20 November 2024

Dear Councillor,

Cabinet

6:00pm on Thursday 28 November 2024

Meeting to be held in the 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:**

Johnson, T.B.	Leader of the Council
Preece, J.P.T.L.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Parks, Culture, and Heritage Portfolio Leader
Williams, D.W.G.	Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Wilson, L.J.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Thornley, S.J.	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
Freeman, M.A.	Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader
Prestwood, J.	Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader

Agenda

Part 1

1. Apologies

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

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.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2024 (enclosed).

4. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

To receive oral updates (if any), from the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader, and Portfolio Leaders.

5. Forward Plan

Forward Plan of Decisions for November 2024 to January 2025 (Item 5.1 - 5.3).

6. Recommendations Referred from Council

To consider the following recommendations referred from the full Council meeting held on 9 October 2024:

Winter Fuel Payments

"That the Cabinet be asked to consider:

  (a) Launching a local awareness campaign to encourage uptake of Pension Credit.

  (b) Through Council partnerships, promote wider efforts to raise awareness of Pension Credit; and

  (c) Approach Beat the Cold to explore ways we and other local groups and charities can work with them to offer energy advice, support, and signposting."

7. Outturn 2023/24

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer (Item 7.1 - 7.35).

8. Value for Money Progress Report - Quarter 2 2024/25

Report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 8.1 - 8.28).

9. Quarter 2 Performance Report 2024/25

Report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 9.1 - 9.38).

10. Strategic Risk Register Update

Report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 10.1 - 10.13).

11. **Risk Management Policy, Strategy, and Risk Appetite Statement**

Report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 11.1 - 11.18).

12. **Transformation & Digital Strategies**

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 12.1 - 12.28).

13. **Community Infrastructure Levy Ward Funding - Playground Resurfacing Works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre**

Report of the Head of Economic Development & Planning (Item 13.1 - 13.4).

14. **Review of the Leisure, Culture, and Heritage Contract**

Report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 14. - **to follow).**

15. **Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge**

Report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 15.1 - 15.8).

Appendix 2 (Item 15.8) to this report is confidential due to the inclusion of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

16. **Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2 2024/25**

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 16.1 - 16.6).

Appendix 1 (Item 16.6) to this report is confidential due to the inclusion of:

- Information relating to any individual.

- Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

17. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Leader to move:

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 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Agenda
Part 2

18. **Revenues and Benefits Computer System**

Not for Publication Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 18.1 - 18.5).

The report is confidential due to the inclusion of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 24 October at 6:00 p.m.

In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:
Councillors:

Johnson, T.	Leader of the Council
Preece, J.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Parks, Culture, & Heritage Portfolio Leader
Williams, D.	Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Wilson, L.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Thornley, S.J.	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
Freeman, M.	Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader
Prestwood, J.	Resources and Transformation Portfolio Lead

53.   Apologies

None received.

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

Member	Interest	Type
Wilson, L.	Agenda Item 9 - Statement of Licensing Policy 2025-2029:	Personal
	Member is a Licensee of a public house in the District.	

55.   Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2024 be approved.

56.   Updates from Portfolio Leaders

(i)   Community Wellbeing

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Community Safety Partnership**

    "I recently met with the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to discuss our Community Safety Partnership. The meeting was extremely productive, with the Commissioner expressing strong support for our current

direction and achievements. We discussed potential new funding arrangements which we hope to have confirmed in the coming months."

- **Strategic Approach for Portfolio Work**

"I'm pleased to report that we're developing a more strategic approach across the portfolio, particularly focusing on health inequalities. We're working to better integrate our services and partnerships to address the challenges highlighted in our recent data, especially around long-term illness, and disability rates in our District."

- **Health, Wellbeing, and The Community Scrutiny Committee**

"I'm also happy to report that the Health, Wellbeing, and The Community Scrutiny Committee is working effectively, with a particular focus on their working group examining anti-social behaviour. I look forward to seeing their recommendations come to Cabinet in due course."

- **2024 Poppy Appeal**

"I'd like to highlight that today marks the launch of this year's Poppy Appeal in Cannock Chase. I'm incredibly proud to report that we have dedicated teams working across our District in Brereton, Cannock, Heath Hayes, Hednesford, Norton Canes, and Rugeley. Our community has always shown tremendous support for our armed forces, which is particularly fitting given our District's rich military heritage and the Commonwealth War Cemetery. Every poppy tells a story, and every donation makes a difference. I strongly encourage all Council Members, officers, and residents to get involved - whether you can spare an hour or a day, your support matters.

Let's show that Cannock Chase remembers and cares."

(ii)   **Environment and Climate Change**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Wild Animals**

"There had been some complaints from the public in regard to the wild animals (tiger & lion) that were housed in Norton Canes, along the A5 (ex-circus animals). The Council vet was visiting tomorrow to assess the condition of the animals, and a decision would be made as to whether they could remain at that site or moved to an animal sanctuary."

(iii)   **Housing and Corporate Assets**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Housing Board**

"Applications were being welcomed from tenants to sit on the Housing Board. The deadline for submission of applications was 1 November.

- **Bungalow Opening for Submission of Housing Applications**

"The Housing bungalow (adjacent to the Civic Centre) would soon be opening to enable housing applicants to submit their housing applications. I welcome this as there had been limited access to face-to-face meetings with Housing Officers following the pandemic."

(iv) **Parks, Culture, and Heritage**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Nancy Foster Walk**

  "The Nancy Foster walk was officially launched today in Hednesford.

  The walk is in memory of her life and her work and features 8 QR codes that can be scanned via the Cannock Chase Can App. Each stop shares some aspect of her life and the scenic attraction of Hednesford and at 6 of these stops there will be a QR code featuring one of her poems that is read out by Staffordshire's new Poet Laureat, Scarlett Ward.

  This project has been in conjunction with officers, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, Rachel Gentle from the Museum of Cannock Chase (who has organised a reprint of her work), Claire Harris of South Staffordshire College, and Malcolm Foster, the nephew of Nancy Foster.

  Radio WM covered the event today and the interview will go out on Monday afternoon at lunchtime. I would urge everyone to give it a listen."

(v) **Regeneration and High Streets**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Cannock Town Centre Partnership / Christmas Event**

  "I attended the Cannock Town Centre Partnership meeting where the arrangements for the Christmas event in Cannock on 30 November had been discussed. They had received confirmation that there would be free parking from 3pm on the day."

- **Planting for Remembrance Day**

  "There would be some planting of red plants/flowers adjacent to the bandstand by the bowling green in Cannock town centre in preparation for Remembrance Day along with some decorations on 3 November."

- **Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee**

  "I attended the meeting of the scrutiny committee held last night and it was a very positive meeting."

57. Forward Plan

Resolved:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period October to November 2024 (Item 5.1 - 5.2) be noted.

58. Priority Projects for 2024-25

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 6.1 - 6.24).

Resolved:

That the list of key strategic and operational priorities as set out in paragraph 3.6 of the report be approved.

Reason for Decision:

Prioritisation of the Council's work programme for 2024/25 was essential for the effective allocation of resources.

59. 2023-24 Housing Services Annual Report to Tenants

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 7.1 - 7.24).

Resolved:

That:

(A) The 2023-24 Housing Services Annual Report (as attached at appendix 1 to the Cabinet report) be agreed for publication on the Council's website and circulated to tenants.

(B) If required, the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets, following consultation with the Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader, be authorised to make amendments to the 2023-24 Housing Services Annual Report prior to publication.

Reason for Decisions:

The Annual Report had to be made available to all tenants and a copy of the final document would be placed on the Council's website, with hard copies circulated to tenants and leaseholders in conjunction with the next edition of the Tenants' Newsletter.

60. Gambling Act 2005 - Statement of Principles

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Regulatory Services (Item 8.1 - 8.33).

Resolved:

That:

(A) Council, at its meeting to be held on 4 December 2024, be recommended to adopt the Gambling Act 2005 - Statement of Principles (Policy Statement) as attached at appendix 1 to the report.

(B) The Head of Regulatory Services be authorised to make amendments to the Policy Statement required due to changes in legislation or government guidance and minor variations in the interests of operational efficiency.

Reasons for Decisions:

Cabinet was asked to approve and recommend for adoption the Policy Statement to ensure that the Council complied with its statutory responsibilities under the Gambling Act 2005.

Authorising the Head of Regulatory Services to make amendments to the Policy Statement was in the interests of operational efficiency.

61. Statement of Licensing Policy 2025-2029

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Regulatory Services (Item 9.1 - 9.42).

Resolved:

That:

(A) Council, at its meeting to be held on 4 December 2024, be recommended to approve and adopt the Statement of Licensing Policy 2025-2029 as attached at appendix 1 to the report.

(B) The Head of Regulatory Services be authorised to make amendments to the Policy required due to changes in legislation or government guidance and minor variations in the interests of operational efficiency.

Reasons for Decisions:

Cabinet was asked to approve and recommend for adoption the Policy to ensure that the Council complied with its statutory responsibilities under the Licensing Act 2003.

Authorising the Head of Regulatory Services to make amendments to the Policy was in the interests of operational efficiency.

The meeting closed at 6:31 p.m.

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Leader

Forward Plan of Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet: November 2024 to January 2025

For Cannock Chase Council, a key decision is as an Executive decision that is likely to:

- Result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings at or above a threshold of 0.5% of the gross turnover of the Council.
- Affect communities living or working in two or more Council Wards.

Representations in respect of any of matters detailed below should be sent in writing to the contact officer indicated alongside each item via email to membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Copies of non-confidential items will be published on the Council's website 5 clear working days prior to the relevant meeting date.

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representations Received
November 2024						
Outturn 2023/24	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer / Leader of the Council / Resources & Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A
Value for Money Progress Report - Quarter 2 2024/25	Head of Transformation & Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A
Quarter 2 Performance Report 2024/25	Head of Transformation & Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A
Strategic Risk Register Update	Head of Transformation & Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A
Risk Management Policy, Strategy and Risk Appetite Statement	Head of Transformation & Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A
Transformation and Digital Strategies	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representations Received
Community Infrastructure Levy Ward Funding - Playground Resurfacing Works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre	Head of Economic Development and Planning / Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	No		N/A
Review of the Leisure, Culture, and Heritage Contract	Head of Wellbeing / Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	Yes	Yes		N/A
Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	Yes (Appendix 2 only)	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2 (2024/25)	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	Yes (Appendix 1 only)	Information relating to any individual. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
Revenues and Benefits Computer System	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	28/11/24	No	Yes	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
January 2025						
General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2025-2028	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources / Leader of the Council / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	16/01/25 30/01/25	No	No		N/A
Rent and Income Collection Policy	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	Yes	No		N/A

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representations Received
Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2024/25 to 2027/28	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	16/01/25 30/01/25	No	No		N/A
Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2024/25 to 2027/28	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	16/01/25 30/01/25	No	No		N/A
Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, and Annual Investment Strategy 2025/26	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources / Leader of the Council / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	No	No		N/A
Weekly Food Waste Collections & Inclusion in Capital Programme and Permission to Spend	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	No	No		N/A
Vehicle Replacement	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	Yes	No		N/A
Play Areas and Parks Improvements, Buildings and Rationalisation	Head of Operations / Parks, Culture, and Heritage Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	Yes	No		N/A
Housing Board - Establishment of the Board and Appointments	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	No	No		N/A
Proposed Charging Schedule for Monitoring of S106 Agreements	Head of Economic Development and Planning / Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader	30/01/25	No	No		N/A

Outturn 2023/24

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 28 November 2024

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer

Portfolios: Leader of the Council / Resources & Transformation

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To present to the Cabinet the outturn position for 2023/24.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That the outturn position for the year ending 31 March 2024 be noted.

2.2   That the financing of the capital programme as outlined in the report be approved.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.3   The Budget report set out an indicative capital programme and financing, this report now sets out the actual capital spend and therefore financing to be approved.

3   Key Issues

3.1   The Budget for 2023/24 was revised as part of the Budget report to Cabinet on the 1 February 2024 which set out a forecast transfer from balances of £0.778 million pounds.

3.2   The revised budget included provision for use of reserves to balance the budget of £0.778 million, of this amount only £0.329 million was used.

3.3   The Portfolio outturn for 2023/24 shows a favourable variance of £0.059 million consisting of a number of variations.

3.4   Investment income in year has increased by £1.002 million as compared to the Revised Budget. This change has occurred due to the following factors:

- Interest rates remained higher for longer than anticipated giving an additional gross investment income above budget of £0.654 million.

- The interest earned is the gross amount for the authority, part of this is payable to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), therefore there is an additional amount payable in interest payable line of £0.188 million.

- The budget also assumed an amount in relation to interest on balances held by the authority in relation to repayable grants, due to the fall in inflation and spend the budget of £0.350 million was not required.

3.5   Technical items show a variance of £1.708 million reflecting contributions made to reserves.

3.6   Income from the Business Rates Retention Scheme was some £0.717 million higher than anticipated.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   The outturn for 2023/24 covers all of the Council's priorities.

5   Report Detail

5.1   This report provides an analysis of the outturn position for 2023/24. It covers the following accounts:

- General Fund Revenue account – which bears the net cost of providing day-to-day services.

- Business Rates Retention

- Capital expenditure and how it is financed.

- Collection Fund.

5.2   The accounts are draft at this stage and will not be audited due to the backstop legislation. No changes to the accounts that impact upon Council Taxpayers are envisaged.

General Fund Revenue Outturn

5.3   The table overleaf summarises the outturn position of the General Fund Revenue Account for the year compared with the budget position.

5.4   The Council's Net Expenditure (Portfolio Budgets) in relation to the Revenue Budget for 2023/24 financial year was set by the Council in February 2023 at a net expenditure of **£14.941 million.**

In determining the 2024/25 Budget in February 2024 Council approved the Forecast Outturn for 2023/24 of **£14.890 million**, a reduction of £0.051 million as compared to the Original Budget.

5.5   The Revised Budget reflected the inflationary increases in costs, known changes in the forecast and the impact of savings achieved.

		Cannock Preliminary Outturn 2023/24			
			Revised Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance to Revised £'000
	Portfolios				
1	Community Wellbeing		3,221	3,065	156
2	Environment & Climate change		4,528	4,429	99
3	Housing		1,200	1,136	64
4	Leader of the Council		1,198	1,180	18
5	Parks, Culture and Heritage		2,119	1,955	164
6	Regeneration & High Streets		1,794	1,616	178
7	Resources & Transformation		3,229	3,849	-620
8	Total Portfolios		**17,289**	**17,230**	**59**
9	Investment Income		-2,059	-3,061	1,002
10	Interest Payable		262	450	-188
11	Technical Items		176	1,884	-1,708
12	Net Expenditure		**15,668**	**16,503**	**-835**
13	Use of Government Grants		-1,731	-2,448	717
14	**Net Revenue Budget**		**13,937**	**14,055**	**-118**
	Financed by:				
	Business Rates				
15	Core funding		-3,159	-3,159	0
16	Growth / S31 grants		-1,805	-2,419	614
17	Business Rates Pool		-1,000	-1,103	103
18	Transfer from balances		-400	0	-400
19	Revenue Support Grant		-123	-123	0
20	Council Tax		-7,072	-6,922	-150
21	Total Financing		**-13,559**	**-13,726**	**167**
22	**Trf to/(from) working balances**		**-378**	**-329**	**-49**
23	**Net Revenue Budget**		**13,937**	**14,055**	**-118**

5.6   The table above shows that net expenditure including Investment Income, Technical financing adjustments and use of government grants was **£14.055 million**, **£0.118 million** (0.85%) more than the budget.

5.7 The actual expenditure on portfolio budgets was £0.059 million (0.3%) lower than anticipated with Investment Income being £1.002 million higher than expected due to the increased interest rates, and reduced interest on balances held. Interest payable shows the additional investment income due to the HRA. Technical items show a variance of £1.708 million reflecting additional reserve contributions.

5.8 Government grants show additional income of £0.717 million; the main variation relates to the compensation grant received from the government in respect of the business rates multiplier which has been frozen, and councils are receiving compensation for this via specific grant.

5.8 Business rates income shows additional receipts of £0.717 million with the overall position, actual net expenditure, and financing, resulting in a use of working balance of £0.329 million. This was as compared to the budgeted figure which envisaged us using reserve balances of £0.778 million, at year end only £0.329 million of this amount was used.

Net Portfolio expenditure

5.9 Net portfolio expenditure was £0.059 million lower than the budget. The principal cost variations, on each portfolio are as follows ((-) is an unfavourable variance (+) is a favourable variance):

Community Wellbeing

- CCTV - staff variations £4,000(-), reduced supplies £12,000(+).

- Grants - one off reduction in contributions £3,000(+).

- Housing services - staff variations £64,000(+), additional housing benefit recovered £37,000(+).

- Leisure contract sports - reduced utilities income £4,000(-).

- Partnerships - reduced rents £8,000(+) and reduced supplies £5,000(+).

- Stadium - reduced supplies £20,000(+) and staff variations £7,000(+).

- Leisure planning and marketing - reduced supplies £3,000(+).

Environment and Climate Change

- Waste - reduced chargeable waste income £23,000(-), additional income £32,000(+), reduced expenditure costs £17,000(+), and other variations £4,000(+).

- Regulatory services - staff variations £39,000(+), additional income £31,000(+), and other variations £9,000(-).

- Cleansing - reduced supplies costs £3,000(+).

- Drainage - reduced maintenance costs £3,000(+).

- Countryside management - staff variations £8,000(+), additional income £10,000(+), and supplies etc £12,000(-).

- Off street parking - additional income £33,000(+), reduced rates payable £6,000(+) and other variations £5,000(+).

- Bus Shelters - additional repairs costs £2,000(-).

- Conservation areas - staff variations £7,000(-).

- Food Safety - additional supplies £5,000(-).

- Management and Administration - staff variations £14,000(-).

- Mortuary - reduced maintenance costs £5,000(+) and other variations £3,000(+).

- Licensing - reduced income £66,000(-), staff variations £23,000(+).

- Hawks Green depot - reduced maintenance and energy costs £10,000(+), reduced supplies £4,000(+).

Housing (Housing General Fund)

- Caretakers and Cleaners - staffing variations £28,000(+) and reduced supplies etc £4,000(+).

- Circular 8/95 - increased recharge of costs HRA £6,000(-).

- Civic ballroom - reduced income £12,000(-).

- Private sector housing - additional income £9,000(+).

- Public Buildings - additional income £80,000(+), staff variations £17,000(+), reduced utilities costs £21,000(+), reserve contribution maintenance underspends across the portfolios £100,000(-) and other variations £18,000(+).

Leader of the Council

- Members - reduced members allowances £4,000(+), and other variations £14,000(+).

- Executive Management and support - staff variations £12,000(-), offset by reduced costs £10,000(+)

Parks, Culture and Heritage

- Grounds maintenance – staffing variations £100,000(+), underspend on services etc £49,000(+), other variations £6,000(+), less transfer Trading reserve £64,000 (-) and earmarked reserve contributions £27,000(-).

- Parks and Open spaces - staffing variations £23,000(+), additional income £20,000(+), underspend on services etc £26,000(+), utility costs £10,000(+), less transfer Trading reserve £47,000(-).

- Cemeteries - staffing variations £9,000(-), cost for opening and closing gates £17,000(-), less reduced public buildings spend £21,000(+), reduced income £10,000(-), reduced supplies £8,000(+), and other variations £4,000(+).

- Allotments - reduced costs £4,000(+).

- Street Cleansing - staffing variations £16,000(-), reduced sweepers cost £17,000(+), additional fee income £12,000(+), underspend supplies and transport £12,000(+).

- Vehicles - staffing variations £4,000(+).

- Contract monitoring - staffing variations £19,000(+), reduced transport costs £6,000(+), additional income £4,000(+), reduced supplies etc £5,000(+).

Regeneration and High Streets

- Development Control – staffing variations £93,000(+), additional income £49,000(+), additional reserve contribution £100,000(-), other variations £10,000(+).

- Economic Development - staffing variations £24,000(+) and reduced car allowances £2,000(+).

- Industrial sites - reduced public buildings £6,000(+) and one off additional rental income £16,000(+).

- Land charges - staff variations £8,000(-) and reduced supplies £6,000(+).

- Management and Support - reduced supplies £5,000(+).

- Town Centre management - reduced public buildings £7,000(+), reduced rents, utilities, and cleaning £13,000(+) and reduced income £10,000(-).

- Markets - reduced public buildings £38,000(+), reduced utilities £32,000(+) and reduced income £13,000(-).

Resources and Transformation

- Technology - additional cost of telephone charges £26,000(-) and Microsoft licences £9,000(-).

- Customer services - staffing variations £8,000(+), reduced supplies £22,000(+).

- Corporate Services - staffing variations £5,000(+), reduced income £2,000(-).

- Policy and Performance - staffing variations £5,000(+) and reduced supplies £9,000(+).

- Risk - increased cost of insurance premiums £10,000(-).

- Taxation - staffing variations £148,000(-), car allowances £14,000(+), supplies £135,000(-), additional income and grants £239,000(+) and increased bad debts provision £30,000(-).

- Finance - staffing variations £93,000(-) and reserve funding £74,000(+).

- Corporate management - increased cost of asset valuation £12,000(-), reduced supplies £4,000(+), and additional grant from government for audit fees £21,000(+).

- Non distributed costs - reduced pension payments £8,000(+).

- Excluded items - reduced bad debts provision £17,000(+), reduced energy and underspend estimate across the authority £250,000(-) and corporate vacancy factor £70,000(-).

- Democratic services - staffing variations £16,000(+).

- Elections - staffing variations £10,000(-).

- Benefits payments - additional cost reflecting subsidy return £265,000(-).

5.10 A summary of performance of the main streams of income against budget is set out in the following table:

Main Streams of Income			
	Revised	**Actual**	**Variance**
	£'000	**£'000**	**£'000**
Waste & Recycling	(1,304)	(1,307)	3
Off Street Parking	(709)	(742)	33
Markets	(37)	(26)	(11)
Building Control	(296)	(297)	1
Local Taxation	(362)	(426)	64
Development Control	(205)	(284)	79
Licensing	(288)	(219)	(69)
Public Buildings	(282)	(360)	78
Cemeteries	(222)	(213)	(9)
Town Centre Management	(142)	(132)	(10)
Grounds Maintenance	(106)	(102)	(4)
Industrial Sites	(115)	(129)	14
Land Charges	(61)	(61)	-
Bus Shelters	(25)	(24)	(1)
Leisure Contract Sports	(188)	(182)	(6)
Leisure Contract Heritage	(2)	(2)	-
Total Main Sources	**(4,344)**	**(4,506)**	**162**

5.11 Overall income levels were £0.162 million higher than the revised budget. The major variations related to Public buildings and Local Taxation which showed additional income, partly offset by reduced Licensing income.

5.12 More detailed explanations for all expenditure and income variances greater than £10,000 and 10% are attached for each portfolio at **APPENDIX 1**.

Business Rates Retention

5.13 The Business Rates Retention Scheme forms part of the current Funding regime for Local Government and incentivises Councils to promote economic growth in their area as they are entitled to retain a share of business rates growth.

5.14 The scheme came into operation with effect from April 2013; therefore 2023/24 is the eleventh year of operation. Income being shared between central government, the Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Service and the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Business Rates Pool.

5.15   The business rates growth figure was £0.614 million higher than anticipated, of this amount £0.223 million related to growth with the balance being attributable to additional business rates grants.

5.16   The business rates pool balance was also £0.103 million higher than anticipated due to increase in the business rates growth.

Working Balances

5.17   The outturn shows a contribution from working balances on the General Fund of £0.329 million with a resultant £1.612 million balance as at the 31 March 2024. As the Council policy is to retain a working balance of £1.0 million the £0.612 million transfer will be able to support future budgets.

Capital Outturn

5.18   The Council approves the Capital Programme for the financial year as part of the budget process and the amount that can be spent is limited by the amount of capital resources available to the Council. The 2023/24 capital programme was approved in February 2023 and updated as part of the revised budget set as part of the 23/24 budget cycle.

5.19   Many of the schemes within the Capital Programme take some time to develop and implement so the detailed programme can experience many changes. Considerable variation will therefore arise over the 18-month period from the time the Capital Programme for the financial year is initially considered, right through to the end of March of the relevant year.

5.20   The Council spent £3.503 million on General Fund capital projects in 2023/24 which was £2.681 million less than the budget of £6.184 million. This is primarily as a result of timing delays in bringing projects to fruition. Of this underspend, £0.990 million relates to DFG spend which was increased at revised budget time by £1.1 million and £0.666 million relates to delays in the Levelling up fund project.

Capital Outturn Position			
	Budget	Actual	Variance from Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Environment & Climate Change	94	75	19
Parks, Culture and Heritage	1,811	923	888
Resources and Transformation	21	21	-
Community Wellbeing	2,643	1,653	990
Housing	10	6	4
Regeneration and High Streets	1,605	825	780
Total	**6,184**	**3,503**	**2,681**

The major items of capital spend in the year were:

- **£1.553 million** on Disabled Facilities Grants.
- **£0.444 million** on Levelling Up Fund
- **£0.375 million** on UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- **£0.244 million** on Laburnum Avenue Phase 1

The detailed Capital Programme outturn for 2023/24 is attached at **APPENDIX 2** along with explanations for major variations.

5.21   The capital programme of £3.503 million was financed in the following way:

Capital Financing	£'000
Capital grants and contributions	3,161
Capital receipts	173
Direct Revenue Financing	169
Total	**3,503**

Collection Fund

5.22   Cannock Chase is the billing authority and as such has a statutory requirement to establish and maintain a separate fund covering the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and national non-domestic rates (NNDR). Net Business Rates attributable to the Council are accounted for as part of the General Fund under the new Business Rates regime.

Council Tax

5.23   The net position on the Collection Fund for the year was a surplus of £0.144 million for Council Tax after taking into account distribution of previous year deficits in year. The overall position for Council tax leaves a net deficit on the fund of £1.256 million at 31 March 2024 (of which £0.158 million relates to this Council).

National Non-Domestic Rates

5.24   A surplus of £2.329 million exists in relation to Business Rates as at 31 March 2024. The deficit is however notional and represents a timing difference between estimated Business Rates returns and actual returns. This Council's actual retained Business Income is in line with the Income and Expenditure account after taking into account the timing deficit required as part of the Collection Fund Statutory requirements.

6   Implications

6.1   Financial

The financial implications have been referred to throughout the report.

6.2   Legal

The legal implications have been referred to throughout the report.

6.3   Human Resources

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

6.4   Risk Management

Nil

6.5   Equalities and Diversity

Nil

6.6   Health

Nil

6.7   Climate Change

Nil

7   Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed Revenue Outturn 2023/24

Appendix 2 - Capital Outturn 2023/24

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

Available in Financial Services

COMMUNITY WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
CCTV					
Expenditure	259,840	261,447	(1,607)	(0.6%)	
Income	(61,530)	(69,132)	7,602	(12.4%)	Safer streets external funding grant (offset by expenditure) £7k
Net	**198,310**	**192,315**	**5,995**		
Grants and Contributions					
Expenditure	141,280	135,680	5,600	4.0%	
Net	**141,280**	**135,680**	**5,600**		
Housing Services					
Expenditure	898,300	1,091,436	(193,136)	(21.5%)	Asylum grant (£244k), bed and breakfast (£75k), new burden grants to reserves (£35k), homeless prevention timing of spend £100k and staffing variations £64k
Income	(542,790)	(837,655)	294,865	(54.3%)	Asylum grant £244k, housing benefit recovered £115k, new burdens grant £35k and homeless prevention grant (£100k)
Net	**355,510**	**253,781**	**101,729**		
Leisure Contract Sports					
Expenditure	2,521,840	2,622,863	(101,023)	(4.0%)	Contribution to reserves of additional funding
Income	(416,060)	(514,007)	97,947	(23.5%)	Additional Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles income relating to income levels
Net	**2,105,780**	**2,108,856**	**(3,076)**		
Partnerships					
Expenditure	325,110	322,391	2,719	0.8%	
Income	(75,850)	(85,304)	9,454	(12.5%)	Additional use of reserves to fund delivery
Net	**249,260**	**237,087**	**12,173**		

COMMUNITY WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Stadium					
Expenditure	84,900	57,466	27,434	32.3%	Reduced operational costs
Income	-	(587)	587	n/a	
Net	**84,900**	**56,879**	**28,021**		
DFG Delivery					
Expenditure	129,060	177,272	(48,212)	(37.4%)	Staffing variations
Income	(128,580)	(177,272)	48,692	(37.9%)	Capitalisation of additional staff costs
Net	**480**	**-**	**480**		
Leisure Planning and Marketing					
Expenditure	96,230	100,991	(4,761)	(4.9%)	
Income	(10,550)	(20,800)	10,250	(97.2%)	Additional income from IHL for equipment bond (contributed to reserves)
Net	**85,680**	**80,191**	**5,489**		
Portfolio Total	**3,221,200**	**3,064,789**	**156,411**	**4.9%**	

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Waste and Recycling					
Expenditure	4,298,880	4,277,481	21,399	0.5%	
Income	(1,321,850)	(1,330,302)	8,452	(0.6%)	
Net	**2,977,030**	**2,947,179**	**29,851**		
Regulatory Services					
Expenditure	457,150	428,155	28,995	6.3%	
Income	(20,310)	(52,562)	32,252	(158.8%)	Additional one off environmental protection income £33k
Net	**436,840**	**375,593**	**61,247**		
Cleansing Services					
Expenditure	498,180	495,500	2,680	0.5%	
Net	**498,180**	**495,500**	**2,680**		
Drainage Services					
Expenditure	8,790	6,187	2,603	29.6%	
Net	**8,790**	**6,187**	**2,603**		
Countryside Management					
Expenditure	262,200	266,438	(4,238)	(1.6%)	
Income	(82,660)	(92,712)	10,052	(12.2%)	One off income £5k (contributed to reserves) and income for adder survey works £5k
Net	**179,540**	**173,726**	**5,814**		
Public Clocks					
Expenditure	6,150	5,842	308	5.0%	
Net	**6,150**	**5,842**	**308**		

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Off Street Parking					
Expenditure	525,630	515,117	10,513	2.0%	
Income	(724,930)	(758,174)	33,244	(4.6%)	
Net	**(199,300)**	**(243,057)**	**43,757**		
Bus Shelters					
Expenditure	38,360	40,246	(1,886)	(4.9%)	
Income	(25,000)	(24,414)	(586)	2.3%	
Net	**13,360**	**15,832**	**(2,472)**		
Conservation Areas					
Expenditure	185,550	192,249	(6,699)	(3.6%)	
Net	**185,550**	**192,249**	**(6,699)**		
Food Safety					
Expenditure	452,640	460,096	(7,456)	(1.6%)	
Income	(83,830)	(84,249)	419	(0.5%)	
Net	**368,810**	**375,847**	**(7,037)**		
Management and Administration					
Expenditure	107,260	121,344	(14,084)	(13.1%)	Staffing variations
Net	**107,260**	**121,344**	**(14,084)**		
Mortuary					
Expenditure	51,330	18,504	32,826	64.0%	Closure / mothballing spend not used £25k, reduced maintenance costs £5k and minor variations
Income	(25,000)	268	(25,268)	101.1%	Reserve not used re anticipated spend on closure / mothballing costs
Net	**26,330**	**18,772**	**7,558**		

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Licensing					
Expenditure	202,840	178,547	24,293	12.0%	Staffing variations £23k
Income	(288,190)	(222,330)	(65,860)	22.9%	Reduced income from licences
Net	**(85,350)**	**(43,783)**	**(41,567)**		
Resilience					
Expenditure	82,980	76,980	6,000	7.2%	
Income	(56,690)	(50,690)	(6,000)	10.6%	Reserve funding not actioned due to lower spend
Net	**26,290**	**26,290**	**-**		
Hawks Green Depot					
Expenditure	153,050	135,578	17,472	11.4%	Reduced maintenance and energy costs £10k and lower supplies spend £4k
Income	(173,960)	(174,555)	595	(0.3%)	
Net	**(20,910)**	**(38,977)**	**18,067**		
Portfolio Total	**4,528,570**	**4,428,544**	**100,026**	**2.2%**	

HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Caretakers and Cleaners					
Expenditure	324,200	291,786	32,414	10.0%	Staffing variations £28k and reduced supplies £4k
Net	**324,200**	**291,786**	**32,414**		
Circular 8 95					
Expenditure	35,520	42,083	(6,563)	(18.5%)	Additional recharge from HRA
Net	**35,520**	**42,083**	**(6,563)**		
Civic Ballroom					
Expenditure	650	-	650	100.0%	
Income	(24,540)	(11,741)	(12,799)	52.2%	Reduced rent income
Net	**(23,890)**	**(11,741)**	**(12,149)**		
Housing Act Advances					
Expenditure	-	81	(81)	n/a	
Net	**-**	**81**	**(81)**		
Miscellaneous Properties					
Expenditure	7,720	4,514	3,206	41.5%	
Income	(9,610)	(9,632)	22	(0.2%)	
Net	**(1,890)**	**(5,118)**	**3,228**		
Private Sector Housing					
Expenditure	251,290	249,182	2,108	0.8%	
Income	-	(9,057)	9,057	n/a	
Net	**251,290**	**240,125**	**11,165**		

HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Public Buildings					
Expenditure	1,074,300	1,274,482	(200,182)	(18.6%)	Reserve contribution reduced maintenance costs across the portfolios (£100k), professional fees in relation to one off income (£52k), net contribution to reserve re one off income (£100k), staffing variations £17k, reduced utility costs £21k and minor var
Income	(459,920)	(695,288)	235,368	(51.2%)	One off income £150k and additional rents and service charges £80k
Net	**614,380**	**579,194**	**35,186**		
Portfolio Total	**1,199,610**	**1,136,411**	**63,199**	**5.3%**	

LEADER PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Members					
Expenditure	392,730	373,275	19,455	5.0%	
Net	**392,730**	**373,275**	**19,455**		
Executive Management and Support					
Expenditure	805,430	807,256	(1,826)	(0.2%)	
Net	**805,430**	**807,256**	**(1,826)**		
Portfolio Total	**1,198,160**	**1,180,531**	**17,629**	**1.5%**	

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Grounds Maintenance					
Expenditure	1,111,970	1,077,477	34,493	3.1%	
Income	(1,090,210)	(1,119,718)	29,508	(2.7%)	
Net	**21,760**	**(42,242)**	**64,002**		
Parks and Open Spaces					
Expenditure	1,524,160	1,513,163	10,997	0.7%	
Income	(116,120)	(135,937)	19,817	(17.1%)	Additional income Hednesford park £20k
Net	**1,408,040**	**1,377,225**	**30,815**		
Cemeteries					
Expenditure	315,070	322,086	(7,016)	(2.2%)	
Income	(226,360)	(230,171)	3,811	(1.7%)	
Net	**88,710**	**91,914**	**(3,204)**		
Allotments					
Expenditure	5,760	2,468	3,292	57.1%	
Income	(4,640)	(5,388)	748	(16.1%)	
Net	**1,120**	**(2,920)**	**4,040**		
Street Cleansing					
Expenditure	782,990	769,380	13,610	1.7%	
Income	(786,400)	(797,947)	11,547	(1.5%)	
Net	**(3,410)**	**(28,567)**	**25,157**		
Vehicles					
Expenditure	249,590	260,937	(11,347)	(4.5%)	
Income	(252,760)	(271,011)	18,251	(7.2%)	
Net	**(3,170)**	**(10,074)**	**6,904**		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Leisure Contract Heritage and Arts					
Expenditure	433,330	433,330	-	0.0%	
Income	(1,600)	(1,602)	2	(0.1%)	
Net	**431,730**	**431,728**	**2**		
Tourism					
Expenditure	9,630	8,000	1,630	16.9%	
Net	**9,630**	**8,000**	**1,630**		
Contract Monitoring					
Expenditure	228,570	198,752	29,818	13.0%	Staffing variations £19k, reduced transport £6k and minor variations
Income	(63,940)	(69,048)	5,108	(8.0%)	
Net	**164,630**	**129,705**	**34,925**		
Portfolio Total	**2,119,040**	**1,954,770**	**164,270**	**7.8%**	

REGENERATION AND HIGH STREETS PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Building Control					
Expenditure	669,010	669,894	(884)	(0.1%)	
Income	(504,590)	(505,474)	884	(0.2%)	
Net	**164,420**	**164,420**	**-**		
Development Control					
Expenditure	761,520	759,129	2,391	0.3%	
Income	(235,170)	(284,101)	48,931	(20.8%)	Miscellaneous income £54k and minor variations
Net	**526,350**	**475,027**	**51,323**		
Economic Development					
Expenditure	1,023,760	1,069,558	(45,798)	(4.5%)	Reserve contribution additional grant (£73k), less staffing variations £24k
Income	(668,250)	(741,493)	73,243	(11.0%)	Additional grant (contributed to reserves) £73k
Net	**355,510**	**328,065**	**27,445**		
Industrial Sites					
Expenditure	13,540	7,114	6,426	47.5%	Reduced maintenance costs £6k
Income	(115,000)	(131,235)	16,235	(14.1%)	One off additional rent income
Net	**(101,460)**	**(124,121)**	**22,661**		
Land Charges					
Expenditure	87,730	63,713	24,017	27.4%	New system spend slipped to 24/25
Income	(86,380)	(60,933)	(25,447)	29.5%	Reserve funding for new system slipped to 24/25
Net	**1,350**	**2,780**	**(1,430)**		

REGENERATION AND HIGH STREETS PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Management and Support					
Expenditure	493,620	522,209	(28,589)	(5.8%)	
Income	(44,510)	(80,879)	36,369	(81.7%)	Additional grants £58k (biodiversity and neighbourhood plan) and reduced funding from reserves (£22k)
Net	**449,110**	**441,329**	**7,781**		
Town Centre Management					
Expenditure	260,580	240,299	20,281	7.8%	
Income	(142,420)	(131,620)	(10,800)	7.6%	
Net	**118,160**	**108,679**	**9,481**		
Markets					
Expenditure	319,810	324,728	(4,918)	(1.5%)	
Income	(39,230)	(105,128)	65,898	(168.0%)	One off income £79k, partly offset by reduced rents
Net	**280,580**	**219,600**	**60,980**		
Portfolio Total	**1,794,020**	**1,615,780**	**178,240**	**9.9%**	

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Legal Services					
Expenditure	297,820	297,820	-	0.0%	
Income	(205,800)	(205,800)	-	0.0%	
Net	**92,020**	**92,020**	**-**		
Technology					
Expenditure	1,199,040	1,237,182	(38,142)	(3.2%)	
Income	(417,870)	(420,758)	2,888	(0.7%)	
Net	**781,170**	**816,424**	**(35,254)**		
Governance					
Expenditure	47,320	44,633	2,687	5.7%	
Income	(22,350)	(22,350)	-	0.0%	
Net	**24,970**	**22,283**	**2,687**		
Human Resources					
Expenditure	277,280	277,814	(534)	(0.2%)	
Income	(174,720)	(174,720)	-	0.0%	
Net	**102,560**	**103,094**	**(534)**		
Customer Services					
Expenditure	449,570	419,831	29,739	6.6%	
Income	(122,270)	(122,261)	(9)	0.0%	
Net	**327,300**	**297,571**	**29,729**		
Corporate Services					
Expenditure	256,500	251,565	4,935	1.9%	
Income	(39,830)	(37,391)	(2,439)	6.1%	
Net	**216,670**	**214,174**	**2,496**		

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Communications					
Expenditure	336,700	405,136	(68,436)	(20.3%)	Senior management restructure (£49k) and staffing variations (£18k)
Income	(25,560)	(95,040)	69,480	(271.8%)	Reserve funding for restructure and additional spend £61k and additional income £9k
Net	**311,140**	**310,096**	**1,044**		
Policy and Performance					
Expenditure	97,470	83,605	13,865	14.2%	Staffing variations £5k and reduced supplies £9k
Income	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	**97,470**	**83,605**	**13,865**		
Audit					
Expenditure	288,030	365,972	(77,942)	(27.1%)	Professional fees re external audit support
Income	(128,510)	(206,452)	77,942	(60.7%)	Reserve funding for additional professional fees
Net	**159,520**	**159,520**	**-**		
Risk					
Expenditure	891,510	965,214	(73,704)	(8.3%)	
Income	(786,490)	(850,647)	64,157	(8.2%)	
Net	**105,020**	**114,567**	**(9,547)**		
Customer Serv Mgmt incl Social Alarms					
Expenditure	128,180	224,291	(96,111)	(75.0%)	Senior management restructure (£95k)
Income	(29,300)	(124,024)	94,724	(323.3%)	Reserve funding senior management restructure
Net	**98,880**	**100,267**	**(1,387)**		

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Taxation					
Expenditure	3,488,260	4,045,648	(557,388)	(16.0%)	Staffing variations (£148k), reduced car allowances £14k, hardship grant (£244k), increased bad debts provision (£30k) and additional supplies (£135k)
Income	(2,524,060)	(3,027,823)	503,763	(20.0%)	Additional court and penalty fees £64k, use of reserves £250k, additional grants £175k and minor variations
Net	**964,200**	**1,017,825**	**(53,625)**		
Finance					
Expenditure	1,272,160	1,392,750	(120,590)	(9.5%)	Staffing variations (£93k), additional supplies (£32k) and minor variations
Income	(967,330)	(1,066,990)	99,660	(10.3%)	Reserve funding £74k and additional contribution from partners £21k
Net	**304,830**	**325,760**	**(20,930)**		
Corporate Management					
Expenditure	273,840	286,071	(12,231)	(4.5%)	
Income	(47,870)	(76,995)	29,125	(60.8%)	Government grant for audit fees £21k and minor variations
Net	**225,970**	**209,076**	**16,894**		
Non Distributed Costs					
Expenditure	307,840	299,419	8,421	2.7%	
Income	(42,450)	(42,450)	-	0.0%	
Net	**265,390**	**256,969**	**8,421**		

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-2024

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Excluded Items					
Expenditure	(274,740)	38,537	(313,277)	114.0%	Budgeted saving across authority outturn estimate and energy (£250k), corporate vacancy factor (£70k) and minor variations
Income	(902,990)	(902,990)	-	0.0%	
Net	**(1,177,730)**	**(864,453)**	**(313,277)**		
Democratic Services					
Expenditure	193,840	175,005	18,835	9.7%	
Income	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	**193,840**	**175,005**	**18,835**		
Elections					
Expenditure	355,150	422,063	(66,913)	(18.8%)	Staffing (£10k), grant contributed to reserve (£40k) and additional supplies (£17k)
Income	(38,230)	(90,799)	52,569	(137.5%)	Additional grants £42k and use of reserves £10k
Net	**316,920**	**331,264**	**(14,344)**		
Benefit Payments					
Expenditure	14,335,450	15,513,579	(1,178,129)	(8.2%)	
Income	(14,516,770)	(15,429,559)	912,789	(6.3%)	
Net	**(181,320)**	**84,020**	**(265,340)**		
Portfolio Total	**3,228,820**	**3,849,086**	**(620,266)**	**(19.2%)**	

COMMUNITY WELLBEING CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
DFG Private Grants					
Expenditure	2,543,220	1,553,204	990,016	38.9%	Fully spent 23/24 DFG allocation, underspend relates to increase at revised budget of £1.1 million reflecting forecast spend, balance to be slipped to 24/25
Net	**2,543,220**	**1,553,204**	**990,016**		
CCTV technology upgrade					
Expenditure	45,000	-	45,000	100.0%	Project slipped from 23-24 to 24-25, to be fully spent 24-25 Q1
Net	**45,000**	**-**	**45,000**		
CCTV Safer Streets 5					
Expenditure	20,000	100,000	(80,000)	(400.0%)	Project brought forward to 23-24, approved budget accelerated from 24-25 to 23-24
Net	**20,000**	**100,000**	**(80,000)**		
Streetlighting Safer Streets 5					
Expenditure	35,000	-	35,000	100.0%	Project slipped to 24-25
Net	**35,000**	**-**	**35,000**		
Portfolio Total	**2,643,220**	**1,653,204**	**990,016**	**37.5%**	

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Wheelie Bins					
Expenditure	90,000	79,884	10,116	11.2%	Small underspend, remaining budget slipped to 24-25
Net	**90,000**	**79,884**	**10,116**		
Hawks Green Rationalisation					
Expenditure	4,000	(4,632)	8,632	215.8%	Scheme complete
Net	**4,000**	**(4,632)**	**8,632**		
Portfolio Total	**94,000**	**75,252**	**18,748**	**19.9%**	

HOUSING CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Home Security Grants					
Expenditure	10,370	6,085	4,285	41.3%	Outturn reflects Home Security requests, balance slipped to 24-25
Net	**10,370**	**6,085**	**4,285**		
Portfolio Total	**10,370**	**6,085**	**4,285**	**41.3%**	

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Additional Cemetery Provision					
Expenditure	18,340	-	18,340	100.0%	Balance for any other small works outstanding, remaining budget to slip to 24-25
Net	**18,340**	**-**	**18,340**		
Penny Cress Green Play Area					
Expenditure	14,460	4,666	9,794	67.7%	Balance for any other small works outstanding, remaining budget to slip to 24-25
Net	**14,460**	**4,666**	**9,794**		
Stadium Development Phase 2					
Expenditure	265,780	57,391	208,389	78.4%	Balance slipped to 24-25, works to continue in 24-25
Net	**265,780**	**57,391**	**208,389**		
Rugeley ATP					
Expenditure	32,000	1,000	31,000	96.9%	Project complete
Net	**32,000**	**1,000**	**31,000**		
Rugeley Swimming Pool					
Expenditure	-	558	(558)	n/a	Residual works
Net	**-**	**558**	**(558)**		
Rugeley LC Boiler					
Expenditure	-	7,714	(7,714)	n/a	Residual works
Net	**-**	**7,714**	**(7,714)**		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Commonwealth Games Legacy					
Expenditure	40,000	37,465	2,535	6.3%	
Net	**40,000**	**37,465**	**2,535**		
Play Area Development and Refurbishment					
Expenditure	50,000	1,383	48,617	97.2%	£42k budget slipped to 24-25
Net	**50,000**	**1,383**	**48,617**		
Parks and Open Spaces Vehicles					
Expenditure	45,200	3,450	41,750	92.4%	Project slipped to 24-25
Net	**45,200**	**3,450**	**41,750**		
Wellington Drive Park and Open Space					
Expenditure	95,700	112,842	(17,142)	(17.9%)	Overspent, financed by additional grant received
Net	**95,700**	**112,842**	**(17,142)**		
Laburnum Avenue Phase 1					
Expenditure	581,620	244,342	337,278	58.0%	Balance slipped to 24-25, works to continue in 24-25
Net	**581,620**	**244,342**	**337,278**		
Barnard Way Play Area					
Expenditure	96,750	102,927	(6,177)	(6.4%)	
Net	**96,750**	**102,927**	**(6,177)**		
Elmore Park Toilets					
Expenditure	110,000	104,206	5,794	5.3%	
Net	**110,000**	**104,206**	**5,794**		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Infrastructure Fencing Parks and Open Sp					
Expenditure	51,000	39,963	11,037	21.6%	Balance slipped to 24-25, works to continue in 24-25
Net	**51,000**	**39,963**	**11,037**		
Cannock Park Path works					
Expenditure	25,000	-	25,000	100.0%	Project slipped to 24-25
Net	**25,000**	**-**	**25,000**		
Ravenhill Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	18,500	2,500	16,000	86.5%	Main planned works completed in 23-24, small balance for any other works outstanding, remaining budget to slip to 24-25
Net	**18,500**	**2,500**	**16,000**		
Cannock Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	112,000	111,004	997	0.9%	
Net	**112,000**	**111,004**	**997**		
Hednesford Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	19,000	20,079	(1,079)	(5.7%)	
Net	**19,000**	**20,079**	**(1,079)**		
Heath Hayes Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	76,000	71,738	4,262	5.6%	
Net	**76,000**	**71,738**	**4,262**		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Cannock Park Streetlighting Safer Street					
Expenditure	160,000	-	160,000	100.0%	Project slipped to 24-25
Net	**160,000**	**-**	**160,000**		
Portfolio Total	**1,811,350**	**923,226**	**888,124**	**49.0%**	

REGENERATION AND HIGH STREETS PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Let`s Grow Grants					
Expenditure	14,610	6,500	8,110	55.5%	Outturn reflects Lets Grow Grant requests, balance slipped to 24-25
Net	**14,610**	**6,500**	**8,110**		
Anglesey Bridges and Rawnsley Woods Brid					
Expenditure	106,000	-	106,000	100.0%	Project slipped to 24-25
Net	**106,000**	**-**	**106,000**		
UK Shared Prosperity Fund					
Expenditure	374,590	374,589	1	0.0%	
Net	**374,590**	**374,589**	**1**		
Levelling Up Fund Capital					
Expenditure	1,109,370	443,581	665,789	60.0%	Balance slipped to 24-25, works to continue in 24-25
Net	**1,109,370**	**443,581**	**665,789**		
Portfolio Total	**1,604,570**	**824,670**	**779,900**	**48.6%**	

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2023-24

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
New Council Website					
Expenditure	20,500	20,500	-	0.0%	
Net	**20,500**	**20,500**	**-**		
Portfolio Total	**20,500**	**20,500**	**-**	**0.0%**	

VFM Progress Report - Quarter 2 2024/25

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2024
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise Members on the progress in the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan at the end of Quarter 2 2024-25.

2 Recommendations

2.1 To note the progress at the end of Quarter 2 2024/25 in the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan set out at Appendix 1.

2.2 To approve the revised target timescales set out in the improvement plan at Appendix 1

Reasons for Recommendations

2.3 The information allows Cabinet to ensure that all appropriate steps are being taken to address the findings of the External Auditors and improve the Council's governance arrangements.

2.4 The timescales have been revised to reflect ongoing capacity issues and the scale of the work to be completed.

3 Key Issues

3.1 The Council's External Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) for 2021/22 and 2022/23, highlighted several significant issues relating to the Council's financial, governance and asset arrangements and made recommendations for addressing these.

3.2 An improvement plan to address the issues was drawn up and approved by the Audit & Governance Committee (7 February 2024) and subsequently by Council (21 February 2024). The improvement plan has been updated with two additional actions arising from the Annual Governance Review for 2023-24.

3.3 This report sets out the progress made up to the end of Quarter 2 2024/25. Of the 53 actions due to be completed, 57% have been completed or are on target and the remainer are behind schedule.

3.4 Following discussions with the Council's new External Auditors a review all of the outstanding actions has been undertaken and revised target dates for completion are proposed. This reflects the capacity available and the scale of the work to be completed.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 Good governance and financial management specifically links to the Council's priority to be "a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council". It also underpins the delivery of the Council's other corporate priorities and operational services.

5 Report Detail

5.1 As part of the work of the External Auditors, they are required to undertake a review of the Council's arrangements for Value for Money and their finding are set out in the Annual Audit Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

5.2 The AAR for 2021/22 and 2022/23 identified several areas of concern relating to the Council's financial, governance and asset arrangements and made recommendations for addressing these. Three statutory recommendations have been made and these are being progressed as a priority.

5.3 The External Auditors acknowledged that there has been a lack of capacity in key service areas to address these issues. The Council has sought to address this by agreeing additional funds as part of the budget process for the Finance and Transformation Teams. Additional resources have also been approved to address the HRA issues.

5.4 A VFM improvement plan has been produced to address the issues raised in the AAR. A commentary on progress for each of the actions up to the end of Quarter 2 2024/25 is set out in Appendix 1. Overall progress is summarised in the table below:

Table 1: Summary of Progress - VFM Improvement Plan

Quarter	★	✔	⚠	✖	No longer applicable	Total Actions
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule		
Q4 2023/24	15	1	1	1	1	19
Q1 2024/25	3	3	7	1		14
Q2 2024/25	**1**	**7**	**12**			**20**
TOTAL	**19 (36%)**	**11 (21%)**	**20 (37%)**	**2 (4%)**	**1 (2%)**	**53**

5.5 At the end of quarter 2, of the 53 actions due for delivery:

- 57% have been completed or are in progress; and
- 43% of actions are behind schedule or are no longer applicable.

5.6 Good progress continues to be made in completing the actions set out in the improvement plan. As at the end of September, the majority of the actions from Q4 have now been completed including the publication of the accounts for 21/22 and 22/23. A number of outstanding actions from Q1 have also been progressed including key policy reviews for risk management and ICT Change management. Housing have continued to make progress with their actions. The independent review undertaken by Savills and the review of the IT system have been completed. The findings of both reviews are being used to inform a Housing Improvement Plan and this will be reported to Cabinet in February 2025 for approval. There has been some slippage in Q2 as a consequence of completion of a number of the outstanding actions from Q4 and Q1 and due to ongoing capacity issues in key service areas.

5.7 Following discussions with the Council's new External Auditors, it has been acknowledged that the VFM improvement plan is ambitious and given the capacity issues the Council is facing, it is going to be a longer-term piece of work. Consequently, a review of the target dates for all outstanding actions has been undertaken and revised where appropriate. It is intended to aim to complete the improvement plan by the end of 2025/26.

5.8 Progress in delivering the actions set out in the improvement plan are being overseen by:

- The Leadership Team; and

- Audit & Governance Committee.

The Audit & Governance Committee will escalate any concerns to Cabinet and the Cabinet will also receive periodic updates.

All actions relating to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets, will also be overseen by a Housing Board which is to be set up in 2024/25.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

Failure to deliver the improvement plan and address the External Auditor's recommendations has been included in the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6   Health

None

6.7   Climate Change

None

7   Appendices

Appendix 1: VFM Improvement Plan - Summary of Progress

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

Report to Audit & Governance Committee 7 February 2024

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 464 411

Ward Interest: All Wards

Report Track: Cabinet: 28/11/24 and

                            Audit & Governance Committee: 19/11/24

Key Decision: No

VFM Improvement Plan - Progress Report

Summary of Progress at 30 September 2024

Quarter	★	✔	▲	✖	No longer applicable	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule		
Q4 2023/24	15	1	1	1	1	19
Q1 2024/25	3	3	7	1		14
Q2 2024/25	1	7	12			20
Q3 2024/25						15
Q4 2024/25						10
2025/26						5
TOTAL	19 (36%)	11 (21%)	20 (37%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	53 at end of Q2

Commentary on Progress

Good progress continues to be made in completing the actions set out in the improvement plan. As at the end of September, the majority of the actions from Q4 have now been completed including the publication of the accounts for 21/22 and 22/23.   A number of outstanding actions from Q1 have also been progressed including key policy reviews for risk management and ICT Change management. Housing have continued to make progress with their actions. The independent review undertaken by Savills and the review of the IT system have been completed. The findings of both reviews are being used to inform a Housing Improvement Plan and this will be reported to Cabinet in February 2025 for approval. There has been some slippage in Q2 as a consequence of completion of a number of the outstanding actions from Q4 and Q1 and due to ongoing capacity issues in key service areas.

Following discussions with the Council's new External Auditors, it has been acknowledged that the VFM improvement plan is ambitious and given the capacity issues the Council is facing, it is going to be a longer-term piece of work. Consequently, a review of the target dates for all outstanding actions has been undertaken and revised where appropriate. It is intended to aim to complete the improvement plan by the end of 25/26.

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
	QUARTER 4 2023/24						
1.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 drafted and approved by Cabinet. Due for approval at Council 21 February 2024. Modelling, assumptions, and risk assessment included as part of the budget report. MTFS includes assessment of likely future government funding.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer		Completed	★	
2.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Capital Strategy to be updated in accordance with the revised Prudential Code.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer		This is currently being worked on and will be completed in Quarter 3.	▲	Q3 24/25
3.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Bring treasury strategy and its reporting to members up to date	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer		Completed	★	
4.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Produce draft financial statements in line with statutory requirements and working with external auditors to deliver audits effectively. (Decision to be made on outstanding audits as there is a consultation taking place as to how to clear the backlog of audits nationally at present)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	This is to be discussed with Azets as to approach	Agreed with Azets not to audit the 21/22 and 22/23 accounts. This is in line with the national statutory dispensation which was put back onto the work plan for Parliament to be approved December 2024.	N/A	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
5.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Draft accounts published up to 2023/24	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	The draft accounts for 2021-22 and 2022-24 have been published.	★	
					The accounts for 23/24 will be published late December/early January. Work is in progress.	✓	Q4 24/25
6.	HRA (Statutory Recommendations 2 & 3)	Appointment of additional senior resource (HRA Recovery Lead) to support the delivery of the HRA action plan and implement recovery actions (starting 26/2/24)	Deputy Chief Executive (Place)		Completed	★	
7.	HRA (Statutory Recommendations 2 & 3)	Liaise with other HRA providers to determine best practice to aid our work and use this information to undertake appropriate benchmarking.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Quarter 4 2023/24	Completed. Members of HouseMark and annual Benchmarking exercise undertaken. Visit to Wolverhampton Homes and discussions with Housing Plus & WHG across subject areas	★	
8.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Provision to be included in the capital programme for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to fund the stock condition survey.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Completed	Approval as part of budget in February 2024	★	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
9.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	• Review of Housing Register to ensure it is maintained up-to-date. • Larger scale review completed in October 2023; and • Ongoing monthly review of application forms on the anniversary of the application form date.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Tenancy Services Manager		Completed On-going monthly review letters sent out and applicants removed from the list that do not re-register	★	
10.	Corporate Savings & Transformation Programme (Key Recommendation 1)	Align the MTFS to the corporate priorities in the Council's Business Plan including the costed climate change actions	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance		Completed as part of budget setting 2024/25. To be revisited in Quarter 2 2024/25	★	
11.	Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)	Review of risk management policy and framework - includes review of format of the SRR	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Approved by Leadership Team. To be approved by Cabinet on 28 November 2024.	★	
12.	Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)	Review of guidelines on risk implications for committee reports	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Approved by Leadership Team.	★	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
13.	Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)	Review of risks in annual budget report to be consistent with corporate process	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer		Completed	⭐	
14.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Implement outstanding recommendation from Cyber and Network Security Audit - staff to complete cyber training	Chief Technology Officer and Information Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Staff have completed cyber training	⭐	
15.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Finalise the change management strategy	Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Change Management Strategy has been approved by Leadership Team	⭐	
16.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Finalise Information Governance Framework	Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Completed - approved by Cabinet	⭐	
17.	Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)	Update the contracts register and ensure it is compliant with transparency requirements	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2023/24 (this will be the first draft to be revisited Quarter 3 2024/25)	Work in progress but has been delayed. This has been rescheduled and will be completed in Q4.	❌	Q4 24/25
18.	Other Related Actions	Review of Audit Reporting to Leadership Team and escalation protocols	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 2023/24	Completed - quarterly progress reports to be discussed at Leadership Team	⭐	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
	QUARTER 1 2024/25						
19.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Restructure of the Finance Team and creation of additional capacity	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Restructure agreed.	★	
20.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Regular performance monitoring to be re-established with budget managers and Leadership Team.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Year-end outturn 2023-24 has been completed and will be reported on in Q3. Work in progress on period 6 monitoring for 2024-25	◭	Q3 24/25
21.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Reporting on the delivery of savings to be established and discussed at Strategic Leadership Team meetings. Where appropriate, project plans will be developed to support the delivery of significant/complex savings.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	As a savings programme is developed as part of budget setting, reporting on this will take place as budget monitoring is reestablished.	◭	Q3 24/25
22.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	A review of the stock condition survey work undertaken to date will be used to help inform investment and the programme of works.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	• Rapleys initial survey report has been shared with Savills who have presented initial basis of HRA business plan May 2024. • Stock Condition survey work by Rapleys commenced and additional survey information will be fed through over the survey period August '24 to March '25	✔	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
					• As appropriate volume of data is received, this can be used to review and update the HRA investment plan and works programme.		
23.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Procurement of contractor to deliver the stock condition survey. Award notice planned for February 2024 with contractor to start March.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager	Q1 2024/25	Final Version of contract agreed August 2024 and signed by Rapleys.	★	
23a New	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Delivery of the stock condition survey	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager	• 10% by end Q2 • 50% by end of Q3 • 100% by end of Q4	Rapley commenced survey work with batch 1 & 2 surveys totalling 878 homes.	✓	
24.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Review and update of the Housing Allocations Policy. • Consultation complete, Policy going to Cabinet in March 2024 with implementation in April 2024.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Tenancy Services Manager	Q1 2024/25	Completed. Approved at Cabinet 28 March 2024. Implementation Phase commenced.	★	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
25.	HRA Compliance (Statutory Recommendation 3)	Regular inspections of properties and blocks will continue to be undertaken and will be reported to Housing Board and Cabinet. This includes gas safety, electrical safety, asbestos, water hygiene and fire safety.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager	Q1 2024/25	Regular Inspections of properties and Blocks in HRA continue to be undertaken and recorded. KPIs included in quarterly corporate performance reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee. Will be reported to Housing Board when this has been set up. Work continues to obtain Compliance Documentation from Shop Leaseholders - 17 occupied units in 4 blocks.	▲	
26.	Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)	Training for Leadership Team, managers, team leaders/principal officers on risk management	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Deferred to Q4 due to delay in taking the updated policy/strategy to Leadership Team for approval	▲	Q4 24/25
27.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Update IT security policy and adopt a cyber security policy	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	The policy has been updated and includes cyber security. Review by Head of Service completed. Once amendments have been completed, the draft will be submitted to Leadership Team for approval in Q3.	✓	Q3 24/25

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
28.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Provide refresher training to ensure compliance with process for 3rd party data transfers and completion of privacy impact assessments	Chief Technology Officer and Information Manager	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	The Data Transfer Policy has been reviewed. The refresher training is going to be delivered in Q3.	▲	Q3 24/25
29.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Complete the IT strategy	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Strategy has been considered by Leadership Team. It will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in Q3 alongside the Transformation Strategy.	▲	Q3 24/25
30.	HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 2)	Establish our culture, values, and type of organisation we want to be. This work will inform the following actions.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 1 2024/25	A meeting has taken place with a potential facilitator for this piece of work. Timing and scope has yet to be agreed.	▲	Q4 24/25
31.	HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 2)	Complete review of hybrid working. This will inform the development of the workforce strategy and the review of the Code of Conduct as well as support the development of an asset strategy.	Head of Transformation & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 1 2024/25	Work on this has slipped further due to ongoing capacity issues in the HR Team. A report is to be prepared for Leadership Team for Q3	✖	Q3 24/25

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
	QUARTER 2 2024/25						
32.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Commence recruitment to new Finance team structure	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Deputy S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Recruitment has commenced with 2 senior posts advertised - closing date 29 September.	✔️	
33.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Lesson learnt exercise to be undertaken of implementation of the finance system	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Work on this has been delayed to Q3 due to the ongoing capacity issues in the Finance Team	🔺	Q3 24/25
34.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Training of managers in budget management and use of the new finance system.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Presentation drafted. Sessions will be scheduled in during Q3 (delayed due to the absence of the s151 Officer)	✔️	Q3 24/25
35.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Review of Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Work on this has been delayed due other work taking precedence and the unplanned absence of the s151 Officer	🔺	Q1 25/26
36.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Training for managers on Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	This will be undertaken once the Financial Regulations have been reviewed	🔺	Q2 25/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
37.	HRA (Statutory Recommendations 2 & 3)	Set up the new Housing Board to enhance governance and oversight of delivery of the improvement plan. The Board will comprise: • Deputy Chief Executive-Place; • Head of Housing & Corporate Assets; • Cabinet Member for Housing; • Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing; • Tenant representatives from across the District; and • independent person with housing expertise	Deputy Chief Executive (Place) Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Q2 2024/25	Promotion work was undertaken up to end of Q2. Applications opened in October and close 1 November. Interviews and informal appointments to be made and then report to Cabinet in January 2025 for approval of appointments and Board formation. Subject to appointments and Cabinet approval, the first meeting will take place in March 2025.	✔️	Q4 24/25
38.	HRA (Statutory Recommendations 2 & 3)	A review is to be undertaken of existing systems and processes in the HRA and General Fund to align them to ensure that we have a standardised approach to building safety inspections.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager Corporate Assets Manager	Q2 2024/25	The Savills review contained a review of HRA compliance systems and the actions arising from this are to be included in wider HRA Improvement Plan. The following draft policies will be presented for Leadership Team approval in Q3: Building Safety, Gas Safety, Fire Risk, Electrical, Water Hygiene, Lifting, and Asbestos Policy. Procedures will be updated based on the Policies and ICT requirements are being developed.	🔺	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
					Compliance checks are being collated for General Fund Council Premises and Leased Properties. Legionella Testing - for General Fund, a new contractor is being procured.		
39.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Comprehensive external HRA review to be undertaken including Health & Safety (Compliance) and HRA Business Plan & Capital Investment.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Q2 2024/25	Majority of Savills review is completed, themes 1-5. Theme 6 - HRA Business Plan to roll forward as Stock Condition data is collected and shared with Savills. The Stock Condition information will be fed into the draft HRA Financial Business Plan and Capital Investment works.	🔺	Q2 25/26
40.	HRA Compliance (Statutory Recommendation 3)	A review of compliance against the housing consumer standards (July 2023), has been undertaken and an action plan is to be developed from this which will improve tenant engagement. A residents engagement officer post has been established.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Strategic Housing Manager	Q2 2024/25	The Savills review contained a review against the Consumer Standards, and this section has been completed. Savills produced a priority action plan which is being fed into the overarching HRA Improvement Plan.	✔	Q4 24/25

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
					The Resident Involvement Strategy gained Cabinet approval in September 2024, and a Housing Communications Plan is being worked up in Q3.		
41.	Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)	Develop risk registers for each Directorate, the HRA and ICT	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Head of Housing & Corporate Assets and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	An IT risk register is in place. Work on the Directorate risk registers will commence in Q4 once training has been provided	▲	Q1 25/26
42.	Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)	Establish escalation process between other risk registers and the SRR e.g. services, projects	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	This will be set up once the new directorate risk registers have been established.	▲	Q1 25/26
43.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Develop assurance reporting for IT e.g. report on outcome of annual health check / penetration testing to Leadership Team and Audit Committee	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	The annual IT assurance report is going to be produced in Q4 to align with completion of the health checks and compliance tests completed during the year.	▲	Q4 24/25

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
44.	IT (Key Recommendation 3)	Review of what we include in procurements re ICT controls and information governance	Head of Transformation & Assurance, Chief Technology Officer, Head of Law & Governance, and Information Manager	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	The review re ICT controls has been completed. Work on the information governance requirements will be completed by end of Q4.	✔️	Q4 24/25
45.	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)	Establish a Corporate Project Management Methodology. Provide templates, guidelines, and training for key officers (LT, Service Managers and key Principal Officers/Team Leaders).	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Work on this has not yet commenced due to other work taking priority. It has been rescheduled for Q2 25/26.	🔺	Q2 25/26
46.	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)	Establish corporate project resources to support transformation work (funding allocated in 2024/25 budget)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	This is under discussion and the team structure will be included in the report to Cabinet on the Transformation Strategy in Q3.	🔺	Q3 24/25
47.	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)	Review of all projects, the current governance arrangements and establish project reporting to Leadership Team	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Deputy Chief Executive (Place)	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	The review is to be undertaken in Q4 following the completion of the review of corporate priorities for 2024/25.	🔺	Q4 24/25

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
48.	Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)	Review and update the Procurement Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Transformation & Assurance and Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Work has commenced on updating the Procurement Regulations. This will be completed in Q4 ahead of the legislation coming into effect in February 2025.	✓	Q4 24/25
49.	Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)	The key elements of the procurement strategy will be built into the procurement regulations rather than as a stand-alone document.	Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Please refer to comment above	✓	Q4 24/25
50.	Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)	Provide training for managers on procurement and contract management	Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Training will be provided once the Procurement Regulations have been updated and approved	△	Q1 25/26
51.	Other Related Actions (from AGS 2023-24)	Review of project management arrangements and project planning for the delivery of the town centre schemes.	Head of Economic Development & Planning	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Additional interim consultancy resource has been appointed to support the programme/project management of the town centre regeneration project. Board meetings, steering groups and weekly project team meetings have been re-established; with regular review of project plans and programmes.	★	

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
	QUARTER 3 2024/25						
52.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Follow-on zero-based budgeting session with managers to continue work started as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q3 25/26 for 26/27 budget setting
53.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Review of HRA reserves to fund planned maintenance, compliance and works arising from the stock condition survey.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Q3 2024/25 (linked to budget setting process)			Q2 25/26
54.	HRA Compliance (Statutory Recommendation 3)	A full review will be undertaken of all records and information held to data cleanse and identify gaps/ weaknesses in the data held. All records will be held electronically so that there is one version of the data record. An on-going reconciliation will be undertaken of the HRA asset register to the health and safety checks completed, compliance data and other inspections. Options for a new single asset register compliance system will be explored.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets All Housing Service Managers	Q3 2024/25			Q3 25/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
55.	Corporate Savings & Transformation Programme (Key Recommendation 1)	Process to be established for developing savings options - this will comprise a service reduction programme and a service transformation/efficiency programme. Initial steps for both: • a discussion with the Cabinet after the May elections to review priorities and key projects; • engagement with Heads of Service and Service Managers to review current service levels for statutory and discretionary services. (to include high level benchmarking) - this will be a pre-cursor to bringing the services together and establish the baseline for service transformation (this will build on the initial work done on SLAs). • Range of options for service reduction and efficiency savings/ transformation Service Reduction: • Savings options to be assessed for impact and deliverability and discussed with Cabinet. • Range of options to be refined and consultation exercise to be undertaken with public and partners where relevant; • Outcome of consultation to be used to inform savings options to be progressed as part of development of budget.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
		Transformation: • Transformation options to be assessed and added to transformation programme for prioritisation. Will need to consider any investment required to deliver savings/service improvements; resourcing to deliver the changes, etc. • Project Manager and Project support officer to be recruited to support delivery of transformation programme, funding allocated in budget 2024/25 to fund posts; • Training of managers and key officers in transformation techniques.					
56.	Corporate Savings & Transformation Programme (Key Recommendation 1)	Consultation and engagement to be embedded into the planning for the delivery of key projects where appropriate to ensure schemes meet community needs e.g. regeneration projects, redevelopment of play areas	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	This will be embedded into the project management methodology		Q2 25/26
57.	Fraud (Key Recommendation 4)	Review Anti-Fraud & Bribery Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26
58.	Fraud (Key Recommendation 4)	Review of Confidential Reporting Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
59.	Fraud (Key Recommendation 4)	Assess compliance against Cipfa 2014 Code for Fraud and develop an action plan as necessary	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26
60.	HRA and Corporate Asset Management (Key Recommendation 6)	A Corporate asset management strategy is in place and an action plan will be developed.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Corporate Assets Manager	Q3 2024/25			Q3 25/26
61.	HRA and Corporate Asset Management (Key Recommendation 6)	A full review will be undertaken of all records and information held to data cleanse and identify gaps/ weaknesses in the data held. All records will be held electronically so that there is one version of the data record. An on-going reconciliation will be undertaken of the corporate asset register to the health and safety checks completed, compliance data and other inspections.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Corporate Assets Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q4 25/26
62.	Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)	Work with managers and the County's Procurement Team to develop a procurement pipeline	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q3 25/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
63.	Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)	Process to be established for publication of key data on the Council's website to meet transparency requirements re spend data, contracts register	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q3 25/26
64.	HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 2)	Develop a hybrid working policy and review other related policies and processes.	Head of Transformation & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 3 2024/25			Q2 25/26
65.	HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 2)	Review and update the Employee Code of Conduct	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 3 2024/25			Q3 25/26
66.	Other Related Actions	Establish an inventory of key policies and a programme of periodic reviews	Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Q4 25/26
67.	Other Related Actions (from AGS 2023-24)	Review of Scheme of Delegations as part of shared services transformation.	Monitoring Officer and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2024/25			Quarter 3 - 2025/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
	QUARTER 4 2024/25						
68.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Implementation of remaining module of the finance system, ongoing development, and maximising use of system functionality	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q2 25/26
69.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)	Performance reporting for Cabinet and Scrutiny to be developed. This will be done alongside the review and development of performance and risk reporting.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q2 25/26
70.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Undertake a full stock condition survey. • An approach to delivering the full stock condition survey has now been developed with the contractor on a phased basis. • Performance and programme delivery to be monitored on monthly and quarterly basis and reported to Housing Board.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager	To be completed by Quarter 4 2024/25			
71.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	As stock condition data increases a rolling programme of improvements will be developed and reported on to the Housing Board.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services Manager	Quarter 4 2024/25			Q2 25/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
72.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Development of a place-based housing strategy, working in conjunction with key partners. This will be part of a longer-term project to understand the needs of the area and our tenants. It will also link in with the Local Plan process. • Housing Needs Assessment completed. • SHLAA and Brownfields register completed. • Draft Local Plan has well informed evidence base (proposed submission Summer 2024).	Deputy Chief Executive (Place) Head of Wellbeing Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Head of Economic Development & Planning	Quarter 4 2024/25			
73.	Fraud (Key Recommendation 4)	Assess fraud risks and include in risk registers as appropriate	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q2 25/26
74.	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)	Develop and adopt a performance management framework to establish golden thread from Corporate Plan to service plans through to employee reviews. Framework to include protocols for ensuring data quality	Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
75.	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)	Review our performance report style - delivery plans and KPIs. To consider the development of performance outcome measures	Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26
76.	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)	Performance reporting for waste and leisure: • review of KPIs for monitoring and reporting on performance; • establish internal validation process of contract performance; and • review information reported to Cabinet / Scrutiny	Head of Transformation & Assurance, Head of Operations and Head of Wellbeing	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26
77.	Other Related Actions	Review of Code of Governance	Head of Transformation & Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25			Q1 25/26
	2025/26						
78.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (Statutory Recommendation 2)	Revision of the 30-year business plan, informed by results of the stock condition survey and housing needs assessment: • Business plan to be updated on a rolling basis as stock condition data increases. • Business plan review to be undertaken on a quarterly basis.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets HRA recovery lead Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 2025/26			

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating	Revised Timescale
		• HRA recovery lead to develop and roll out training for housing staff on business plan and assumptions. • Develop HRA asset management strategy	Deputy Chief Executive (Place)				
79.	Fraud (Key Recommendation 4)	Review the information we report on fraud work (including data matching) to the Audit Committee.	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	2025/26			Q1 25/26
80.	HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 2)	Development of a workforce strategy that links to long term transformation / shared services	Head of Transformation & Assurance and HR Manager	2025/26			Q4 25/26
81.	Other Related Actions	Development of Assurance Model	Head of Transformation & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	2025/26			Q4 25/26
82.	Corporate Savings & Transformation Programme (Key Recommendation 1)	Review current corporate plan and priorities to determine if an update is required and if so, engage with stakeholders as appropriate.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Transformation & Assurance	To be done for new Corporate Plan (s) and any savings exercises going forwards	Interim review of corporate plan completed. Priorities remain unchanged but underpinning projects have been revised		N/A

Quarter 2 Performance Report 2024/25

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 28 November 2024

Report of: Head of Transformation and Assurance

Portfolio: Resources and Transformation

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To advise Members on the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans and Council's performance at the end of the first quarter of 2024-25.

2   Recommendations

2.1   To note the progress at the end of the second quarter relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities as detailed at Appendices 1a-1d and the performance information set out at Appendix 2.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.2   The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and operational services.

3   Key Issues

3.1   The original Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) for 2024/25, based on the Corporate Plan 2022-26, have been superseded. The revised delivery plans are designed to focus on key strategic and operational priorities.

3.2   Overall, 78% of the projects have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in 5.3 of the report and set out in detail in Appendices 1a to 1d.

3.3   With regard to the operational performance of the key services of the Council, 71% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.6 and in Appendix 2.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   The Priority Delivery Plans set out key strategic and operational projects which support the delivery of the Council's priorities.

5   Report Detail

Background

5.1   The Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) set out in Appendices 1a to 1d to this report are the revised set of plans setting out how the Council will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; these plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery that are the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework.

5.2 In addition to the PDPs, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2.

Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs)

5.3 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the projects/actions set out in the PDPs is given in Appendices 1a-1d. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in the table below.

Table 1: Summary of progress in delivery of key projects/actions for Quarter 1

	Action completed ★	Work on Target ✓	Work < 3 months behind schedule ⚠	Work > 3 months behind schedule ✖	Actions due in Quarter 2	Action not yet due N/A	Total Number of Actions
Corporate Plan Priority							
Economic Prosperity	2		2		**4**	**9**	**13**
Health and Wellbeing	1	2			**3**	**4**	**7**
Community	1				**1**	**12**	**13**
Responsible Council	5	3	2		**10**	**16**	**26**
Total	**9**	**5**	**4**		**18**	**41**	**59**

5.4 At the end of quarter 2, of the 18 actions planned for delivery in this period:

- 14 (78%) have been completed or are on target to be completed; and;
- 4 (22%) are behind schedule.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

5.5 In addition to the Delivery Plans, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2 and are summarised in Table 2:

Table 2 - Summary of key performance indicators for Quarter 1

Corporate Plan Priority	Performance exceeds target ★	Performance on target ✓	Performance < 5% below target ⚠	Performance > 5% below target ✖	Not Applicable / Annual N/A	Total Number of KPIs
Economy Prosperity	5			2		**7**
Health & Wellbeing					1	**1**
Community	3	2	3	2	5	**15**
Community (Housing)	1	11	2	3	7	**24**
Responsible Council	5	2			6	**13**
Total	**14**	**15**	**5**	**7**	**19**	**60**

5.6   Of the 41 indicators due to be reported on in quarter 2:

- 29 (71%) show performance on or above target; and
- 12 (29%) show performance below target.

The reasons for underperformance and the corrective action to be taken is set out in Appendix 2.

6   Implications

6.1   Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

6.2   Legal

None

6.3   Human Resources

None

6.4   Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities.

6.5   Equalities and Diversity

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual services areas and by undertaking equality impact assessments for projects and programmes of work where this is necessary and appropriate.

6.6   Health

None

6.7   Climate Change

None

7   Appendices

Appendix 1a: Economic Prosperity PDP

Appendix 1b: Health and Wellbeing PDP

Appendix 1c: The Community PDP

Appendix 1d: Responsible Council PDP

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2022-26 - Council 27 April 2022

4-Year Delivery Plans 2022-26 - Cabinet 15 September 2022

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 464411

Ward Interest: All Wards

Report Track: Cabinet: 28/11/24

Key Decision: No

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity
Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2

Quarter	★ Action completed	✔ Work on target	▲ Work < 3 months behind schedule	✖ Work > 3 months behind schedule	Total Number of Projects
1&2	2		2		4
3					7
4					2
TOTAL	**2**		**2**		**4 to Q2**

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2
LUF project - progress made with phase 1 in terms of acquisitions.
Local Development Scheme updated and Local Plan on target for submission.
Cabinet approval to introduce BNG monitoring fees.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2
Delay in introducing S106 monitoring fees and commencing review of S106 policy and procedures.

Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of major economic growth regeneration projects	**Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase One (Levelling up Fund)**						
	• Acquire commercial interests to facilitate the development of the Northern Gateway		X			Surrender of lease linked to Units 1 to 3 Cannock Shopping Centre was completed in July 2024.	★
	• Secure planning consents for demolition for phase 1 and Northern Gateway (reserve matters)			X			
	• Commence demolition works to facilitate phase one of Town Centre regeneration scheme			X			
	• Commence highway works as part of the Northern Gateway scheme				X		
	Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase Two (Levelling up Fund)						
	• Decision on whether to proceed with phase two of scheme, subject to approval of the Project Adjustment Request from MHCLG			X			

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	• Linked to above, conclude negotiations to acquire commercial interests to create regeneration opportunity for the town centre			X			
	UK Shared Prosperity Fund						
	• Implement and deliver the UKSPF projects in year 3 of the Council's approved Investment Plan, working towards full allocation of spend by 31 March 2025 and delivery of outputs - CCDC and SBC				X	.	
Local Plan	• Submit Local Plan to Examination • Complete Local Plan Evidence Base o Air Quality o Viability Update o Heritage Impacts Assessments			X			
	• Revised Local Development Scheme		X			Approved at Cabinet 26 September and Full Council 9th October	★

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol

Planning Obligations - Review of Policy and Allocations	• Charging schedules for Section 106 and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) monitoring fees
	
	  o Cabinet approval
	
	  o Implementation
			X
			
				X
						BNG monitoring fees approved at Cabinet.
						
						Draft S106 charging schedule produced; currently finalising report with input from Finance.
							▲

	• Planning obligations Working Group
	
	  o Establish group and terms of reference
	
	  o Agree governance and schedule of meetings
			X			Report to return to Leadership Team; awaiting comments from Finance.
						
						 Governance and meeting schedule to follow once report signed off.
							▲

	• Business case for Exacom system			X			

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 2 - Health & Wellbeing

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2

Quarter	★	✔	▲	✖	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1&2	1	2			3
3					2
4					2
TOTAL	**1 (33%)**	**2 (67%)**			**3 to Q2**

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2
The health inequalities funded projects were all successfully completed.
Strategic support has been commissioned to review the leisure, culture and heritage offer in the district.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2
None

Priority 2 - Health & Wellbeing

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Review of the Leisure, Culture and Heritage Contract	Commission strategic support to review the leisure, culture and heritage offer in Cannock Chase		X			Strategic support in place and work progressing well.	✔
	Commission technical support to carry out stock condition surveys of CCDC leisure, culture and heritage buildings		X			The stock condition surveys have been commissioned and works on site have been taking place in September.	✔
	Preparation of report setting out options			X			
	Decision on Cannock Chase leisure, culture and heritage provision and scope of future commissioned service				X		
Design and Deliver Cannock Chase District's approach to Health	Complete delivery of health inequalities funded projects		X			All funded projects successfully completed.	★
	Evaluation of health inequalities funded projects to inform future activity			X			
	Extend the scope of the Cannock Community Safety Partnership to ensure health and wellbeing are fully integrated.				X		

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 3 - The Community

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2

Quarter	★ Action completed	✔ Work on target	🔺 Work < 3 months behind schedule	✖ Work > 3 months behind schedule	Total Number of Projects
1&2	1				1
3					5
4					7
TOTAL	**1 (100%)**				**1 to Q2**

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2
Procurement of the Councils kerbside waste and recycling collection contract was completed, and the contact signed during quarter 2 as planned. This enters the Council into a 7+6-year contract, offering stability for that period, with its incumbent provider, Biffa Municipal Ltd.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2
None.

Priority 3 - The Community

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Place based housing strategy	Prepare documents to commission Cannock Place Based Housing Strategy			X			
	Start procurement of the Cannock Place Based Housing Strategy				X		
Waste & Recycling - Kerbside collection contract (2025-2032)	Complete procurement process and award contract		X			Procurement and award of 7+6-year kerbside waste and recycling collection contract completed during September 2024	★
	Complete preparation for mobilisation of new waste and recycling contract				X		
Waste & Recycling - Introduction of mandatory food waste kerbside collections [* denotes action subject to confirmation of government funding settlement]	Design of new service model and discussions with contractor			X			
	Consider and action revenue settlement offered by Government			X*			
	Cabinet approval for new service, start date, and permission to spend				X*		
	Prepare to tender for the procurement of food waste caddies				X*		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Tree Management	Review current services & establish requirements (including Tree Protection Orders)				X		
Play Area / Parks Improvements	Review and update current play area investment programme			X			
	Create potential rationalisation lists			X			
	Consult on potential rationalisation lists				X		
	Report to Cabinet on recommended rationalisations				X		

Priority Delivery Plan for 2024-25

Priority 4 - Responsible Council
Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2

Quarter	★	✔	⚠	✖	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1&2	5	3	2		10
3					8
4					8
TOTAL	5	3	2		**10 to Q2**

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2
Work on upgrading the Council's infrastructure has commenced. The new switches have been procured and work is underway to plan for their installation. The Land Charges service review has been completed and a review of the IT systems carried out.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2
There has been some slippage on the Transformation and Digital strategies. Both strategies have been drafted and considered by Leadership Team. They are being amended and will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in quarter 3.

Priority 4 - The Council

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Closure of the Accounts	Closure of the accounts 23/24				X		
	Catch up on closure of previous years accounts			X			
Transformation Strategy & Plan	Approval of the Transformation Strategy and Plan		X			The strategy has been drafted and considered by Leadership Team. Strategy to be amended and submitted to Cabinet early in Q3	🔺
	Brief Senior Management Team on the strategy		X			Completed	⭐
	Complete scoping work to support development of the Transformation work programme			X			
	Develop the Transformation work programme				X		
Digital Strategy (incl. replacement of IT Systems)	Finalise the digital technology strategy		X			The strategy has been drafted and considered by Leadership Team. Strategy to be amended and submitted to Cabinet early in Q3	🔺
	Procurement of switches for Infrastructure Upgrade	X				Procurement completed.	⭐

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Plan for installation of new switches		X			Planning has commenced for the installation of the new switches	✔
	Installation of new switches				X		
	Identify IT systems in need of replacing over next 3 years		X			Completed - systems have been identified	★
	Assessment and prioritisation of systems to be replaced		X			The list of systems to be replaced has been reviewed and priorities agreed for the next 3 years. To be discussed and agreed with the Technology Board and Leadership Team	✔
	Technology Board to approve systems to be replaced			X			
	Project plans will be developed for each system once prioritisation has been agreed and the PDP will be updated accordingly						
Climate Change Strategy	Revised Climate Change Strategy developed and in place			X			
	Recruitment of staff to support delivery of strategy and monitor operational delivery			X			

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	New Governance Structure in place to track operational delivery			X			
Land Charges	Full review of Land Charges Service to include a review of current processes and IT systems		X			Land Charges service review complete. Review of IT systems carried out and recommendations made for replacement system. Processes under review to align with replacement system	★
	Transformation of Land Charges scoped and timeline in place to drive this forward			X			
	Procure replacement IT System				X		
	Working towards transformed service				X		
Strategic asset management including the review of key assets	**Building Condition Surveys**						
	Appoint Interim Building Surveyor		X			Completed	★
	Undertake Building Condition Surveys, including HRA Shops				X		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Corporate Assets ICT System						
	Research Systems available and draft specification		X			Alternative systems are being explored - 2 systems demos have been completed	✔
	Draft specification for new system				X		
	Insurance Reinstatement Valuations						
	Secure Budget			X			
	Commission Service Provider to complete Valuations				X		

CCDC Summary of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2024/25 - as at end of Quarter 2

Symbol	Description	Economic Prosperity	Health & Wellbeing	Community	Community (Housing)	Responsible Council	Total
★	Performance exceeds target	5		3	1	5	14
✔	Performance on target			2	11	2	15
▲	Performance < 5% below target			3	2		5
✖	Performance > 5% below target	2		2	3		7
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable		1	5	7	6	19
	TOTAL	**7**	**1**	**15**	**24**	**13**	**60**

KPIs for Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	5			
✔	Performance on target				
▲	Performance < 5% below target				
✖	Performance > 5% below target	2			
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable				
	TOTAL	**7**			

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Planning									
Major Planning Applications determined within time	100%	60%	None determined	100%				★	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	94.8%	70%	95%	97.7%				★	
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	N/a	< 10%	0%	0%				★	
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	N/a	< 10%	0%	0%				★	
Building Control									
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	98%	95%	93%	89%				✖	Staff shortages have slightly delayed the processing of applications.

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	90%	80%	64%	88%				★	
Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	85%	90%	100%	80%				✖	There were very few returns this quarter with one negative response.

KPIs for Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target				
✔	Performance on target				
▲	Performance < 5% below target				
✖	Performance > 5% below target				
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable				1
	TOTAL	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Leisure									
Annual report from Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles setting out the performance of all facilities, including comparison to previous years as well as narrative on the wider wellbeing work and events they facilitate.		N/A						N/A	Annual report to be produced

KPIs for Priority 3 - The Community

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	3			
✔	Performance on target	2			
▲	Performance < 5% below target	3			
✖	Performance > 5% below target	2			
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	5			
	TOTAL	**15**			

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Operations - Waste & Recycling									
% collections completed first time	NEW	99.90%	99.98%	99.97%				✔	No target previously. Propose target set at 99.90% as target.
Number of missed bin collections (including assisted) / 100,000	NEW	<40 per 100,000	19 per 100,000	23 per 100,000				★	Not previously reported in this format. 897,000 collections/qtr.
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	40.45%	45%	43.22%	37.41% (est)				▲	Improved quality and reduced material weights have reduced overall tonnages of recycling collected.
Amount of residual waste collected per household (Kgs)	482.58 kg	<480 kg or 120 kgs / qtr. (equivalent)	115.69 kg	129.23 kg				✖	Whilst performance has dipped in Q2, it is estimated that the year-end target will be achieved
Environmental Health									
% of food businesses inspected	100%	100%	30%	59%				✔	

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
% of food businesses inspected which are broadly compliant (rating of 3 or better)	97.5%	N/A	97%	97%				N/A	This is a measure, not target
% of service requests responded to within target (all service areas)	NEW	95%	88%	90%				▲	Relatively low number of missed response time affecting overall average.
% Environmental Protection Act permitted processes inspected in line with risk rating	NEW	100%	0%	10%				N/A	Annual target. Significant resource will be allocated to this work during Qs 3 and 4 to ensure shortfall is recovered.
% Taxi / PHV fleet inspected	NEW	90%	25%	41%				▲	Small number of inspections required to recover backlog
% Taxi / PHV fleet compliant	NEW	90%	97%	93.5%				★	

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Housing Assistance									
No of DFGs completed		80	26	14				❌	Quarterly Targets: 20, 20, 20, 20. And annual report with wider data. Q2 completions included 3 large scale, high value extensions which are resource intensive. Combined, Q1 and Q2 produced 40 completions which is on target.
Strategic Housing & Homelessness									
% households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6 + months		41%						N/A	Annual Target
Community Safety & Partnerships									
Number of residents/cases dealt with by the CAB	New	N/A	814	792				N/A	Measure / contextual information only

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Total value of financial outcomes achieved as a result of the CAB contract	New	Measure only	£1,342,740	£941,705				N/A	Dealt with debt of over £928,000.
Community Safety Partnership Hub referrals and case closures within 3 months	New	90% closed within 3 months	27 referrals 96% closed	26 referrals 92% closed				★	

KPIs for Priority 3 - The Community (Housing)

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	1			
✔	Performance on target	11			
▲	Performance < 5% below target	2			
✖	Performance > 5% below target	3			
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	7			
	TOTAL	**24**			

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Housing Repairs									
% emergency repairs completed in time	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
% of non-emergency repairs completed in time	82%	65%	68.40%	69.96%				✔	An increase in repair requests, have meant a temporary slippage in responding to non-emergency repair jobs - so a reduced target for 24/25 is in place whilst improvement measures are implemented.
Building Safety/Decency									
% of properties with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
% of properties with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
% of passenger lifts that have a valid 6 monthly thorough examination record	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
% of buildings that have a current Legionella risk assessment	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
% of buildings that have a current Fire risk assessment	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
Proportion of homes for which all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections have been carried out.	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard at year end.	0.28%	0%						N/A	Annual Figure will be reported
Tenancy Management									
Housing Applications Processed within 28 days	57%	95%	84%	43%				✖	The target has been increased to drive improved performance. Whilst the target has dropped in Q2, it has increased cumulatively (63%) for the YTD from 23/24 and is expected to improve further.

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
% of Mutual Exchange applications determined (approved or refused) within 42 days	65%	100%	89%	-				✖	Q2 data was not available as no meaningful data could be extracted from the external HomeSwapper system.
% of dwellings that are vacant and available for let (at period end)	0.58%	N/A	0.99%	0.60%				N/A	Measure only
Average re-let time for Voids	42.50	50	62.24	63.39				✖	Voids continues to be a challenging area and is being closely monitored. Increase in number of properties in poor condition requiring more work, increasing relet times.
No. of tenants benefiting from disabled facilities work (major and minor)	170	100	58	80				★	Exceeded target at Q2, 138 tenants benefitted from DFWs.

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
No of tenants awaiting disabled facilities work (registered and work approved (major and minor))	90	62	71	62				✔	
Rent collected as proportion of rent due	100.20 %	100%	99.31%	99.96%				🔺	Just under target, but by year end will likely meet.
% of Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) collected as a proportion of total FTA	5.78%	6%	1.71%	4.10%				✔	Target is 1.5% per quarter. Figure will increase through year. At Q2 on target to exceed by year end.
Number of ASB cases opened per 1,000 homes by or on behalf of the registered provider during the reporting year	9.94	N/A	0.99	5.17				N/A	Measure only
Number of ASB cases which involve hate incidents.	0.79	N/A	0.00	0.60				N/A	Measure only
Housing Complaints									
Stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes during the reporting year.	7.15	N/A	2.59	2.19				N/A	Measure only

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Proportion of Stage one complaints responded to within 10 days	83.33%	95%	92.31%	90.91%				🔺	Only 1 complaint responded outside of timescale in Q2, missed by one day.
Stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes during the reporting year.	1.39	N/A	0.80	0.20				N/A	Measure only
Proportion of Stage two complaints responded to within 20 days	100%	100%	100%	100%				✔	
No. of escalations to the Ombudsman (LGO or Housing Ombudsman)	1	N/A	0	1				N/A	Measure only.

KPIs for Priority 4 - Responsible Council

Symbol	Description	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	5			
✔	Performance on target	2			
▲	Performance < 5% below target				
✖	Performance > 5% below target				
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	6			
	TOTAL	**13**			

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Local Taxation and Benefits									
Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	27.0	20 days	25.1	18.5				★	
Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	6.2	9 days	7.3	3.0				★	
% of Council Tax collected annually	96.8%	98% by year end	28.0%	54.6				✓	
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	97.3%	98% by year end	26.7%	54.9				✓	
Transformation & Assurance									
% of calls answered	88.8%	94%	94%	95.9%				★	
Average call wait time	1.55 min	2 min	1.15 min	00.49				★	
Number of calls answered	New	N/A	20,971	20,716				N/A	This is not a measure but gives context to the performance in call handling

Indicator	Year End 23/24	Target 24/25	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Law & Governance									
FOI requests within time i.e. 20 working days	88.8%	85%	85%	87%				★	
Corporate Assets									
% of buildings with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of buildings with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of passenger lifts that have a valid 6 monthly thorough examination record	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of buildings that have a current Legionella risk assessment	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target
% of buildings that have a current Fire risk assessment	New	100%						N/A	Not previously reported on - Annual Target

Strategic Risk Register Update

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2024
Report of:	Head of Transformation & Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To set out details of the Council's Strategic Risk Register as at 30th September 2024

2   Recommendations

2.1   That Cabinet approves the Strategic Risk Register and considers the progress made in the identification and management of the strategic risks.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.2   Cabinet are required to approve the Strategic Risk Register.

3   Key Issues

3.1   All strategic risks and associated action plans have been reviewed and the Council's risk profile is summarised in the table below:

Risk Status	Number of Risks at 1st April 2024	Number of Risks at 30th September 2024
Red (High)	2	3
Amber (Medium)	6	6
Green (Low)	0	0
TOTAL	8	9

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

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

(i)   Risk management is a systematic process by which key business risks / opportunities are identified, prioritised, and controlled so as to contribute towards the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives.

(ii)   The strategic risks set out in the Appendices have been categorised against the Council's priorities.

5   Report Detail

5.1   The Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 state that:

"A relevant body must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which:-

(a)   facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives;

(b)   ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and

(c)   includes effective arrangements for the management of risk."

5.2   Risk can be defined as uncertainty of outcome (whether positive opportunity or negative threat). Risk is ever present and some amount of risk-taking is inevitable if the council is to achieve its objectives. The aim of risk management is to ensure that the council makes cost-effective use of a risk process that has a series of well-defined steps to support better decision making through good understanding of risks and their likely impact.

Management of Strategic Risks / Opportunities

5.3   Central to the risk management process is the identification, prioritisation, and management of strategic risks / opportunities. Strategic Risks are those that could have a significant impact on the Council's ability to deliver its Corporate Priorities and Objectives.

5.4   The risk register has been updated as at 1st April 2024 and a summary is attached as **Appendix 1**.

5.5   The risk summary illustrates the risks / opportunities using the "traffic light" method i.e.

RED   risk score 12 and above (action plan required to reduce risk and/or regular monitoring)

AMBER   risk score 5 to 10 (action plan required to reduce risk)

GREEN   risk score below 5 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

5.6   The overall number of risks has increased as three new risks have been to the Risk Register. All other risks remain at the same score. There are currently no Green Risks.

5.7   As part of this review a new Red Risk has been added in relation to the delivery of the major regeneration projects *"There is a risk that the high-profile large regeneration projects may not deliver as anticipated, to time or to budget, leading to reputational risks to the Council and creating financial risks that impact on the Council's financial* position *and could impact on service delivery."* The risk identifies that whilst action is being taken to manage the projects the impact on the Council could be significant if they fail to be delivered on time and within budget. In addition, the time and resources going into the management of the projects may have an impact on the delivery of other services.

5.8   Whilst there has not been any movement in scores of the remaining risks action plans are being progressed and relevant comments detail the progress made to deliver the identified controls.

5.9	The key information and progress for each risk is set out in the strategic risk register attached at **Appendix 2**. A full strategic risk register including detailed controls and actions for each risk is held on file by the Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager.

# 6	Implications

## 6.1	Financial

None

## 6.2	Legal

None

## 6.3	Human Resources

None

## 6.4	Risk Management

The Risk Management implications are included within the body of the report and appendices.

## 6.5	Equalities and Diversity

None

## 6.6	Health

None

## 6.7	Climate Change

None

# 7	Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of Strategic Risks – 30th September 2024

Appendix 2 – Strategic Risk Register Key Information – 30th September 2024

# 8	Previous Consideration

None

# 9	Background Papers

File of papers held by the Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager.

Contact Officer:	Stephen Baddeley

Telephone Number:	01543 464415

Ward Interest:	All

Report Track:	Cabinet 28/11/2024

Audit & Governance Committee 19/11/2024

Key Decision:	No

Cannock Chase Council
Summary of Strategic Risk Register as at 1st April 2024

Red Risks

Risk No	Risk	Risk Owner	Date Added to Register	Residual Risk Score at April 2024	Residual Risk Score at Sept 2024	Direction of Travel over period reported
C1	Finance Risk	Deputy Chief Executive Resources	May 2020	**20 Red**	**20 Red**	↔
C4	Key Contractors Risk	Head of Operations / Head of Wellbeing	May 2020	**15 Red**	**15 Red**	↔
2024-04	Town centre regeneration project	Head of Economic Development & Planning	Sept 2024	**N/A**	**15 Red**	**New Risk**

Amber Risks

Risk No	Risk	Risk Owner	Date Added to Register	Residual Risk Score at Sept 2023	Residual Risk Score at April 2024	Direction of Travel over period reported
C2	Economy Risk	Head of Economic Development & Planning	May 2020	**9 Amber**	**9 Amber**	↔
C5	Organisational Resilience Risk	Chief Executive	May 2020	**10 Amber**	**10 Amber**	↔
C6	Cyber Attack Risk	Head of Transformation & Assurance	May 2020	**9 Amber**	**9 Amber**	↔
2024-01	Governance Risk	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	April 2024	**9 Amber**	**9 Amber**	↔
2024-02	Housing Compliance Risk	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets	April 2024	**10 Amber**	**10 Amber**	↔
2024-03	Meeting Homelessness Statutory Duty Risk	Head of Wellbeing	April 2024	**9 Amber**	**9 Amber**	↔

Key to Direction of Travel

↓	Risk has decreased	↔	Risk level unchanged	↑	Risk has increased

Cannock Chase Council
Strategic Risk Register Key Information as at 1ˢᵗ September 2024

Ref No: C1	Risk Name: Finance Risk
Risk Description	Poor budget planning, over commitment of financial resources or inappropriate use of reserves leading to a financial shortfall or overspends that undermine the Council's ability to deliver services, corporate priorities or leading to external intervention

Risk Owner: Deputy Chief Executive Resources		Portfolio: Resources and Transformation		
Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)		Likelihood: 4	Impact: 5	Total Score: **20 – Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)		**Likelihood: 4**	**Impact: 5**	**Total Score: 20 – Red**

Overall Progress Summary:

The medium-term financial stability of the Council is dependent upon its ability to set a 2025-26 budget that minimises the use of reserves, and the impact of changes arising from the future funding regime for local government. Details in relation to the implementation of 50% Business Rates Retention, a Business Rates Reset and Fair Funding are still awaited.

A consultation document in relation to the Future of New Homes Bonus was published in February 2021 (a response from the Council was submitted in advance of the closing date). The Council is awaiting details of the financial Settlement for 2025-26, including New Homes Bonus, to be provided by Central Government, likely in the Autumn.

Events beyond the Councils control such as the geopolitical situation, energy crisis, inflation creating a cost-of-living crisis and interest rate rises have occurred in recent years and are likely to continue in the future. These issues, as well as uncertainty regarding national fiscal and monetary policy, the direction of the Government post general election and the impact on the local government financial settlement, have created substantial risk to financial sustainability. The council has sought to mitigate this by avoiding overextending its position beyond its ability to self-finance from finance streams which are as certain as possible e.g. council tax income.

Ref No: C2	Risk Name: Economy Risk
Risk Description	Adverse macro-economic conditions lead to a serious impact on the performance of the District's economy

Risk Owner: Head of Economic Development & Planning	Portfolio: Regeneration & High Streets

Links To Priorities:

- PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY - "To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives"

Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 3	Impact: 5	Total Score: **15 – Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood: 3**	**Impact: 3**	**Total Score: 9 - Amber**

Overall Progress Summary:

Economic conditions remain challenging, due largely to the current cost of living pressures and economic uncertainty.

Despite the current challenges, the District's economy continues to be resilient, with unemployment rates at a stable level and a large number of job vacancies available. The Council will continue to monitor local economic conditions and respond if the situation worsens.

Major investments such as the Levelling Up Fund scheme in Cannock Town Centre, the proposed phase 2 of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet and re-development of the former Rugeley Power Station continue to be absolutely critical in supporting the prosperity and growth of the District. Furthermore, the £3m of UK Shared Prosperity Fund money is being invested by the Council to grow the District's economy and address current economic challenges.

Ref No: C4	Risk: Key Contractors Risk
Risk Description	Changes in the operational costs/income due to economic factors which impact on the sustainability key Contractors to deliver the required services.

Risk Owners: Head of Operations / Head of Wellbeing	Portfolios: Community Wellbeing, Environment & Climate Change		
Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 4	Impact: 5	Total Score: **20 – Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood:3**	**Impact: 5**	**Total Score: 15 – Red**

Overall Progress Summary:

Regular contact continues to be maintained with the Council's key contractors in relation to performance and operational matters and in the case of leisure, a new project management resource has been brought in to enhance this monitoring.

Leisure and culture facilities and services remain at risk, with Cannock Chase District as the contractors only client. Consultants SLC have been brought in to support the Council in finding a new way forward for leisure, culture and heritage provision.

The Council has successfully retendered its kerbside collection contract for 2025 onwards and has included provision for statutory weekly food waste collections, and the continuation of its dual-stream dry mixed recycling and chargeable garden waste services.

Clarity has been received from government around consistency in recycling, which has now been rebranded as 'simpler recycling'. The impacts of which are considered within manageable contract tolerances.

The Council is continuing to develop its new customer portal across its waste and collection service to assist with contract management, reporting and to improve the overall customer experience.

Concerns over the cost-of-living increases impacting upon staffing costs / wage bills, and increasing fuel/energy costs, such as electricity, gas, and petroleum-based products, impacting upon operational costs, have eased over the year. However, the impact can still be evidenced in areas such as leisure services, income, and costs. While current costs seem to have stabilized, they remain considerably higher than in previous years, which may have a marked impact upon contract pricing in the future, such as in the forthcoming waste collection contract.

Ref No: C5	Risk: Organisational Resilience Risk
Risk Description	The Council doesn't have sufficient officer capacity or financial resources to sustain delivery of essential services and key projects.

Risk Owner: Chief Executive	Portfolios: The Leader and Resources & Transformation

Links To Priorities:

- PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL "To be a modern, forward thinking, and responsible Council"

Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 4	Impact: 5	Total Score: **20 - Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood: 2**	**Impact: 5**	**Total Score: 10 - Amber**

Overall Progress Summary:

Capacity is an ongoing issue across a range of services due to vacancies and problems in recruiting new staff. A review of corporate priorities and work projects has recently been completed to manage workload within existing resources.

Ref No: C6	Risk Name: Cyber Attack Risk
Risk Description	Failure to repel or recover from a Cyber-attack including targeted ransomware, malware, and Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attacks leading to disruption to the delivery of services and communication with residents.

Risk Owner: Head of Transformation & Assurance	Portfolio: Resources and Transformation

Links To Priorities:

- PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL "To be a modern, forward thinking, and responsible Council"

Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 4	Impact: 5	Total Score: **20 - Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood: 3**	**Impact: 3**	**Total Score: 9 - Amber**

Overall Progress Summary:

Cyber-attacks are a global issue, and the operating environment means that new risks and challenges are always developing, and attacks are becoming more sophisticated.

The Technology Team has achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation for 2024; this is a government-backed, industry-supported scheme to help organisations protect themselves against common online threats. About Cyber Essentials - NCSC.GOV.UK. The accreditation is renewed annually.

The infrastructure hardware refresh is to be completed in 2024 providing a modern up to date infrastructure with enhanced security features.

Quarterly internal vulnerability scans are performed by the IT Security officer producing an action plan to remove or mitigate any risks found.

A new Cyber Security training program has been put in place for all staff

Ref No: 2024-01	Risk Name: Governance Risk
Risk Description	If the recommendations from the External Auditor's VFM report are not implemented, it would lead to a failure in the Council's governance arrangements.

Risk Owner: Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Portfolio: Resources and Transformation

Links To Priorities:

- PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL "To be a modern, forward thinking, and responsible Council"

Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 4	Impact: 5	Total Score: **20 - Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood: 3**	**Impact: 3**	**Total Score: 9 - Amber**

Overall Progress Summary:

Progress is reported quarterly to the Cabinet and Audit & Governance Committee. Progress is being made in delivering the actions set out in the VFM Improvement Plan, to address the External Audit recommendations. However, as at the end of Quarter 1, there has been some slippage

Ref No: 2024-02	Risk Name: Housing Compliance Risk
Risk Description	The Council fails to comply with the requirements of the Social Housing Regulator and Housing Ombudsman leading to regulatory intervention and fines.

Risk Owner: Head of Housing & Corporate Assets	Portfolio: Housing and Corporate Assets

Links To Priorities:

- PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL "To be a modern, forward thinking, and responsible Council"

Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 4	Impact: 5	Total Score: **20 - Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood: 2**	**Impact:5**	**Total Score: 10 - Amber**

Overall Progress Summary:

The Housing Improvement Plan actions are on track to be delivered within the target dates. As appropriate volume of stock data is received, this can be used to review and update the HRA investment plan and works programme. Savills will continue to analyse, develop and update a Financial BP as Rapleys data is received on a quarterly basis. Subject to appointments and Cabinet approval, the first meeting of the Housing Board will take place in March 2025.

Ref No: 2024-03	Risk Name: Meeting Homelessness Statutory Duty
Risk Description	Demand on the Homelessness Service is high and accommodation supply is low leading to the lack of ability to place households in settled accommodation leading to a high number of households in long term temporary accommodation increasing costs and impacting on family life."

Risk Owner: Head of Wellbeing	Portfolio: Community Wellbeing

Links To Priorities:
• PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL "To be a modern, forward thinking, and responsible Council"

Gross Risk Score (i.e., without controls)	Likelihood: 4	Impact: 3	Total Score:**12 - Red**
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e., with controls)	**Likelihood:3**	**Impact:3**	**Total Score: 9 - Amber**

Overall Progress Summary:
The Renters Reform Bill is in Parliament but in the meantime, eviction from the private rented sector remains the principal cause of homelessness.
Work has taken place to ensure correct housing benefit levels to minimise risk to the General Fund.
Policies on housing choice and a proposed uplift in the delivery of affordable housing have been included in the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

Ref No:	**2024-04**
Risk Name:	**Town centre regeneration project**
Risk Description:	There is a risk that the high-profile large regeneration projects may not deliver as anticipated, to time or to budget, leading to reputational risks to the Council and creating financial risks that impact on the Council's financial position and could impact on service delivery.
Risk Owner(s):	Deputy Chief Executive - Place Head of Economic Development & Planning
Portfolio:	Economic Development & Planning
Links to Corporate Business Plan	Links To Priorities: PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY - "To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives"
Gross Risk Score (Without Controls in Place)	Likelihood: 4 Impact: 5 Total Score: **20**
Residual/Net Risk Score **(i.e. with controls in place)**	**Likelihood: 3 Impact: 5 Total Score: 15**

Overall Progress Summary:	The Council is actively seeking to mitigate the risks associated with the delivery of the regeneration schemes by establishing robust programme / project management arrangements, documenting risks and identifying appropriate mitigation measures, ensuring that contracts are pro-actively managed, and budgets are monitored frequently with corrective action taken where budget issues arise.

Risk Management Policy, Strategy and Risk Appetite Statement

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 28 November 2024

Report of: Head of Transformation and Assurance

Portfolio: Resources and Transformation

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To seek Cabinet approval of the Council's revised Risk Management Policy and Strategy.

2   Recommendations

2.1   Cabinet to approve the Risk Management Policy and Strategy set out in Appendix 1.

2.2   Cabinet to approve the Risk Appetite Statement and set the risk appetite at Moderate.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.3   The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to have effective arrangements for the management of risk.

2.4   The Council needs a structured approach to direct and support managers in the effective management of risk. By defining a methodology for assessing risks the Council can ensure that decision makers are clear about the level of risk that they can take and areas where additional controls will need to be implemented to manage risks being taken

3   Key Issues

3.1   Risk management is a vital activity which underpins the vision, values, and corporate objectives of the Council. It should be embedded into the culture of the organisation and led by the most senior leaders and managers. In addition, by having an effective risk management framework in place it will provide the communities we serve with confidence that we can deliver the objectives we have promised.

3.2   The existing Risk Management Policy and Strategy was approved in 2016 and is in need of update. The current strategy is high-level and needs more detail to support effective risk management across the Council's decision-making processes.

3.3   The External Auditors also identified a need for the Council to improve its risk management arrangements in the Value For Money Report issued in 2023. The Improvement Plan agreed by the Council includes the update and approval of revised risk management arrangements. As part of a wider review, identified in the Annual Governance Statement the Risk Management Policy and associated

procedures have been updated will be used to support the to re-launch of risk management at the Council and to ensure that it forms part of an effective governance framework.

3.4   As part of the update a risk appetite statement has been included to guide decision making by showing the acceptable level of risk the Council has determined it is prepared to accept. Explicit approval will be required where an action or decision is above the Council's risk appetite.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   Risk management is about putting arrangements in place to identify and manage the things that may affect the Council from successfully delivering its intended objectives. As such it is connected to the delivery of all the corporate priorities.

5   Report Detail

5.1   The Council last updated its risk management policy and strategy in 2016. This was a high-level strategy that removed the previous requirements for service/operational risk registers to be maintained and which instead focused on the Strategic Risk Register and project risk registers.

5.2   However, it has become clear that the Council needs to improve its management of risk across the Council and not just at a strategic level and embed it across the Council's decision-making processes and service delivery. This was identified as an action in the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-24 and in the External Auditor's Value for Money Report for 2021-22 and 2022-23 and included as an action in the resulting Improvement Plan.

5.3   The new policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Members, Leadership Team, and employees, in relation to effective risk management. The new risk management policy is designed to embed a risk management culture within the Council and will establish additional mandatory risk registers enabling a greater understanding of risk to be developed.

5.4   The updated risk management policy has been built around guidance contained in the Association of Local Authority Risk Managers (ALARM) Risk Management Toolkit 2021. This is seen as a best practice model for Local Authority risk management.

5.5   The policy contains an updated risk matrix which sets out a clear statement on the Council's risk appetite. It is proposed that the level of risk the Council is prepared to accept should be set at Moderate. However, there is also recognition that at times some activities may require a more risk-taking stance than the risk appetite allows and needs to take into account the opportunity risk relating to the decision - for example Economic Development regeneration opportunities. Where a scheme is deemed to be at a higher level of risk than allowed by the risk appetite an approval process is being introduced which will be overseen by the Council's statutory officers and the Leader of the Council.

5.6   As the revised risk management policy requires a shift in culture within the Council a programme of training will be delivered to Leadership Team, Service Managers and Members. Heads of Service and Service Managers will also be tasked with ensuring that the risk management culture is promoted and established across all employees.

6   Implications

6.1   Financial

Most actions resulting from the adoption of the policy will be delivered within existing budgets. However, there is a need to bring in an external trainer to support the roll-out of the policy. This will be funded from the Council's Corporate Training Budget. The cost is anticipated to be a maximum of £10,000 across the two Councils.

6.2   Legal

The Council is required to establish and maintain effective arrangements for the management of risk by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

6.3   Human Resources

The policy will need to be communicated across the workforce as applicable - including training where appropriate.

6.4   Risk Management

Effective risk management is a fundamental element of effective governance. If risks are not appropriately identified and controlled within the Council's agreed risk appetite, then it is likely that the intended outcomes will not be met. This could lead to significant financial and reputational impact.

6.5   Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6   Health

None

6.7   Climate Change

None

7   Appendices

Appendix 1: Risk Management Policy & Strategy

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

None

Contact Officer:	Stephen Baddeley
Telephone Number:	01543 464 415
Report Track:	Cabinet: 28/11/24
	Audit & Governance Committee: 18/11/24
Key Decision:	No

Risk Management Policy & Strategy

December 2024

Contents

Risk Management Policy Statement

We recognise risk management is a vital activity which underpins the vision, and corporate priorities of the Council. In addition, by having an effective risk management framework in place it will provide the communities we serve with confidence that we can deliver the priorities we have promised.

Risk is always present in every activity that we do, and our risk management framework sets out to be proactive in the identification, assessment, and management of key areas of risk. We seek to embed effective risk management within the operation and decision-making process of the Council. Risk management needs to be an integral part of all processes, projects and strategic decisions made. Wherever we work with partners or third parties we will ensure that they are aware of and work in line with our risk management framework or have their own suitable arrangements.

Our aim is to have a risk management framework that is fit for purpose and appropriate to the size and nature of our operations. We aim to ensure that our risk management framework is well communicated and operating effectively within the Council.

In order to assist in effective decision making it is essential for us as strategic leaders to define the level of risk exposure that we think is acceptable. This is set out in the Risk Appetite Statement. This will inform decision makers on the level of risk that they can take and areas where additional controls will need to be implemented to manage risks being taken.

The risk management framework and the effective management of risks is a key part of the Governance Framework of the Council. Its implementation will that risk identification and management plays a key role in the delivery of our Corporate Plans and strategic priorities.

Through this framework we will involve, empower, and give ownership to all employees and Members to identify and manage risk. Risk management will be supported by regular discussions and appropriate actions by Cabinet and Leadership Team including the regular review of significant risks and reviewing actions to reduce those risks to an acceptable level. The management of risk will be an integral part or strategic and operational planning as well as embedded in the day-to-day delivery of services of the Council. The Audit Committee will have oversight of the effectiveness of our risk management arrangements.

_____   _____

Tim Clegg   **Cllr Tony Johnson**
Chief Executive   Leader
Stafford Borough Council   Cannock Chase District
and Cannock Chase   Council
District Council

Risk Management Strategy

1. What is Risk Management

1.1. Risk Management is the process whereby an organisation methodically addresses the risks which may stop them from achieving their corporate priorities. The focus of good risk management is the identification and treatment of the risks to minimise any impact or maximise benefit.

1.2. A risk is defined as the "effect of uncertainty on the achievement of priorities" (ISO 31000). An effect is a positive or negative deviation from what is expected, and that risk is often described by an event, a change in circumstances or a consequence.

1.3. By accepting this definition, the Council recognises that taking the right risks in an informed way can be beneficial to the priorities and that risk management is not just a negative process used to stop opportunities being taken.

1.4. Risk Management should be a continuous and developing process connected with the Council's Corporate Plan and the delivery of it in the present, and future.

2. Why does the Council need to carry out Risk Management?

2.1. Risk management is a management tool which forms part of the governance system of the Council. When applied appropriately, risk management can be very beneficial. It can help the Council to achieve its stated priorities and deliver on intended outcomes. It can also help managers to demonstrate good governance, better understand their risk exposure and better mitigate risks (particularly uninsurable risks). Externally it can help the Council to enhance political and community support and satisfy stakeholders' expectations on internal control.

2.2. The Council does not operate in isolation and is subjected to constant challenges and external changes which may pose a threat to the delivery of the Corporate Priorities or provide new opportunities which must be considered and addressed on an ongoing basis. Risk management processes provide a mechanism by which these issues and their impact can be identified, assessed, monitored and relevant actions taken to address them.

2.3 Whilst it is good business practice and essential for good governance processes the Council also has a legal requirement to have a risk management process in place.

2.4 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 state:

*"A relevant authority must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which—*

(a)facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and priorities.

(b)ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and

(c)includes effective arrangements for the management of risk."

2.5 Ultimately by having an effective, embedded Risk Management Framework in place to influence its decision making the Council can benefit by helping to ensure:

- The priorities set in the Corporate Plan can be delivered.
- All employees and Members understand the desired culture in relation to risk,
- Decisions to take appropriate risks in certain areas can be made from an informed viewpoint.
- It can protect its reputation.
- Operational and financial efficiency is ensured as resources are not lost by taking unnecessary risks.
- It can maximise opportunities.
- Good governance processes are operating.
- Assets are protected.

3. Governance and Infrastructure

3.1. **Sponsorship and Positioning of Risk Management**

- Risk Management needs to be embedded throughout the Council and underpin all its activities. It is a key governance process and needs to have direction and leadership from the very top of the organisation; as well as being relevant and responsive to the staff delivering services on the ground. The risk matrix and risk appetite statement contained in this strategy will be used across the Council to ensure that a collective understanding and language is adopted when talking about risks.

- Management and other corporate reporting/assurance functions will help to monitor and report on the effective delivery of the Risk Management Framework in line with the Institute of Internal Auditors' "3 Lines Model" as set out below:
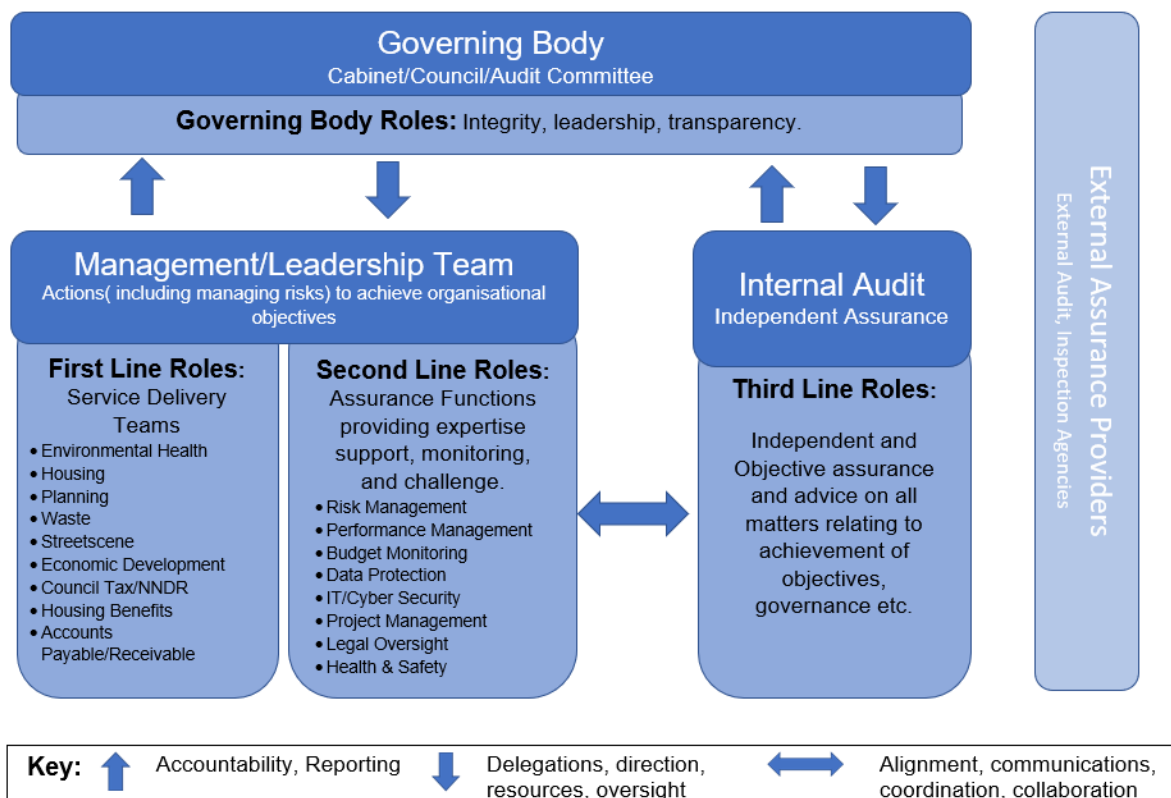
3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

- All employees and Members have a role to play in the management of risk as it is a key part of day-to-day service delivery and management of the Council. However certain individuals or groups have specific responsibilities in the oversight and implementation of risk management, more detail on these is set out below.

- **Risk Management Sponsor - Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and s151 Officer**

  o Act as the sponsor for the Risk Management Framework at a strategic level and with the support of the Head of Transformation and Assurance will ensure that Leadership Team decisions are taken in line with the Risk Management Strategy.
  o Champion risk management at the strategic level.
  o Ensure regular discussions are held on Risk Management and the Councils risks.
  o Encourage all members of Leadership Team to ensure they have effective risk management arrangements in place for their service areas.

- **Head of Transformation and Assurance**

  o Support the Deputy Chief Executive - Resources in their role as sponsor for risk management.
  o Regularly review the risk management policy, strategy, and framework to ensure it underpins the Council's strategy and priorities.
  o Report on behalf of Leadership Team on the strategic risks and controls in line with the organisation's risk management strategy.

- **Risk Manager (Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager)**

  o Coordinate the organisation's risk management activity.
  o Develop and maintain the risk management policy, strategy, methodologies, and tools.
  o Highlight any significant new or worsening risks to the Leadership Team or Cabinet for review and action.
  o Assist in the delivery of the risk management process across the Council.
  o Provide risk management guidance, training, and advice.
  o Promote the link between risk management and other related disciplines, for example, insurance, business continuity, emergency planning, and health and safety.
  o Promote and share best practice risk management across the Council.

- **Cabinet & Leadership Team**

  o The Cabinet and Leadership Team are responsible for giving direction, approving the Risk Management Framework, and taking ownership of the Strategic Risk Register. They will ensure that all decisions are taken in accordance with the Council's agreed risk appetite.

- **Cabinet**

  o Approve the Risk Management policy, strategy, and Risk Appetite for the Council.

  o Review key risks to the Council and controls in place via the Strategic Risk Register.

  o Provide assurance that risks are being effectively managed.

- **Leadership Team**

  o Recommend the Risk Management policy, strategy, and Risk Appetite to Cabinet for approval

  o Approve the processes to be used to manage and monitor risks.

  o Review the strategic risks across the organisation, consider their importance against strategic priorities and action controls where required to manage those risks.

  o Allocate sufficient resources to address the key strategic risks.

  o Create an environment and culture where risk management is promoted, facilitated, and appropriately undertaken by the Council and is embedded in all decision making.

  o Champion risk management activities, educate colleagues, and raise awareness of the benefits of managing risk effectively.

- **Deputy Chief Executives**

  o To maintain a risk register of key risks for their directorate

  o To raise significant risks within their directorate which could impact on delivery of the Council's corporate priorities for consideration for inclusion in the Strategic Risk Register.

  o To support Heads of Service in the management of risks in their service area

- **Heads of Service**

  o Communicate the benefits of risk management across service areas for which they are responsible.

  o Help facilitate the risk management process and risk reporting procedures across operational areas.

  o Help ensure key stakeholder commitment.

  o Ensure risk management processes and risk reporting procedures are completed in line with the Council' risk management framework for each area under their responsibility.

  o Monitor the key risks in each area of responsibility.

- **Service Managers**

  o Manage risk effectively in each area of responsibility.

  o Complete the risk management process and risk reporting procedures as per the Council's guidelines.

  o Complete, track and monitor the progress of action plans.

- **All Employees**

  o Understand and comply with the risk management processes and guidelines of the Council.
  o Monitor work on an ongoing basis to identify new and emerging risks and escalate as required.

- **Audit Committee**

  o Gain assurance over the governance of risk, including leadership, integration of risk management into wider governance arrangements, and the ownership and accountability for risks.
  o Monitor to ensure management are managing risks appropriately

- **Internal Audit**

  o Create an audit plan aligned with the key strategic and directorate risks.
  o Review and provide assurance on the effectiveness of the risk management framework.
  o Provide assurance on the operational arrangements for managing risks across the Council.
  o Review the progress of planned actions.
  o Test and validate existing controls.

4. Pillars of the Strategy

4.1. There are several key pillars which form the basis of the risk management strategy these are set out below

4.2. The risk management strategy encourages the use of risk registers to record key risks faced by the Council in delivering its services and objectives. The following risk registers are required to be maintained as part of this strategy:

- Strategic Risk Register
- Directorate Risk Registers for Place and Resources
- IT Risk Register
- Housing Revenue Account Risk Register
- Project Risk Registers

4.3. Processes will be in place to monitor and report the risk registers to relevant levels as set out below:

- The Strategic Risk Register is monitored by Leadership Team and reported to Cabinet and the Audit Committee.
- The relevant Deputy Chief Executive will monitor their Directorate Risk Register escalating significant risks to Leadership Team for inclusion in the Strategic Risk Register.
- The IT Risk Register will be monitored by the Head of Transformation & Assurance and Technology Manager.
- The Housing Board will monitor the HRA Risk Register.
- Project Boards will be responsible for monitoring Project Risk Registers.

4.4. Risk management will be imbedded in all decision-making processes. All committee reports relating to decisions will clearly set out the risks relating to the proposal and any controls in place or proposed to manage the risks. Guidance and training will be provided to managers to improve the quality of risk management implications in committee reports.

5. Culture

5.1. To be effective in the long term and to support good governance, effective risk management needs to be embedded into the Council's culture and have full support from the top of the organisation down.

5.2. Leadership Team and Service Managers will set an example to other employees when it comes to embracing the importance of effective, embedded risk management in all processes. All managers must support the roll-out of this framework and ensure that risk management processes once established are followed by all employees across all processes and in all decision making.

5.3. The risk matrix within this framework and the definitions for levels of risk set out in this policy will be used consistently across the Council to categorise all risks to ensure a common understanding of risks. This adds clarity so that the level and definition of a risk is understood and means the same thing to everyone regardless of which section or function is talking about it. Any assessments associated with risks will utilise the agreed risk matrix and definitions and operate in line with the Council's agreed risk appetite.

5.4. Any deviations must be agreed in advance with the Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and either the Head of Transformation & Assurance or the Deputy Chief Executive - Resources.

5.5. Where we work closely with third party organisations, managers should ensure that the Council's Risk Appetite Statement and risk processes are communicated and understood by those we are in partnership with. Wherever possible the Council's risk management processes should be used when working with partners and contractors. Where third party funders specify a different risk management process to the Councils as a condition of funding this will be agreed and recorded at the time of application for the funding.

5.6. All employees and managers are required to take ownership and accountability for their role in the Risk Management process as set out in the "roles and responsibilities" section of the strategy. Employees at all levels are encouraged to raise emerging risks that they have identified with their line managers with the knowledge that the information will be considered and acted on appropriately where necessary.

5.7. The Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) as the Risk Management Sponsor will oversee the risk management culture at Leadership Team. They will do this by encouraging positive messages relating to risk management and challenging poor risk management practices such as the failure to adequately consider risk implications when making important decisions.

6. Management of Risks

6.1. The Council will implement an ongoing cyclical review process for the management of risks as set out in the diagram below.
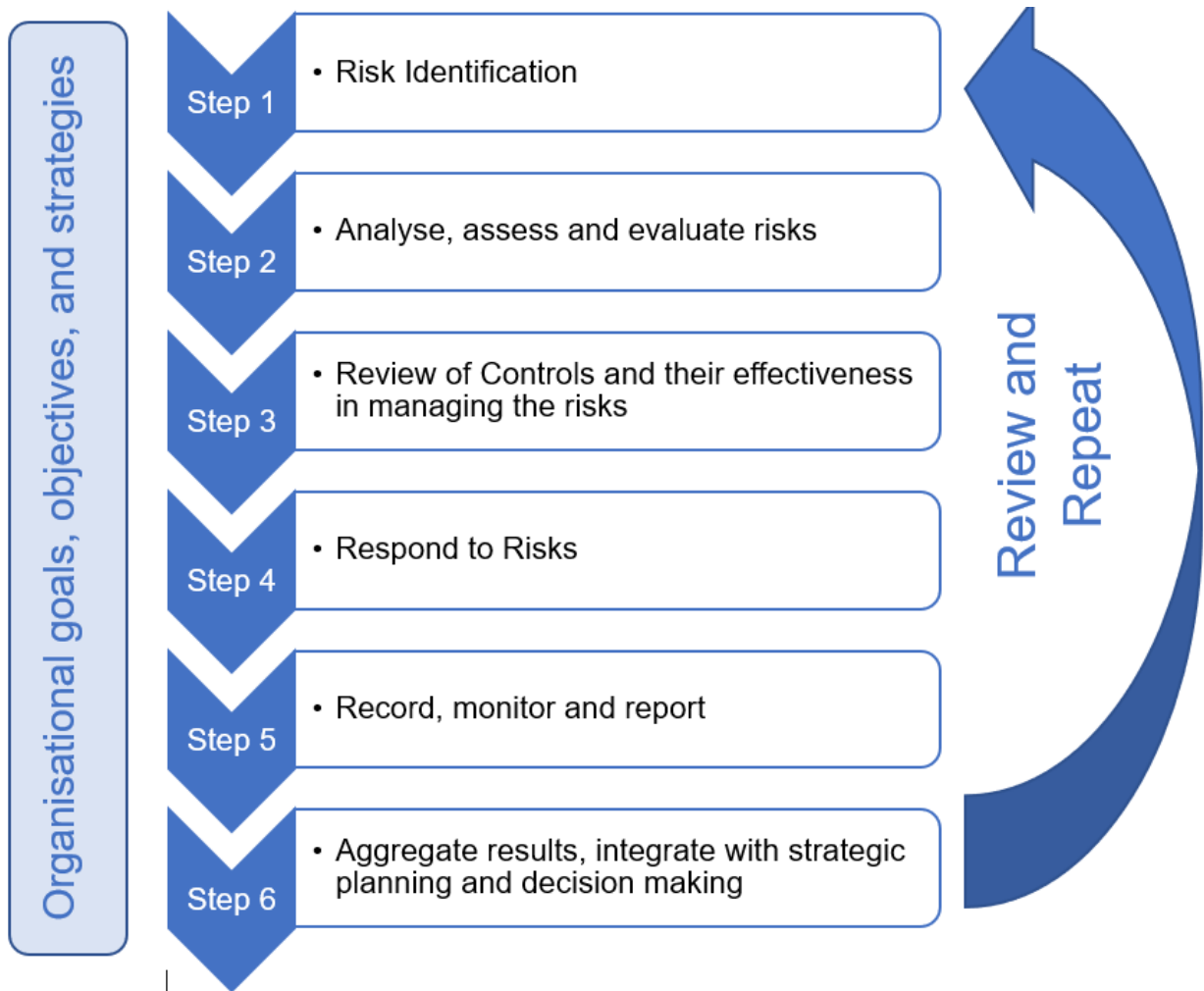
6.2. More detail on each step and how to implement the process can be found in the Risk Management Toolkit.

7. Risk Appetite Statement

7.1. Risk appetite can be defined as the amount and type of risk the Council is willing to accept in the pursuit of its priorities.

7.2. The Council's overall risk appetite is set out in reference to the risk appetite definitions below which include reference to the levels of risk. Escalation and reporting thresholds will be reassessed periodically to ensure risks are reported and reviewed within suitable defined limits and the risk appetite.

Category	Definition	Risk Levels
Avoid	No appetite. Not prepared to take any risks.	N/A
Adverse	Prepared to accept only the very lowest levels of risk, with the preference being for ultra-safe delivery options, while recognising that these will have little or no potential for reward/return	Negligible Risk
Cautious	Willing to accept some low risks, while maintaining an overall preference for safe delivery options despite the probability of these having mostly restricted potential for reward/return.	Low Risk
Moderate	**Tending always towards exposure to only modest levels of risk in order to achieve acceptable outcomes**	**Moderate Risk**
Open	Prepared to consider all delivery options and select those with the highest probability of productive outcomes, even when there are elevated levels of associate risk.	Medium Risk
Hungry	Eager to seek original/creative/pioneering delivery options and to accept the associated substantial risk levels in order to secure successful outcomes and meaningful reward/return.	High Risk

7.3. **The Council's risk appetite is defined as moderate.**

7.4. This means the Council remains open to innovative ways of working and to pursue options that offer potentially substantial rewards, however, also carry a moderate level of risk. The Council's preference is for safe delivery options, especially for those services required by statute and ideally all actions should be within this agreed risk appetite. This means that options should only be pursued if they can be managed as a yellow or lower risk.

7.5. However, it is accepted, where service delivery is diverse and risks take many forms, risk appetite may vary according to the specific circumstances being assessed. For example, an option may be considered for a regeneration scheme that is seen to have a higher level of risk for the Council than the moderate appetite would allow but where the ultimate outcome would bring significant benefits if successfully implemented. This is where the opportunity risk significantly exceeds the risks exposed to in pursuing the option.

7.6. Where an option or decision is being pursued that is deemed to be at a higher level of risk than Moderate then additional controls/safeguards will need to be put in place. In most situations this will need to be clearly stated in the committee report and approval or the scheme by Cabinet or Council. Where the situation does not provide for a formal committee decision where the risk is outside of our normal risk appetite formal documented agreement to proceed will be required from the 3 Statutory Officers (s151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, and Head of Paid Service) and the Leader of the Council to pursue the option. When approved, increased levels of monitoring and reporting on the risk and the operation of relevant controls will need to be established.

7.7.   There may also be occasions where a risk may score higher than our risk appetite, but which is outside of the Council's direct control. Examples of this includes the global/national financial situation which has a direct impact on the Councils financial/budgetary position and additional statutory duties/service delivery placed on the Council through Government policy/decision making.

8. Risk Matrix

To assist in the management of risks the Council has adopted a 4 x 4 matrix for the scoring of risks.

		Impact			
		Minor/Non-Disruptive Impact (1)	Moderately Disruptive Impact (2)	Significant Consequences (3)	Serious Consequences (4)
Likelihood	Very Likely (4)	4	8	12	16
	Probable (3)	3	6	9	12
	Possible (2)	2	4	6	8
	Unlikely (1)	1	2	3	4

The matrix has been colour coded in line with the Council's risk appetite as follows.

Risk Levels	Colour
Negligible Risk	Blue
Low Risk	Green
Moderate Risk	Yellow
Medium Risk	Orange
High Risk	Red

The risk matrix is supported by the following definitions:

Likelihood Scores

4	**Very Likely**	• Event expected to occur. Has occurred and will continue to do so without action being taken. • Indication of imminent occurrence • There are external influences which are likely to make our controls ineffective
3	**Probable**	• There is a moderate exposure to the risk. • Reasonable to expect event to occur within a year. • Has occurred in the past. • Is likely to occur within the Council's planning cycle. • There are external influences which may reduce effectiveness of controls
2	**Possible**	• There is a low exposure to the risk. • Little likelihood of event occurring - 1 in 10 years • There is a potential for external influences which may reduce effectiveness of controls
1	**Unlikely**	• Extremely remote • Not expected to occur but may do so in exceptional circumstances - 1 in 100 years. • There are few or no external influences which may reduce effectiveness of controls

Impact Scores

4	Serious Consequences	- Loss of key front line delivery supplier/partner - Loss of life, significant life-changing injuries - Significant negative publicity - national press - Significant interest from regulators, external auditors or central government. - Significant ongoing loss of workforce (over 25%) - Unable to finance within existing framework/requiring additional government financial support. - Complete system failures/large scale data loss/breach or major Cyber Incident. - Significant delays, overspends or abandonment of a major project. - Serious frauds or criminal offences - Major failure to deliver services across multiple departments - Requires external intervention or full Council decisions.
3	Significant Consequences	- Loss of suppliers/partner - Loss of a service area/team/software for several weeks - Localised pollution/contamination incident - Serious injury to employee or public - Negative short-term local publicity - Large data breach or cyber attack - Attract significant interest from regulators/external auditors - Overspend on project requiring fundamental redesign or significant additional resources - Significant additional budget pressures requiring supplementary approval - Requires Cabinet Intervention
2	Moderately Disruptive Impact	- Loss of systems/service delivery for a few hours - Loss/damage to a room or small part of a structure requiring some relocation - Loss of key staff member/team for short term - Minor injuries to staff/public - Small losses/thefts, minor data breaches. - Service performance/standards slightly below expected - Minor public attention or limited attention from regulators/external audit - Financial impact below £10,000 or 1% of budget - Can be resolved by Head of Service
1	Minor/Non-Disruptive Impact	- Negligible impact on service delivery - No noticeable impact to the public/environment - Negligible financial impact or loss/damage to assets - Can be resolved by Service Manager

Transformation & Digital Strategies

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 28 November 2024

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive - Resources

Portfolio: Resources and Transformation

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   This report sets out the Transformation and Digital strategies that will drive the transformation work across the Council and support the delivery of shared services.

1.2   The report also outlines the structure for the new Transformation Team that will lead on the co-ordination and delivery of the strategy and work programme.

2   Recommendations

2.1   Cabinet is asked to approve the:

    (i)   Transformation Strategy (Appendix 1);

    (ii)   The Transformation Plan (Appendix 2); and

    (iii)   The Digital Strategy (Appendix 3).

2.2   Cabinet is asked to approve the governance arrangements for the delivery of the transformation programme set out in 3.4.

2.3   Cabinet is asked to note the staffing structure for the new Transformation Team (set out in 3.5) which will lead on the co-ordination and delivery of the work programme.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.4   The transformation and digital strategies set out the vision and provide a framework for transformation of the Council's services. The transformation programme will drive efficiencies and improvements in services. The use of digital technology will be a key tool in delivering improvements for customers, employees and Members.

2.5   Additional resources were included in the budget for 2024/25 to fund the setting up of a transformation team. This report sets out how this funding is to be used to set up this team.

3   Key Issues

3.1   The Council is ambitious to deliver significant change through delivery of its Shared Services agenda. Transformation is much broader than bringing the two council's services together, it will drive change in how we deliver better services to our customers and improve the efficiency of our operations.

3.2 The transformation strategy sets out our vision and objectives for transformation (Appendix 1). The strategy is underpinned by a transformation plan which sets out the process for delivering change (Appendix 2).

3.3 The transformation strategy is also accompanied by the Digital Strategy which set outs our vision and aims for the future use of technology and how this will support the wider transformation agenda. A technology work programme is being developed to support delivery of the digital strategy.

3.4 Oversight of the delivery of the Transformation work programme will be undertaken by:
- A Transformation Steering Group (Officers); and
- The Shared Services Joint Operational Board (Members); which is to be renamed as the Transformation Board.

3.5 Additional resources are needed to support the co-ordination and delivery of the transformation work programme. Additional funding of £100k was agreed by each Council as part of the budget for 2024/25. At this stage it is likely that additional funding will be required moving forwards as projects are developed. Business cases will be developed on a case by case as funding requirements are identified by the work of the team. The initial funding is to be used to set up a new team which will include the following posts:
- Transformation Lead;
- Project Manager;
- Business Analyst;
- Project Assistant.

3.6 Further specialist resources (both staff and technology) will be needed to deliver specific projects; businesses cases will be completed as and when required to support requests for additional funding.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The transformation and digital strategies will support the delivery of all of the Council's priorities but primarily relates to Priority 4 "To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

5 Report Detail

5.1 Following the decision to extend the sharing of services with Stafford Borough Council, work is needed to bring the teams together and review the delivery of services. This presents an ideal opportunity to launch a wider and more ambitious transformation programme to create modern and agile Councils.

5.2 A transformation strategy has been drafted (Appendix 1). It sets out the vision for transformation:

"Our authorities envision a transformed and resilient community where services are efficient and resident focused, communities are empowered, and digital innovation drives progress. Through effective transformation, we aim to create modern and agile councils that adapt to changing needs and advance the well-being of our residents".

5.3   The strategy is underpinned by a transformation plan which sets out the process for delivering change (Appendix 2). Transformation will be approached both at a service level and corporately, through inter-linking workstreams.

5.4   The transformation strategy is also accompanied by the Digital Strategy which set outs our vision and aims for the future use of technology and how this will support the wider transformation agenda.

> *"Our vision is to create a seamless digital experience for residents, businesses, and employees of Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council. Using technological solutions, we aim to deliver efficient services, empower communities and staff, and drive economic growth while maintaining high standards of governance and data security".*

A technology work programme is being developed to support delivery of the digital strategy.

5.5   Oversight of the delivery of the Transformation work programme will be undertaken by:

- A Transformation Steering Group (Officers); and
- The Shared Services Joint Operational Board (Members); which is to be renamed as the Transformation Board.

5.6   Additional resources are needed to support the co-ordination and delivery of the transformation work programme. Funding of £100k was agreed by each Council as part of the budget for 2024/25. This funding is to be used to set up a new team. Originally it was proposed that the Head of Transformation and Assurance would take the lead on this agenda. However, the last 18 months has shown that there is insufficient capacity within this role to move the transformation agenda ahead with the pace required as well as deliver on the assurance work (including the delivery of the VFM Improvement Plan). This has necessitated the creation of a new transformation lead post, which will be job evaluated. The existing postholder is supportive of this proposal.

5.7   The Transformation Team will include the following posts:

- Transformation Lead;
- Project Manager;
- Business Analyst;
- Project Assistant.

5.8   The development of the transformation work programme will commence in May 2025 and recruitment will commence in advance of this so that the team is in place ready to start co-ordination and delivery of it.

5.9   Further specialist resources (both staff and technology) will be needed to deliver specific projects; businesses cases will be completed as and when required to support requests for additional funding.

6   Implications

6.1   Financial

A total of £200k has been budgeted for to set up the Transformation Team. Additional funding will be required in due course to deliver the improvements in technology required to support the transformation work programme. Funding has been set aside in reserves to cover some of this work and business cases will be required to support requests to call on these funds.

6.2   Legal

None

6.3   Human Resources

The transformation plan sets out the practical steps to delivery of transformation. A key part of this will be the process of bringing teams together ahead of TUPE transfers. The report sets out a summary of the stages leading up to the transfers themselves.

This process will be supported by the Human Resources team in line with relevant legislation and best practice and will have regard to our previous approach to shared service arrangements, incorporating those elements of employee information and consultation sessions which worked well.

With regard to the roles comprising the Transformation Team, these will need to be evaluated to determine the salary for each post. In order to undertake this exercise, job descriptions and person specifications will need to be produced. Once roles are graded, they can be recruited to as applicable, subject to confirmation of budget.

6.4   Risk Management

The delivery of the transformation work programme should help to address the organisation's capacity risk by creating efficiency savings.

Failure to deliver the transformation work programme will in itself be a risk and a comprehensive project plan and risk register will be established to manage this.

6.5   Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6   Health

None

6.7   Climate Change

None

7   Appendices

Appendix 1: Transformation Strategy

Appendix 2: Transformation Plan

Appendix 3: Digital Strategy

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 464411

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet: 28/11/24

Key Decision: Yes

Transformation Strategy

Introduction:

This document outlines the transformation strategy and vision for Stafford Borough and Cannock Chase District Councils, focusing on key themes of customer choice, service transformation, strengthening communities, a new target operating model, and digital innovation. The strategy aims to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable transformation programme by identifying the necessary steps, tools, stakeholders, and enablers. It also highlights strategic options, success measurement techniques, and leadership approaches to ensure successful implementation.

Vision:

Our authorities envision a transformed and resilient community where services are efficient and resident focused, communities are empowered, and digital innovation drives progress. Through effective transformation, we aim to create modern and agile councils that adapt to changing needs and advance the well-being of our residents.

Transformation Programme Objectives:

1.   Channel Shift: Enable residents to access services conveniently and efficiently through digital channels wherever possible.

2.   Service Transformation: Enhance service delivery by reimagining processes, optimising resources, enabling strong financial management and embracing technology to improve outcomes, resilience, efficiency and customer satisfaction.

3.   Strengthening Communities: Empower and engage communities, fostering inclusivity, social cohesion, and active participation in decision-making processes.

4.   New Target Operating Model: Develop and implement a modern and flexible target operating model that aligns resources, skills, and structures with strategic priorities.

5.   Digital Innovation: Embrace emerging technologies, data-driven decision-making, and digital transformation initiatives to drive efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation across all areas.

Steps to Implement the Transformation Programme:

1.   Assess the Current State: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing processes, services, and systems to identify areas for improvement and set a baseline for future measurement.

2.   Define Transformation Priorities: Prioritise areas that need transformation based on the criteria of impact, urgency, feasibility, statutory priorities, and alignment with strategic objectives.

3.   Engage Key Stakeholders: Identify and engage relevant stakeholders, including residents, businesses, community groups, employees, elected officials, and partners, to gain insights, build consensus, and ensure collaboration throughout the transformation journey.

4.   Develop a Transformation Roadmap: Create a detailed roadmap that outlines the sequence of initiatives, timelines, resource requirements, and dependencies for each transformation priority.

5.   Allocate Resources: Secure adequate financial, human, and technological resources to support the transformation programme and ensure its successful implementation.

6.   Establish Governance Structure: Set up a governance framework that provides clear roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes to oversee the transformation programme and monitor progress.

7.   Implement Initiatives: Execute the identified initiatives, focusing on process redesign, service digitisation, community engagement, organisational restructuring, and technological innovation.

8.   Measure and Monitor Progress: Establish performance indicators and monitoring mechanisms to track the progress and impact of the transformation programme against set objectives.

9.   Review and Refine: Regularly review the programme's effectiveness, gather feedback, identify areas for improvement, and refine the approach as necessary to ensure continuous transformational progress.

Key Enablers for Transformation:

1.   Programme Design and Management: Establish a dedicated transformation team with expertise in change management, project management, and stakeholder engagement to drive and oversee the programme effectively.

2.   Efficiency/Contract Management: Implement robust processes to enhance efficiency, optimise resources, and effectively manage contracts with service providers, suppliers, and partners.

3.   Financial Analyses/Forecasting/Planning: Conduct thorough financial analyses, forecast future funding requirements, and develop sound financial plans to support the transformation programme.

4.   Performance Management: Establish performance metrics, measurement frameworks, and reporting mechanisms to track progress, identify areas of success, and address performance gaps.

5.   Commissioning: Optimise service commissioning processes to ensure that resources are allocated effectively, services meet residents' needs, and outcomes are achieved.

6.   ICT/Informatics: Invest in modern and secure information and communication technology infrastructure, leverage data analytics, and enable digital innovation to transform services and operations.

7.   Customer/Stakeholder/Community Engagement: Foster a culture of customer focus, active stakeholder engagement, and community involvement through various channels, seeking feedback, and incorporating it into decision-making.

8.   Partnerships and Collaboration: Foster strategic partnerships and collaboration with other public sector organisations, private businesses, community groups, and academic institutions to leverage expertise, resources, and shared goals.

9.   Alternative Delivery Models: Explore innovative delivery models, such as public-private partnerships, social enterprises, and outsourcing, to optimise service delivery and achieve desired outcomes. Ensure that the implementation of shared services is a focus of all transformation work so that the benefits of the two organisations coming together are maximised. Be that through increased scale, expertise or sharing of best practice.

10. Organisational Development: Invest in developing the skills, capabilities, and leadership required for a transformed organisation, fostering a culture of innovation, agility, and continuous learning. This is to include the development of a trainee programme to enable succession planning and enhance skills and diversity of thinking within the organisation.

11. Investment Vehicles: Explore and utilise various funding mechanisms and investment vehicles, including grants, loans, public-private partnerships, and revenue generation models, to secure resources for transformation initiatives.

12. Asset Utilisation: Optimise the use of physical assets, such as buildings and infrastructure, through effective asset management strategies, including rationalisation, sharing, and repurposing.

Strategic Options for Transformation:

1.   Collaborative Partnerships: Collaborate with neighbouring districts, higher-tier authorities, and other organisations to share resources, pool expertise, and drive joint transformation initiatives.

2.   Evidence-driven Decision-making: Invest in data collection, analytics, and insights to inform evidence-based decision-making, identify trends, and drive targeted interventions.

3.   Digital Service Delivery: Transform service delivery by developing user-friendly digital platforms, mobile applications, and online portals that offer convenient and personalised access to services.

4.   Community Empowerment: Foster community engagement and participation through resident panels, and digital platforms, empowering residents to contribute to local decision-making.

5.   Agile Organisational Structures: Implement flexible organisational structures and governance models that promote collaboration, empower employees, and support rapid adaptation to changing circumstances. For example, this may be in response to a large project where employees are seconded, or specific skills of employees are being deployed.

6.   Innovation and Experimentation: Create a culture that encourages experimentation and innovation, promoting pilots and test-bed environments to explore new ideas and approaches.

Measuring Success:

1. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Define specific KPIs aligned with transformation objectives, such as resident satisfaction scores, service delivery metrics, cost of the transformation, savings delivered, alignment with/delivery of corporate objectives and digital adoption rates.

2. Baseline and Target Setting: Establish a baseline for each KPI and set ambitious yet achievable targets to measure progress and success.

3. Regular Reporting: Implement a reporting mechanism to regularly monitor and communicate progress against KPIs, providing transparency and accountability to stakeholders.

4. Feedback Mechanisms: Gather feedback from residents, businesses, employees, and other stakeholders through surveys, focus groups, and online platforms to assess the impact and effectiveness of transformation initiatives.

5. External Benchmarking: Benchmark against other district authorities, best practices, and national standards to gain insights, identify areas for improvement, and drive continuous performance enhancement.

6. Evaluation and Reviews: Conduct periodic evaluations and reviews of the transformation programme to identify lessons learned, celebrate successes, and make informed adjustments for future initiatives.

Leading the Transformation:

1. Leadership Commitment: Secure commitment from senior leaders, councillors, and key decision-makers to champion the transformation agenda, provide resources, and communicate the vision.

2. Change Management: Develop a change management strategy that encompasses communication, training, and support mechanisms to address resistance, build buy-in, and ensure successful adoption of new ways of working.

3. Empowering and Engaging Employees: Empower employees by involving them in the transformation process, providing training and development opportunities, and recognising their contributions.

4. Agile Decision-making: Establish agile decision-making processes that enable swift responses to changing circumstances, remove bureaucratic barriers, and foster a culture of innovation and experimentation.

5. Collaboration and Communication: Foster open and transparent communication channels, internally and externally, to engage stakeholders, share progress, address concerns, and celebrate achievements.

6. Continuous Learning and Improvement: Fostering a learning and reflective culture that encourages knowledge sharing, captures lessons learned, and promotes continuous improvement across the organisation.

Conclusion:

By implementing this transformation strategy, the councils aim to achieve the vision of a thriving community with resident-centric services and strengthened communities. The strategy emphasises the importance of prioritising transformation areas, engaging stakeholders, utilising key enablers, measuring success, and adopting effective leadership approaches. Through these efforts, the district authority will build a future-ready and resilient organisation that meets the evolving needs of their residents and fosters inclusive and sustainable development.

Transformation Plan

Our approach to transformation

This document supplements the transformation strategy and sets out how it will be delivered.

We will approach transformation both at a service level and corporately. This will be done through inter-linking workstreams.

Service level transformation

The starting point for service level transformation will be the bringing together of teams, services and processes through our shared services programme.

Each service will be responsible for developing an outline transformation plan. A template has been developed to support this and is attached at Appendix 1.

Once all of the outline transformation plans have been drafted, the Transformation Team will work with Heads of Service to prioritise the delivery of the transformation programme in order to maximise the efficient and effective use of resources and ensure cross service working.

Transformation Themes

The service level transformation will be supported by cross cutting / thematic transformation. This will be focussed around 6 key themes:
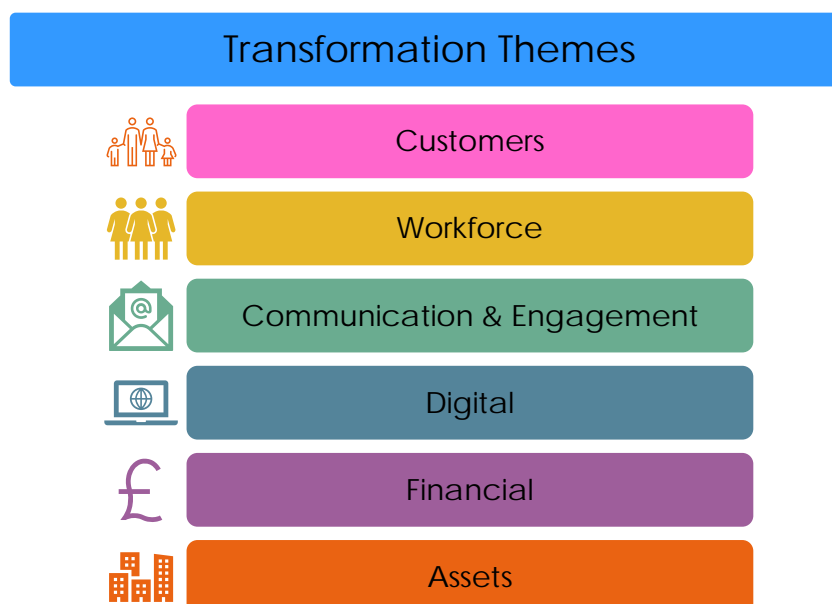
1. **Customers** - improving the services we deliver to our customers and how they access services will be at the heart of all transformation. This will include not just our external customers but internal customers too.

2. **Workforce** - our employees are key to the delivery of services. It is therefore essential that they have the appropriate skills and experience to do this or are given training and development opportunities. The welfare of our employees is also important, not just for productivity but for motivation and creativity to support continuous improvement.

3. **Communication & Engagement** - good internal and external communication and engagement will be key to the success of delivering transformation. It will be essential to understanding what our customers want, the views of our staff and Members and celebrating our successes along the way.

4. **Digital** - digital transformation will underpin a number of the other transformation themes set out below. There is a separate digital strategy which sets out our approach and work plans.

5. **Financial** - with increasing financial pressures, it is essential that opportunities to reduce costs or generate income are considered when transforming the way we do things. But financial transformation isn't limited to cost; it's also about the way we understand and manage the Council's finances, through budget management, effective procurement, seeking out external funding and considering the revenue consequences of any capital schemes.

6. **Assets** - the management of our physical assets (buildings, land, fleet and equipment) is a key component in the delivery of services. How we manage and make best use of these will also be central to delivering transformation.

Next steps & timeline

1.   Governance Arrangements

A Transformation Steering Group (Officers) will be set up, chaired by the Chief Executive.

The Steering Group will comprise:

- The Chief Executive
- The Deputy Chief Executive - Resources
- The Deputy Chief Executive - Place
- The Head of Transformation & Assurance

The Transformation Steering Group will report on progress to the Shared Services Joint Operational Board (to be renamed as the Transformation Board) (Members).

The Transformation Steering Group will act as the overarching Group for the working groups/operational boards for each of the 6 work areas as appropriate.

The Transformation Working Group will be chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive - Resources, supported by the Transformation Lead and will comprise representatives from:

- Technology;
- Human Resources;
- Finance;
- Customer Services;
- Corporate Assets (as appropriate)
- Representatives from frontline services as appropriate to each service area being transformed.

Internal Audit will also provide support where appropriate.

Communications will attend meetings as required and will assist with communicating progress with staff and celebrating successes.

Timescale:
- The Transformation Board will hold its first formal meeting in March 2025 and will meet quarterly thereafter or as necessary to approve key stages of the process.

2. Bringing the Teams Together

Informal meetings may be held between Heads of Service, Managers and teams. These should just be for getting to know each other.

Formal briefings will be arranged with HR and Trade Union colleagues to set the scene for transformation and explain the TUPE transfer process.

Meetings will be held with Heads of Service in advance of this to agree the scheduling of the TUPE transfers.

Timescale:
- Formal briefings to be held between January and March 2025.
- TUPE transfers to commence April 2025.

3. Service Level Agreements

Establishing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for each Council's services is essential to ensure that we have a clear understanding of current service levels and good foundations for transformation. This process will also help managers to understand the new service areas that they are taking on responsibility for and ensure consistency in the approach to the SLAs.

Budget information will form a key part of the SLA process and this will be complex for some services where budgets and cost codes do not align currently and/or are being changed as part of the new management structure.

Timescale:
- This work will be completed by December 2024.

4. **Service Transformation Plans**

Heads of Service will work with managers and their teams to complete the initial service transformation templates. It will be vital to engage with all employees so that they feel part of the process. A key part of this will be identifying a shared vision for the service, what the teams have in common, identify any known issues that they are hoping to overcome and what they hope to achieve through shared services.

This stage of the process is about scoping the scale of transformation work needed. It will seek to establish where there are fundamental differences in approach, where more minor changes of processes are needed etc. Information will need to be gathered about all aspects of the service and will start the process of prioritising what work needs to be done first. It will include identifying all processes, policies, contracts etc that will form part of the transformation process.

At this stage, we will also seek to challenge what services are currently provided and whether they need to continue to be delivered. In some areas, it may be appropriate to take an early decision (subject to Member approval where necessary) to cease to provide services/functions.

The outline transformation plans will be challenged by the Transformation Board to ensure that they are comprehensive.

Timescale:
- This work will be completed by end March 2025 with outline plans ready for the challenge process during April 2025.

5. **Transformation Programme**

Once all of the individual service outline transformation plans have been completed and signed off, the Transformation Team will meet with Heads of Service individually to assess the priorities for delivery. This process will take into account:

- capacity of relevant teams needed to support the transformation work e.g. IT;

- Cross cutting workstreams e.g. customer related processes;

- Potential impacts/ benefits of transformation e.g. efficiencies, financial savings, contribution to corporate priorities;

- Urgency e.g. key deadlines for statutory changes;

- Feasibility, complexity and interdependencies;

- Any funding needed to support the transformation work; and

- External factors e.g. IT systems no longer supported/ security risk.

The Transformation Team will assess the information and use it to develop the Corporate Transformation Programme. This will also include identifying cross cutting work streams that will support service transformation eg the move from paper based to digital files.

The Transformation Programme will change and evolve as we work through the process. It will be subject to quarterly reviews and progress reports to ensure that we remain focussed on our objectives and on track for delivery.

Timescale:
- This work will commence in May 2025 and should be completed by end June 2025 with the final plan ready for consideration and approval in July 2025.

6. Transformation Process

The transformation process will be focussed on improving service delivery and efficiency; it's not simply about aligning processes and policies across the two Councils.

The transformation process will be based on "lean thinking" techniques (or similar) for transactional processing services. For other services, we will look at best practice, benchmarking etc. In some cases, it may be necessary to consider alternative delivery models this may include bringing some services back in-house, outsourcing others, or partnership models.

As part of the transformation process, we will need to consider how we use the assets we currently have and whether they can be rationalised, shared etc.

7. Managing Change

Effect management of the transformation programme will be critical to its success. The key emphasis will be on:

- Good governance arrangements;
- Effective project management;
- Good communications and engagement with staff, Members, customers and stakeholders;
- Flexibility and adapting as we progress;
- Training and development to ensure we have the necessary skills; and
- Culture - empowering teams to try new ways of working and encouraging positivity.

Digital Strategy
2024-2028

Cannock **Chase** | **Stafford**
COUNCIL | BOROUGH COUNCIL

working together

Contents

Executive Summary

This strategy is designed to be a catalyst for technological innovation and change, propelling our organisation into the future. This will be achieved by ensuring that the necessary tools, policies, and people are in place to support.

The advances we are making with our 'cloud' systems (storing and accessing data and programmes over the internet rather than on local hard drives and servers) have created a solid foundation for the next five years, enabling us to think bigger and more creatively about the challenges and opportunities and how we are best positioned to benefit from them.

We are working to become digital, not just do digital.

This strategy sets out the necessary detail, guiding principles, and objectives. It contains the key achievements we will meet, ensuring critically important and interdependent milestones are managed to completion. It aims to leverage technology to enhance service delivery, improve efficiency, and foster collaboration between the two councils. One of the primary results of the strategy will be:

- The creation of a Customer Experience platform, a digital platform that pulls together integrated data and intelligent systems, enabling us to properly integrate and automate transactions for all our customers.

Creating a new Customer Experience Platform, giving easy access to all council data and customer information, integrating remaining systems into the new Customer Experience Platform and decommission redundant systems and servers held on site that have been replaced with the more agile solutions.

We will then have positioned staff to deal with more complex, high value demand and created more opportunities for adding value to the organisation, (currently unquantified), because of better management and interrogation of our data.

Vision

Our vision is to create a seamless digital experience for residents, businesses, and employees of Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council. Using technological solutions, we aim to deliver efficient services, empower communities and staff, and drive economic growth while maintaining high standards of governance and data security.

Strategic Objectives

The objectives for digital are:

- Provide a 24/7 public service available to customers wherever they are.
- Continue to drive engagement with our customers through more relevant digital channels. As well as Enhancing the quality and accessibility of services through those digital channels.
- Transforming the Technology department as we know it to become a Digital Services team.
- Moving from on-site provision of infrastructure to pure cloud and Software as a Service solutions (SaaS) and making this the standard approach moving forwards with new technology purchases
- Equip council staff with the necessary digital tools and skills to deliver services effectively, increase productivity, and adapt to changing work environments.
- Encourage innovation and experimentation with emerging technologies to address challenges, improve decision-making, and create value for stakeholders.
- Streamline internal processes, reduce administrative burden, and optimise resource utilisation through digital transformation.
- Leverage data analytics to gain insights, monitor performance, and make informed decisions that drive service improvements and innovation.
- Drive the council's green agenda by, for example, the purchase of recycled laptops, using cloud solutions which reduces council electricity usage and energy efficient technology solutions.

The strategy has been written to underpin the council's corporate business plans and define how we will meet these objectives.

Measuring Success

- All staff having access to information and data they can use to create and provide new services and improvements to existing services.

- Elevated levels of enrolment onto the newly created digital platform 'My Account' portal by customers and a preference for the digital channel.

- Receipt of customer feedback

- Reduced carbon footprint

Governance and Delivery

What follows outlines the proposed governance for ensuring delivery of this programme of projects.

- **Leadership Team**: will engage and support members and senior managers in understanding and embedding the principles set out in this strategy.

- **The Technology Program Board**: The Board will drive the delivery of the building blocks outlined above. The Delivery board will also agree prioritisation within the programme with service areas and transformation projects and obtain and manage the resources needed, thus ensuring delivery.

- **Service Areas:** will handle mapping and re-designing their processes to encompass channel shift and take advantage of the modern technology put in place as part of new strategies. Service areas are recognised as subject matter experts so they are best placed to design practical solutions which will improve customer service in their area.

Business Engagement

Users are keen to see innovative and intuitive solutions as part of a value for money Technology service. Technology is an enabler for future agile work and will support the cultural shift that is required across the organisation and assist in addressing business processes. This cultural shift will be underpinned by a digital first approach to problem solving, looking towards innovative use of existing tools or looking for new tools to remedy challenges or improve service delivery.

There is also recognition that to be a digital organisation, we need our staff to use technology in a more skilled and proficient way. Users need a range of support mechanisms to build the necessary confidence and competence to get the most out of the solutions available to them.

The technology and customer service teams need to respond to the evolving needs of its user base by adapting its support services and providing more innovative ways to assist users out of core hours. We also need to ensure greater sharing and collaboration of technical options with our business areas.

Thinking Digital

Improve Customer access to services

We will use new technology to deliver services tailored for residents and ensure peoples information follows them through their journey regardless of who they are interacting with.

We will achieve this by:

- o Developing a new customer portal to deliver better access to services online
- o Communicate with residents and stakeholders using language that is clear and easy to understand
- o Make services easier to find and access
- o Use automation to make services better

What this means for us:

- o Better access to services
- o More effective public services
- o Better informed residents

Enhance the use of Technology and new ways of working

We will build on existing ways of working, improving information flow between organisations supporting the council's ambitions.

We will achieve this by:

- o Ensuring information can be shared between organisations, adhering to information governance policies and processes
- o Investing in infrastructure to support the services we deliver
- o Take a proactive approach to dealing with cyber threats
- o Tools to allow working choices provided as standard based on role

What this means for us:

- o Confidence that data is protected
- o A modern forward thinking council

Develop our Workforce

Our modern infrastructure and skilled workforce will attract staff and businesses to the area.

We will achieve this by:

- o Introductory training for new staff on the use of hardware, software and systems used
- o Promotion of self-help through guides and videos on our 'Teams and 'Intranet' sites
- o Technical tips become part of global communication to encourage digital skills
- o Use the intranet more effectively
- o Invest in software to meet needs

What this means for us:

- o Confident digitally skilled workforce
- o New ideas that improve services
- o Make the best use of our assets

Current Customer Experience

The services currently delivered by the Technology service are reflective of an era where users primarily work in a council office environment and are connected to a fixed network point or use corporate Wi-Fi to gain access to information, systems, and applications. Mobile working is available; however, it is not found everywhere due to budget limitations, network constraints, not being intuitive, and it also has some constraints around application suitability.

The provision of the current desktop, delivered by Remote Desktop Servers, has enabled many users to work in a more flexible way, as they can access a "virtual desktop" wherever they have internet connectivity.

Our users can often have two or even three phones: the traditional fixed desk telephone for office working and one or more mobile phones for business private use. Each device has a different number that makes contacting someone more complicated than it needs to be.

The estate of applications comprises of several core applications and specific business applications. Not all the functionality of these systems is being utilised and, in many cases, only basic functionality has been exploited. This partial use of systems can be symptomatic of a poor return on investment in a product and has led to business areas requesting and relying on bespoke applications as an alternative to provide missing features or functional gaps.

Traditionally applications are purchased for a specific business unit's requirement, resulting in application and data silos. These applications cannot work with each other without costly integration that were not factored in at the time of procuring them.

Many of our staff deliver services to our residents and businesses 24/7. These users are still constrained by the technical support team, only being available during office hours. The Technology service has access to a range of self-service solutions to support customers and needs to look at what is of most benefit, to address this gap.

The user base has a wide range of abilities and confidence in using the technology; where this is limited or less advanced, in some cases it can prevent efficiencies from being fully achieved and opportunities are missed in identifying where ICT or data sharing could make a real difference to the value of a service.

Security and compliance standards are also of prime importance to the authority and its residents and in many cases, there are national standards that define the required controls that ensure that the delivery of solutions is secure.

Understanding Customers

People have more access to technology today in the form of smartphones, enhanced home appliances, and the internet where they can see and buy anything.

The diagram below shows the online presence of residents in the UK as of January 2023; mobile devices have overtaken laptop computers as the most used device type and is continuing to rise with a rise of +1.2million mobile connections against last year.
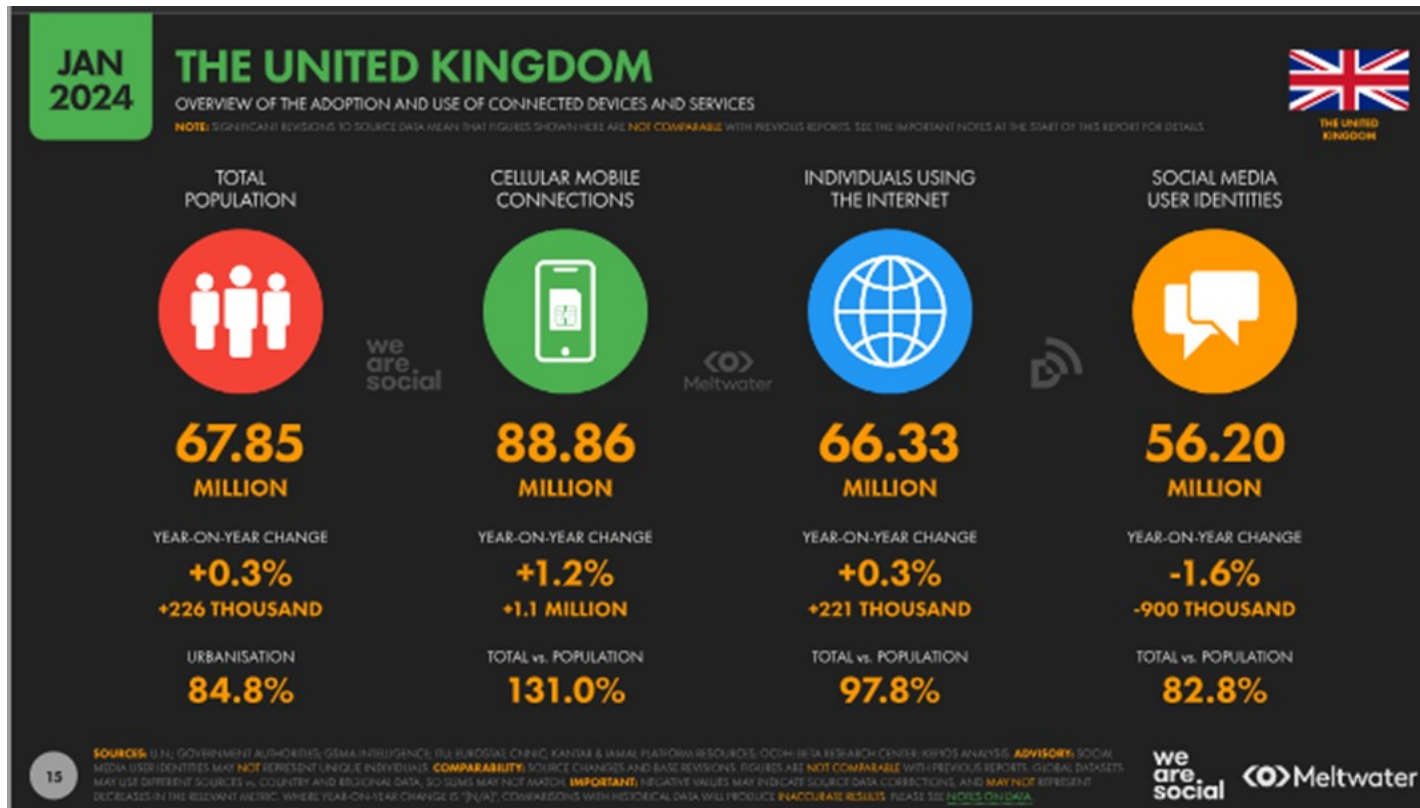
Customers expect things to be available all the time with clever, fast delivery of information.

As an organisation we need to ensure we are ready to meet the increasing demand of these customers while also dealing with more complex queries.

The diagram below shows the demands of today's customers and their grand expectations of a digital first experience.
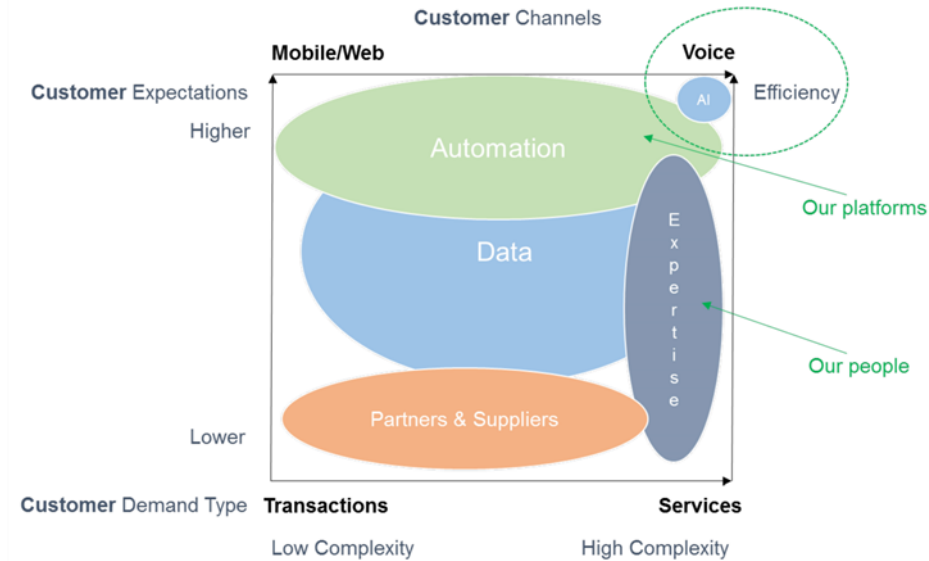
Complex needs are currently met by our staff, experts, however new emerging technologies such as voice activated services and online chats are becoming more efficient at delivering some of these services, backed up by our data.

Basic transactional requests are currently automated to a degree, with some re-keying involved; customers still have high expectations of these. As expectations increase, more complex services will be delivered by people along with some artificial intelligence (AI) voice control.

In time, artificial intelligence and voice activated channels will provide the highest level of efficiencies (circled in green above)

We will utilise partners to create less visible but still important activities which give value to our customers.

This is further reinforced by the chargeable Garden Waste sign up process taken up by residents in Stafford and Cannock.

The Aging Population

The combined authorities have more than 233,000 residents, 20% (1 of 5) of those residents who are over 65, 12% being over the age of 74. With an aging population comes additional social care and health needs for individuals, combined with the difficulties that come with living alone. This needs to be recognised by our strategy.

New processes and technology will free up resources to spend more time dealing with elderly and vulnerable residents across the borough/district. Advanced smart technology, for example, Alexa and other voice activated systems, can be incorporated to meet social needs. This will enable customers to ask questions, for example, "Alexa when is my bin being collected.'

Meeting Customer Need

Reception should give visitors a positive impression and feel; the recent pandemic has seen our reception areas closed with residents and customers having to use online services; this has highlighted where current processes for frontline services have failed to keep up with the channel shift.

Customers expect the 'Amazon' type experience when using online services, being able to book and pay for the services while having the ability to chat with a customer service agent. Expectations are now such that residents have a video consultation with a doctor rather than attending the surgery.

To meet this new expectation the council has invested in a modern, fit for purpose, Customer Platform.

- Intuitive user interface
- Cloud based accessible on any device.
- Management reporting and data.
- Customer information is all in one place – the 'golden thread.'
- The ability to track queries online.
- The ability to book and pay for services online.

The platform has the ability for all systems to work together with ease of access and facilities for continuous improvement and better communication with our residents and stakeholders.

The meeting of customer need will always ensure that while there is focus on digital and a move to digital first no one will be left behind or unable to access customer services. Other non-digital means of accessing services will be maintained where there is a user need to ensure that services remain available to all.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Whilst AI is developing quickly now it is a very resource intensive and expensive tool in the main. The council, where possible, will explore the use of AI. Taking this into account, Artificial Intelligence (AI) could benefit the councils in several ways. For example, it would:

- supply more accurate information leading to better outcomes.
- improve public services - for example personalising public services to adapt to individual circumstances.
- automate simple, manual tasks which frees up time to spend on innovative ways to improve services.

AI cannot be imaginative or consider the emotional aspects of a situation. In some cases, the financial aspect of releasing an AI process may be unrealistic as a form, with some simple logic, may be quicker and cheaper to provide.

AI systems also need to be compliant with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018. For AI to work and to support ongoing business decisions it needs access to relevant data. Our data will need to be assessed for its quality, accuracy, validity, relevancy, completeness, and consistency.

Emerging voice technologies such as 'Alexa' Google, and 'Siri' will be developed and integrated with applications such as waste to enable customers to ask questions, for example 'Alexa when is my bin being collected'.

Conclusion

The successful implementation of the digital strategy for the shared service requires a coordinated and collaborative approach, strong leadership, and ongoing commitment to innovation and excellence in service delivery. By leveraging technology to enhance efficiency, transparency, and engagement, we can become a more connected, resilient, and responsive organisation that meets the needs and expectations of our communities now and in the future.

Summary

Key Messages
- Provide the same experience to internal and external customers.
- Recognising that data collection and sharing is key to achieving organisational aims.
- Staff become experts in our business, our customers, and the use of our systems.
- Specialised staff become experts in our data, turning it into information we can use.
- Security controls are transparent from the start, focusing on visibility, not deniability.
- Ensuring that "green" decision making is embedded throughout the technology decision making process.

Overall Outcomes
- To shift to a digital customer service experience within a data driven environment.
- Focusing on serving customers, mobilising the workforce, and increasing the level of organisational expertise.
- Automate cloud-based services and solutions reducing the reliance on the internal infrastructure.
- Make the most of our data, interrogating it to provide value to all while also supporting the business.
- Where possible, we will use the same system for all that we do, reducing platforms and tools while improving skills to meet demands from our customers.
- Customers can see their own data and self-service.
- Reduced carbon footprint from the use of technology.
- Reduce avoidable contact to the contact centre to allow officers time to deal with other aspects of the role.

Key work streams that need to be fed into the overall transformation program.

1. Improving Services and Customer Access
2. Leadership of Place
3. Support Members to be effective community leaders.
4. Empower Staff to deliver Services.
5. Reducing costs and Increase Income.
6. Quality Assurance

Author(s):

Sarah Warren

Chris Forrester

Contributors:

References/Sources:

Government Digital Strategy

SCC Population demographics - [Population demographics and adult social care needs (all adults) - Staffordshire County Council](#)

We are Digital UK - [Digital 2024 United Kingdom (February 2024)](#)

Community Infrastructure Levy Ward Funding - Playground Resurfacing Works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 28 November 2024

Report of: Head of Economic Development and Planning

Portfolio: Regeneration and High Streets

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To seek Cabinet approval to allocate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Ward Funding for playground resurfacing works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre.

1.2   To obtain Cabinet approval and permission to spend CIL Ward funding to fund the playground resurfacing works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre.

1.3   To update costs associated with the Chadsmoor High Street project.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That Cabinet authorises the allocation of £5,846.74 from the Chadsmoor Ward Community Infrastructure Levy ward fund to fund the resurfacing works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre.

2.2   That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Economic Development and Planning to agree a timeframe to implement and complete the agreed works.

2.3   That Cabinet approves an additional £5,946.91 towards the Chadsmoor High Street project representing Staffordshire County Council costs in designing, developing, and delivering the project.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.4   The Council collects CIL contributions from development within the district in line with the CIL Charging Schedule and The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

2.5   An element of these contributions is collected as neighbourhood funds to fund improvements within a parish or ward. The Council retains CIL monies collected for Chadsmoor and is responsible for the allocation of funds to eligible projects. The formal allocation of funds requires Cabinet approval.

3   Key Issues

3.1   The Council collects CIL contributions from development carried out within the district. A proportion of these contributions (15% or 25% where the area is covered by a neighbourhood plan) are allocated and available to either a parish fund where the development was undertaken or a ward fund where the development was carried out in an unparished area. In parished areas, funds are

transferred to the relevant parish council and where there is no parish council, ward funds are the responsibility of the Council as the Collecting Authority.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

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

Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity - attract investment to develop the District's economy, rejuvenate our town centres.

Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing - provide opportunities for residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles and recognise the importance of mental health and wellbeing.

Priority 3 - The Community - ensure our communities are well designed, accessible, and inclusive environments.

5   Report Detail

5.1   Community Infrastructure Levy is a tariff-based planning charge levied on new development to fund infrastructure to support sustainable development in the area. The level of contributions is set by the Council based on needs identified through plan-making and set at a level to not affect development viability. The Council approved the CIL Charging Schedule and Regulation 123 List (now CIL Infrastructure List) of infrastructure projects at its meeting on 15th April 2015. CIL came into effect on 1st June 2015.

5.2   CIL contributions have been collected and retained since its introduction until a sufficient amount was accumulated to invite bids from sponsors of projects within the CIL Infrastructure List and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The process of bidding and evaluation was introduced from 2019 when the first allocations were considered and the Member Officer group that would oversee the decision-making process was established. Recommendations from the group are included in the Council's Cabinet report pertaining to annual budget setting.

5.3   CIL neighbourhood fund is used as the collective term for the 15% (or 25% where a neighbourhood plan has been adopted) CIL contribution received for distribution to the parish or ward where development is taking place. The neighbourhood element is intended to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area as defined in CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

5.4   In relation to the non-parished parts of the district the process requires consultation with ward members to identify priorities on which the 15% local funding can be spent as well as project ideas. Proposals for projects would be invited on an individual ward basis provided that funds had been generated from CIL in that ward. The project proposed within Chadsmoor has support from ward members.

5.5   Projects seeking CIL funding including the neighbourhood fund element need to demonstrate a connection to Local Plan policies alongside an assessment of the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the project. This should be

accompanied by evidence of cost, deliverability and arrangements for ongoing maintenance and management as revenue funds are not deemed to be eligible.

5.6   The Chadsmoor ward has accumulated the sum of £138,897.10 from CIL eligible developments within the ward. If £5,846.74 allocation is approved for the playground resurfacing works at West Chadsmoor Family centre a balance of £133,050.36 would remain to deliver future approved projects.

5.7   Members of the former Cannock East Ward identified the playground resurfacing works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre as a focus for improvement. The project is to replace the safety surfacing in the children's playground which is worn and in need of repair. The garden is used by all families who attend the activities at the centre and is used by the local community when the organisation is open. The playground equipment needs to be replaced as a safeguarding concern for the children playing. There have been 2,042 attendees over the last 12 months. The overall costs from a quotation received are £7,096.74 and £1,250 has been received in match funding. The applicants have approached a contractor specialised in this work and are happy to proceed with the quotation supplied.

5.8   The playground resurfacing works will be carried out on land controlled by West Chadsmoor Family Centre who maintain the land. The work will improve the play area, making it safe for the children in the local area to play on.

5.9   Cabinet approved the Chadsmoor High Street project at its meeting on 26th September 2024 and a budget of £23,100.73 was identified. The costs identified related to the delivery of physical works on site and did not include the costs of Staffordshire County Council. The additional costs were not included and relate to design and development work to date and a projection to cover fees that will be incurred to deliver the project.

5.10   The total allocation towards the Chadsmoor High Street project will now be £29,047.64. The project will be delivered early 2025 while lead-in work is carried out in preparation for delivery.

6   Implications

6.1   Financial

The Chadsmoor Ward Community Infrastructure Levy fund currently has a balance of £138,897.10 available for allocation. This report is seeking £5,846.74 and £5,946.91 from the Chadsmoor Ward CIL fund for playground resurfacing works at West Chadsmoor Family Centre and fees for the Chadsmoor High Street Improvements project. If approved this will leave a balance of £127,103.45 within the ward funding to deliver future approved projects.

There are no direct financial implications for the Council as a result of this report.

6.2   Legal

Legal implications are set out within the report.

6.3   Human Resources

There are no direct implications on human resources.

6.4   **Risk Management**

The centre is in receipt of a detailed quotation. This has informed the application for funding that highlights the main areas of risk being cost escalation resulting in insufficient funding. Should this be the case, a revised CIL application form would be required to provide a revised funding request.

The West Chadsmoor Family Centre will have responsibility for the management and maintenance of the play area. The contractor will need to provide appropriate warranties and assurances that the works have been carried out to the required industry standards. Officers have advised the centre of this and having viewed the quotation documents; this appears to be in order.

6.5   Equality and Diversity

There are no direct implications.

6.6   Health

There are no specific health impacts identified although the provision of an improved and safer High Street will contribute to improved health outcomes.

6.7   Climate Change

There are no direct implications on Climate Change as a result of this report.

7   Appendices

None

8   Previous Consideration

Cannock Chase Community Infrastructure Levy Funding Decisions Protocol - Cabinet - 23 July 2015.

Cannock Chase Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule - Cabinet - 15 April 2015.

9   Background Papers

Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, as amended in 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016 and 2019.

Contact Officer:	Julie Purle
Telephone Number:	01543 464 485
Ward Interest:	Chadsmoor
Report Track:	Cabinet: 28/11/24
Key Decision:	No

Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2024
Report of:	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
Portfolio:	Housing and Corporate Assets

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To confirm Cabinet authority for disposal of the of the freehold interest in Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge, Rugeley.

1.2 To request funding of £130,000 + VAT for the necessary works associated with the separation of the water supply, fencing, utility connections; relocation of a lamp post on site; provision of new welfare facilities for Cemetery Operatives and allow for a 10% contingency sum.

2 Reason for Appendix 2 being 'Not for Publication'

2.1 In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the report Appendix 2 is considered 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:

- Exempt Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

3 Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet confirms an open market disposal of the freehold interest in Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge, Rugeley on terms and conditions to be agreed by the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets.

3.2 That Cabinet approves the works associated as outlined below:

- New Water Supply: £69,597.29 + VAT

- New Welfare Facilities: £26,740.55 + VAT

- New Boundary Fencing: £8,060.00 plus VAT

- Utility connections: £11,708.14 plus VAT

- Relocate Lamp post: £900.00 + VAT

- 10% Contingency: £11,700.60

- **Total Project Costs £128,706.588 + VAT**

Reasons for Recommendations

3.3   Cabinet have previously approved a report to dispose of Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge. A business decision was made to move away from having a live in Sexton and to outsource the opening and closing of the cemetery.

3.4   The report also detailed recommendations to provide on-site Cemetery Operatives with a purpose-built modular building elsewhere within the cemetery site.

3.5   External agents have expressed the view that Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge would be attractive to potential residential purchasers. The proposed sale of this property will not only avoid ongoing maintenance and security costs but should also generate a capital receipt, the level of which will be determined by market demand (Appendix 1).

4   Key Issues

4.1   The proposal set out in the original Cabinet report envisaged a substantial capital receipt for the Council. The water supply issue was not known at the time Cabinet agreed to the disposal.

4.2   The Head of Operations has confirmed that the requirement for Cemetery Operatives to have a building onsite to accommodate welfare and office facilities. Previous costs of constructing a purpose-built building were anticipated at £60,000.

4.3   Members of the public currently have the opportunity to view burial records on-site on an ad-hoc occurrence and this is not something that happens on a daily basis. However, moving forward arrangements can be made for records to be viewed at the Civic Centre, Cannock.

4.5   In August 2024 the Council was advised that the Secretary of State had received a request under the Right to Contest Legislation (the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980) in relation to the Lodge. The request asked MHCLG to consider ordering disposal of land / property.

4.6   Following submission by the Council of the requested information to enable the MHCLG to consider the request, an Order for disposal was **not** given on the basis that the Council has a timetable for disposal.

4.7   The Council will undertake the necessary works following exchange of the sale contract but prior to completion.

5   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

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

   (i)   **Priority 4 - Responsible Council** - by making the best use of our assets and by being a responsible Council that lives within its means and is accountable for its actions.
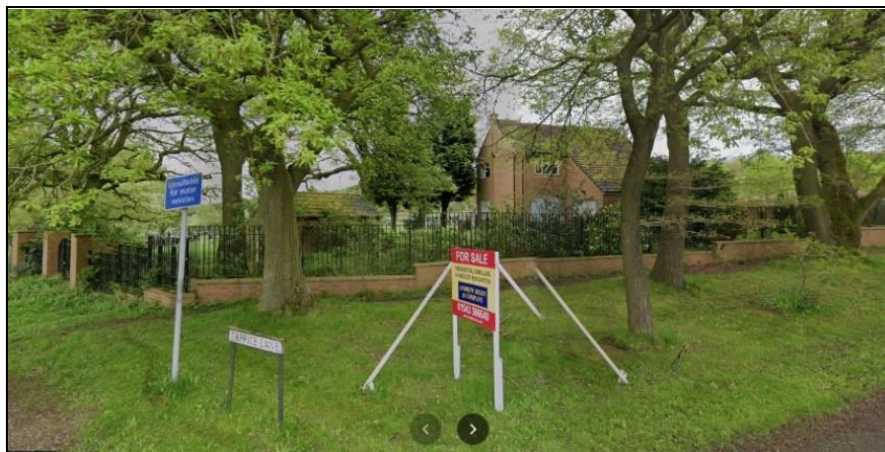
6 Report Detail

6.1 **Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge**

a. Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge is located near the cemetery entrance, fronting onto Stile Cop Road, Rugeley:

b. The Lodge is a two-storey residential dwelling with a single storey staff office and mess room area attached.

c. The Lodge has already been exposed to the open market via a local property agent and a number of offers for the property were received by the Council in mid-2023. Expressions of interest in the site have continued to be received by the Council.

Works to Facilitate a Sale of The Lodge

The following works are required to facilitate a sale of the lodge:

- Water - the Lodge shares its water supply with the cemetery and the cemetery water meter is approximately ¼ mile away on the edge of the Pear Tree Estate. In 2019, a quote from the water authority to separate the Lodge water supply from the cemetery was £58,000. In addition to this will be costs for altering the water supply connections to both the lodge and the cemetery. Allow a budget of £69,597.29 + VAT.

- New Welfare Facilities - The Cemetery Operatives will be displaced once the Mess Room is disposed of. The provision of a New Build Anti Vandal Welfare Container is of a significantly lower cost than building new welfare facilities (£60,000). Allow for a budget of £26,740.55.

- Fencing - Over 60m of new boundary fencing is required to fully separate the Lodge from the cemetery. Allow a budget of £8060.00 + VAT.

- Utility Connections - Connection to the new Welfare Facilities from the existing toilet block and re-connection of the supply to the Lamp Post. Allow a budget of £11,708.14.

- Relocate Lamp Post - one of the Lamp post's leading into the Cemetery is within the curtilage of the Lodge. Allow a budget of £900.00 + VAT.

Summary

It is therefore recommended that Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge is confirmed as surplus to Council requirements and offered for sale on the open market.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial

The financial implications are outlines in the attached "Not for Publication" Appendix 2.

7.2 Legal

Section 123 Local Government Act 1972 prevents the disposal of Council land for a consideration less than the best that can reasonably be obtained, other than by way of a short tenancy or with the consent of the Secretary of State.

7.3 Human Resources

None.

7.4 Risk Management

None.

7.5 Equalities and Diversity

None.

7.6 Health

None.

7.7 Climate Change

None

8   Appendices

Appendix 1 - Stile Cop Sexton's Lodge Plans

9   Previous Consideration
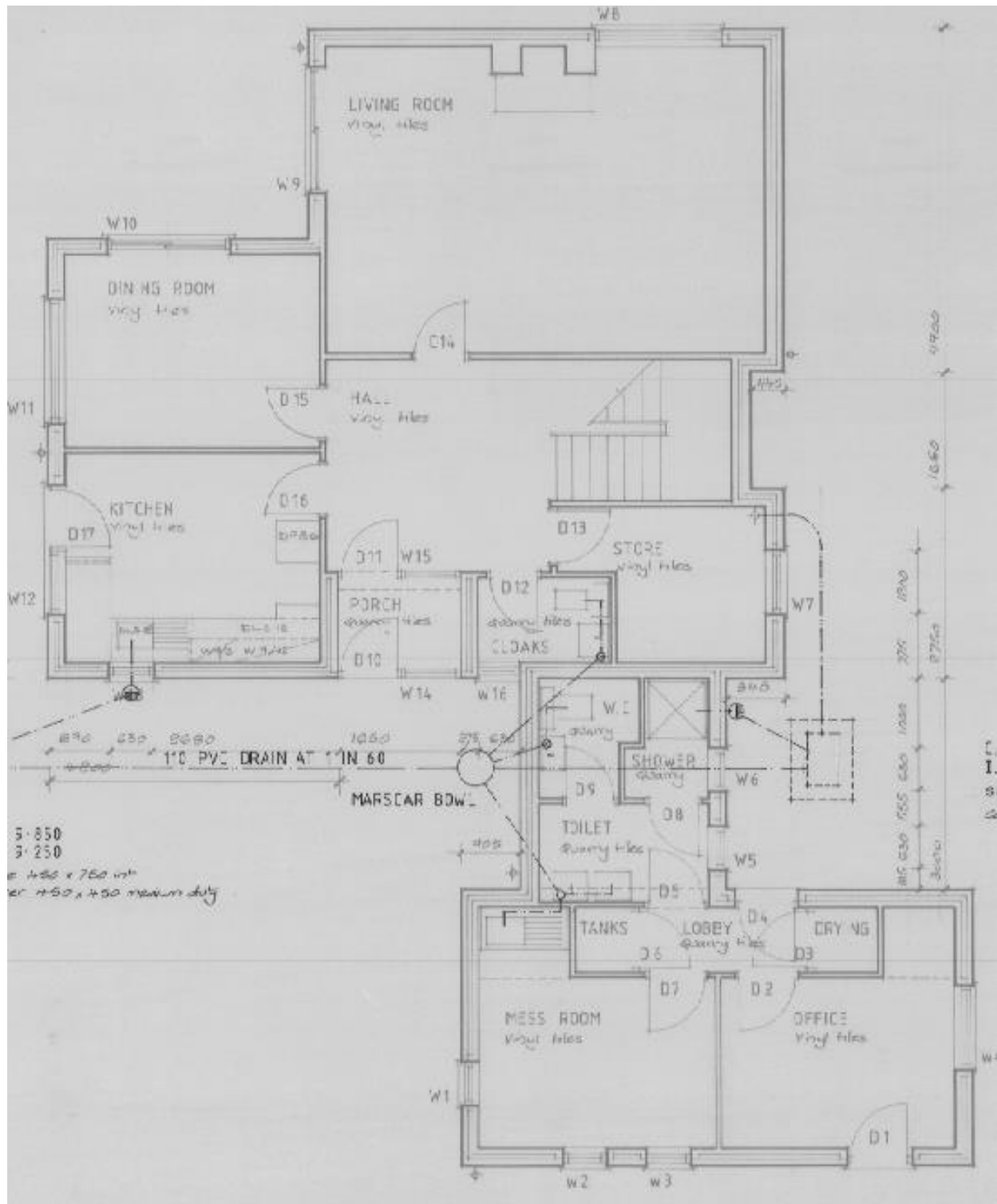
None.

10   Background Papers

Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge, Stile Cop Road, Rugeley, Cabinet, 23 August 2018

Contact Officer: Nirmal Samrai

Telephone Number: (01543) 464 210

Ward Interest: Western Springs

Report Track: Cabinet: 28/11/24
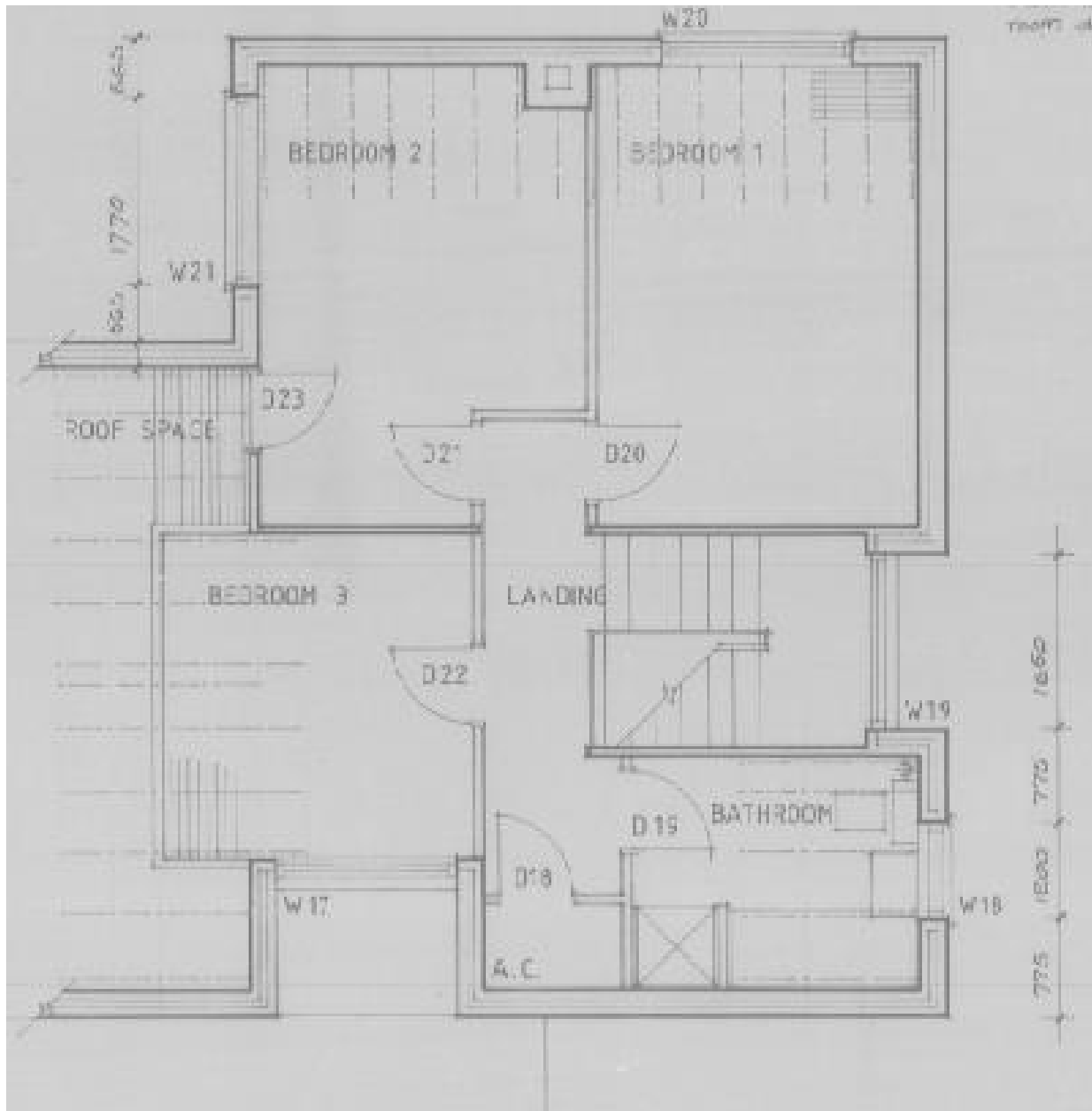
Key Decision: No

STILE COP SEXTON'S LODGE PLANS

Ground Floor:

STILE COP SEXTON'S LODGE PLANS

First Floor:

Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	28 November 2024
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive – Resources
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To inform Cabinet of the performance of the Revenues and Benefits Service as regards:

- The collection of Council Tax during the first half of the financial year.

- The collection of Business Rates during the first half of the financial year.

- The recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit during the first half of the financial year.

1.2   To seek approval to the write-off of the arrears listed in the **confidential Appendix 1.**

2   Reasons for Appendix 1 being 'Not for Publication

2.1   In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), report Appendix 1 is considered 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:

- Exempt Paragraph 1 – Information relating to any individual.

- Exempt Paragraph 2 – Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

- Exempt Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

3   Recommendations

3.1   That the information regarding collections be noted.

3.2   That the arrears listed in the **confidential Appendix 1** be written off.

Reasons for Recommendations

3.3   Efficient collection of the Council's revenues is of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by our preceptors.

3.4   Whilst our collection rates are traditionally good, regrettably not all of the monies owed to the Council can be collected and this report contains a recommendation to write off bad debts which cannot be recovered**.**

4 Key Issues

4.1 Council Tax due for the 2024/2025-year amounts to £66.7M of which some **54.6%** was collected by the end of September. This is similar to last year's performance in the same period (54.7%).

4.2 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £38.6M of which some **54.9%** was collected by the end of September, showing a marginal decrease on the previous year (55.1%).

5 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

5.1 Not applicable.

6 Report Detail

6.1 **Council Tax**

6.1.1 Council Tax is collected on behalf of the District Council, Parish Councils, and our Major Preceptors (Staffordshire County Council and Commissioner for Police, Crime, Fire and Rescue). The effect of the Collection fund arrangements means that Cannock Chase Council retains around 12.4% of the council tax collected.

6.1.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounts to £66.7M and we have collected 54.6% within the first half of the year. This compares well to the 54.7% at the corresponding time last year, given that temporary increases in Local Council Tax Reduction were applied in the 2023-24 year.

6.1.3 In accordance with the Council's approved policies, all reasonable and lawful attempts are made to recover all amounts due. In the first instance this involves the issue of bills, reminders, and final notices, followed by Summonses in the Magistrates Court where the warning notices are not effective. At all stages of this process, debtors are encouraged to engage in voluntary arrangements to repay their arrears, to prevent the need for formal action.

Where necessary and when Liability Orders are granted by Magistrates, the Council uses its powers to make deductions from earnings and benefits of debtors, where it can, and instructs Enforcement Agents where such deductions are not possible or appropriate.

In the most severe cases and for debts exceeding £5,000, the Council will consider personal bankruptcy action against individuals.

6.1.4 The recovery powers available to the Council are considerable but not completely infallible. Some of the limitations which lead to debts being written off are described below.

6.1.5 Statutory safeguards such as Debt Relief Orders, Individual's Voluntary Arrangements exist to protect debtors suffering hardship, to attempt to the expensive, stressful, and sometimes ineffective process of personal bankruptcy. Where a debt is included in such an instrument, or when a debtor is bankrupt, our ordinary recovery powers cannot be used.

6.1.6 For any of our powers to be effective we need to know the whereabouts of a debtor, and this is not always the case. Where debtors abscond, we will use all reasonable endeavours to trace them and are often successful in doing so. Unfortunately, on occasions this is not so, and we must submit a debt for write off.

Our trace procedures include;

- Checking our internal Council systems and following any information which may help us to trace the debtor.

- Use of credit reference agency data.

- Trace and collect facilities offered by our Enforcement Agencies

- Visits to the last known address by the Council's Property Inspector and use of external tracing agents.

Unfortunately, legislation does not currently permit access to DWP or HMRC records to trace Council Tax debtors or their employers, though a Cabinet Office project is currently reviewing this.

Data protection legislation allows us to receive information as to a debtor's whereabouts, but we cannot disclose information to other creditors. Reciprocal arrangements with utility companies and similar are not therefore workable.

6.1.7 No Council Tax debts are listed in the confidential appendix to this report.

6.2 Business Rates

6.2.1 Business rates income forms a part of the Council's core funding, with around 29% of receipts being retained by this Council. The remainder is collected on behalf of Central Government and our major preceptors.

6.2.2 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £38.6M of which some **54.9%** was collected by the end of September. This represents a marginal decrease on last year's performance of (55.1%). There is no obvious single reason for this marginal reduction as recovery action has been taken against defaulters in the usual way. Officer will work hard to try to reverse the dip, in the second half of the year.

6.2.3 The recovery powers available to us are again contained in the Council's approved policies and are used in full. Those powers and our procedures are similar to the council tax powers described above, with the exception that deduction from individuals' benefits and earnings are not permissible, even if the debtor is an individual.

6.2.4 Where rates are owed by an individual, similar safeguards exist for the debtors and trace facilities are used by the Council for absconding debtors, as described above.

6.2.5 Additionally, in the case of business rates, as has been reported to Cabinet previously, our collection efforts are sometimes frustrated by weaknesses in legislation. Rates are due from the occupiers rather than the owners of property and where the occupier is a company, we can only recover from that company. Some proprietors will strip a company of its assets or dissolve the company before

we have had an opportunity to implement our recovery procedures. A new company is then formed in a similar style, to trade from the same premises.

Central Government has previously undertaken to review the loopholes that exist in rating and company legislation, though no changes have yet been received. Your officers continue to actively monitor these issues.

6.2.6 2 Irrecoverable business rates debts in the sum of £55,667.23 are listed in the **confidential appendix 1** to this report.

6.3 Housing Benefit Overpayments

6.3.1 The Council manages the Housing Benefit scheme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, who fund the cost of benefits paid to claimants.

6.3.2 Sometimes a claimant will be paid too much Housing Benefit, for example when the Council does not become aware of a change of circumstances until after the claimant has been paid the benefit. This is called an Overpayment of Housing Benefit. The Council is expected to recover these overpayments from the claimant in all but a few limited circumstances. DWP will fund only 40% of benefit which is overpaid as a result of claimant error or fraud.

6.3.3 Where an overpayment occurs as a result of a local authority error, DWP will provide 100% funding provided our error rate remains below a threshold of 0.48% of benefit paid, as it has routinely done for many years.

6.3.4 Recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit continues to progress well, with some £193K being collected into the Council's General Fund in the first half of the financial year.

6.3.5 There are no irrecoverable Benefit Overpayment debts included in the confidential appendix to this report.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial

Under the Business Rates Retention Scheme, business rates write offs will no longer be offset against the National Non-Domestic Rating Pool. Write offs will now form part of the costs of collection of business rates.

Council Tax write offs are losses to the Collection Fund and, as such, form part of the cost of collection incurred by this Council. There are no Council Tax write-offs on this report.

The amounts being recommended are well below the value of the bad debt provision, which the Council includes within its accounts in expectation that some amounts owed will not be paid and cannot be recovered.

The cost of collecting the debts has been considered as part of the decision to put them forward for write off. If further information does come forward about the whereabouts of any of the individual debtors, the Council will pursue recovery action.

Cabinet is asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommenced.

7.2 Legal

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommenced.

7.3 Human Resources

None

7.4 Risk Management

The risk issues contained in this report are not strategic and therefore should not be included in the Strategic Risk Register.

7.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

7.6 Health

None

7.7 Climate Change

None

8 Appendices

Confidential Appendix 1: Business Rate write offs over £10,000.

9 Background Papers

None

10 Previous Consideration

None

Contact Officer:	Rob Wolfe
Telephone Number:	01543 464 397
Ward Interest:	None
Report Track:	Cabinet: 28/11/24
Key Decision:	No