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27 November 2025

Dear Councillor,

Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

6:00pm, Tuesday 9 December 2025

Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

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

Yours sincerely,

T. Clegg
Chief Executive

To: Councillors:

Todd, D. (Chair)
Mawle, D. (Vice-Chair)
Bullock, L. Hill, J.O.
Craddock, R. Johnson, T.
Fisher, P. Lyons, O.
Haden, P. Thompson, S.
Hill, J.

Agenda

Part 1

1. Apologies

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

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

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2025 (enclosed).

4. Cannock Chase College

Kirk Hookham and Claire Boliver (South Staffordshire College) will give a presentation providing a general overview of the courses available and the skills required in the district

5. Quarter 2 2025/26 Performance Update - Economic Prosperity PDP

To receive the Quarter 2 performance update for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan (Item 3.1 - 3.6).

The documents included are as considered by Cabinet on 4 December 2025.

6. Update on Local Plan

The Development and Policy Manager will provide an update.

7. Update on the Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Review

The Committee will receive an update in respect of the review.

8. Town Centre Regeneration update

The Head of Economic Development and Planning will provide an update.

9. Building Control Staffing and Performance

Briefing Note of the Head of Regulatory Services (Item No. 4.1 - 4.4)

10. Review of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 25/26

The Head of Economic Development and Planning will provide an update on the Work Programme.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Held on Wednesday 16 September 2025 at 6:00pm
in the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

Todd, D. (Chair)
Mawle, D. (Vice-Chair)
Fisher, P. Lyons, O.
Haden, P. Thompson, S.
Hill, J. Thornley, S.
Hill, J.O.

Also present: Councillor M. Freeman - Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader

The Chair advised that the meeting was being recorded in accordance with Section 40 of the Council's Constitution, specifically the Protocol for Recording, Filming and Social Media at Meetings.

She also advised that the order of the agenda would be amended, and the Town Centre Regeneration Update would be considered as the first item.

7. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Bishop and L. Bullock.

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

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made and no party whip declarations were received.

9. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2025 be approved.

10. Town Centre Regeneration Update

The Head of Economic Development and Planning provided a verbal update which gave an overview of the current position regarding the regeneration of Cannock town centre.

He advised that officers were continuing to work hard to take the redevelopment project forward. Good progress had been made in respect of Phase 1 with the demolition of the Multi Storey car park progressing at pace. The planning application for the demolition of the Forum Shopping Centre was being processed, and it was anticipated that this would be submitted to the Planning Control Committee in October.

Cabinet approval had been granted under Phase 1 of the project to undertake highways works in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council and AMEY. This included the

Northern Gateway improvements to remove the subway and create a pedestrian crossing, café and steps and improve the Beecroft Road car park. The tender from AMEY for carrying out these works was currently being looked at, and it was hoped that a view could be taken on this in the next few months.

The project involved a lot of demolition works to create a redevelopment space. A more detailed development framework had been produced, and an Investment Prospectus was launched at the UKREiiF development event in May. This set out potential uses for the cleared sites and improvements to the public realm. Arising from the event significant interest had been generated in the redevelopment of Cannock town centre. Several follow-up meetings had taken place with interested developers and operators. It was anticipated that there would be a move towards appointing an operator/developer towards the end of the year and Cabinet would be presented with a report outlining the strategy.

He further advised that clarification had been received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with regards to the Levelling Up Fund monies which had been secured. The system had been simplified, and the Council had been given flexibility to use the LUF funding to deliver the project without the need to seek further approvals to make any amendments. The scheme must still be delivered against certain output indicators, and the money would need to be committed by March 2028.

The LUF funding would now be referred to as the “Local Regeneration Fund” and a further report would be taken to Cabinet towards the end of the year. The report will set out how monies will be used, outline a Development Framework and formally select development partners to deliver a redevelopment scheme.

Following the update members of the Committee were offered the opportunity to ask questions. A Member sought clarification as to why it had been considered necessary to fill in the subway and build more steps as part of the Northern Gateway improvements. The Head of Economic Development and Planning confirmed that officers were currently in discussions with Staffordshire County Council and AMEY and reviewing the detailed cost plan that had been produced to deliver that aspect of the project. Consideration was being given to whether the proposals were serving a purpose or whether alternative options should be considered. It was important that the project achieved VFM (Value for Money), and a decision would be taken on whether to proceed as initially planned. AMEY had confirmed that their costs could not be reduced due to the complex nature of the work. Cabinet would therefore be receiving a recommendation on this in due course.

The Chair welcomed the Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader to the meeting and invited her to comment. She explained that the costs associated with infilling the subway and creating a pedestrian crossing had significantly increased from the original costs. Officers were in discussions with Staffordshire County Council, and it may be that a cheaper and better alternative could be found.

A Member referred to comments made by members during the planning process whereby safety concerns had been raised in relation to using the subway, particularly during the hours of darkness. He then asked when the improvements to the Beecroft Road car park would commence. The Officer advised that no date had been confirmed in this respect due to the ongoing discussions with the County Council regarding the subway/highways works. The Member also asked whether the UKREiiF Investment Prospectus could be made available to members. The Economic Development and

Regeneration Manager advised that the document had not been made publicly available as it included drawings which gave an idea of the scope and scale of development, and it was important to note that these are only indicative at this stage. However, a copy could be provided to members, but they should note that the contents were not prescriptive, they just gave a general idea of what could be achieved.

Another Member also recalled previous discussions whereby safety concerns had been raised about using the subway. However, he had spoken to friends, family and residents who had indicated they did not feel vulnerable using the subway. He was therefore pleased that other alternatives were now being considered, particularly when costs were so high.

The Chair raised concern regarding the proposed new pedestrian crossing on what she considered to be a very busy road. The Head of Economic Development and Planning clarified that all safety concerns would be considered when deciding on the best approach to take. All possible options would be considered; for example, better lighting could be provided in the subway if it was decided that it should remain.

The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager explained that the purpose of this part of the scheme was to create a welcoming entrance to the town centre, and, at the time, it was considered that the solution was to infill the subway and create a pedestrian crossing. However, under the new guidance it was now possible to make amendments to the scheme as it progressed without the need to seek permission from MHCLG. The costs for infilling the subway were significantly higher than expected and therefore discussions were taking place and other alternatives were being considered. It was noted that the new guidance would assist in moving the project forward at a quicker pace.

In response to a question from a Member about the planning application to demolish the Forum Shopping Centre the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager clarified that consultees had not objected but had sought reassurances about the application as part of the planning process. It was important that all the information was ready for when the application was submitted to Committee so that appropriate conditions could be attached to any permission if members were minded to approve.

A Member asked how much money remained in the LUF pot. The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that this would be known when the subway/highways issue had been resolved. A detailed review of spending and monies remaining was currently being considered and this would soon be made available.

Another Member referred to the closure of the Prince of Wales Theatre and the recent Cabinet decision to not proceed with the Cannock Chase Theatre Trusts bid. She asked whether any of the remaining LUF monies could be reallocated if a new proposal was to come forward, now there was more flexibility with the project. The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that consideration was being given to what money remained and what could be delivered with it.

In terms of the proposed café that was to be delivered a Member asked where this would be located. The Officer confirmed that this was part of the Northern Gateway proposals which were currently under review. There would be discussions with developers and operators regarding uses for the available retail space and following the review further information would be made available.

The Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader added that the LUF money was essential to regenerate the town centre. Now that the guidelines had been relaxed it would be easier for officers to move forward with the project as there were less restrictions. Officers were working hard to progress the project and there would be some amendments coming forward in the next few months.

In terms of monitoring and reporting on spending it was noted that Cabinet permission would be sought on where to spend the remaining LUF money. The process for reporting to the MHCLG had changed but the usual quarterly reports to Cabinet and Scrutiny would continue.

Members asked whether there would be any opportunity for residents to have a say in respect of the project. The Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader advised that she was fully aware of the importance of informing and engaging with the public in respect of the project. She confirmed that there would be an opportunity to consult with the public going forwards.

The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that the views of residents were very important and once there was clarity regarding any amendments to the project and the money that was available there would be positive conversations with prospective operators/developers. He added that this was an incredible opportunity to change Cannock town centre and create a town centre to be proud of.

Resolved:

That the update be noted and a copy of the Investment Prospectus prepared for the UKREiF event be provided to all members on the Committee.

11. Quarter 1 2025/26 Performance Update - Economic Prosperity PDP

Consideration was given to the Quarter 1 performance update (April to June 2025) for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan (Item 4.1 - 4.6).

The Head of Economic Development and Planning led Members through the report referring to the progress of the various projects and the summary of successes as at Quarter 1. Members had already received an update on the Cannock town centre regeneration scheme and would be updated on the UKSPF funding later in the meeting. He referred to the UKREiF event in May which had generated interest from developers. There had been several meetings over the summer with interested parties who were now awaiting the Council to set out their intentions.

In terms of the Local Plan members noted that there would be an update at the December meeting.

Reference was made to the Planning Obligations Working Group and a member asked whether it was up and running. The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that the Terms of Reference had been produced but the Group had not formally been established. He had met with relevant officers and discussed taking the proposal forward. It was a significant piece of work, and he would need to be certain the resource was available. It was anticipated that a report would be prepared and considered by LT by the end of Quarter 2.

With regard to the Key Performance Indicators members noted that 5 were exceeding the performance targets and these related to Planning. However, there were 2 within

Building Control that were below target. The Chair asked whether the Head of Regulatory Services could attend the next meeting to provide an update and explain the issues within the service area and to clarify the position regarding staffing. Members also asked that the information be provided to the Committee in advance of the next meeting.

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The Quarter 1 2025/26 performance update be noted.
- (B) The Head of Regulatory Services attend the next meeting to provide an update on the issues being experienced within Building Control and the reasons the 2 KPI's were below target.
- (C) The Head of Regulatory Services provide the relevant information in respect of (B) above, to members in advance of the next meeting.

12. Car Parking in the District

The Head of Operations provided a presentation to members which outlined the number of car parking spaces available and the locations within Cannock, Hednesford, Rugeley, Bridgtown, Heath Hayes & Norton Canes and Chadsmoor. This was as follows:

Cannock - 562 - chargeable (-1)
Hednesford - 319 - not chargeable (-RS & LS)
Rugeley - 369 - chargeable (-1 + RS)
Bridgtown - 76 - not chargeable
Heath Hayes & Norton Canes - 119 - not chargeable
Chadsmoor - 93 - not chargeable

He confirmed that the total number of car parking spaces in the district was 1538. The number of car parking spaces lost in recent years was 173 (9.9%) and he explained that some car parks had closed to make way for redevelopment. These included the Avon Road car park in Cannock and Taylors Lane, Rugeley. The Market Street car park in Rugeley had also closed due to the lease ending with the Brewery.

In terms of ticket sales and income generation he showed a slide which outlined each car park location along with the ticket sales and income. The total ticket sales for 2024/25 were 456,221 and the net income from machine sales was £515,086.08. The net income from Pay by Phone app was £179,114.59. The overall net income generated was £694,200.

The Committee noted that there has been a steady decline in some ticket sales for several years. In 2017/18 ticket sales on Beecroft Road car park was 252,661 compared to 171,114 in 2024/25. Similarly, on Backcrofts car park ticket sales went from 77,175 to 64,586 for the same years. The fall in numbers on Beecroft Road could be attributed to the opening of the Brunswick Road car park for hospital patients/visitors as prior to this, many of these users would have parked on Beecroft Road. The decline could also be due to increased online shopping and more out of town shopping centres.

With regards to Pay and Display options he explained that the new machines were installed in December 2020 which gave customers the option of using coins or paying

with card at the machine. At the same time, the Pay-by-Phone App was introduced which gave customers another option; this provides a virtual P&D ticket which appears on the Civil Enforcement Officers handheld device to indicate a valid ticket. There has been a gradual trend towards cashless payments since the introduction of these options in December 2020.

Current data for April to July 2025 indicates that the split of payment methods is 44% coin at machine, 28% card at machine and 28% Pay-by-Phone App. The data reflects changing lifestyles in general with how customers pay for goods and services, however, there was still demand for providing cash payment options and he clarified that the Council had no plans to remove this option.

District parking charges were last increased in April 2017, 8 years ago. He confirmed that the Brunswick Road (hospital) car park opened in May 2019. This was converted from part of the former CCDC staff car park.

He outlined the various parking fee trials that had occurred in 2014 and 2021/22. In 2014 a 10p tariff after 3pm each afternoon was trialled for six months to encourage customers into the town centres later in the day. Unfortunately, the trial did not seem to encourage customers to change their town centre shopping habits.

In addition, a rebate trial was introduced in 2021/22 giving customers the opportunity to receive part of their parking fee reimbursed off the cost of purchases in certain independent stores in the town centres. Only certain stores participated, and the scheme was funded by a “back to the high street” initiative following Covid.

In terms of capital investment, the Committee noted that:

- A capital investment programme was approved in early 2020 giving a 5 and 10-year programme of works across many of the car parks in the district.
- The 5-year programme was completed (excluding Beecroft Road) in the early 2020's, however, the 10-year programme was put on hold pending a funding review.
- Beecroft Road car park is to be improved as part of the current town centre redevelopment project.
- Several of the Councils other car parks (both free and pay & display) still require capital investment for improvement and / or resurfacing works which requires funding.

The Head of Operations explained that Staffordshire County Council has been allocated funding from Central Government via the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme for the installation of on-street electric charging points. The scheme was designed to assist residents without access to off-street parking. This funding has been extended to include Councils' public car parks in residential areas. The Council was working with the County Council looking at the installation of electric vehicle charging points at 8 of the Council's car parks.

Following the presentation there was an opportunity for questions from members. A member sought further information in relation to parking permits. The Head of Operations explained that parking permits could be issued for designated car parks to users who park their cars on a daily basis. The Council was mindful of how many permits are issued so as not to exclude spaces for shoppers. He also clarified that income from

car parks went into the General Fund.

It was explained that consideration was being given to erecting charging points on Heath Hayes park car park. Members noted that the technology in respect of the charging points quickly became outdated. However, the contractor who was awarded the LEVI contract would be responsible for keeping the machines up to date with technology.

Reference was made to the improvements to the Beecroft Road car park as part of the LUF project and a member asked how the loss of income would be managed when it closed during the works. It was explained that the loss of income had been taken into account as part of the bid. He confirmed that the car park would not fully close during the works; half would be sectioned off, and half would remain open.

In response to a question from a member the Head of Operations clarified that not all car parks within the district had been included in the presentation. There were other car parks, but the ones mentioned in the presentation were the main shopper's car parks.

A member asked why some car parks were chargeable and others were not. The Head of Operations explained that when the Council introduced CCTV in the district this was funded by the introduction of Pay and Display car parks. However, Hednesford Town Council paid a sum of money to fund the installation of the CCTV and made a decision not to have Pay and Display car parks in Hednesford.

With regards to the LEVI funding the Head of Operations advised that land would be leased to the contractor who would provide the charging points and keep them up to date with technology. The County Council would come back with proposals in relation to the contract and there may be an opportunity to profit share from the income taken. He clarified that the reason for the funding for the charging points was to provide residents who had no access to off-street parking the facility to charge their vehicles.

In terms of the income from parking enforcement charges the officer did not have the figures available but asked the Committee to note that the Council does not make a profit from parking services and the scheme was not designed to generate income.

A member asked whether there were sufficient car parking spaces available in Cannock. The Head of Operations explained that it would depend on the outcome of the town centre redevelopment and, if the retail offer was improved, there may be a need for more spaces.

A member referred to the Local Plan and commented that the Danilo and Backcrofts car parks had been noted as potential for housing development. The Head of Economic Development and Planning explained that various car parks within the district had been put forward for housing within the Local Plan. A developer had acquired the Avon Road car park and obtained permission to build a care home; however, none of the other car parks had come forward for development.

The Chair commented that on certain days, particularly on a Friday when the street market was held, it was difficult to park in the town. The Head of Operations explained that other options such as a single deck car park over the Beecroft Road car park could be considered in the future if there was a demand for extra parking.

With regards to introducing car parking charges in the future the Head of Operations explained that consideration was being given to charging on the Leisure Centre car park to those who were not using the facilities. This would be determined in discussion with

the Friends of Cannock Park and the Trustees. Additionally, long stay parking charges were being introduced at Hednesford and Rugeley train stations. It was hoped the parking order would be ready within the next few months.

13. Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Review

Councillor Thornley, Chair of the Review Group provided the Committee with an update on the work of the Group. He advised that the last meeting was held in August and there had been a discussion around promoting events in the town centre in order to increase footfall. There had been a suggestion that the Town and Parish Councils could be asked to support the Council in delivering and promoting events; however, it was noted that there was no Parish Council in Cannock.

The Group also discussed whether the LVEP was offering VFM and members were asked to consider whether they were happy with the work the LVEP was doing to promote Cannock Chase and to consider the relevant data. He noted that attendance at the last meeting had been low, and members had not come back with any priorities, ideas, and suggestions for discussion. However, a further meeting would need to be arranged so that some recommendations could be formulated.

The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager advised that the LVEP was currently producing a new Destination Management Plan and engaging with various partners. It may be useful for Charlotte Cain from the LVEP to talk to the Group so they could feed into the process. She would therefore liaise with the Chair and look at a date for mid-October.

Arising from this the Chair asked for an update on the current position with regards to the Town Centre Partnership as she was aware there had been significant changes. The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that officers had recently met with the Partnership, and their current focus was to arrange the Christmas event in Cannock. The Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader added that there were still some active members on the Partnership, but it was proving difficult to get volunteers to help plan and run events. They were therefore looking to seek a Charitable status for the Partnership in the future to help secure their position in the long term.

Resolved:

That the update be noted and the LVEP representatives be invited to attend the next meeting of the Review Group to talk about the new Destination Management Plan.

14. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager advised members that Cabinet had considered a report at the end of July that confirmed the successful completion of the UK Shared Prosperity (UKSPF) programme for 2022-2025 and updated members on the programme for 2025/26. The report advised that all monies allocated under the UKSPF programme must be fully spent by 31 March 2026. Priority was therefore given to projects and investments with the lowest risks associated with delivery and to those projects that had a track record of meeting the criteria of the Fund.

The schedule outlining the indicative programme of projects was considered by Cabinet and included the following:

- Beat the Cold
- Benefits Advisor

- Youth Aspirations
- General Life Skills
- Growth Hub
- Business Support

In terms of the business support grants members noted that a workshop had been held recently which had been attended by 20 businesses. Officers had worked through the process of applying for grants with these businesses and 5 had been successfully signed off so far. Another broader business support event was scheduled for 7 October, and further details would follow.

Further projects included:

- Rugeley Town Centre Masterplan
- Rugeley Leisure Centre/Flooding
- Union Street Play Area
- Climate Change feasibility study

Members noted that the way in which the UKSPF programme was administered had been modified for this extension period and the previously published Investment Plan was no longer a requirement of the scheme. It was therefore far easier to manage and spend the funding.

In response to questions from members the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager agreed to circulate the link outlining the criteria for applying for funding to all members.

The Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader thanked the Economic Development Team who had worked extremely hard within a tight timescale to deliver the UKSPF programme.

Resolved:

That the update be noted and the Economic Development and Regeneration Manager circulate the link outlining the criteria for applying for the funding to all members.

15. Review of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2025/26

The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that at the next meeting on 9 December 2025 members would receive an update on the Local Plan. There would also be an update on the Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Review. The Head of Regulatory Services would attend to provide members with an update on the challenges within Building Control and the issues highlighted in the KPI's. It was noted that members had requested that the required information be sent to them in advance of the meeting.

A more substantive update would be provided on the Town Centre Regeneration scheme and if possible, this would include any new proposals or amendments arising from the discussions currently taking place between officers and the County Council with regards to the highways/subway issue. Members would also have the opportunity to monitor the progress of the underspent LUF funding.

The Chair referred to the discussion at the previous meeting regarding Task and Finish Groups and asked whether members wished to undertake a review of car parking having

received the presentation today. Members considered that a review would not be beneficial at this time.

In terms of undertaking a further Task and Finish Group several members indicated they were keen for reviews to take place but noted that attendance could be an issue and it was difficult to agree a topic to review given that all members had different ideas/priorities. It was therefore agreed that the Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Review be completed before another review commenced.

Members agreed that they would like to invite a representative from the College to the next meeting to provide a general overview of the courses available and some data on the skills required in the district.

Resolved:

That the following items be included on the agenda for the meeting on 9 December:

- (i) Update on Local Plan.
- (ii) Update on the Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Review.
- (iii) Update on Town Centre Regeneration Scheme.
- (iv) Update on the issues being experienced within Building Control and the reasons the 2 KPI's were below target (Head of Regulatory Services to attend).
- (v) That a representative from the College be invited to attend to provide a general overview of the courses available and some data on the skills required in the district.

The meeting closed at 8:10pm.

Chair

Priority Delivery Plan for 2025/26

Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 2

				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
4		2		11	17

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 2
None

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 2
Delay to the Northern Gateway project, due to review of the scheme including review of project costs against available budget. A revised scheme is being worked up which will be reported to Cabinet in December 2025. Delay in setting up the Planning obligations working group due to lack of capacity in Finance to support the workstream.

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						
	• Complete demolition works including former Multi-storey car park			X			
	• Commence construction works for Northern gateway		X			Ongoing discussions with SCC/Amey concluded in September 2025. CCDC Cabinet report is scheduled for December 2025, which will provide an updated position and seeking appropriate approvals for next phases of the programme	
	Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase Two						
	• Submit planning application for phase two of the demolition works	X				The Phase 2 planning application in respect of the Forum Shopping Centre was submitted in June 2025	
	• Commence demolition works for phase two (Forum and Cabot units)			X			
	• Agree preferred development delivery option for cleared development sites			X			

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Investment and growth projects						
	Promote Cannock town centre development prospectus at UKREiiF 2025	X				Investment Prospectus produced and launched at UKREiiF development event in Leeds, May 2025 with significant interest generated in the regeneration of Cannock town centre	★
	Agree programme of projects for UKSPF for 2025/26	X				The programme was agreed with the Leader in advance of submitting to Government May 2025. Full details are being reported to Cabinet in July 2025.	★
	Refresh Economic Growth Strategy				X		
	Develop pipeline of future projects				X		
Local Plan	Local Plan Examination and adoption			X		Adoption will slip into Q4. The Examination hearing sessions ended July 2025, however the Inspector undertook a further 3 week consultation and queries leading up to and following the consultation that have delayed the plan. The Council will undertake a 6 week consultation on Main Modifications to 1 st December and then will await Inspector's final report.	
	Review Statement of Community Involvement in Line with New Regulations - scope out extent of changes required				X		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Community Infrastructure Levy - Prepare specification for CIL Viability Assessment				X		
	Design SPD - secure budget, prepare specification and appoint consultant. (Local Plan Examination requiring new SPD Spring 2026)				X		
	Local Validation Checklist - consider need for new update and consultation.				X		
	New Local Plan - Green Belt Assessment - consultant team procurement			X		Consultant appointed and inception meeting held October 25.	
Planning Obligations - Review of Policy and Allocations	- Charging schedules for Section 106 and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) monitoring fees - Introduce Monitoring Fees	X				Fees were introduced from 1 April 2025.	★
	- Planning obligations Working Group - Project Identification, prioritisation and monitoring		X			It has been agreed with the S151 officer to defer this action as the finance team do not have the capacity to support this workstream currently due to competing priorities. It is proposed to reconsider delivery of this project in 2026/27.	▲

KPIs for Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

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

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
Planning									
Major Planning Applications determined within time	100%	60%	100%	100%				★	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	97.4%	70%	100%	96.5%				★	
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	0%	< 10%	0%	0%				★	
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	0%	< 10%	7%	0.32%				★	
Building Control									
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	92%	95%	86%	90%				▲	Improvement on Q1. Target not achieved due to increase in applications and ongoing staff shortages
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	77%	80%	65%	76%				▲	Improvement on Q1. Target not achieved due to increase in applications and ongoing staff shortages
Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	95%	90%	100%	100%				★	

Building Control Staffing and Performance

Committee: Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 9 December 2025

Briefing Note of: Head of Regulatory Services

1 Purpose of Briefing Note

- 1.1 To provide Members with an update regarding the Building Control service area and an explanation of performance and staffing issues.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Building Safety Act 2022(BSA) introduced sweeping changes to the building control system in England. The Act was introduced following the Grenfell Tower fire and made major changes to the way building control operates.
- 2.2. Changes introduced included mandatory registration of all Building Inspectors. All existing Officers, however experienced had to go through a validation process to be registered at a level they are competent to operate at.
- 2.3 Other changes included the introduction of Operational Standard Rules, approximately 40 national KPI's, oversight and regulatory control from the Building Safety Regulator and the requirement to operate and adhere to a Quality Management System
- 2.4 In conjunction with this the service has lost staff and seen an increase in workload

3 Report Detail

- 3.1 The Building Control Team if fully staffed consists of the following:

Building Control & Climate Change Manager

Principal Building Control Surveyor x2

Senior Building Control Surveyor x3

Building Control Surveyor x2

At present the service has the following vacancies:

Principal Building Control Surveyor - vacant since April 2023

Senior Building Control Surveyor - vacant since April 2025

Senior Building Control Surveyor - reduced working at 3 days/week

- 3.2 The PBCS left to join another organisation. The vacancy has been advertised 4 times and the salary has been increased via a market supplement but there have been no suitable applicants. The SBCS left because they could not obtain their registration from the Building Safety Regulator. The Officer was highly experienced and competent but was unable to pass the required test. The post has been advertised twice with zero applicants.
- 3.3 One of the consequences of the new registration process is that nationally many experience Surveyors have left the profession due to not wanting to go through the registration process or failing to gain registration. This has led to a national shortage with many who are registered leaving employers to work through the contracting route where pay is at very high levels. Building Control have had a contractor in place for the last 12 months working at Senior level but the cost is over double that of an employed officer.
- 3.4 The introduction of Operational Standard Rules, national KPI's and Quality Management System requirements have resulted in changes in working practices and additional work especially at management and team leader levels. Another aspect the service is aware of is that within the next 3 years it will have a comprehensive inspection and audit by the Building Safety Regulator. This level of oversight and regulation is new to the service and is another aspect resulting from the Building Safety Act.
- 3.5 Members will be aware that clients can choose who provides the building control service for their construction work. The LA competes for the work with private sector companies known as Registered Building Control Providers (RBCA's). The introduction of the BSA increased oversight of RBCA's and as a result some have ceased trading, others have been brought out by larger consultancy companies and there have been new companies set up. One of the results of this appears to be that we are receiving slightly higher share of applications.
- 3.6 Only the LA can enforce the building regulations. This means that if an RBCA reaches a position with a project where there are outstanding defects which are not being corrected or some final paperwork has not been received then after a limited period they have to cancel their application and the control of the work reverts to the LA. Prior to 2022 only 1 application had been reverted to CCDC but since then we have received 18 reversions and this is increasing. This is due to the new regulatory regime and oversight of the BSR.
- 3.7 Building Control application numbers do fluctuate every year with construction work being so closely linked to the national economy. For the period April to September 2025 176 applications were received. This is the highest for the equivalent period since 2022 and is 15% higher than April to September 2024. This is all application types including full plans, building notices, regularisations

and reversions. Building Control Surveyors also inspect construction work at various stages and the number of inspections carried out in this period has increased to the level last seen in 2022. At this stage in 2022 the service had a full complement of staff.

- 3.8 Three performance indicators are reported by building control. All of these together with targets are set locally.
 - 3.8.1. Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt. This is for all types of applications. For Building Notices the LA has 2 days in which to reject if there are suitable grounds for this. Failure to do this means a notification is deemed approved. This indicator is set at 3 days to also allow time for the other types of application to be validated and registered. Within the process Building Notices are given priority with 96% for Q1 and Q2 receiving a decision within 48 hours of receipt.
 - 3.8.2. Full Plan applications receiving a full assessment within 15 days. This assessment consists of a design check to ensure it complies with the building regulations. It is for all types of construction project from a small domestic extension to a large commercial or residential scheme. Legally the LA is required to issue a decision within 5 weeks, but this can be extended with the agreement of the applicant. The local 3-week target is set to try and provide applicants with an enhanced service. As Members are aware for the first 2 quarters of 2025-26 the target of 80% has not been achieved. A few applications have also taken longer than 5 weeks to assess but for most the applicant has agreed to an extension of time.
 - 3.8.3. Customer satisfaction. Following a satisfactory completion inspection and receipt of paperwork a completion certificate is issued to the applicant. A link to an online survey is issued at the same time and the responses are collected quarterly. The response rate is low. For April to September there have been 11 responses which is 9% of completions. Generally, the service receives a very high level of customer satisfaction with some very positive feedback but due to the low number of returns one neutral or negative response can give a false impression.
- 3.9 The situation of the building control service in relation to workload and staffing is reflected nationally. This has been acknowledged by Government but due to there being a national shortage of Registered Building Inspectors there are no easy answers. Currently an independent panel established by the Government are considering how building control should operate and deliver its services. The panel is due to give their report to the Government by the end of this year, but the outcomes will not be published until next Spring. This may result in changes, but it will then take a few years to implement.
- 3.10 In relation to staffing levels engagement with a recruitment agency has been made but in 2 months no suitable candidates for our vacancies have been

identified. The Manager will continue to work with colleagues in Human Resources to investigate other options for recruitment but confidence is low.

- 3.11 Other considerations include investment in the IT system to make its operation more efficient to enable Officers to have readily available information when on site. This is at an early stage and will require a business case for investment. The other area being considered relates the Building Safety Levy. This is a new tax which the LA has to start collecting from 1 October 2026. New staff will have to be taken on and there maybe an opportunity to combine these roles with operational control and performance monitoring which would potentially ease the workload of the Service Manager and Team Leader.
- 3.12 The building control team are managing to provide a good quality service in challenging circumstances. The locally set targets are not all being achieved but virtually 100% of all inspection requests are completed within the requested timeframe and the majority of applications are being processed in accordance with the legal deadlines.

4 Implications

4.1 Financial

Additional costs of agency staff are being closely monitored. Contract will be terminated when there is insufficient budget but this will have further implications for service delivery.

4.2 Legal

As mentioned within the contents of the report

4.3 Human Resources

As mentioned within the contents of the report.

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