



**Please ask for:** Matt Berry  
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25 February 2026

Dear Councillor,

**Cabinet**

**6:00pm on Thursday 5 March 2026**

**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:**

Thornley, S.	Leader of the Council
Samuels, G.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader
Williams, D.	Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Thornley, S.J.	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
Johnson, T.	Parks, Culture and Heritage 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 19 February 2026 (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 March to April 2026 (Item 5.1 - 5.2).

### 6. Housing Board Minutes

To note the Minutes of the Housing Board meetings held on 5 November 2025 and 28 January 2026 (Item 6.1 – 6.15).

### 7. Quarter 3 Performance Report 2025/26

Report of the Head of Business Support and Assurance (Item 7.1 - 7.27).

### 8. Updated Strategic Risk Register

Report of the Head of Business Support and Assurance (Item 8.1 - 8.24).

### 9. Governance Improvement Plan Update - Quarter 3 2025/26

Report of the Head of Business Support and Assurance (Item 9.1 - 9.14).

### 10. Housing Services - Quarter 3 Performance Report 2025/26

Report of the Head of Business Support and Assurance (Item 10.1 - 10.27).

### 11. Corporate Plan 2026-27 to 2027-28

Report of the Head of Business Support and Assurance (Item 11.1 - 11.18).

### 12. Disposal of the Freehold Interest in 63 Hagley Road

Report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 12.1 - 12.4).

### 13. Permission to Spend - Community Safety Funding 2026/27

Report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 13.1 - 13.3).

**14. Biodiversity Duty Report 2023-2025**

Report of the Head of Operations (Item 14.1 - 14.27).

**15. Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 3 2025/26**

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer (Item 15.1 - 15.7).

The appendix (Item 15.6 - 15.7) to the 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 person.

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 19 February 2026 at 6:00 p.m.**

**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:**

Councillors:

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

**88. Apologies**

None received.

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

None received.

**90. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2026 be approved.

**91. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer (Item 4.1 - 4.11).

**Resolved:**

(A) That the report be noted.

(B) That Council, at its meeting to be held on 25 February 2026, be asked to adopt to the changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction (LCTR) Scheme, explained in the report, regarding:

- Increases in Income Band Thresholds, in line with changes to Universal Credit to increase the standard allowance by more than inflation and to remove the 2-child limit.

- Protection for disabled Universal Credit claimants, who receive other incomes in addition to Universal Credit.
- Closing a potential loophole in respect of, usually self-employed, claimants who earn less than the minimum wage.
- Disregarding certain payment types relating to LGBT compensation scheme for armed forces, in line with national benefits.
- Extending the period of time for which a claimant can receive Local Council Tax Reduction whilst temporarily away from home, in 'war-torn' areas.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

The Council's LCTR scheme for working aged claimants had been a banded income discount scheme since 2020. In order to maintain the levels of support afforded to claimants of Universal Credit, it was important that the income thresholds contained in our scheme were increased each year in line with increases to Universal Credit payments. The methodology for annual uprating to Universal Credit payments was changing from 2026 and the 2-child cap was being removed. The Council's scheme would be similarly changed, to maintain LCTR awards at their current level for affected claimants.

Recent caselaw had determined that some of the circumstances in which councils used their discretionary powers to protect disabled UC claimants was not appropriate and the protections must be written into the main, Council approved scheme.

## **92. Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, and Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27**

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer (Item 5.1 - 5.30).

### **Resolved:**

That the following be approved:

- (A) The Prudential and Treasury Indicators.
- (B) The Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2026/27.
- (C) The Treasury Management Policy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2026/27.

### **Reasons for Decisions:**

To note that indicators may change in accordance with the final recommendations from Cabinet to Council in relation to both the General Fund Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

## **93. Updates from Portfolio Leaders**

### **(i) Housing and Corporate Assets**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Understanding our Tenants and Homes Survey**

"A survey was recently commissioned to gain a better understanding of who lives in our homes. This will help us to update the information we already hold on our tenants, ensure our services are accessible and fair and helps us to gain an

insight into what future needs may be. A well-deserved thank you should be given to our tenants as the survey response rate was 52%.”

- **Stock Condition Survey**

“The Council has been carrying out comprehensive stock condition surveys, with detailed information on 3531 dwellings and 263 communal areas to date. Surveys will continue to be carried out with a newly formed internal team, including a specialist Data Officer to ensure accurate data and informative insights into the data and Surveyors to ensure access and data is captured to all our homes. These surveys will provide a detailed dataset that will shape our long-term maintenance and investment strategies and future works to ensure our homes remain safe, well-maintained, and meet our tenants needs.”

- **De-Carbonisation project**

“The Council has secured, and match funded, £800,000 in Social Housing De-Carbonisation Funding to improve the energy efficiency of 112 Council-owned homes across the District. The works included loft insulation, new windows and doors, solar panels, and smart heating controls. Following the completion of these measures the residents will have seen a reduction in carbon emissions, lower energy bills and improved comfort, helping with our goal for all our homes to meet EPC ‘C’ in 2030.”

- **New posts created to meet the requirements of the Building Safety Act**

“The Council has reviewed all building safety policies and how we deliver the building safety service.

This review has led to the creation of four new positions in the Building Safety Compliance Team which were filled in 2025 and have been successfully working toward ensuring our homes and the residents within them remain and feel safe.”

- **Former Aelfgar School Site Redevelopment Scheme**

“Our development partner Lovell are well underway with the homes being built at the former Aelfgar School in Rugeley. A number of the open market sale properties have sold and the first Council homes are expected to be ready for tenants during the Spring, with the development fully complete by September 2026.

Homes are being delivered to the Future Homes Standard, using sustainable measures that include air source heat pumps, triple glazing and solar panels. Tenants and residents should experience better ventilated and warmer homes with the potential for lower energy bills.”

- **Tenancy Agreement**

“A new Tenancy Agreement accompanied by an easy read agreement and a video explaining the terms and conditions was launched 9 June 2025. This followed a period of consultation with existing tenants who were then given Notice of Variation of their tenancy terms and conditions.”

- **Housing Fraud**

“On 1 April 2025 a joint housing fraud initiative with Oxford City Council Corporate Investigations Team was launched with the aim to combat Housing Fraud.

The team have so far recovered a total of 5 council properties that have been unoccupied and illegally sublet. A further 8 cases are currently being prepared for investigation.”

- **Housing Rents**

“On 29<sup>th</sup> January 2026 Cabinet approved the annual rent increase of 4.8% - in line with the Government Rent Policy whereby “increases to social housing rents will be limited to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1%”. The annual increase is effective from the 6<sup>th</sup> April, and will allow for continued investment in the existing HRA stock, services and new build properties to increase the stock held by the HRA. It should be noted that the Council’s average rent is still lower than most social landlords operating in the Cannock Chase area and throughout Staffordshire.”

- **Income Collection**

“We continue to perform strongly in collecting rent due from tenants. At the end of 2024/25, the amount of rent arrears outstanding was equivalent to just 0.73% of the total rent due at £174,123.81 - this is exceptional performance. Despite the continued cost of living challenges facing our residents, the latest figures (8/2/26) show rent arrears of £192,195.64 outstanding, which compares well to the figure at the same period last year, which was £207,542.64.

Additionally, in November 2025, an updated Former Tenant Arrears policy was approved to help continue to improve our collection of these debts. £52,871 (10.54%) of the former arrears outstanding have been collected in the period to December 2025, which compares to £33,103 (6.86%) at the same period last year.”

(ii) **Environment and Climate Change**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Action Against Unlicensed Pet Trader**

“Following the announcement made by the Leader at Monday night’s full Council meeting, as the portfolio lead, can I thank everybody in Environmental involved in the prosecution of the illegal pet shop in Rugeley.

It was a successful prosecution as he got 32 months, so I’d like thank everyone involved in that, as well Staffordshire Police and the RSPCA.”

The meeting closed at 6:22pm.

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**Leader**

### Forward Plan of Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet: March to April 2026

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](mailto: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
<b>March 2026</b>						
Quarter 3 Performance Report 2025/26	Head of Business Support and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Updated Strategic Risk Register	Head of Business Support and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Governance Improvement Plan Update - Q3 2025/26	Head of Business Support and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Housing Services - Quarter 3 Performance Report 2025/26	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Corporate Plan 2026-27 to 2027-28	Head of Business Support and Assurance / Leader of the Council	05/03/26	Yes	No	N/A	N/A

**Item No. 5.2**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Contact Officer / Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Date of Cabinet</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>Confidential Item</b>	<b>Reasons for Confidentiality</b>	<b>Representations Received</b>
Disposal of the Freehold Interest in 63 Hagley Road	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Permission to Spend - Community Safety Funding	Head of Wellbeing / Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Biodiversity Duty Report 2023-2025	Head of Operations / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Q3 2025/26	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	05/03/26	No	Yes (Appendix only)	Information relating to any individual and which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.  Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.	N/A
Adoption of the Cannock Chase Local Plan 2018-2040	Head of Economic Development and Planning / Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader	16/03/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
<b>April 2026</b>						
Staffordshire Sustainability Board Pledges	Head of Regulatory Services / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	16/04/26	No	No	N/A	N/A

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Housing Board**  
**Held on Wednesday 5 November 2025 at 10:00am**  
**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

**Councillors:**

S. Thornley	Leader of the Council and Chair of the Housing Board
S.J. Thornley	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
P. Haden	Housing and Corporate Assets Shadow Portfolio Leader

**Tenant and Leasehold Members:**

N. Howells	Council tenant and Income Management Assistant, CCDC
B. Murphy	Council tenant
G. Pace	Council tenant

**Independent Members:**

L. Cunnett	Homes Manager, Tamworth Borough Council
S. Johnson	Director of Governance and Legal, Walsall Housing Group

**Also Present:**

**Officers:**

T. Clegg	Chief Executive
G. Stott	Deputy Chief Executive-Place
C. Forrester	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer
N Samrai	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
R. Frumenzi	Housing Maintenance Manager
C. Hawkins	Housing Property Services Manager
J. Morgan	Assistant Housing Services Manager
M. Berry	Democratic Services Team Leader

**21. Apologies**

Apologies were noted for:

- A. Kenny - Independent Member.
- Louise Tandy - Housing Services Manager.
- Howard Campbell - Tenancy Services Manager.

**22. Previous Minutes and Action Tracker**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 August 2025 were agreed and the action tracker noted.

### 23. **Housing Services Improvement Plan**

A tenant member thanked the Assistant Housing Services Manager for keeping the Board updated with the information on SharePoint.

The updated improvement plan for quarter 2 2025/26 was noted.

### 24. **Key Performance Indicators**

#### ***Key Performance Indicators - Quarter 2 2025-26***

In response to a query from an Independent member as to how the 'percentage of dwellings that are vacant and available for let (at period end)' was measured, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the Housemark definition was used.

In response to a query from a Member regarding the 'average re-let time for Voids (calendar days),' the Assistant Housing Services Manager confirmed that the position had improved during quarter 2. The Housing Maintenance Manager further advised that for September, minor works averaged 17 days completion (which was below the 30 days target) and for major works, 5 out of 10 were under target, but had been affected by issues with two specific properties. It was expected that from December onwards, the overall figure would improve further.

#### ***Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) - Quarter 2 2025-26***

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to why the 2024/25 target for 'percentage of non-emergency repairs completed within provider timescales' was only 65% when the service was performing well above that level, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that this related to some concerns with the NEC system. The figures were not real-time as the system did not allow for completions to be recorded, so a lot of manual recordings were having to be done and then the system updated. The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets noted the target may be too low and so could be reviewed ready for April next year. The Assistant Housing Services Manager further advised that the proposed indicators for 2026/27 were due to be considered at the January 2026 Board meeting.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to how information on the TSMs was provided to residents, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the data was published on the Council's website and also included in the tenants' newsletter (delivered to all tenants) for those without internet access. Benchmarking data was also published.

In response to a Member as to whether much feedback was received from residents, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that limited feedback was received, and this was a historic issue. More information was being published than previously, but the service was doing the best it could and did rely on tenants' engagement. An update on engagement was provided later in the agenda.

A Tenant Member raised that it was more likely people wanted to give negative rather than positive feedback, so this perhaps skewed the data available.

Another Tenant Member noted this matter went back to historic issues of residents feeling that raising issues with the Council was a waste of time, specifically due to poor communication when there was a problem, and the information not always being passed on.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised the service could track back to find out what happened in the specific issues raised by the Tenant Member, noting it was disappointed the tenant concerned had had a negative experience. Some parts of the Housing service now had telephone recording in place, and whilst the aim was to have it rolled out across the whole service, there was a cost implication for doing so.

Another Tenant Member then provided their own anecdotal experiences of communications issues.

An Independent Member noted that perception was very important, particularly in respect of the TSMs as half of the measures reported against related to it, the importance of it could not be underestimated.

A Tenant Member raised the Council should be working to put out more positive messaging online and via social media to counteract negative posts put out by the public.

An Independent Member noted that the work of councils was so broad and often being done by under-resources teams, so it only took one negative post to tar everyone with the same brush, with a lot of time being spent having to try and defend officers' work. The Council had taken some great steps on social media and with its communications. Consistency was key to putting positive messages out there, with this Board being part of that positivity.

A Tenant Member noted that when the Council was doing a good job, the perception from residents was that the Council was just doing the job expected of it, but this was not the case when it was a negative position.

### ***Housemark Presentation - TSMs and Performance Feedback***

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to what work the Council had done about anti-social behaviour (ASB) and tenants' perceptions, the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the District had historically low levels of ASB until the last year or two. The Council had a corporate community safety team in place, but there was no dedicated ASB officers in the Housing department and it often felt that the Police expected the Council to carry out some of their duties on ASB matters. There was an interim legal enforcement officer in place working with the Council's legal services department, and a discussion had been held with the S151 Officer about creating a budget to support this work further with the additional resource for a specific Housing legal enforcement officer being agreed.

The Independent Member noted it may be worthwhile putting out regular messaging on social media about the role of the Police in respect of ASB matters and that residents should contact them rather than the Council if they had any ASB issues. More work could also be done with the community safety partnership on diversionary tactics.

## **25. Compliance Update**

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether water hygiene works were carried out in-house or by contractors, the Housing Property Services Manager advised the checks were done in house via two operatives and annual checks were carried out by an external contractor.

An Independent Member noted that 100% of housing stock dwellings (excluding tenant refusals) receiving an annual gas safety check was excellent and queried whether residents were taken to court for non-compliance. In response, the Housing Property Services Manager advised that this had not been the case, but conversations were happening at the moment about how non-compliance issues were dealt with.

In response to a query from an Independent Member about how the damp and mould works team were getting on, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised they had been working for seven months now and it was going well overall. The NEC system had been built to support their work to ensure compliance with damp and mould works. A meeting was due to take place soon to set benchmark targets based on information from the NEC system. The team had gone above and beyond the minimum expectation of getting the works done and a 10-day inspection process was built into the timescales to always stay compliant.

In response to a query from a Member as to what demand there was on the damp and mould team, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that information was available online about the different types of mould that residents could experience in their properties. The quarterly breakdown showed that over 800 reports of damp and mould had been received between April 2024 and end of September 2025 (the 18-month period prior to date).

An Independent Member noted that based on the quarterly figures, communications could be targeted accordingly to reflect specific peaks and troughs in demand.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets noted that for the period outlined, the team had not had to decant any residents, which was a positive story.

An Independent Member then referred to the following questions submitted in advance by another Independent Member (A. Kenny):

#### *Building Safety*

- The CORGI audits, what were the results and findings of the Q1 & Q2 audits, the number of audits actively conducted, and how is this figure agreed on?

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised that all the audits carried out by CORGI were absolutely fine. If any significant issues occurred, then they get called out to site to be rectified at the time. 35 audits were conducted in quarter 2, with generally only 120 CORGI audits done per year at the moment.*

- The procurement of the other external audits. Do we have a timeline for this please and I have the importance of this in the last two meetings.

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised that a proper procurement exercise needed to be done for gas servicing, as well as electrics and asbestos. The 120 audits referred to in the previous answer were a small amount, so we will look to increase this number once the procurement exercise is done. In-house audits were also being done and handover reviews by gas officers.*

*There was a lot of outstanding procurements to get done. A procurement programme and delivery plan is being compiled to address them, although not likely to start the majority of procurements until the new financial year.*

#### *Fire Safety*

- There does not appear to be much movement in the actions from Q1 to Q2. Do we have a timescale for rectification and a priority timescale for the remaining 136?

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised the timescales would be published on the Board's SharePoint page for ease of reference moving forward.*

- In relation to the Lighting Conductors to each building - this is usually a default approach with FRAs and only is required if the building in question is the tallest in height within a certain geographical area.

*The Housing Property Services Manager advised that he agreed with this view. Because we have asked for a fire risk assessment to be undertaken, we are leaving ourselves at additional risk if we do not carry out this work. It will be prioritised accordingly.*

## 26. Housing Revenue Account - Position Statement

The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer delivered a presentation on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) that covered:

- Looking backwards.
- Current position
- Challenges
- Decisions

Board Members raised the following comments/queries during the course of the presentation which were responded to by officers as necessary:

1. Would a change in direction regarding income generation / service charges require an update to the tenancy agreements?

*The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the agreements had recently been updated and included provision for charging to be adopted if decided to do so.*

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Place further advised that if service charging was to be adopted, there would be a need to look at what services residents would get*

2. What would the HRA be paying out in real terms on loans taken out to support investment in the housing stock?

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised that the Council's borrowing was linked to the Government (via the Public Works Loans Board (PWLBB)) rather than commercial markets and it was hoped that going forward borrowing would stabilise. As a 30-year HRA Business Plan was being developed, the level of risk was being factored in for the full plan period.*

*A sustainable level of borrowing would be taken on and if all stock condition works were done successfully then this should reduce the ongoing costs in respect of repairs and maintenance works.*

3. The caveat of local government reorganisation (LGR) - would this be considered as part of developing the 30-year business plan?

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised that the position being taken was the HRA was a standalone, sovereign entity that would not be linked to the Council's General Fund and needed to be solvent and successful. The onus was on the Council to get this right before LGR came into being, with the risk being that the new authority might take a different view of the sustainability of the housing stock if it was not seen as successful.*

*The Chief Executive advised that in the context of LGR, if the housing stock was to be maintained rather than being managed in a different way then the Council had to get its house in order and ensure the service was sustainable for the future, with some decisions in the past perhaps not having helped long-term planning. The hope was that the successor council would make positive decisions about how social housing was delivered and provided in the area.*

4. Was there any feeling for how much income concessionary charges could bring in?

*The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised it could potentially be a few hundred thousand pounds per year over the 30-year plan period.*

5. What percentage of tenants were in receipt of benefits?

*The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised it was currently around two-thirds.*

6. Difficult decisions had got to be made, and support was given to the proposals set out in the presentation as the Council was quite tied on what it could do. The Council probably needed to look at ways of working smarter and also the need to manage the messaging of any proposed changes / charges, as well as selling to tenants what improvements had been made.
7. There was a need to explain to tenants what services they currently received, what they could receive in future if charges were brought in and what the future would look like if those services could not be offered.
8. This was an incredible leap forward for the Council and would be a very different way for tenancies to operate in future if service charges were adopted.
9. As tenant members, a lot of information had been provided which still had to be assimilated and understood. As the Board role was still quite new for them it was a learning process and so there was concern about whether the information was being read in the correct way. Thanks were given to the officers for the presentation and information provided.

*The Chair advised that one-to-one meetings could be offered with the Head of Service and Cabinet member to help understand the role further if that was of help.*

10. It may be worthwhile having an agenda item at the January 2026 meeting on LGR and the future implications for the HRA.
11. Rent increases and service charges were definitely needed, particularly given the disparity on rental charges when compared to other local authorities and social landlords.
12. Everything needed to be futureproofed in respect of LGR to ensure the District was left in the best position possible for the new authority.

The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer advised that as the Board indicated its support with the proposals set out in the presentation, then several reports and policy documents would come forward separately for the Board's information and assurance.

**The Board indicated its support for the proposals outlined in the 'decisions' section of the presentation for further information and reports back to the Board.**

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the independent living schemes had not been factored in, particularly looking at redesign and use of redundant spaces. Action needed on communal blocks in respect of upgrades, decorating of flats communal areas and bin storage. There were some empty garage sites that could be disposed of or chosen for small scale developments. Decent homes phase two also had to be dealt with, the costs of which were unknown at this stage. Some extra savings had been achieved in the carbon reduction programme which could be put toward loft insulation measures.

## **27. Resident Engagement Update**

The Assistant Housing Services Manager provided an update on resident engagement matters that covered:

- Historic resident engagement in Cannock Chase.
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.
- Resident engagement at the Council since 2024/25 onwards.

- Resident Involvement Strategy - Framework and options for involvement.
- Update on activities.
- Resident satisfaction.
- Measuring engagement with tenants.

**28. Forward Agenda**

The main agenda items for the next meeting were agreed as follows:

- KPIs / performance update (standing item)
- Proposed KPIs for 2026/27
- Housing Services Improvement Plan (standing item)
- Damp and Mould - Awaab's Law - response and initial findings.
- Local Government Reorganisation - potential impact on the HRA.

**29. Any Other Business**

The Chair raised he would discuss with officers whether a change of Board Chair was necessary owing to the fact he was married to the Board member who was the Housing Portfolio Leader.

Board Members advised they had no issues with the Chair remaining in position.

**30. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 10am, Esperance Room, CCDC.

The meeting closed at 11:52am.

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Housing Board**  
**Held on Wednesday 28 January 2026 at 10:00am**  
**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

**Councillors:**

S. Thornley	Leader of the Council and Chair of the Housing Board
S.J. Thornley	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
P. Haden	Housing and Corporate Assets Shadow Portfolio Leader

**Tenant and Leasehold Members:**

B. Murphy	Council tenant
G. Pace	Council tenant

**Independent Members:**

L. Cunnett	Homes Manager, Tamworth Borough Council
S. Johnson	Director of Governance and Legal, Walsall Housing Group
A. Kenny	Former Executive Director of Property, Housing Plus

**Also Present:**

**Officers:**

T. Clegg	Chief Executive
G. Stott	Deputy Chief Executive-Place
C. Forrester	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer
N Samrai	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
R. Frumenzi	Housing Maintenance Manager
L. Tandy	Housing Services Manager
H. Campbell	Tenancy Services Manager
A. Charlesworth	Assistant Housing Property Services Manager
J. Morgan	Assistant Housing Services Manager
M. Berry	Democratic Services Team Leader

**31. Apologies**

Apologies were noted for N. Howells, Tenant Member.

**32. Previous Minutes and Action Tracker**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 November 2025 were agreed and the action tracker noted.

### 33. Housing Services Improvement Plan

The Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised that work on the new 30-year business plan was an ongoing process and would be picked up in more detail as part of the budget update later in the meeting. 69% of the stock condition survey was complete with the aim to achieve as close to a 100% as possible by the end of the summer. This work fed into the refresh of the plan and the overall budget.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether contact had been made with those tenants where their properties could not be accessed to complete the surveys, the Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised that 100% of properties had been visited and officers were looking into what options were available to access the remaining ones.

In response to a Councillor as to whether the Council was in a vulnerable position if items such as gas tests/checks were not able to do be done because of this, the Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised that all gas and electric surveys were completed (see performance information), this issue related to the stock condition survey only.

*(The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources arrived at the meeting at this point.)*

A Tenant Member raised it was their understanding that difficult to contact tenants were now being reached, and so queried if it was possible to correlate how many had been contacted. The Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised those figures could be provided separately.

In response to a query from a Councillor regarding the actions on pages 7 and 18 of the improvement plan that were showing as more than three months behind schedule, the Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised these would be picked up later in the meeting as part of the budget update.

*The updated improvement plan for quarter 3 2025/26 was noted.*

### 34. Key Performance Indicators

#### **Key Performance Indicators - Quarter 3 2025-26**

The Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised that all compliance rating KPIs were 100%, including those that linked to the earlier question regarding electrical safety checks.

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the re-let times for voids were higher than wanted but a lot of work had been going on during quarter 3 and there was confidence that the figure would come down moving forward.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to what were defined as major upgrades, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that these included works were several upgrades were required, which included kitchens, bathrooms and electrics etc. So far this year, circa 50% of the voids works had been classed as major, but it was felt that the team was getting on top of this and managing them. The Assistant Housing Services Manager further advised that the Council followed a standard definition for voids works as set by HouseMark.

In response to a query from another Independent Member as to whether the major voids were outsourced, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that 8 had been outsourced so far this year. Most would be done in house, but external resources used where required.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the team had recently gone through the HQN voids toolkit to identify any gaps and pick up actions across the allocations and repairs teams to ensure properties were being provided to the right tenants as quickly as possible. The Housing Maintenance Manager further advised that he met with the allocations team weekly to ensure handovers were being done at the right time.

The Deputy Chief Executive-Place raised that the amount of work done by the relevant teams had to be recognised, and whilst the indicator was still showing as behind target, the figure continues to come down. The team had done a lot of work to review policies etc. and were having to work against specific criteria and definitions, along with benchmarking against the sector and other providers.

The Housing Maintenance Manager further raised that some voids were quick hits rather than major ones which would also help to improve the overall figure by identifying such properties early and taking the necessary action.

***Proposed Indicators for 2026/27***

The Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that the proposed indicators for 2026/27 had been amended following feedback from HouseMark and the service was moving away from using the corporate template.

An Independent Member referred to the proposed indicator for the proportion of homes that did not meet the Decent Homes Standard at year end with a target of 2% and queried why the target was not set at 0% (excluding refusals) so as to meet the requirements of the Safety and Quality Standard. In response, the Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that tenant refusals were excluded and there was a greater knowledge of the position because of the stock condition survey work. Based on available data, 2% was considered to be a good estimate and this figure would decrease over time. The year-end calculation would be available after 31 March 2026.

In response to a query from a Councillor as to whether the Council was vulnerable if it was not meeting the minimum regulatory requirements, an Independent Member advised could depend on what regulatory rating the service was aiming for.

*The Q3 2025/26 key performance indicators and the proposed 2026/27 indicators were noted.*

**35. Compliance Update**

An Independent Member congratulated the team on the gas servicing work performance and raised that in respect of external validation of electrical works, it was important to have third-party validation in place. The Assistant Property Services Manager advised that it was planned to procure checks for gas and electrical works as a joint exercise in the new financial year.

In response to another Independent Member as to what progress was being made on residents' Person Centered Fire Risk Assessment (PCFRA) in respect of fire safety, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised that work was being discussed with the Tenancy Services Team.. The Tenancy Services Manager confirmed that recording of who is living in our stock is difficult and requires the tenant and leaseholders to inform the Council. However, vulnerability information about tenants living in properties with communal areas is available on the Housing management system and from the tenancy profile survey.

In response to a further question from the Independent Member on how tenants were doing in terms of updating on changes to occupancy, the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that a tenancy profiling exercise was currently underway, with a 52% return rate so far. There was a difficulty around getting the data into the system as this would be a manual exercise, and so additional resource support would need to be provided.

The Tenancy Services Manager further advised that part of the issue was knowing who was living in the properties and who was prepared to share the required information. This was easier to do in the sheltered schemes as on-site staff were available.

In response to a query from another Independent Member as to when the remaining 98 fire safety actions were likely to be completed, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager advised that a contractor would be secured in the next few months to support required work in respect of replacement fire alarms etc. and so the work was aimed to complete in the next financial year. Additionally, building safety officers were also in place to help identify and address issues earlier.

In response to a query from a Tenant Member as to what was meant by properties having 'received' an asbestos management survey and what were the results of that survey, the Assistant Housing Property Services Manager replied that the team could look to pull together information on which properties had asbestos and to what level.

The Tenancy Services Manager further replied that when a tenant signed up, they received an asbestos report in their pack which set out whether asbestos was present, what control measures were in place and any plans for additional works. The Housing Maintenance Manager also advised that a new survey was always produced before a tenant moved into a property as this was picked up as part of the void works.

*The compliance update 2025/26 was noted.*

### **36. Awaab's Law Response and Damp and Mould Update**

#### ***Awaab's Law Update***

An Independent Member noted that a lot of good work had been done in this regard which provided a lot of assurance that the matter was being taken seriously by the Council. In response, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that every case coming through was being managed and the team was being proactive to source new cases. Some improvements were still however needed in terms of the NEC IT system.

In response to a query from a Councillor as to whether inspections were done on an individual tenant basis or whether the whole stock was planned to be done, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that issues were being picked up as part of the stock condition survey, through the tenant profiling work, visits to properties by staff and contactors and by residents contacting the Council directly.

A Tenant Member raised that lifestyle problems of tenants in some properties could cause issues which were out of the hands of the Council but had to be dealt with. In response, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the Council had a landlord responsibility to its tenants to deal with issues and so provided guidance and information on what tenants could do to help themselves look after their properties.

An Independent Member raised that the team had done really well on this work and was ahead of the curve in taking action, with a lot of work being done that probably was not recognised in the information presented today with different teams working together.

In response to a query from another Independent Member as to when the real-time tracking tool would be rolled out in respect of engagement with tenants and ensuring clear reporting channels, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the NEC IT system was being built better with some changes made this week on the reporting, which would help with development of the tracking tool.

Another Independent Member noted that as a result of Awaab's Law, housing providers were not allowed to say that lifestyle factors could be taken into account, and so sought assurance that the Council was not doing this. In response, the Housing Maintenance Manager confirmed this was the case, instead referring to contributing factors and ensuring the team moved away from the 'lifestyle' mindset.

In response to a query from the Deputy Chief Executive-Place as to whether an increase in complaints had been seen on damp and mould cases since Awaab's Law came in, an Independent Member advised that for their organisation there had been an increase in complaints, but less of a spike for damp and mould cases. There had however been an increase in complex complaints, particularly ones that were AI generated.

Another Independent Member noted that the AI generated complaints were a challenge for everyone and difficult to manage. Whilst their own organisation had not seen an increase in complaints, there had been an initial knee-jerk panic which caused issues. There had also been a need to determine what was a damp or mould/disrepair issue or a matter related to Awaab's Law.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that an in-house discussion was needed about the use of AI to responds to complaints.

A Councillor noted that the increase in reported damp and mould issues was also possibly a result of 'unethical' solicitor firms posting on social media.

*The Awaab's Law and Damp and Mould performance figures updates were noted.*

### **37. Housing Revenue Account Budgets**

The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources talked through the Housing Revenue Account Budgets and Capital Programmes 2025/26 to 2028/29 reports which were to be considered by Cabinet on 29 January:

- The proposed budget was a holding one at the moment and as discussed at the previous meeting, officers were looking at how to try and fund the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) going forwards.
- The stock condition survey data needs further analysis, and work was needed with external partners to get a new business plan up and running.
- The proposed budget was therefore based on the existing business plan and a planned rent increase which was in line with legislation.
- The HRA budget summary set out proposed income, expenditure, Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) and working balance changes for the period 2026-2029.
- Sufficient funds were available to manage the current revenue needs within the HRA.
- Key assumptions for 2026-29 were the pay award, dwelling rent increases and anticipated Right to Buys.
- Table 3 of the report set out major changes to budgets, with specific reference drawn to the repairs backlog funding, disrepair settlements funding and damp and mould tenancy support funding.
- Appendix 1 of the budget report set out full figures for the proposed HRA budgets for 2025-2029.
- Appendix 1 of the capital programme report set out the estimated availability of HRA capital resources for 2025-2029, with specific reference drawn to the total capital resources, proposed capital expenditure and the carried forward amount for each financial year.
- Appendix 2 of the capital programme report set out the list of proposed items to be funded from the capital programme for the period 2025-2029 and the amount of unallocated resources available.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether the proposed spending was based on the stock condition survey, the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised it was based on historical information, although some elements had changed in consultation with managers.

In response to a query from a Councillor as to how the proposed HRA budgets sat within the context of the wider budgets to be considered by Cabinet and full Council in the next few weeks, the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources advised that the General Fund and HRA budgets and capital programmes were due to be considered by the Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee later that day, Cabinet the day after and then full Council in two weeks' time.

A Tenant Member noted the figures were projected expenditure, and sought clarity if there was a mechanism for future years for the Council to say it had less funding available and so would need to reduce its expenditure accordingly.

The Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised that the current model was based on old data with a static financial position. There was a need to undertake fundamental reviews of the structure and operation of the HRA. A no-borrowing model was the preferred position, but this might depend on the outcome of the full stock condition survey and other policy decisions on the HRA. Proposed rent increases and service charges would be seen as a negative impact for tenants but would provide significant income to help deliver the required changes.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether any consideration had been given to the potential impact of rent convergence, the Deputy Chief Executive-Place advised that it had been considered but no specific view taken as it was unknown at this stage what would be happening.

The Tenancy Services Manager further advised that modelling had been done depending on what levels the convergence was set at. For £1 per week, it would take up to 18 years for all properties to achieve formula rent, and £2 per week would be circa 8.5 years. Furthermore, as part of the introduction of service charges, an additional rent uplift may need to be looked at.

In response to a query from another Independent Member as to whether historically the budgets had included 'nice-to-have' items such as fencing, and whether there was a requirement to provide this, the Deputy Chief Executive-Place confirmed that this was the case, particularly around the types of fencing that had to be provided.

*(The Deputy Chief Executive-Resources left the meeting at the end of this item.)*

### **38. Resident Engagement - Tenant and Leaseholder Review Panel (Scrutiny) - First Report**

The Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that this item had been brought to the Board to provide assurance that the Council was listening to the tenant voice and that the work of the Housing Service was being scrutinised.

*The TLRP report was noted.*

### **39. Local Government Reorganisation**

The Chief Executive delivered a presentation on local government reorganisation (LGR) that covered:

- Recap of key activities so far.
- Current position.

- Options to be consulted on.
- Reasons for preferred option.
- Next steps and issues for further work.

The Chief Executive noted concern that as part of LGR, housing stock would get lost in the new organisation and so there was a need over the next two years to ensure the HRA was in the best position as possible for transfer to the new authority.

In response to a query from a Tenant Member as to where LGR would leave the Housing Board, the Chief Executive advised that it was hoped LGR would become part of the work of the Board to help make sure that the HRA was fully considered as part of the development of the new authority. The Board would still be relevant for new structures and discussions with new councillors and chief executive about how it would feature in the new structure.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to who would generate the proposed savings target of £29 million, the Chief Executive replied that this was based on what the Government said it wanted to see achieved, so the modelling had been done on that basis.

The Chair noted the biggest anxiety was around the amount of work required and the staff resource that needed to be redirected to support this work without impacting on normal service delivery.

The Chief Executive noted that from Autumn 2026, the Government would be issuing section 24 notices to councils going through LGR which would limit what those councils could make decisions on and spend money on.

The Deputy Chief Executive-Place raised that the resource and capacity concerns were correct, but there had to be an appreciation that the Council ran many regulatory services which it was statutorily required to deliver, and so whilst resource needed putting into LGR, this could be above the Council's regulatory and legal requirements.

The Chief Executive further raised that the Council was now finding recruitment and retention of staff more difficult as local government was becoming a less attractive field to come into.

In response to a query from an Independent Member as to whether there had been any involvement in the taskforce established by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, the Chief Executive confirmed that this was the case, with local governance structures agreed within the last week. Staffordshire had in place a leaders' board, chief executive group and workstreams focused on specific aspects of LGR.

#### **40. Forward Agenda**

The main agenda items for the next meeting were agreed as follows:

- KPIs / performance update (standing item)
- Housing Services Improvement Plan (standing item)
- Self-assessment against the consumer standards
- Review of the Housing Board's performance and fulfilment of its terms of reference.

**41. Any Other Business**

The Tenant Members raised that they had discussed their role on the Board, noting that they did not have the qualifications or specific experience of other Board members but did not want to be seen as troublemakers.

The Chair advised that he did not see them as troublemakers and that their role was more of a critical friend to raise concerns on behalf of tenants if it was felt the Council was not doing what it was meant to for residents.

An Independent Member noted that the Tenant Members had raised an important point, but from a governance perspective, one of the really important things was for the Board to have 'lived experience' from people involved who had the knowledge and experience of being tenants, so the role of tenants' representatives was very important to the Board.

The Tenant Members further raised that they did not just want to come across as rubber stamping decisions and not asking questions, but an added complexity for them was that they could not raise individual issues at Board meetings, which meant it was difficult to provide examples to support discussions.

**42. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2026, 10am, Esperance Room, CCDC.

The meeting closed at 12:07pm.

## Quarter 3 Performance Report 2025/26

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Business Support and Assurance
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Resources and Transformation

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans and the performance at the end of the third quarter of 2025-26.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress at the end of the third quarter relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities and the corrective action 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 Corporate Plan 2022-26 sets out the Council's priorities and strategic objectives. The plan is supported by Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) which set out the key projects and actions for delivery each year. The PDPs were revised last year to reflect changes at an operational level and limitations on capacity.
- 3.2 Overall, 74% of the projects have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in section 5 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, 74% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found in section 5 and in Appendix 2.

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Annual 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 Corporate Plan 2022-26 sets out the Council's priorities and strategic objectives. There are four overarching priorities:

1. To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives.
  2. To encourage and support residents to lead healthy and independent lives.
  3. To ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home.
  4. To be a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council.
- 5.2 The priorities are supported by a number of objectives that set out what the Council is aiming to achieve, how we will deliver these and how we will measure our performance.

### Priority Delivery Plans

- 5.3 The Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) set out in Appendices 1A to 1D to this report are the annual documents that set 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. The PDPs were revised last year to reflect changes at an operational level and limitations on capacity.
- 5.4 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 3 2025-26**

Performance Rating	Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Actions due to end of Quarter 3	Actions not yet due	Total Number of Actions
<b>Corporate Plan Priority</b>						N/A	
<b>Economic Prosperity</b>	6	1	2	1		7	<b>17</b>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	4		1			1	<b>6</b>
<b>Community</b>	8	1	2			5	<b>16</b>
<b>Responsible Council</b>	5	2	2	2		6	<b>17</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>56</b>

- 5.5 At the end of quarter 3, of the 37 actions planned for delivery in this period:
- 27 (73%) have been completed or are on target;
  - 10 (27%) are behind target.

Progress has slipped by 14% compared to quarter 2, and this is largely due to capacity issues.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

5.6 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 3 2025-26**

Corporate Plan Priority					N/A	Total Number of KPIs
	Performance exceeds target	Performance on target	Performance < 5% below target	Performance > 5% below target	Not Applicable / Annual	
Economy Prosperity	7					7
Health & Wellbeing					1	1
Community	2	1	4	2	3	12
Responsible Council	5	2			6	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>33</b>

5.7 Of the 23 indicators due to be reported on in quarter 3:

- 17 (74%) indicators show performance on or above target; and
- 6 (26%) indicators show performance below target.

Performance has improved by 5% compared to quarter 2.

5.8 It should be noted that the actions and performance relating to the Housing Service have been removed from this report and are now being reported separately as part of the arrangements to support the work of the new Housing Board.

## 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 464 411

**Ward Interest:** All Wards

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

**Key Decision:** No

**Priority Delivery Plan for 2025/26**

**Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity**

**Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3**

				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	
6	1	2	1	7	17

**Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3**

Cannock town centre regeneration – Forum demolition works have commenced.

**Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3**

Cannock town centre regeneration – delay to finalising development framework and delivery strategy due to change to site boundary and project scope. This is now proposed to be reported to cabinet in Q4.

Review of s106 and planning obligations delayed. This will be reviewed in Q1 26/27.

Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of major economic growth regeneration projects	<b>Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase One</b>						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete demolition works including former Multi-storey car park</li> </ul>			X		Main demolition works completed in Q3 as scheduled	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commence construction works for Northern gateway</li> </ul>		X			Cabinet resolved on 4 December 2025 to revise the scope of the Northern Gateway element of the scheme which will be subject to a new programme of works. The PDP will be updated with revised actions.	N/A
	<b>Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase Two</b>						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit planning application for phase two of the demolition works</li> </ul>	X				The Phase 2 planning application in respect of the Forum Shopping Centre was submitted in June 2025	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commence demolition works for phase two (Forum and Cabot units)</li> </ul>			X		Demolition commenced on site November 2025	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree preferred development delivery option for cleared development sites</li> </ul>			X		Due to be reported to Cabinet in Q4. Delayed due to the proposed change of site boundary as reported to Cabinet on 4 December 2025	▲
	<b>Investment and growth projects</b>						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote Cannock town centre development prospectus at UKREiiF 2025</li> </ul>	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	★	

Item No. 7.7  
Appendix 1A

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree programme of projects for UKSPF for 2025/26</li> </ul>	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.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresh Economic Growth Strategy</li> </ul>				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop pipeline of future projects</li> </ul>				X		
Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Plan Examination and adoption</li> </ul>			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 undertook a 6 week consultation on Main Modifications to 1 <sup>st</sup> December and sent responses to Inspector. Awaiting final report.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Statement of Community Involvement in Line with New Regulations - scope out extent of changes required</li> </ul>				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Infrastructure Levy - Prepare specification for CIL Viability Assessment</li> </ul>				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design SPD - secure budget, prepare specification and appoint consultant. (Local Plan Examination requiring new SPD Spring 2026)</li> </ul>				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Validation Checklist - consider need for new update and consultation.</li> </ul>				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Local Plan - Green Belt Assessment - consultant team procurement</li> </ul>			X		Consultant appointed and inception meeting held October 25.	

Item No. 7.8  
Appendix 1A

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Planning Obligations - Review of Policy and Allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charging schedules for Section 106 and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) monitoring fees               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduce Monitoring Fees</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	X				Fees were introduced from 1 April 2025.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning obligations Working Group               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Project Identification, prioritisation and monitoring</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		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.	

Priority Delivery Plan for 2025/26

Priority 2 - Health & Wellbeing

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3

				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		1			6

**Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3**

Three bids were received for the leisure procurement which were evaluated and moderated. Cabinet agreed the recommendation to award the contract to the provider who scored highest in both quality and cost. The new contract will provide an improved service for residents and at a substantially lower cost to the Council (after year 2 of the contract, it will deliver an income stream).

**Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3**

A draft community strategy has been developed, this has been delayed due to staffing capacity. Work is continuing to finalise this.

Priority 2 - Health & Wellbeing

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Review of the Leisure, Culture and Heritage Contract	Prepare tender documents for leisure procurement.	X				Working group and project board established. Tender documents drafted.	★
	Start procurement for new leisure contract.		X			The tender was published on 4 <sup>th</sup> August 2025.	★
	Evaluation of submissions for the new leisure contract.			X		3 bids were received and evaluated. Permission was given by Cabinet to award to the provider who scored highest on both quality and cost.	★
	Award of contract and mobilisation period.				X		
Design and Deliver Cannock Chase District's approach to Health	Work with partners and the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) to develop priorities for reducing health inequalities.	X				Partners continued to refine key local priorities for the locality improvement framework and a proposal for collaborative project delivery was drafted.	★
	Complete Community Wellbeing Strategy, setting out priorities across community safety and health.			X		Draft strategy has been produced. Final amendments being made. Implementation plans are being developed.	▲

**Priority Delivery Plan for 2025/26**

**Priority 3 - Community**

**Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3**

				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	
8	1	2		5	16

**Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3**

Communications on the Council’s introduction of weekly food waste collections from April 2026 were launched on social media during Q3 in accordance with the communications plan. Cannock Park play area officially opened in August 2025 and Phase 1 of the masterplan is on track for completion by the end of Q4. Heath Hayes Park consultation has been carried out, with a view to submitting planning application in Q1 2026/27.

**Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3**

Work on outsourcing the health and safety tree inspections has been delayed, due to staffing issues within the Council’s Tree Team. During Q3 the Council’s only remaining fulltime tree officer left the Council for a role in another local authority. The postholder was working on the project in addition to his normal duties, and at the time of drafting the post remained vacant. Due to planned changes in the tree management team the post has yet to be advertised, however, it should soon be. This vacancy will continue to have an impact upon tree management, and the Council’s tree management projects for some time after it has been filled.

Work on the housing strategy is progressing but behind schedule; it has been delayed due to staff capacity issues.

## Priority 3 - Community

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Place based housing strategy	Start procurement of a Housing Strategy for Cannock Chase		X			Staffordshire County Council are supporting on the procurement of a Housing Strategy and a specification is in the process of being agreed.	★
	Award contract for a Housing Strategy			X		Specification has been finalised and is with Staffordshire County Council.	▲
Waste & Recycling - Kerbside collection contract (2025-2032)	Commencement of new kerbside waste & recycling collection contract	X				The new kerbside waste & recycling collection contract was commenced on time at the start of April 2025 as planned and has operated effectively following its commencement.	★
	Complete required collection round rerouting / day changes, in accordance with the accepted tender	X				Re-routing of collection rounds has been successfully implemented. Minimal disruption to the service during implementation phase can be evidenced by no formal complaints received by CCDC.	★
	Complete performance review of new kerbside waste & recycling collection contract				X		
	Complete procurement of food waste caddies	X				Food waste caddy procurement has been completed with orders placed with the successful bidder. Deliveries expected late 2025/early 2026.	★

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Launch of communications plan for food waste introduction with residents.			X		Food waste communications successfully launched on social media during Q3 according to the Councils communications plan.	★
	Distribute new food waste caddies and new service information to residents.				X		
Tree Management	Secure approval and funding for integrated tree management system and tree inspections.		X			Completed - Funding for the new integrated tree management system was secured following a report to Cabinet on 31st July 2025.	★
	Begin procurement of joint tree management system (including Open Customer Facing Public Portal).		X			Completed - procurement of the joint tree management system was commenced following the above Cabinet briefing undertaken on new system.	★
	Commence procurement of outsourced routine health and safety tree inspections.			X		Work on the outsourcing health and safety tree inspections has been delayed due to staffing issues within the Council's Tree Team.	▲
	Implement joint tree management system.				X		
	Prepare joint investment strategy and work programme as part of the budget setting process.				X		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Play Area / Parks Improvements	Continue play area development in accordance with follow-up (second) play area improvement programme, agreed by Cabinet during 2024/25 (following early completion of the first).	X	X	X	X	Work is progressing on Phase 1 of the Cannock Park master plan.  Heath Hayes Park master plan consultation has been carried out, with a view to submitting planning application in Q1 2026/27.	
	Begin consultation around the rationalisation of play areas identified within the above 2024/25 play area development programme report.			X		Consultation with the elected ward members has begun where the 5 play areas have been identified for rationalisation.	
	Prepare Cabinet report on the results of the play area rationalisation consultations.				X		

**Priority Delivery Plan for 2025/26**

**Priority 4 - Responsible Council**

**Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3**

				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	
5	2	2	2	6	17

**Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3**

The first Climate Change Board meeting took place in November 2025

**Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3**

As reported previously, work on the installation of the switches has slipped and has been rescheduled for completion by the end of quarter 4. Work on the new shared intranet is progressing but is slightly behind schedule; this will now be completed in quarter 4. Climate change data is being collated but will now start to be reported to the Board from quarter 4 onwards.

## Priority 4 - Responsible Council

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Closure of the Accounts	Audit of the Accounts for 2023/24			X		Work has commenced on a phased approach to catching up on the backlog of unaudited accounts	
	VFM review 23/24			X		Work on the VFM review for 23/24 has been completed and work on the 24/25 review is nearing completion	
Transformation Strategy & Plan	Report to Cabinet setting out impact of LGR on Shared Services /Transformation work and agree proposed approach		X			The report was approved by Cabinet in November 2025.	
Digital Strategy (inc replacement of IT Systems)	Installation of new switches	X	X			Work on the replacement of the core switches has been completed. The ESXi hosts have been replaced and work continues on the edge switches. The remainder of the work will be completed by the end of Q4.	
	SharePoint File Migration - development of business case and work plan		X			Approximately 50% of the migration has been completed to date and we are aiming to complete the majority of the remaining files by the end of Q2 2026/27.	
	Development of new Shared Services Intranet		X			Platform has been developed. Work programme to populate it and migrate information from existing intranet sites has been agreed and work will be completed in Q4.	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Climate Change Strategy	Climate Change Strategy to be adopted	X				Council adopted the Strategy	★
	Climate Action Board in place			X		The first Board meeting took place on 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2025 and are scheduled for every quarter	★
	Data gathered for reporting to Climate Action Board		X			Q1 and Q2 data gathered from all service areas. Action plan progress reported to Climate Action Board November 25.	★
	Climate Action Board reports to Cabinet			X		The first report will be produced following the February Board meeting	▲
Strategic asset management including the review of key assets	Building Condition Surveys - Budget to be allocated to undertake essential remedial works				X		
	Statutory Compliance for all Council owned buildings: • Complete Insurance Reinstatement Valuations for outstanding buildings				X		
	Complete Lease & Asset Reviews:						
	• Appoint Agency Estates Surveyor		X			Interim Estates Surveyor Appointed	★
	• Compliance of Leased Buildings				X		
	• Lease Reviews Lease Negotiations				X		
	• Asset Reviews				X		
	Implement TIO to record Compliance Data across all buildings				X		

## Summary of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - Quarter 3 2025/26

Symbol	Description	Economic Prosperity	Health & Wellbeing	Community	Responsible Council	Total
★	Performance exceeds target	7		2	5	14
✓	Performance on target			1	2	3
▲	Performance < 5% below target			4		4
✘	Performance > 5% below target			2		1
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable		1	3	6	11
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>

**KPIs for Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity**

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

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 24/25	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Planning</b>									
Major Planning Applications determined within time.	100%	60%	100%	100%	75%			★	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time.	97.4%	70%	100%	96.5%	98%			★	
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined.	0%	< 10%	0%	0%	6.7%			★	
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined.	0%	< 10%	7%	0.32%	0.35%			★	
<b>Building Control</b>									
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	92%	95%	86%	90%	100%			★	
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt.	77%	80%	65%	76%	85%			★	
Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service.	95%	90%	100%	100%	100%			★	

## KPIs for Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing

Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	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	1	1		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Leisure</b>									
Annual report from Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles setting out the performance of all facilities and narrative on the wider wellbeing work and events they facilitate.	N/A	N/A						N/A	As the contract is due to end on 31 March 26, it has been agreed that an Annual report will not be produced. The focus will be on supporting the mobilisation of the new contract.

**KPIs for Priority 3 - The Community**

Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	4	3	2		
✓	Performance on target	1	2	1		
▲	Performance < 5% below target	1	2	4		
✘	Performance > 5% below target	3	2	2		
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	3	3	3		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>		

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Operations - Waste &amp; Recycling</b>									
% collections completed first time	99.96%	99.90%	99.95%	99.98%	99.96%			★	
Number of missed bin collections (including assisted) / 100,000	26 per 100,000	<40 per 100,000	59 per 100,000	20 per 100,000	42 per 100,000			▲	An increase in missed bins has been attributed to the poor weather conditions and the recruitment of new staff members.
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	36.10%	45%	40.49%	37.68%	33.20%			✘	The reduction is normal during Q3 due to the lower garden waste tonnages collected
Amount of residual waste collected per household (Kgs)	492.71 kg	<480 kg or 120 kgs / qtr. (equivalent)	117.67 kg	120.39 kgs	120.65 kgs			▲	Slightly over target which is due to additional waste from the pre-Christmas period.
<b>Environmental Health</b>									
% of food businesses inspected	100%	100%	27%	52%	76%			✓	
% of food businesses inspected which are broadly compliant (rating of 3 or better)	98%	N/A	97%	96%	98.5%			N/A	This is a measure, not target
% of service requests responded to within target (all service areas)	91%	95%	94%	93%	91%			▲	Small number of requests out of target largely due to Christmas break

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Housing Assistance</b>									
No of DFGs completed	86	85	10	11	15				The new IT system is up and running with data cleansing in progress; new team procedures are being embedded resulting in gradual improvement.
<b>Strategic Housing &amp; Homelessness</b>									
% households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6 + months	50%	39%	55%	47%	38%				Increase in complex cases in the last quarter has made it more difficult to secure suitable offers of accommodation.
<b>Community Safety &amp; Partnerships</b>									
Number of residents/cases dealt with by the CAB	3,275	N/A	841	823	846			N/A	Measure / contextual information only
Total value of financial outcomes achieved as a result of the CAB contract	£4,675,514	Measure only	£1,314,649	£1,146,959	£1,439,341			N/A	Measure / contextual information only
Community Safety Partnership Hub referrals and case closures within 3 months	107 referrals 97% closed	90% closed within 3 months	22 referrals 95% closed	35 referrals 100% closed	28 referrals 100% closed				

**KPIs for Priority 4 - Responsible Council**

Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
★	Performance exceeds target	4	4	5		
✓	Performance on target	1	2	2		
▲	Performance < 5% below target	1	1			
✘	Performance > 5% below target	1				
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	6	6	6		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>		

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Local Taxation and Benefits</b>									
Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	17.4	20 days	18	19.7	14.2			★	
Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	4.3	9 days	2.2	2.1	2.6			★	
% of Council Tax collected annually	97%	98% by year end	28%	54.7%	81.6%			✓	
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98.3%	98% by year end	26.1%	53.8%	80.8%			✓	
<b>Transformation &amp; Assurance</b>									
% of calls answered	94.5%	95%	96.2%	96.7%	97.1%			★	
Average call wait time	90 secs	90 secs	44 secs	32 secs	33 secs			★	
Number of calls answered	86,466	N/A	20,602	17,404	17,089			N/A	
<b>Law &amp; Governance</b>									
FOI requests within time i.e. 20 working days	84.6%	85%	74%	91.2%	92.3%			★	

**Item No. 7.27**  
**Appendix 2**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Year End 24/25</b>	<b>Target 25/26</b>	<b>Qtr 1</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>	<b>Qtr 3</b>	<b>Qtr 4</b>	<b>Year End 25/26</b>	<b>Rating Symbol</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Corporate Assets</b>									
% of buildings with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record	100%	100%						N/A	Annual Target
% of buildings with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)	100%	100%						N/A	Annual Target
% of passenger lifts that have a valid 6 monthly thorough examination record	100%	100%						N/A	Annual Target
% of buildings that have a current Legionella risk assessment	100%	100%						N/A	Annual Target
% of buildings that have a current Fire risk assessment	100%	100%						N/A	Annual Target

## Updated Strategic Risk Register

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Business Support & Assurance
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Resources and Transformation

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out details of the Council's Strategic Risk Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

### 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:

<b>Risk Status</b>	<b>Number of Risks at 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2025</b>	<b>Number of Risks at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025</b>
Red (High)	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
Orange (Medium)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Yellow (Moderate)	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Green (Low)	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>

### 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 A new risk management framework was approved for implementation by Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and this has been used to do a fundamental review of the Council’s Strategic Risks. This resulted in a fully revised risk register being produced for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. This has been reviewed and updated for and a summary of the position at the end of the third quarter of 2025 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

5.5 Work continues to enhance and refine the risks and actions identified to manage them as the Strategic Risk Register matures. As such it is anticipated that risks and wordings may change as Leadership Team have a better understanding of the risks.

5.6 The risk summary illustrates the risks / opportunities using the “traffic light” method i.e.

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

**Orange** Medium risk, score 6 to 9 (action plan required to reduce risk)

**Yellow** Moderate risk, score of 3 to 4 (risk within risk appetite, no action plan required but watching brief to ensure controls are effective and operating)

**GREEN** Low risk, score below 3 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

**Blue** Negligible Risk, score of 1 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

- 5.7 Cabinet and Audit Committee are receiving summary level information on all the risks as they stand at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 **Appendix 1** and detailed information of risks which are red at a residual level **Appendix 2**.
- 5.8 Leadership Team have reviewed all risks in detail and are monitoring all the orange risks in addition to the red risks.
- 5.9 At the end of December some actions had been completed, and others are being progressed. There has been some slippage on a few of the actions planned due to a lack of capacity/delays in recruitment and these are highlighted in Appendix 2.
- 5.10 The Leisure Risk 2025-05 has undergone a larger review to recognise the move from the procurement to mobilisation stage as the Council has now awarded the contract to a new supplier. This has seen a reduction in the residual risk score from 12 (Red) to 8 (Orange) which is the target score for the risk at this time.

## **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 – 31 December 2025

Appendix 2 – Strategic Risk Register Red Risks – 31 December 2025

## **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 464 415

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

Audit & Governance Committee: 11/03/26

**Key Decision:** No

Cannock Chase Council - Summary of Strategic Risk Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

Risk Ref	Risk Owner	Risk Name	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score Sept	Residual Risk Score Dec	Direction of Travel in Period	Target Score
2025-01	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Financial Stability	16	12	12	↔	12
2025-02	Housing & Corporate Assets	Health and safety arrangements for properties	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-03	Chief Executive	Local Government reorganisation	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-09	Operations	Tree Management	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-15	Economic Development & Planning	Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Project	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-04	Transformation & Assurance	IT Resilience	16	8	8	↔	8
2025-07	Housing & Corporate Assets	Failure to meet required housing standards and not being prepared for inspection.	16	8	8	↔	4
2025-10	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Failure to deliver good governance	16	8	8	↔	4
2025-05	Wellbeing	Sustainable leisure provision	12	12	8	↓	8
2025-06	Chief Executive	Corporate capacity is insufficient to maintain provision of core services and deliver major projects	12	12	12	↔	12
2025-12	Chief Executive	Health and safety arrangements for people	12	8	8	↔	4
2025-14	Housing & Corporate Assets	HRA Financial Sustainability	12	8	8	↔	4

## Key to Direction of Travel



Risk has decreased



Risk level unchanged



Risk has increased

Cannock Chase Council - Strategic Risk Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025

<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-01
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)
<b>Risk Name</b>	Financial Stability
<b>Risk Description</b>	Internal - Poor budget planning, over commitment of financial resources or significant use of reserves to fund schemes leading to a financial shortfall, reduced financial resilience or overspends that undermine the Council's ability to deliver services or corporate priorities. External - central government policy changes which impact the Council's financial position.
<b>Consequences</b>	s114 notice / Government intervention Damage to reputation with stakeholders May affect ability to bid for funding Poor PR
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	Responsible Council
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Financial

<b>Inherent Impact</b>	<b>Inherent Likelihood</b>	<b>Inherent Risk Score</b>
4	4	16
<b>Residual Impact</b>	<b>Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Residual Risk Score</b>
4	3	12
<b>Target Score</b>		12

**Comment on Target Score:**

The three year financial settlement announced December 2025 has given a greater degree of certainty to funding moving forwards. It must be noted that this is still provisional and subject to change though. The funding allocated has allowed the council to balance a 3 year budget with significant use of reserves. This has reduced the council's financial resilience.

<b>Controls</b>	<b>Assurances</b>
Medium term financial plan in place	Council approval and s151 Officer
Working Balances maintained, with tentative proposals to maintain over the medium term	S151 Officer and Deputy
Review of the capital programme is complete	S151 Officer and Deputy
Evaluation of consultations on changes to government funding regimes	S151 Officer
Financial regulations in place to be followed	Internal Audit periodic checks and Finance Team

Controls	Assurances
Membership of appropriate bodies to gain insights into government funding direction	S151 Officer
Business cases required for drawdown of reserves to ensure VFM and appropriate use of monies	S151 Officer and Deputy / Leadership Team
Internal and audit review of accounts/processes and procedures	Internal Audit Reports
Budget managers have been trained on financial procedures, budget monitoring and the utilisation of the general ledger to view budgets/spend in real time	

### Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Quarterly budget monitoring	s151 Officer	Quarter 1 2025/26	Not achieved. See update below.

### Progress Updates

Current Position	<p><b>Internal:</b></p> <p>The period 6 outturn for 2025/26 has been completed and will be reported to Cabinet in January as part of the budget.</p> <p>Due to resource constraints within the Finance Team and increasing workload generated by the wider organisation, it is currently not possible to achieve regular quarterly monitoring.</p> <p>Training has been given to budget managers to support them in accessing live information from the finance system and they also have access to staff in the Finance Team.</p> <p>Nonetheless, without formal regular quarterly budget monitoring reports and meetings it is acknowledged that the risk score will remain as high.</p> <p><b>External:</b></p> <p>A balanced 3 year budget has been prepared and is currently going through the governance cycle for approval. This is a major step forwards for the council. As above, this required the use of reserves which could be safely released to fund the position and increased investment in services.</p>
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<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-02 (A&B)
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets
<b>Risk Name</b>	Health and safety arrangements for properties
<b>Risk Description</b>	Operational property procedures including CDM compliance, maintenance and management of properties is not sufficient to adequately ensure they are safe for tenants, employees, leaseholders or visitors leading to death or serious injury.
<b>Consequences</b>	Death or serious and minor injury, Prosecution by HSE and private legal action. Reputational damage. Deterioration in condition of buildings Depreciation of buildings
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	Responsible Council
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Health & Safety

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
<b>Target Score</b>		8

**Comment on Target Score:**

There are situations outside of the control which will lead to accidents, and a large housing and property portfolio means that a risk score of 4 is unlikely as accidents and incidents will still happen.

<b>Controls</b>	<b>Assurances</b>
Compliance data is held for all properties	Monthly data validation by managers
TIO system for recording regular compliance checks on all Housing blocks	Monitoring of spreadsheets by management
Policies approved by Leadership Team and published online, regularly reviewed.	Internal Audit Reviews Housing Board - monitoring Improvement Plan External Audit - VFM Reviews
Updated policies and procedures for compliance areas.	
Periodic training for staff . Training database records.	
Compliance Checks carried out by appropriately qualified staff	

## Actions Housing - 2A

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Monthly data validation to be carried out	Assistant Manager (Compliance)	Quarter 3 2025-26 (Revised from Q1 to Q3 Sept 2025)	Validation started in December 2025.
Following results of Stock Condition Survey address identified Category 1 hazards	HPS Manager	Quarter 2 2026/27 (Updated from Q3 2025-26 Dec 25)	Action complete – Cat 1 Hazards identified and works completed in the 69% properties that have been surveyed. Remaining 31% of stock condition surveys to be completed by Summer 2026
NEC Housing Information System to be further developed to ensure data is collected (additional elements/fields to be built)	NEC Consultant / HMIT	Quarter 3 2026/27 (Updated from Q3 2025-26 Dec 25)	Work will progress upon the appointment of the Business Analysts or capacity becomes available within the team.
Procedures to be developed for the Compliance Polices that have been approved	Housing Maintenance Manager and HPS Manager.	Quarter 3 2026-27 (Updated from Quarter 4 2025/26 Dec 25)	8 Procedures to be developed in line with the appointment of the interim Business Analysts In addition an over-arching Access Procedure to be produced
Increase third party assurance of inspections and data collection.	HPS Manager	Quarter 2 2026-27 (Updated from Quarter 4 2025/26 Dec 25)	budget has been approved to take this forward.  Procurement can now be progressed

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Damp and Mould, Disrepair, HHSRS system data collection to follow (element/fields to be built) further to requirements arising from Awaabs Law.	Housing Maintenance Manager	Quarter 1 2026/27	Module went live in October 2025. Further tweaks are required and these are currently being addressed.  Further development of the Module is required with the expansion of the HHSRS (Housing, Health and Safety Rating System)
Spreadsheet information put into NEC, following above element/field system build.	Assistant Manager (Compliance)	Quarter 2 2026/27	To be developed in line with the appointment of the interim Business Analyst. If time allows delivery team can pick up within next 12months should business analyst not materialise.  One of two business analysts will be appointed mid-January 2026 with priority set for scheduling and mobile solution for repairs.

**Progress Updates Housing - 2A**

Current Position	<p>Budget has been approved for the appointment of two Business Analysts will help to move actions along. These posts are being recruited via an agency and will be appointed on an interim basis in January 2026.</p> <p>Damp &amp; Mould work ongoing to build elements - challenging target set ahead of October date for Awaabs Law going live. Following the go live date the number of repairs reported relating to damp and mould have significantly increased.</p> <p>The Business Analyst likely to be appointed January 2026, the focus is on NEC Go/Mobile and Scheduler review is the first priority. NEC Housing Information System to be further developed to ensure data is collected (additional elements/fields to be built) - this is resource intensive project and the initial timescales were ambitious.</p>
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**Actions Corporate Property - 2B**

<b>Actions Planned</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Progress/Comments</b>
Monthly validation of corporate assets data	Interim Asset Manager	Quarter 4 2025/26	A central list has been collated and is being checked.  Other validations will take place once the new Corporate Assets Manager is in post.  No software solution identified so will remain on a spreadsheet.
Statutory Compliance for all Council owned Buildings	Interim Asset Manager	Quarter 4 2025/26	Year End Target
Lease & Asset Reviews	Interim Asset Manager	Quarter 4 2025/26 (on-going)	Ad-hoc as and when required. Owing to lack of resources and direction regarding a large-scale review ahead of LGR.  New Corporate Assets Manager will take the lead on this - they have been appointed but not yet started to work at the Council.

**Progress Updates Corporate Property - 2B**

Current Position	<p>All Tenants have been contacted, and early indications are that a number of compliance certificates are not available. A dialogue has commenced with the tenants, and we will be supporting them to complete their compliance requirements as per the lease agreements. However it is noted that some leases do not require this information to be supplied to the Council.</p> <p>The Compliance Spreadsheet is being updated as and when we are receiving the documentation so progress whilst being made will be slow to fully reduce the risk.</p> <p>The newly appointed Asset Manager has a start date in early February 2026 and will pick up the outstanding actions.</p>
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<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-03
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Risk Name</b>	Local Government reorganisation
<b>Risk Description</b>	The Council has to divert resources to the management of the Council's response plans for Local Government re-organisation which threatens the ability to maintain the quality of services at a time when capacity is already stretched.
<b>Consequences</b>	Core Services and major projects fail to be delivered Reputational damage
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	Responsible Council
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Capacity / Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
<b>Target Score</b>		8

**Comment on Target Score:**

As planning for LGR is still in its infancy, it is too soon to be confident that we can mitigate this risk fully and reduce it to a 4. At present it is considered we can reduce the likelihood to a 2 giving a target score of 8. As planning and work progresses, actions and the target score will be reviewed. Progress with this risk is also linked to the risk regarding capacity (ref 2025-06).

Controls	Assurances
LGR lead officers identified	Cabinet
	Scrutiny Committee
	Leadership Team

**Actions**

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Review of resources available to support LGR work	Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 2 2025/26	Report approved by Cabinet in November 2025 recommending the redirection of resources allocated to transformation work to LGR and setting out key areas of preparatory work to be done. Action Completed

**Progress Updates**

Current Position	<p>The actions planned to date have been completed and the proposal has been submitted to the government for consideration. Whilst there has been no impact on front line service delivery, there has been an impact on the delivery of actions within the Resources Directorate and in particular actions relating to the Governance Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Cabinet has approved a report setting out the redirection of resources planned for transformation work to support LGR and key areas of preparatory work for the Council. However, there is still uncertainty at the moment, as to what other work is going to take place over the coming months but it has been agreed to set up a County wide Project Management Office to commence preparation for LGR and the Council will be represented on this.</p>
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<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-05
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Head of Wellbeing
<b>Risk Name</b>	Sustainable leisure provision
<b>Risk Description</b>	Not being able to secure affordable and sustainable leisure provision now and in the future.
<b>Consequences</b>	This could result in the closure of leisure facilities and wellbeing services to the public, directly impacting on the health and wellbeing of residents in the district. It would cause reputational damage to the Council and would negatively impact on staff employed in this sector.
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	Health & Wellbeing
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Reputation, Customer/ Public Perception

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	3	12
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	2	8
<b>Target Score</b>		8

**Comment on Target Score:**

Leisure is delivered by a single provider therefore the impact will remain serious if there are factors that lead to the loss of that partner. The likelihood can never be reduced to a 1 due to external factors which may impact on the affordability of a leisure provision.

Controls	Assurances
Weekly partnership meetings with senior representatives of the current leisure provider and CCDC	Management Oversight
Dedicated Leisure Officer appointed	Regular meetings with the provider
Resource allocated to procurement of new leisure contract	Procuring alternative, sustainable option

**Actions**

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Procurement of a new Leisure Contract to be operational from 01 April 2026	Head of Wellbeing / DCE (Resources)	Quarter 4 2025-26	On target to have new contract operational on 01 April 2026.

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Tender submissions received and recommendations on preferred supplier made	Head of Wellbeing / DCE (Resources)	Quarter 3 2025-26	3 compliant bids received, recommendation on preferred provider approved by Cabinet, contract award notice published and standstill period completed. Initial mobilisation meeting with new provider held and between outgoing and new provider. Action Complete
Contract mobilisation	Head of Wellbeing / DCE (Resources)	Quarter 4 2025-26	Plans are in place to mobilise the new contractor in Q4.

### Progress Updates

Current Position	Significant progress has occurred in quarter 3 reducing this risk. When the mobilisation has completed and the new operator is in place this risk will be managed through strong contract performance management and close working with the incoming provider, as a result it is likely to be removed from the Strategic Risk Register.
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<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-06
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Risk Name</b>	Corporate capacity is insufficient to maintain provision of core services and deliver major projects.
<b>Risk Description</b>	The inability to recruit and retain staff particularly in statutory and other core areas threatens service delivery across the Council. This risk is exacerbated by other factors such as the number of high priority projects, large procurement exercises, demand for new software, competing priorities and Local Government Reorganisation.
<b>Consequences</b>	Projects are delayed or not implemented. Operational services are delivered to a lower standard, backlogs arise or service not delivered at all. Complaints / damage to reputation. Wellbeing of staff who are under pressure to deliver.
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	Responsible Council
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Capacity / Service Delivery

<b>Inherent Impact</b>	<b>Inherent Likelihood</b>	<b>Inherent Risk Score</b>
4	4	16
<b>Residual Impact</b>	<b>Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Residual Risk Score</b>
4	3	12
<b>Target Score</b>		12

**Comment on Target Score:**

Due to the limited market in key professions such as Finance, Legal, Planning etc, the uncertainty created by Local Government Reorganisation and the volume of major projects in progress, it is considered that the residual risk score cannot be reduced further and actions planned are focussed on maintaining the current position.

<b>Controls</b>	<b>Assurances</b>
Corporate Plan sets out priorities and key projects	Performance reporting
Use of agency staff and contractors to cover posts which are difficult to recruit to	
Market supplements to enhance salary to attract candidates	
Management of absences	Oversight by HR

**Actions**

<b>Actions Planned</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Progress/Comments</b>
Assessment of capacity, pinch points and reductions in workload consequentially	Leadership Team	Quarter 3 2025/26 (Revised Q1 to Q3 Sept 2025)	Assessment of current vacancies completed. Discussion with Leadership Team in January about the development of workplans covering the next 2 years.
Management of expectations / discussion with Cabinet	Chief Executive / Leadership Team	Revised to Q4 from Q2 2025/26 and ongoing (Jan 26)	Discussions will take place once the work plans have been drafted. Likely to be March/April 2026.

**Progress Updates**

Current Position	<p>An assessment of vacancies and capacity issues was completed as at end of October and discussed at the Responsible Council Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10 December 2025.</p> <p>Following a discussion with Leadership Team, workplans are to be developed setting out the key projects and workstreams for the next 2 years, which will include preparation for LGR and this will also include an assessment of capacity. Once drafted, these will be shared with the Cabinet Members.</p> <p>Additional resources have been included in the proposed budget for 2026/27 onwards for a small number of services to create new posts or support agency payments where there are difficulties in recruiting. This will help in maintaining the current position but is not expected to significantly improve it.</p> <p>As flagged previously, the focus is on managing capacity within the current resources and maintaining the current position so that this does not deteriorate.</p>
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<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-09
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Head of Operations
<b>Risk Name</b>	Safe Management of Trees
<b>Risk Description</b>	Risk of a tree or part of a tree falling on an individual/s causing death or serious injury. Risk of a tree or part of a tree falling onto a building causing server damage to a property or the death or serious injury of an individual/s.
<b>Consequences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death/Serious Injury</li> <li>• Damage to property</li> <li>• HSE Investigation/Prosecution</li> <li>• Corporate Manslaughter</li> <li>• Insurance Claims</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	The Community
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Capacity / Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
<b>Target Score</b>		8

**Comment on Target Score:**

Given the number of trees and the unpredictability of the weather, and the increase in the number of severe weather events, it is considered the current residual likelihood score sits at a 3. With the residual impact score remaining at a 4, it makes the overall residual risk score a 12. It is unlikely that the impact score can be reduced below a 4. Due to its categorisation, the nature, and the subject area it may also be difficult to reduce the likelihood from a 3 to a 2. The residual risk score will remain high for some time at a 12 until re-inspections have been undertaken, and resultant work programmes are well established. Given the circumstances of the risk, while currently higher than preferred at 12, an overall goal of a residual risk score of an 8 is considered acceptable in the longer-term.

Controls	Assurances
Trained Manager, Tree Officers, and Arboriculturists.	IA Reviews.
Tree Surveys	Management Information
Policies and Procedures for Tree Management	
Trees maintained using recognised tree risk management process	
CCDC - Urban Forestry Strategy	
Allocation of semi-dedicated management resource.	

<b>Controls</b>	<b>Assurances</b>
Knowledge of tree locations	
Historic / recent tree inspections	
Rudimental tree database / systems in place	

**Actions**

<b>Actions Planned</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Progress/Comments</b>
Review tree policy and procedures	Natural Environment Manager	Q1 2026-27 (Revised from Q3 2025-26 Dec 25)	Work has been hampered on tree management by staffing issues. This will have a knock-on impact on each of the below.
Implement new fully risk-based tree management procedure	Natural Environment Manager	Q1 2026-27 (Revised from Q3 2025-26 Dec 25)	See above
Implement risk-based programme of tree works around inspection results	Natural Environment Manager	Q1 2026-27 (Revised from Q3 2025-26 Dec 25)	See above
Implement new joint tree management ICT GIS based system	Natural Environment Manager	Q2 2026-27 (Revised from Q4 2025-26 Dec 25)	See below comment around delay.
Outsource next round of tree inspections for all trees to create new baseline data (78,000 trees)	Natural Environment Manager	Q2 2026-27 (Revised from Q4 2025-26 Dec 25)	See below comment around delay.
Implement procedure for on-going risk-based inspections of trees	Natural Environment Manager	Q2 2026-27 (Revised from Q4 2025-26 Dec 25)	See below comment around delay.
Deliver and monitor tree risk-based works and ongoing inspections	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2026-27 (Revised from Q1 2026-27 Dec 25)	See below comment around delay.

**Progress Updates**

Current Position	<p>Progress around tree management has been hampered by fulltime staffing and structure issues. This has been compounded by the recent loss of the Council's only remaining Tree Officer. Tree management is reliant upon, the use of consultant tree officers and contracted tree maintenance works, at both SBC and CCDC. The Tree Management structure across both Councils is being finalised with HR and finance, and posts should be advertised during Q4. Until the above restructure has been undertaken and embedded it is likely to impact on each of the above tasks and other tree management requirements. It is considered that the impact of having to restaff both tree teams will delay the tree management programme by up to 6 months. A decision has been taken for the above timescales be put back by that delay period and the action noted.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the risk, it is considered the overall residual likelihood score will not be reduced until the tree inspections have been completed and the majority of the high-risk remedial tree works identified has been completed. This may take upward of 2-3 years.</p>
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<b>Risk Ref</b>	2025-15
<b>Risk Owner</b>	Head of Economic Development & Planning
<b>Risk Name</b>	Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Project
<b>Risk Description</b>	<p>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 and hinder the Council's wider ambition to secure economic prosperity for the District.</p> <p>There is a risk that either the Council may not be able to deliver the demolition phase of the project or secure a development partner to re-develop the cleared sites.</p>
<b>Consequences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major reputational risk for the Council in terms of not delivering the schemes that local residents expect; potential that Council may be unsuccessful with future funding bids</li> <li>• Reduced growth and economic prosperity for local residents</li> <li>• Decline of town centres / impact on major redevelopment proposals</li> <li>• Council exposed to unplanned financial risks and pressure on revenue resources which impacts on delivery of core services</li> <li>• Clawback of funding for non-delivery</li> <li>• Increased pressure on already stretched services/functions of the council which have capacity issues.</li> <li>• Cleared sites could sit empty for indeterminate period if developer interest doesn't materialise</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Objective CCDC</b>	Economic Prosperity
<b>Main Risk Category</b>	Reputation, Customer/ Public Perception

<b>Inherent Impact</b>	<b>Inherent Likelihood</b>	<b>Inherent Risk Score</b>
4	4	16
<b>Residual Impact</b>	<b>Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Residual Risk Score</b>
4	3	12
	<b>Target Score</b>	8

**Comment on Target Score:**

Inherent nature of the risk profile of the regeneration schemes makes it difficult to reach a score of 4, therefore a target score of 8 has been set at this stage. External influences may affect the ability to secure operators/end users to build out development within the agreed footprint of the scheme. Although the demolition works to the former MSCP and Forum Shopping Centre are nearing completion and there has been a strong level of

interest in the town centre from potential operators the residual risk score will remain at 8 until the Council agrees the overall Development Framework for the scheme and secures agreements with operators.

It should be noted that the risk profile of the scheme will change over time as the Council completes the demolition works and secures development partners/operators to bring forward development on the cleared sites.

Controls	Assurances
Monitoring / finance returns being prepared and submitted to MHCLG in line with timescales in agreed memorandum of understanding	Project Sponsor Statutory Officer Meetings
Key decisions taken by Cabinet in relation to the project with relevant delegations and budget approvals in place	Statutory Officer Meetings Project Sponsor
Business cases to support key acquisition with quantification of costs and risks	Review by Statutory Officers Project Sponsor
Procurement using approved frameworks to select and appoint key contractors	SCC Procurement team Internal Audit Reviews Project Sponsor
Detailed risk registers and project plans to Operational Group	Project Board Project Sponsor Internal Audit reviews. External Audit overview Statutory Office Meetings
Governance arrangements to ensure oversight of programme delivery, spend and risks; with Programme Boards, Steering groups and project delivery meetings taking place on a regular basis	Project Board Project Sponsor Internal Audit reviews. External Audit overview. Statutory Officer Meetings External Audit
Ensure that the Council is effectively managing contractors and consultants	Project Sponsor Statutory Officer Meetings
Ensure that the Council has sufficient Programme / project management arrangements and capacity to deliver the projects	Statutory Officer Meetings Project Sponsor
Ensure that the Council's Health & Safety / CDM requirements are met, and demolition / construction works are managed safely and in line with regulations	Review by Statutory Officers Project Sponsor

## Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Monthly Risk Registers and Dashboards to Leadership Team and Project Board	Head of Economic Development & Planning	Quarter 1 2025/26	Action completed. Performance Dashboards and Risk Registers have been produced and reported to Project Boards.
Communications to stakeholders, partners and the public - development of Comms Strategy and Plan	Head of Economic Development & Planning, Communications Manager	Quarter 1 2026-27 <i>(Revised from Q1 to Q2 June 25 and from Q2 to Q4 Sept 25 and from Q4 to Q1 2026-27 in Dec 2025)</i>	Target date needs to be revised to quarter 1 26/27. It was anticipated that this action would be complete in quarter 2, then quarter 4. A revised comms plan for the project will be developed when the Development Framework has been presented to Cabinet and agreed (see next action).
Agree approach to securing development delivery	Head of Economic Development & Planning	Quarter 4 2025/26 <i>(Revised from Q3 to Q4 in Sept 2025)</i>	The Council is producing a Development Framework which can be used to guide development within the cleared regeneration site. This will be reported to Cabinet in Quarter 4.
Formal procurement process to appoint development partner(s)	Head of Economic Development & Planning	Quarter 1 - 2026/27	Officers have completed work to research procurement frameworks and other routes to market that could be used to select developers/operators.
Business case to review opportunity for Council to relocate from the Civic Centre site	Chief Exec Deputy Chief Exec - Resources Deputy Chief Exec – Place Head of Economic Development & Planning Head of Housing & Corporate Assets	Quarter 1 2026/27	External capacity will need to be procured to support this workstream.

**Progress Updates**

Current Position	<p>Performance Dashboards and Risk Registers have been produced and reported to Project Boards and LT.</p> <p>Meetings with developers/operators are currently taking place as part of the soft market testing to discuss the regeneration opportunity being created by the Council utilising the regeneration funding. Procurement frameworks have been researched and identified with the view to understand the optimum route to the market.</p> <p>The Council is currently producing a comprehensive Development Framework which sets out a vision and set of parameters for the cleared development site and this will guide the proposed uses in this area. It is intended that a report will be taken to Cabinet in spring 2026 to seek approval for the Development Framework and to recommend a preferred approach to selecting operators/end users for the scheme.</p> <p>During 2026/27 it is anticipated that the Council will be in a position to formally select developers/operators to deliver proposals that accord with the uses set in the Development Framework. The risk profile of the scheme will begin to shift with risk transferred to third party developer/operators rather than the Council and this will impact on the overall risk score.</p>
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## **Governance Improvement Plan - Progress Report for Quarter 3 2025/26**

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Business Support and Assurance
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Resources and Transformation

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### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress in the delivery of the Governance Improvement Plan at the end of Quarter 3 2025-26.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the progress made in the delivery of the Governance Improvement Plan set out at Appendix 1.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2.3 The information allows Cabinet to ensure that all appropriate steps are being taken to improve the Council's governance arrangements.

### **3 Key Issues**

- 3.1 The findings of the annual review of the Council's governance arrangements for 2024-25 were reported to the Audit & Governance Committee on 17 June 2025. The report included an action plan to address the findings.
- 3.2 This report sets out the progress made in delivering the action plan up to the end of quarter 3 of 2025/26. Of the 39 actions due to be completed, 23% have been completed or are on target. Progress in quarter 3 has continued to be impacted by work on Local Government Reorganisation taking precedence and ongoing capacity issues.

### **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 The Council has a statutory responsibility to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, which includes the system of internal control and to publish an "annual governance statement" with the annual accounts.

5.2 In reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, the Council has to identify any ‘significant governance issues’ and what action will be taken to address these. There is no single definition as to what constitutes a ‘significant governance issue’ and judgement has to be exercised. Factors used in making such judgements include:

- the issue has seriously prejudiced or prevented achievement of a principal objective;
- the issue has resulted in a need to seek additional funding to allow it to be resolved, or has resulted in significant diversion of resources from another service area;
- the issue has led to a material impact on the accounts;
- the Chief Internal Auditor has reported on it as significant, for this purpose, in the Internal Audit Annual Report;
- the issue, or its impact, has attracted significant public interest or has seriously damaged the reputation of the Council;
- the issue has resulted in formal action being taken by the Chief Financial Officer and/or the Monitoring Officer.

5.3 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2024-25 was approved by the Audit & Governance Committee on 17 June 2025. The statement sets out details of the review undertaken, the “significant governance issues” identified and the actions to be taken to address them. This includes the outstanding actions identified during the VFM review undertaken by the External Auditors.

5.4 This report provides an update on the progress in delivering the planned actions at the end of quarter 3 (31 December 2025). Details of the progress is given at Appendix 1 and overall performance is summarised in the table below:

**Table 1: Summary of Progress - Governance Improvement Plan**

Quarter					No longer applicable	Total Actions
	Action completed	Work on target	< 3 months behind schedule	> 3 months behind schedule		
2024/25	3			6	4	13
Q1 2025/26	3			9		12
Q2 2025/26	1			6	2	9
Q3 2025/26	1	1		2	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>39 due to date</b>

5.5 At the end of Quarter 3 of the 39 actions due for delivery:

- 9 (23%) have been completed or are in progress;
- 23 (59%) of actions are behind schedule; and
- 7 (18%) are no longer applicable or not being actioned.

- 5.6 Work on Local Government Reorganisation has continued to take precedence in quarter 3 and this, together with already limited capacity, has had a significant impact on the progress made. Notwithstanding this, some progress has been made in updating a number of key policies which will be taken forward for approval in quarter 4.
- 5.7 An interim review of the outstanding actions has been undertaken. The Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) has decided that a small number of actions will not now be implemented. The most notable of these concerns regular budget monitoring reports; these will remain as twice yearly as there is insufficient capacity to do this quarterly. The remainder of the outstanding / incomplete actions have been rescheduled but these will be subject to a further review when we know the outcome of the 2024/25 VFM assessment by the External Auditors. This will allow us to prioritise any new and the existing actions in line with the capacity available.
- 5.8 Whilst much progress has been made since the VFM report was received from the previous External Auditors in January 2024, the slowing in progress over the last six months and our limited capacity to address this is a concern. It will be important to maintain good governance arrangements over the next two years, during a period of considerable change and uncertainty. This will be borne in mind in undertaking the review of outstanding actions referred to in 5.7 and in planning the work necessary to support LGR over the coming months.

## **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**

A failure to deliver good governance, which includes the delivery of the improvement plan, 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: Governance Improvement Plan - Summary of Progress.

## **8 Previous Consideration**

None

## **9 Background Papers**

Report to Audit & Governance Committee 17 June 2025

**Contact Officer:** Judith Aupers

**Telephone Number:** 01543 464411

**Ward Interest:** All Wards

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26 and  
Audit & Governance Committee: 11/03/26

**Key Decision:** No

## Governance Improvement Plan - Progress Report

## Summary of Progress at 31 December 2025

Quarter					No longer applicable	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target / progressing	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	N/A	
<b>2024/25</b>	3			6	4	13
<b>Q1 2025/26</b>	3			9		12
<b>Q2 2025/26</b>	1			6	2	9
<b>Q3 2025/26</b>	1	1		2	1	5
<b>Q4 2025/26</b>						3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>39 due to date</b>

**Commentary on Progress**

Progress has continued to be limited in quarter 3 due to work on Local Government Reorganisation taking precedence and this is expected to continue in 26/27. However, we have made progress in reviewing and updating a number of key policies which will be taken forward for approval in Q4 25/26 and other work is in progress, albeit behind schedule.

We are currently awaiting the outcome of the 2024/25 VFM assessment by the External Auditors and will use this to inform a full review of the outstanding actions to prioritise them in line with the capacity available. In the meantime, a number of the outstanding actions have been rescheduled and a decision taken by the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) not to pursue a small number of others. The most notable of these concerns regular budget monitoring reports; these will remain as twice yearly as there is insufficient capacity to do this quarterly.

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
<b>VFM</b>	<b>Significant Governance Issues from the former VFM Improvement Plan</b>				
<b>VFM1</b>	<b>Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)</b>				
20.	Regular performance monitoring to be re-established with budget managers and Leadership Team.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	Due to ongoing capacity issues within the Finance Team, budget monitoring for 25/26 has not been restored to quarterly, and reporting will remain as twice yearly.  The outturn for period 6 2025/26 has been completed and is to be reported as part of the budget to Cabinet in January.	N/A
21.	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 3 - 2024/25	Following the financial settlement and the balanced 3 year programme, no savings are planned for delivery	N/A
33.	Lesson learnt exercise to be undertaken of implementation of the finance system	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	Given the length of time that has elapsed, and the ongoing capacity issues within the Finance Team, it has been decided not to proceed with this action.	N/A
34.	Training of managers in budget management and use of the new finance system.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	Completed	★
35.	Review of Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not started on this due to other priorities taking precedence. This has slipped again in Q3 and has been rescheduled for Q1 26/27.	✘

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
36.	Training for managers on Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2025/26	This has been rescheduled to Q2 26/27 to follow the review of Financial Regulations.	
68.	Implementation of remaining module of the finance system, ongoing development and maximising use of system functionality	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2025/26	In light of LGR and ongoing capacity issues, the s151 Officer has decided not to implement the outstanding module of the Finance system.	N/A
69.	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 2 - 2025/26	Due to ongoing capacity constraints and LGR, a decision has been taken not to pursue this action.	N/A
52.	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 - 2025/26 for 2026/27 budget setting	Follow on sessions have taken place with budget managers to discuss budget variations that are needed for 26/27.	
<b>VFM2</b>	<b>Corporate Savings &amp; Transformation Programme (Key Recommendation 1)</b>				
56.	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 Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2025/26	Due consideration is given in all key projects as to whether consultation/ engagement is required.	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
<b>VFM3</b>	<b>Risk Management (Key Recommendation 2)</b>				
26.	Training for Leadership Team, managers, team leaders/principal officers on risk management	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Completed	★
41.	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 Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	The risk registers are being developed. A first draft of the risks has been completed. Progress to complete this, the scoring and develop action plans has stalled but will be picked up in Q4 25/26 and completed in Q1 26/27.	✘
42.	Establish escalation process between other risk registers and the SRR eg services, projects	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	This is being developed as part of the work on the Strategic Risk Register, the Directorate Risk Registers, etc. This cannot be finalised until work on the directorate risk registers has been completed.	✘
<b>VFM4</b>	<b>IT (Key Recommendation 3)</b>				
27.	Update IT security policy and adopt a cyber security policy	Head of Business Support and Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	Completed	★

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
43.	Develop assurance reporting for IT eg report on outcome of annual health check / penetration testing to Leadership Team and Audit Committee	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work has commenced on the IT Assurance report, but this is behind schedule. This has been delayed further due to other work taking precedence. This will now be reported as part of end of the year end cycle in Q1 26/27	
44.	Review of what we include in procurements re ICT controls and information governance	Head of Business Support & Assurance, Chief Technology Officer, Head of Law & Governance and Information Manager	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	A revised checklist has been produced and testing is ongoing on a sample of relevant procurements. This will be finalised in Q4 25/26 ready for formal adoption in Q1 26/27.	
<b>VFM5</b>	<b>Fraud (Key Recommendation 4)</b>				
57.	Review Anti-Fraud & Bribery Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Review has been undertaken; the policy is being amended and will be taken to the Audit Committee for approval in Q4.	
58.	Review of Confidential Reporting Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Review has been completed; the policy is being amended and will be taken to Audit Committee for approval in Q4.	
59.	Assess compliance against Cipfa 2014 Code for Fraud and develop an action plan as necessary	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	This has been undertaken as part of the review of the Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policy.	
79.	Review the information we report on fraud work (including data matching) to the Audit Committee.	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not yet started on this due to the work on developing and embedding risk management across the Council. It has been rescheduled to Q1 26/27 so that information can be included in the year-end report.	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
73.	Assess fraud risks and include in risk registers as appropriate	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team	Quarter 2 - 2025/26	Work in progress as part of the development of directorate and operational risk registers and should be completed in Q1 26/27.	
<b>VFM6</b>	<b>Performance Management (Key Recommendation 5)</b>				
46.	Establish corporate project resources to support transformation work (funding allocated in 2024/25 budget)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	Although proposals for a Transformation Team were approved by Cabinet as part of the Transformation Strategy (28 November 2024), a report was considered by Cabinet in November 2025 which agreed to the redirection of the transformation resources to support the preparatory work needed for LGR and a more modest programme of change.	N/A
47.	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 4 - 2024/25	This work has been refocused to develop work plans for all Heads of Service to cover the next 2 years. These are to be developed during Q4 25/26.	
74.	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 Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Discussions are currently in progress with the External Auditors as part of the VFM review for 2024/25 as to the adequacy of our current arrangements and what additional work is required.	
75.	Review our performance report style - delivery plans and KPIs. To consider the development of performance outcome measures	Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	As for comment above	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
76.	Performance reporting for waste and leisure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review of KPIs for monitoring and reporting on performance;</li> <li>• establish internal validation process of contract performance; and</li> <li>• review information reported to Cabinet / Scrutiny</li> </ul>	Head of Business Support & Assurance, Head of Operations and Head of Wellbeing	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Performance reporting for leisure has been reviewed as part of the new contract and included in the tender specification.  The waste contract performance report has been reviewed. The contractor is to be asked to present their report to the Scrutiny Committee in Q3.	★
45.	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 Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2025/26	Work has not commenced on this due to the work on LGR taking priority. It has been agreed with the Deputy Chief Executive - Resources that a corporate methodology will not be developed but appropriate project management training is to be sourced and delivered instead. This is to be scheduled for Q1-2 26/27.	✘
<b>VFM7</b>	<b>Procurement and Contract Management (Key Recommendation 7)</b>				
17.	Update the contracts register and ensure it is compliant with transparency requirements	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work on this stalled in Q3 but will be picked up in Q4 as part of the preparations for LGR.	✘
50.	Provide training for managers on procurement and contract management	Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Training on Procurement and the new Regulations was completed in Q4	★
62.	Work with managers and the County's Procurement Team to develop a procurement pipeline	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2025/26	This action has been superseded. Instead, a plan will be developed as part of the preparation for LGR as to which contracts need to be re-tendered in the next 2 years. This will be completed in Q1 26/27	✘

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
63.	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 Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2025/26	The contracts register data will be published in Q1 and quarterly from there onwards	
<b>VFM8</b>	<b>HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 2)</b>				
31.	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 Business Support & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25	Report discussed at Leadership Team on 15 July 2025. Further work has been completed and will be reported back to Leadership Team in Q4.	
30.	Establish our culture, values and type of organisation we want to be. This work will inform the other HR related actions	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Values are to be developed and embedded into the new Code of Conduct for Employees and this will be completed in Q1 26/27.	
64.	Develop a hybrid working policy and review other related policies and processes	Head of Business Support & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 2 - 2025/26	Work cannot commence on this until the review has been completed and agreement reached on the future direction of hybrid working.	
65.	Review and update the Employee Code of Conduct	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Head of Law & Governance	Quarter 3 - 2025/26	A revised Code of Conduct for Employees has been drafted and it is intended to take this to Leadership Team in Q4 for consideration.	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
80.	Development of a workforce strategy that links to long term transformation / shared services	Head of Business Support & Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		
<b>VFM9</b>	<b>Other Related Actions</b>				
77.	Review of Code of Governance	Head of Business Support & Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	The Code has been reviewed and updated. It will be taken to Leadership Team for discussion in Q4 ahead of formal approval through the democratic cycle.	
67.	Review of Scheme of Delegations as part of shared services transformation. (From AGS 2023-24)	Monitoring Officer and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2025/26	In light of LGR and the decision not to proceed with Shared Services Transformation, the Monitoring Officer has decided not to undertake a full review of the Scheme of Delegations. Updates will continue to be made as part of the annual Constitution review process.	N/A
66.	Establish an inventory of key policies and a programme of periodic reviews	Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		
81.	Development of Assurance Model	Head of Business Support & Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
<b>New Significant Governance Issues Arising from the 2024/25 Governance Review</b>					
<b>GOV Governance Framework</b>					
GOV1	Training and reminders for managers on good governance and key components of the framework	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Business Support & Assurance and Head of Law & Governance	Initial session Quarter 2 - 2025/26	This has been deferred to Q1 26/27 to follow the launch of the revised Code of Governance.	
GOV2	Monitoring compliance with the governance framework	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Business Support & Assurance and Head of Law & Governance	Mid-Year Review to be undertaken in Q2	This has been deferred to Q4 due to work on LGR taking priority.	

## Housing Services - Quarter 3 Performance Report 2025/26

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Housing and Corporate Assets

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress of the Housing Services Improvement Plan and performance at the end of the third quarter of 2025-26.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress at the end of the third quarter relating to the delivery of the Housing Services Improvement Plan as detailed at Appendix 1 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 Housing Services' priorities and operational services.

### 3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Housing Services Improvement Plan (HSIP) was approved by Cabinet on 24 April 2025 and the accompanying key performance indicators are taken from those previously reported as part of the corporate performance reporting. These are designed to focus on key strategic and operational priorities for Housing Services.
- 3.2 Overall, 58% of the projects have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the HSIP is summarised in section 5 of the report and set out in detail in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 With regard to the operational performance of the key areas of Housing Services, 88% of targets are on schedule to be met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.5 and in Appendix 2.

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The HSIP sets out key strategic and operational projects which support the delivery of Housing Services' priorities and contributes directly to the Corporate Priority 3:

**Priority 3 - The Community:** Improve the housing offer across the District.

The provision of good quality housing in the public sector is a priority for the Council and there is a commitment to achieve this by managing our Council homes efficiently and effectively.

## 5 Report Detail

### Background

- 5.1 The Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP) set out in Appendix 1 to this report is the approved plan setting out how Housing Services will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; this plan establishes the actions and timetable for delivery that are the basis for Housing Services' main work programme which feeds into the Council's performance reporting framework.
- 5.2 In addition to the HSIP, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2.

### Housing Service Improvement Plan (HSIP)

- 5.3 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the projects/actions set out in the HSIP is given in Appendix 1. 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 3**

Quarter					Total Number of Project Actions
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1	2	9	4	0	15
2	6	15	8	1	30
3	13	10	8	8	39
4					
<b>TOTAL (as at Q3)</b>	<b>(33%)</b>	<b>(25%)</b>	<b>(21%)</b>	<b>(21%)</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

- 5.4 At the end of quarter 3, of the project actions planned for delivery in this period:
- 33% have been completed;
  - 25% are on target to be completed;
  - 42% are behind schedule.

There are 64 project actions in total, with some projects having a number of actions, so the remaining 25 actions are planned to be completed later in the year and beyond.

The completed actions increased substantially at end of Q3, however the works over 3 months behind schedule has also increased. The reasons for slippage and the corrective action to be taken is set out in Appendix 1.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

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

**Table 2 - Summary of key performance indicators for Quarter 3**

Quarter					N/A	Total Number of KPIs
	Performance exceeds target	Performance on target	Performance < 5% below target	Performance > 5% below target	Reported Annually / Measure only	
1	6	9	0	2	7	24
2	6	9	0	2	7	24
3	6	9	1	1	7	24
4						
<b>TOTAL (as at Q3)</b>	<b>(35%)</b>	<b>(53%)</b>	<b>(6%)</b>	<b>(6%)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24</b>

5.6 Of the 24 indicators due to be reported on in quarter 3:

- 6 indicators show performance above target (35%)
- 9 indicators show performance on target (53%)
- 2 indicators show performance below target (12%)
- 7 indicators are measure only.

The position at Q3 end has remained consistent on all but two target indicators.

- No. of tenants benefiting from disabled facilities work (major and minor) - dropped from exceeding target performance back to 5% below target.*
- No. of tenants awaiting disabled facilities work (registered and work approved (major and minor)) (at period end) - improved from more than 5% below target to now exceeding 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. If any of the actions require any additional funding to complete these will be the subject of a separate report.

## **6.2 Legal**

None.

## **6.3 Human Resources**

None.

## **6.4 Risk Management**

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks Housing Services faces in delivering its priorities. In relation to this report and appendices includes the following risks:

- (i) Failure to meet required housing standards and not being prepared for inspection
- (ii) Health and safety arrangements for properties.

Delivering actions within the Housing Services Improvement Plan and monitoring KPIs are control measures to contribute towards addressing these risks.

## **6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual 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 1: Housing Services Improvement Plan

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

## **8 Previous Consideration**

None.

## **9 Background Papers**

None.

**Contact Officer:** James Morgan

**Telephone Number:** 01543 464381

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

Health, Wellbeing and The Community  
Scrutiny Committee: 17/03/26

**Key Decision:** No

**Housing Services Improvement Plan - Quarter 3 2025/26**

**Summary of Progress for the year 2025/26 to date**

Quarter					Total Number of Project Actions
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	
1	2	9	4	0	15
2	6	15	8	1	30
3	13	10	8	8	39
4					
<b>TOTAL (as at Q3)</b>	<b>(33%)</b>	<b>(25%)</b>	<b>(21%)</b>	<b>(21%)</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

**Summary of Successes for the Year**

- First meeting of the newly formed Housing Board held.
- Better demonstrating outcomes for tenants - You Said, We Did feature added to website.
- Majority of policies and procedures now refreshed and in place.
- Stock Condition Surveys were all completed (inc. no accesses).
- Tenant Scrutiny Panel re-introduced and working on first topic.
- Tenancy Agreement reviewed and new implemented.
- New cleaning contract procured and in place.
- Website review with tenants completed by newly established Tenant Scrutiny Panel.
- Completed initial Decarbonisation project.

**Summary of Slippage as at the end of Q3 2025/26**

- Full completion of the comprehensive external HRA review with HRA Business Plan & Capital Investment information is still to complete, work ongoing by Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Housing & Corporate Assets - subsequently impacts several other actions.
- Development of a rolling programme of planned improvements from SCS data has slipped, to be reported to Housing Board into Q4.
- The absence of ICT resources has impacted on a several project areas/actions as well. A Cabinet report for additional resources was approved in early Q2, however this was subject to further approval on basis of a balanced HRA Business Plan. In addition, work to ensure NEC system holds all compliance records impacted on by lack of Business Analyst.
- Compliance procedures for non-HRA properties still to be developed, and slipped in Q4.
- Review the existing contract with Grounds Maintenance Team has further slipped, initial work started but now procured external consultant to review and look at in-house capacity to deliver required updated specification. Some joint estate inspections around shared estate spaces (bins stores/drying areas) have also slipped into Q4 and beyond

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
<b>Safety and Quality Standard</b>						
1.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (GTA)	Delivery of the stock condition survey (SCS)	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Property Services (HPS) Manager	Q1 2025/26	Completed 3,050 Surveys out of 4,500 surveys on all properties visited (69%). The remainder exhausted the no access procedure (3 contact attempts). Data and report received from Rapleys to inform further HRA 30 Year Business Plan project actions.  A follow-up project to complete surveys on the outstanding properties will be undertaken, as well as a rolling programme going forward.	
2.	HRA Compliance (GTA)	Regular inspections of blocks to be undertaken and reported to Housing Board and Cabinet. This includes gas safety, electrical safety, asbestos, water hygiene and fire safety.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets HPS Manager	Q1 2025/26	Now completed - reported to Housing Board (Q2 and Q3 meetings to date). Rolling agenda item, and further validation figures requested by Housing Board will also now be provided alongside.	
3.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (GTA)	Develop a rolling programme of planned improvements from SCS data and report on progress to the Housing Board.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets HPS Manager	Q2 2025/26	Not yet produced. Report to HB in Q2 26/27.  Reviewing data findings from SCS, which links to no.1. Data Officer in post from Feb 26 will help deliver analysis to inform the programme.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
4.	HRA Compliance (GTA) and	Review/establish data governance arrangements for housing assets and resident data.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets			
	HRA Governance (Savills)	i) A full review to be undertaken of all records and information held to data cleanse and identify gaps/ weaknesses in the data held.	All Housing Service Managers	Q3 2025/26	Review requires the appointment of a Business Analyst (appointed Jan 26). Need to establish in the BA work programme to set new timescale. Cabinet approved Business Analyst post in July 25, but with caveats for balanced Business Plan first. Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer updated Housing Board in November.	
		ii) An on-going reconciliation will be undertaken of the HRA asset register to the health and safety checks completed, compliance data and other inspections to ensure records all in one place (one version of the truth).		Ongoing	Absence of Business Analyst resource has had an impact on all no.4 actions. Building Safety Operatives in place and doing checks etc. utilising TIO software.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
		iii) Data Governance Policy/Data Strategy;		Q3 2025/26	Work delayed due to staff resources. The HMIT Team Leader retired from the business in Q3, and the replacement will be assigned this work as a priority.	
		iv) Performance Reporting Framework; and KPI definition document.		Q3 2025/26	<p>Work delayed due to staff resources. Unable to appoint to the Housing Policy, Performance and Complaints Officer post in Q2, and other resources were not available.</p> <p>Housemark were consulted and quotes obtained, however sufficient resources would not be available (or VFM) for an external provider to complete this work.</p> <p>Good practice examples of PRFs have been sought and officers will now draft internally by Q4 end.</p> <p>A KPI definition document has been drafted in line with a revised 2026/27 KPI collection, which will be provided to Housing Board in Q4.</p>	
		v) Housing assets data linked to ICT Review.		Linked to ICT Review.		
		vi) Options for a new single asset register compliance system will be explored.		Linked to ICT review.		

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
5.	HRA Compliance (GTA)	Review of existing systems and processes in the HRA and General Fund (commercial properties managed by HRA) to align them to ensure that we have a standardised approach to building safety inspections.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets HPS Manager Corporate Assets Manager			
		i) Review and develop written procedure for existing process in the HRA, including commercial properties (HRA Shops).		Q2 2025/26	To complete, issues with access to non-HRA. HPS Compliance team working on. Slipped into Q4.	
		ii) Ensure NEC system holds records of information and ability to report on performance against the process.		Q2 2025/26	Data kept in NEC, TIO and spreadsheet. NEC can hold all data we need - but needs to be built into system. BA appointed in January 2026. To be programmed into workload once started.	
		iii) Programme of inspections to be established and completed.		Q3 2025/26	As per procedures, still to be developed and for handover to Corporate Property Services to deliver on non-HRA.	
6.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (GTA)	Full completion of the comprehensive external HRA review with HRA Business Plan & Capital Investment information, by Savills.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Q2 2025/26	Still to complete. Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer provided update to Housing Board in November, and will update again in January 2026. HRA Budget to Full Council in February 2026.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
7.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (GTA)	Review of HRA reserves to fund planned maintenance, compliance and works arising from the stock condition survey.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer	Q3 2025/26 (linked to budget setting process)	Link to no.6 above. Reviewing against emerging DHS requirements also.	
8.	HRA 30 Year Business Plan (GTA)	Revision of the 30-year business plan, informed by results of the stock condition survey and housing needs assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business plan to be updated on a rolling basis as stock condition data increases.</li> <li>• Business plan review to be undertaken on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>• HRA recovery lead to develop and roll out training for housing staff on business plan and assumptions.</li> </ul>	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets HRA recovery lead Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer Deputy Chief Executive (Place)	Q4 2025/26		
9.	HRA and Corporate Asset Management (GTA)	i) Develop HRA Asset Management Strategy - once SCS completed.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Corporate Assets Manager	2026/27		
		ii) Develop an action plan to follow on from the Corporate asset management strategy already in place.		Q4 2025/26		

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
10.	Decarbonisation & Energy Performance	i) Complete initial project - September 2025	HPS Manager Climate Change Officer	Q3 2025/26	All properties completed, grant funding received. Monitoring and final submission made during Q3. 112 properties received measures to meet EPC C, now all complete and submitted.	
		ii) Incorporate into Capital programme of upgrade work and develop KPIs to add to performance.		Q3 2025/26	Slipped. Follows on with developing work programmes (no.3).	
		iii) Explore other avenues for funding to support HRA capital budgets.		When available		
		iv) Deliver additional decarbonisation measures if/when additional funding becomes available.		2026/27		
		v) Install measures to meet EPC rating C		2029/30		
11.	HRA Compliance (Savills)	i) Identifying risks to tenant safety and eliminating or mitigating those risks.	HPS Manager	2026/27		
		ii) External Third-Party independent assurance to be sought. Increase % completed.		Q4 2025/26		

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
<b>Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard</b>						
12.	HRA Governance (GTA)	i) First formal meeting of the new Housing Board to enhance governance and oversight of delivery of housing services.	Deputy Chief Executive (Place) Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Q1 2025/26	Completed 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2025.	
		ii) Report to Housing Board every quarter - performance and HSIP standing agenda items.		Ongoing	Q1 and Q2 Performance provided to the Board (Q3 scheduled in Jan 26). Housing Services Performance report (inc. HSIP update and KPIs) scheduled to Board and Cabinet going forward. Performance and HSIP made standing items on Board agenda.	
13.	Policies and procedures (Savills)	Review policies and procedures – principal gaps and others where gaps identified. (Policy Tracker contains detail)	All Managers	Ongoing	Ongoing, see website for completed policies - <a href="#">Housing Strategies and Policies   Cannock Chase District Council</a> Easy read versions for tenants also being created. Tenancy Agreement version completed and work commenced on other inc. Rent policies.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
14.	Triangulating data for prioritisation or risk management to take place. (Savills)	i) Complete Tenant Profiling Exercise.	All Service Managers	Q4 2025/26		
		ii) Complete SCS as above, (no.1)		Q1 2025/26	See no.1 above.	★
		iii) Tie information altogether in NECH system.		2026/27		
15.	Demonstrable outcomes for tenants. (Savills)	i) Develop an engagement tracker to record engagements and outcomes.	Housing Services Manager	Q2 2025/26	Engagements recorded in monthly performance reporting. A basic spreadsheet system is in use to record engagements and outcomes. This will be developed in due course, with learning being taken from other providers and Tpas.	✔
		ii) 'You said, we did' extended to website publication, alongside Newsletter and Annual Report.		Q1 2025/26	Completed, see <a href="#">You said, We did   Cannock Chase District Council</a> Further developed following recommendation by Independent Housing Board member, to include what it means for all tenants.	★
16.	Tenant Engagement (Savills)	i) Website consultation with tenants	Housing Services Manager	Q2 2025/26	Undertaken with the Tenant and Leaseholder Review Panel (Tenant Scrutiny Panel) as their first topic review. Report will be received by Housing Board in Jan 26.	★

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
		ii) Re-introduce Tenant Scrutiny Panel		Q2 2025/26	Panel recruited to and re-introduced. 4 tenants and 1 leaseholder onboard. Named themselves the Tenant and Leaseholder Review Panel.	
		iii) Complete all Engagement Strategy actions.		Ongoing, strategy duration 2024-27.	Work is ongoing on implementing the required actions. Officer position is still currently seconded to.	
17.	Transparency (Savills)	i) Publish quarterly performance information (following consideration by Housing Board and Cabinet) for tenants to be able to scrutinise.	Housing Services Manager	Q2 2025/26	Data published on the website. <a href="#">Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Performance Information   Cannock Chase District Council</a> Updated every quarter, going forward.	
		ii) Develop scorecard for compliance/Safety and Quality Standard.		Q3 2025/26	To be developed further for 2026/27. KPI table to Cabinet placed online alongside figures for Q2 - this provides a more detailed presentation of the performance data. Performance data is presented to tenants online already in text form, however restricted on what can be done on the website due to accessibility reasons.	
		iii) Explore external audit of TSM management performance information.		Q4 2025/26		

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
<b>Tenancy Standard</b>						
18.	Secure tenancy agreement. (Savills)	Review and Implement updated tenancy agreement.	Tenancy Services Manager	Q2 25/26	Complete - <a href="#">Tenancy Agreement   Cannock Chase District Council</a>	★
19.	Improve empty property management	i) Reduce average relet times for empty properties.	Tenancy Services Manager	Q4 2025/26		
		ii) Review lettable standard	Tenancy Services Manager	Q4 2025/26		
		iii) Improve satisfaction with new lettings.	Housing Maintenance Manager	Q1 2026/27		
		iv) Adapted Housing Register to be developed once SCS data is fully updated and analysed.	Housing Maintenance Manager	2026/27		
<b>Neighbourhood and Community Standard</b>						
20.	Safety of shared spaces (Savills)	External environment and grounds maintenance.	Tenancy Services Manager			
		i) Review existing contract with Grounds Maintenance Team.	Parks and Open Spaces Manager	Q1 2025/26	Now exploring a new specification with external contractor. Draft specification completed and looking at a bill of quantities and confirmation the in-house team can meet the specification requirements.	✘

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
		ii) Complete joint estate inspections, to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tree shrub planting and external environment</li> <li>– street scenes / street cleaning</li> <li>– Communal drying areas &amp; euro bins and their storage.</li> </ul>		Q2 2025/26	Trees completed with Tree Officers in Q2. Street scene/cleaning inspections complete in Q3. Communal drying areas and bin storage all to do. Links to no.21 below, Safety of shared spaces.	
		iii) Following which, work programme to be established on the priority estates (link to no. 23, already identified)		Q3 2025/26	Programme of estate inspections currently done and pulls in other services as required. Communal drying areas and bin storage still to tie in. Grading estates with works etc. was completed and is to be published online.	
21.	Safety of shared spaces (Savills)	i) Review the cleaning contract of communal areas in flatted accommodation.	Tenancy Services Manager	Q1 2025/26	The review of the cleaning service has been completed, with a new specification and on-site confirmation of when the cleaning is completed. For 2026/27 we will be seeking to amalgamate the procurement of the voids property cleaning with the general needs block cleaning.	
		ii) Procure new Cleaning Contract.		Q2 2025/26	New contract procured and in place for one year.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
22.	Safety of shared spaces (Savills)	Carfax estate improvements. i) Draw up Estate Plan.	HPS Manager	Q4 2025/26		
		ii) Engagement with tenants throughout process (focus groups for design, plan consultation, agreement)	Tenancy Services Manager	Ongoing	Resident Engagement Officer has attended Estate Walk with Neighbourhoods Officer, with some initial items noted for attention. To be further developed with Community Day preparation. Building relationships with tenants is needed and ongoing. Profile information can assist with developing approach.	
		iii) Hold initial Community Day.		Q2 2025/26	Not held, as per 22) i), repair works required first. Delay until Spring 2026.	
23.	Safety of shared spaces (Savills)	Explore and introduce better methods to record and present outcomes of cooperative work with tenants, other landlords and relevant organisations to ensure the safety of shared spaces (i.e. areas which are not the responsibility of the Council) i.e. research best practice with other providers and further discussions with Savills.	Tenancy Services Manager	Q2 2025/26	We have looked at numerous organisations, LAs and HAs, and most just have a communal area policy with the Tenant Satisfaction Measures perception figures used to monitor and cover outcomes in this area - both of which we have and monitor, available for tenant scrutiny. We have collated a table with activities and outcomes, and will measure this each quarter. New Housing Operational Communal Area and Space Policy 2025 - 2030 to be consulted on and approved in Q4.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
<b>Cross Cutting - All Standards</b>						
24.	Housing ICT System (Savills)	i) Undertake full IT systems review (inc. website) and develop a costed, prioritised roadmap for the housing function (further to the IT review work undertaken to date).	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets Housing Services Manager	2026/27		
		ii) Stabilise the 'Go Mobile' system		Q1 2025/26	Attempted and stabilized as much as possible, with work-arounds. Upgrade and imminent health check in early Q2. (Latest upgrade installed in early Q4) Will hopefully be resolved with alternative ICT solution, as per iii). ICT resources report approved by Cabinet on 31/7/25, subject to Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Housing & Corporate Assets sign-off on basis of a balanced Business Plan.	✓
		iii) Subject to resource approval, start 'Go Mobile' replacement procurement process.		Q2 2025/26	Cabinet approved 31/7/25, however subject to Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) & S151 Officer and Head of Housing & Corporate Assets sign-off on basis of a balanced Business Plan. Links to actions 6 and 8.	✓

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
25.	Wider corporate services (Savills)	Establish principles for non-housing function services in the delivery and support of RP responsibilities and produce action plan.  <i>Links to no. 20 in part, but also includes arrangements with HR, ICT, Customer Services, Finance, Legal, Procurement etc.</i>	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Q4 2025/26		
26.	Staff Resources (Savills)	Identify and recruit to additional roles required to support the Council's RP responsibilities.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Ongoing (subject to resource approvals)	Building Safety staffing resources increased (4no.). Staffing Report completed. Data Officer for Asset data approved. ICT resources report inc. Business Analyst x 2no., Project Manager and Technical Officer approved by Cabinet on 31/7/25 (subject to further approval, balanced HRA Business Plan).	
27.	Staff Resources (Link to Housing ICT System, no.24)	i) Review responsible officer for Housing ICT.	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets	Q2 2025/26	Still to be determined, discussions with ICT ongoing. HMIT structure to be reviewed following retirement of Team Leader at end of Q3.	
		ii) Identify resources required for Housing ICT and management responsibilities (links to no. 24 and 26 above)		Ongoing	As above, no.26, ICT resources report.	

No.	Theme / Project	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Symbol
28.	Assurance	i) Complete HQN toolkits on standards, as a self-assessment.	All Service Managers	Q4 2025/26		
		ii) Report to Housing Board.		Q1 2026/27		
29.	Council New Build	Completion of Aelfgar Redevelopment Scheme.	Housing Services Manager	Q1 2026/27		
30.	Development Pipeline	i) Identify all viable development opportunities, obtain approvals and permission to spend as required.	Housing Services Manager	Q4 2025/26		
		ii) Enable and deliver pipeline scheme(s).		Subject to approvals and resources.		

### KPIs for Housing Services

Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
	Performance exceeds target	6	6	6		
	Performance on target	9	9	9		
	Performance < 5% below target	0	0	1		
	Performance > 5% below target	2	2	1		
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	7	7	7		
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>24</b>

Note: Figures cumulative to date, unless period end.

Item No. 10.23  
Appendix 2

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Housing Repairs</b>									
% emergency repairs completed in time	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✓	
% of non-emergency repairs completed in time	73.82%	75%	81.91%	81.65%	78.82%			★	Revised to exclude Planned Priority jobs.
<b>Building Safety/Decency</b>									
% of properties with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✓	
% of properties with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✓	
% of passenger lifts that have a valid 6 monthly thorough examination record	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✓	
% of buildings that have a current Legionella risk assessment	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✓	
% of buildings that have a current Fire risk assessment	100%	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%	100%			✓	
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard at year end.	0.7%	0%						N/A	Measure only - Annual figure.

Note: Figures cumulative to date, unless period end.

**Item No. 10.24**  
**Appendix 2**

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
<b>Tenancy Management</b>									
Housing Applications Processed within 28 days	80%	95%	99%	99%	100%			★	99.6%, but reported to zero decimal place, therefore rounded up.
% of Mutual Exchange applications determined (approved or refused) within 42 days	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✔	
% of dwellings that are vacant and available for let (at period end)	0.70%	N/A	0.94%	0.74%	0.74%			N/A	Measure only. Equates to 37 properties.
Average re-let time for Voids (calendar days)	53.59	40.00	61.90	59.20	60.20			✘	A decline in Q3 and still above target time. Note: median benchmark figure for peer organisations is 67 calendar days. Q3 has seen standard (minor) work voids completed quickly and continued performance in Q4 should contribute to keeping overall relet times down. Major voids have been a challenge due to the condition of

Note: Figures cumulative to date, unless period end.

**Item No. 10.25**  
**Appendix 2**

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
									<p>voids being returned and the amount of upgrade works being required.</p> <p>Changes have been made in operational delivery and are now starting to show through December's figures. Team to continue and focus on maintaining performance.</p>
No. of tenants benefiting from disabled facilities work (major and minor)	241	146	48	74	106				<p>110 is proportioned Q3 target, so completions dropped but still anticipated to meet target level at year end.</p> <p>Lack of OT provider has meant less approved works for completion have come through to the contractor. New OT provider to be secured in Q4.</p>

Note: Figures cumulative to date, unless period end.

**Item No. 10.26**  
**Appendix 2**

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
No. of tenants awaiting disabled facilities work (registered and work approved (major and minor)) (at period end)	41	<17	27	23	5			★	Note, referrals received can fluctuate and this is out of our control. A number of applicants are awaiting OT assessments (see above) and once these have progressed and had work approved, the awaiting works figure may rise. However, we are confident the contractor can complete works and closely match awaiting once works approved to keep awaiting numbers below the target.
Rent collected as proportion of rent due	100.67%	100%	100.18%	100.19%	100.05%			★	
% of Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) collected as a proportion of total FTA	10.24%	6%	1.82%	5.39%	10.54%			★	

Note: Figures cumulative to date, unless period end.

**Item No. 10.27**  
**Appendix 2**

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Number of ASB cases opened per 1,000 homes by or on behalf of the registered provider during the reporting year	12.77	N/A	4.80	10.01	16.42			N/A	Measure only Increase being seen in ASB cases, partly down to methodology, now counting correctly.
Number of ASB cases which involve hate incidents	1.20	N/A	0	0	0			N/A	Measure only
<b>Housing Complaints</b>									
Stage one complaints received per 1,000 homes during the reporting year.	8.98	N/A	1.20	3.60	5.40			N/A	Measure only
Proportion of Stage one complaints responded to within 10 days	93%	95%	100%	100%	100%			★	
Stage two complaints received per 1,000 homes during the reporting year.	1.40	N/A	0.60	1.40	2.00			N/A	Measure only
Proportion of Stage two complaints responded to within 20 days	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			✓	
No. of escalations to the Ombudsman (LGO or Housing Ombudsman)	5	N/A	0	0	1			N/A	Measure only. At end of Q3, 1 case currently being investigated by Housing Ombudsman.

Note: Figures cumulative to date, unless period end.

## Corporate Plan 2026-27 to 2027-28

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Business Support and Assurance
<b>Portfolio:</b>	The Leader of the Council

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the updated Corporate Plan for 2026-27 to 2027-28 and the supporting priority delivery plans (PDPs).

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council approval of the:
- (i) The Corporate Plan 2026-27 to 2027-28; and
  - (ii) The outline Priority Delivery Plans for 2026-27 to 2027-28.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The adoption of a corporate plan provides clarity in what the Council is seeking to achieve and allows for a framework to be put in place to deliver this and for performance to be reported against it.

### 3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The current 4-year corporate plan ends on 31 March 2026. As the Council is due to be abolished with effect from April 2028 under proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), it is proposed to extend and refresh the current corporate plan up to 2027-28 rather than producing a full new corporate plan.
- 3.2 The headline priorities set out in the current plan will be retained as the core of the corporate plan. The overarching vision and the objectives that underpin the priorities have been refreshed to reflect changes in circumstances including LGR.
- 3.3 The focus for the corporate plan for the next 2 years is to:
- continue to deliver the key projects that are in progress;
  - ensure continuity of service delivery; and
  - prepare for the efficient transfer of services and the workforce to the new unitary council with minimal disruption for local residents
- 3.4 Priority delivery plans which set out how the objectives will be delivered over the next 2 years have been produced and will be used to manage progress in delivering the Corporate Plan.

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The corporate plan determine what the Council's priorities will be for the next two years.

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 The Council's current Corporate Plan was developed four years ago and is due to end on 31 March 2026. Normally a full review would be undertaken and a new plan produced for the next four years. However, the Government has set out proposals for Local Government Reorganisation which will see the abolition of all councils in 2 tier areas such as Staffordshire and new unitary councils will be established with effect from April 2028. With only two years remaining, it is considered that the existing corporate plan should be extended and refreshed. This will allow work to continue on the existing major projects such as the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre.
- 5.2 The current four priorities will be retained at the heart of the corporate plan:
- Economic Prosperity;
  - Health & Wellbeing
  - Communities; and
  - Responsible Council.
- 5.3 The priorities are supported by a number of objectives that set out what the Council is aiming to achieve, how we will deliver these and how we will measure our performance. These have been refreshed, along with the overarching vision, to reflect the change in circumstances.
- 5.4 As the Corporate Plan is only for two years, there will be fewer major projects than normal, with the emphasis on completing those underway. There will however be a focus on maintaining service delivery and an effective transfer of services to the new Council.
- 5.5 The updated corporate plan is set out in detail in Appendix 1.
- 5.6 In order to performance manage the delivery of the corporate plan, priority delivery plans (PDPs) will continue to be used. These plans will set out the key actions/milestones and target dates for delivery. A high-level PDP for each priority setting out the key milestones for the next two years is attached at Appendix 2. A range of key performance indicators (KPIs) are also included in the corporate plan. Performance in delivering the annual PDPs and the KPIs will be reported quarterly to the Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Committees.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

There are no direct financial implications at this stage in the refresh of the corporate plan. A number of the priorities/objectives have associated ongoing schemes for delivery which already have budget allocated to them.

Where new projects come forward as part of the development of the delivery plans, these will need to be costed and consideration given to whether this can be accommodated withing existing budgets or whether additional funding will be required.

## 6.2 Legal

The Local Government Act 1999 requires local authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which their functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (the Best Value Duty). Regard must be had to the statutory guidance which advises authorities to set clear and achievable priorities, to review corporate plans to ensure they are current and realistic, and to ensure resources are used effectively considering the resources available.

## 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. This is reviewed and updated quarterly.

## 6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as part of the delivery of the actions set out in the Corporate Plan and the supporting priority delivery plans, where appropriate.

## 6.6 Climate Change

Climate change is embedded in the objectives which underpin each of the four priorities for the Council.

## 7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Corporate Plan

Appendix 1a - Economy Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan

Appendix 1b - Health and Wellbeing Priority Delivery Plan

Appendix 2c - Communities Priority Delivery Plan

Appendix 2d - Responsible Council Priority Delivery Plan

## 8 Previous Consideration

None.

## 9 Background Papers

None.

**Contact Officer:** Judith Aupers

**Telephone Number:** 01543 464411

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

Council: 22/04/26

**Key Decision:** Yes

## **CORPORATE PLAN 2026-28**

### **Foreword**

This Corporate Plan is set in the context of the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation which will see the abolition of this Council along with all the other councils in Staffordshire and the creation of new larger unitary councils. The new arrangements are due to come into effect in April 2028 so this plan sets out our priorities for the next two years.

Whilst we only have two years, we are still ambitious for our District and one of our key priorities is the regeneration of Cannock Town centre.

We will continue to deliver services that are essential to our residents and local businesses during the period of change that lies ahead.

We will work closely with our neighbouring Councils to hand everything over in good order to our successor organisation.

Finally, we are committed to keeping our residents, local businesses and partners informed of the progress with these changes.

Steve Thornley  
Leader of Cannock Chase Council

## Cannock Chase in numbers

- 104,088 residents in 2024
- 43,615 households in 2022
- Almost 2650 hectares of parks and open spaces including 6 which have won 'Green Flag' awards
- A National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and 2 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
- 4983 Council rented properties at the end of December 2025
- Average house price £233,532 (October 2025)
- 60 new affordable homes built in 2024-25
- More than 4,000 miles of roads and pavements cleaned every year and over 600 litter bins emptied
- 69,000 bins emptied each week with around 40% waste collected from households recycled
- 3,415 Business Enterprises in 2025
- Nearly 300 planning applications received in 2024
- 146 CCTV Cameras Monitored
- 902 premises registered as food businesses with 98.5% rated 3\* and above in 2026
- Out-of-Work Benefits: Claimant Count 3% residents aged 16-64, November 2025

**Sources:** Office for National Statistics; UK House Price Index; Cannock Chase Council. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

**Vision:**

We want a Cannock Chase that local residents are proud to call home, where:

- our town centres are thriving, local businesses are supported and we continue to attract new jobs.
- residents are encouraged to lead healthy, independent and happy lives;
- we value strong communities and feeling connected; and
- the local environment is protected, preserved, and enhanced for future generations.
- we will deliver value for money in service delivery and be accountable for our decisions.

We cannot achieve this vision alone and want to work together with partners and the voluntary sector to achieve this ambition.

## PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

### `To create a District that thrives`

We want to encourage growth and new businesses. We will attract investment and businesses and skilled jobs for local people. We will continue the regeneration of Cannock town centre and attract visitors to the district.

#### What we want to achieve:

- **More investment in the district's economy.**
- **More new businesses and skilled jobs**
- **Substantial progress towards the regeneration of Cannock town centre.**
- **More visitors and an increase in their spend in the district.**
- **More housing that is well designed and built in the right place.**

#### How we will deliver this:

##### Major Projects:

Over the next 2 years we will:

- Continue the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre creating high quality, mixed use development.
- Complete a new masterplan for Rugeley Town Centre and identify opportunities to attract new investment.
- Work in partnership with South Staffordshire College to strengthen the skills offer of the District
- Commence a new Local Plan for the District identifying sites for homes, including affordable housing, with good infrastructure, land for employment, protection of our green spaces and policies that reduce the impact of climate change.
- Seek to ensure that the next phase of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet supports our local economy and provides opportunities for our residents.

##### Operational Service Delivery:

- Ensure that Cannock Chase provides sufficient employment opportunities for residents by attracting investment and supporting local businesses to grow
- Deliver good planning services that provide fast decision making for major and non-major planning applications.
- Promote Cannock Chase as a visitor destination.

**How we will measure our operational performance:**

<b>Regeneration</b>
Economic activity rate
Visitor economy - value and volume of tourism in Cannock Chase (data source tbc)
<b>Planning Services</b>
Number of housing completions and affordable homes
Major Planning Applications determined within time
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined

## PRIORITY 2- HEALTH & WELLBEING

### `To encourage and support residents to lead healthy, independent and happy lives`

We want our residents to live in strong communities and lead healthy, happy and active lives. We will improve our leisure centres, encourage walking in our parks, and on the Chase and cycling. We will work with our communities to engage residents in positive activity that are fun and support their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

#### What we want to achieve:

- **Provide opportunities for residents to lead healthy, happy and active lives and recognise the importance of mental health and wellbeing.**
- **Embed health and wellbeing into all of our policies and everything that we do.**
- **Work with partners to address health inequalities across the District.**
- **Support residents that need our help.**

#### How we will deliver this:

##### Major Projects:

Over the next 2 years we will:

- Work with our new leisure provider to attract more people to use and enjoy our leisure centres. We will manage the new contract (due to commence 1 April 2026) to deliver better services, attract more people to use them and to provide value for money for customers and council tax payers.
- Deliver capital investment in our Leisure Centres to enhance existing facilities.
- Integrate the Wellbeing Team into the Council and deliver wellbeing support to our residents to lead healthy, happy and active lives, working with our new leisure services provider.

##### Operational Service Delivery:

- Provide Disabled Facilities Grants to support people to stay in their own homes (this includes council housing stock).
- Safeguard the most vulnerable people within our District. This includes:
  - Preventing homelessness
  - Providing accommodation for vulnerable people and support to sustain their tenancies.
  - Providing an outreach service for rough sleepers.
  - Co-ordinating multi-agency working to identify and address vulnerability issues.
- Provide funding to voluntary organisations to for free independent, impartial, and confidential advice to our residents.

**How we will measure our operational performance:**

<b>Leisure, Culture and Heritage</b>
Annual Report from Leisure Provider setting out the performance of all facilities and the wider wellbeing work they facilitate. The key contract KPIs to be reported on include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facility attendances</li> <li>• Social value delivered through the Contract as measured through Sport England's Moving Communities platform</li> <li>• Net surplus / subsidy per visit (total across portfolio) based on the measure used by Sport England's Moving Communities platform.</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>
Number of residents/cases dealt with by the CAB
Total value of financial outcomes achieved as a result of the Citizen's Advice contract
<b>Strategic Housing, Homelessness and Assistance</b>
% households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6 + months
Rough sleeper count (annual estimate)
Community Safety Partnership Hub referrals and case closures within 3 months
Number of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) completed

## PRIORITY 3 - THE COMMUNITY

### ‘To ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home’

We want our District to be an attractive and safe and happy place to live. We will preserve our open spaces and local parks. We aim to build on the existing and new communities across our District so that residents feel connected and supported. We want to ensure that our residents have a choice in their housing accommodation and that it is safe.

#### What we want to achieve:

- **Safe, clean and tidy neighbourhoods.**
- **Attractive local parks and green spaces.**
- **Residents who live a sustainable lifestyle.**
- **Less carbon resulting from the Council’s activities.**
- **The Council’s housing stock meets the Decent Homes Standard.**
- **A safe and secure place to live for local people.**
- **Increased supply of new build council homes across the District.**

#### How we will deliver this:

##### Major Projects:

Over the next 2 years we will:

- Deliver the Climate Change Strategy via our Climate Action Plans which are updated annually
- Improve the management of our trees
- Commence and promote food waste collection service
- Deliver the Housing Improvement Plan
- Complete the survey of the Council’s housing stock, produce a 30-year business plan setting out investment in and improvements to the stock and install new bathrooms, kitchens, roofs and fences where necessary and affordable.
- Build 58 new homes, of which 29 will be for Council rent and 29 for sale at the Aelfgar site in Rugeley.

##### Operational Service Delivery:

- Work with residents and partners, including Staffordshire Waste Partnership to support households to minimise the waste they produce and maximise their reuse and recycling.
- Ensure that our housing stock is safe and sustainable.
- To ensure that accommodation provided in the private rented sector is safe and secure through appropriate interventions.

## Appendix 1

- Help local businesses to provide good services through regulation that protects consumers and ensures non-compliant businesses do not gain an unfair competitive advantage over other businesses.
- Ensure that there is a robust response to activities that adversely impact residents' quality of life (eg fly tipping, noise nuisance).

### How we will measure our operational performance:

<b>Climate Change</b>
% reduction in Council's carbon emissions
Number of engagement activities with businesses
Number of engagement activities with the community.
<b>Waste and Recycling</b>
% collections completed first time
Number of missed bin collections (including assisted)/100,000/qtr.
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting
Amount of household residual waste collected per household (Kgs)
Amount of food waste collected
<b>Regulatory Services</b>
% of Food Businesses Inspected
% of Houses in Multiple Occupation inspected
% of appropriate action taken to address Cat 1 hazards identified following Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Assessment
% response to Environmental Protection service requests.
<b>Council Housing</b>
% of properties with a valid annual landlord Gas Safety Record
% of properties with a valid Electrical Certificate (within 5 years)
Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard at year end.

## PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL

### `To be a responsible Council and ensure we deliver good value for money`

The Council faces considerable uncertainty over the next 2 years as we face reductions in funding and prepare for local government reorganisation. It is important that we are prudent and plan ahead for the transfer of services and staff to the new unitary council.

We will continue to improve the ways in which customers can access our services and at a time that suits them through better use of technology; while continuing to provide contact via the telephone or face-to-face for those customers who need more personal support.

#### What we want to achieve:

- **Improve our customers' access to services.**
- **Deliver Value for money to local taxpayers.**
- **Be accountable for our decisions and uphold good governance across the Council.**
- **The efficient transfer of Council services and its workforce to the new Unitary Council in 2028 with minimal disruption to our community.**

#### How we will deliver this:

##### Major Projects:

Over the next 2 years we will:

- Work with neighbouring Councils to develop and deliver a plan for the transfer of services and the workforce to a new unitary Council. We will also develop a plan for our own preparatory work.
- Complete delivery of the value for money / governance improvement plan.
- Deliver the digital strategy.

##### Operational Service Delivery:

- Maintain in person local customer services and advice over the telephone for our customers.
- Provide more services on-line.
- Consult with the public and/or stakeholders on key projects that affect our communities.
- Seek to maximise collection of council tax and business rates, including arrears.
- Efficient processing of benefit applications (council tax and housing benefit).
- Annual review of our governance arrangements

**How we will measure our operational performance:**

<b>Good Customer Experience:</b>
Days taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Claims
Days taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax change of circumstances
% of calls answered
Average call wait time
Number of services (forms) available online
Number of online transactions
<b>Funding Council Services</b>
% of Council Tax collected annually
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected
<b>Value for Money</b>
Completion of Value for Money / Governance Improvement Plan
External Auditor's Value for Money Opinion (reported separately)
<b>Good Governance</b>
Number of public consultations/engagement exercises undertaken
The Annual Governance Statement (reported separately)

## Priority Delivery Plan for 2026-27 to 2027-28

## Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Project	Actions and Milestones	26-27	27-28
Continue the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre	<b>Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase One</b>		
	Complete demolition works	X	
	<b>Cannock Town Centre Regeneration - Phase Two</b>		
	Complete demolition works for phase two (Forum)	X	
	Commence demolition works for phase two (Church Street)	X	
	Agree preferred development delivery option for cleared development sites	X	
	Implement regeneration delivery strategy		X
Masterplan for Rugeley Town Centre	Adoption of completed masterplan	X	
Work in partnership with South Staffordshire College to strengthen the skills offer	Collaboration on preferred development schemes for cleared sites	X	
	Complete analysis of interventions and support provided via the Cannock Business Growth Group	X	
Commence new Local Plan	Notice to commence plan preparation - 30 June 2026	X	
	Publish Gateway 1 self-assessment - 31 October 2026	X	
Support the next phase of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet	Work with McArthurGlen and South Staffs College to support recruitment for phase 2	X	

## Priority Delivery Plan for 2026-27 to 2027-28

## Priority 2 - Health &amp; Wellbeing

Project	Actions and Milestones	26-27	27-28
Mobilisation of the new Leisure Contract and work with the new provider to encourage more people to use the leisure centres	Delivery of agreed mobilisation plan	X	
	Establish and embed contract management arrangements	X	
	Develop with the new contractor a programme of agreed activities and campaigns to encourage new users	X	X
Deliver capital investment in our Leisure Centres to enhance existing facilities.	Procurement of contractors to deliver the works agreed	X	
	Delivery of agreed programme of works	X	
	New facilities opened	?	
Integrate the Wellbeing Team into the Council and develop a work plan	Wellbeing Team transfer to the Council	X	
	Work with the Wellbeing Team and the new Leisure Contractor to develop and deliver a programme of activities	X	X

Priority Delivery Plan for 2026-27 to 2027-28

Priority 3 - Community

Project	Actions and Milestones	26-27	27-28
Deliver the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan	Increase awareness of Climate Change and its causes with residents, organisations and businesses and encourage action to mitigate it.	X	X
	Work with partners to identify and support businesses to become more carbon efficient.	X	X
	Review of Council's emissions and development of action plan to reduce these	X	
	Delivery of action plan to reduce the Council's Carbon emissions		X
Tree Management	Implement joint tree management system	X	
	Commence re-inspections of tree condition and safety	X	
	Carry out programmed tree maintenance following reinspection		X
Waste & Recycling - Food Waste Collection Service	Commencement of weekly food waste collection service for all residents	X	
Deliver the Housing Improvement Plan	A separate plan already exists for this. Actions will be delivered in line with this and reported on separately	X	X
Survey housing stock, produce 30-year business plan and make improvements to properties	Temporary internal surveying team being set up to complete the outstanding stock condition surveys.	X	X
	Cyclical programme of stock condition surveys to be established to check 20% of stock per year.	X	X
	Results of stock condition survey to be used to produce 30-year business plan	X	
	30-year business plan to be updated annually with results of ongoing stock condition surveys		X
	Data from stock condition surveys used to develop works programmes	X	
	Contractors to be procured to deliver works programmes	X	
	Delivery of works programmes		X
Delivery of new Build Programme in Rugeley	Completion of the development at the former Aelfgar school in Rugeley, delivering 29 Council homes for rent to the Future Homes Standard and 29 units for open market sale.	X	

## Priority Delivery Plan for 2026-27 to 2027-28

## Priority 4 - Responsible Council

Project	Actions and Milestones	26-27	27-28
Work with neighbouring Councils to prepare for LGR and develop our own plan of work required.	Development of wider Staffordshire work plan with neighbouring Councils	X	
	Development of communications plan	X	
	Development of plan to support workforce through change	X	
	Map out and plan for contract renewals	X	
	Complete the Audit of Accounts	X	X
	* These actions will be updated as the wider Staffordshire work plan is developed		
Complete the delivery of the value for money / governance improvement plan	A separate plan already exists for this. Actions will be delivered in line with this and reported on separately	X	
Delivery of digital strategy	Ongoing development of Customer Portal	X	X
	Complete migration to Sharepoint	X	
	Implement HR self-serve portal	X	

## Disposal of the Freehold Interest in 63 Hagley Road

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Housing & Corporate Assets

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet authority for a disposal of the freehold interest in 63 Hagley Road.
- 1.2 To obtain delegated authority to dispose of the freehold of future properties with structural defects, and deemed surplus to requirements.

### 2 Recommendations

That:

- 2.1 Cabinet authorises disposal of the freehold interest in 63 Hagley Road, Rugeley on terms to be agreed by the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets.
- 2.2 Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets to instruct agents to market the above property for sale and to take all other actions required to implement the recommendation.
- 2.3 Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets to authorise the disposal of the freehold of any council owned property with structural defects, at the point there is a change in tenancy or that the defect becomes a hazard.
- 2.4 Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets to instruct agents to market any of the above properties for sale and to take all other actions required to implement the recommendation.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.5 A freehold disposal of this property will avoid the need for the Council to spend substantial money underpinning the property as it can be sold in its existing condition.
- 2.6 Based on a recent tender process the cheapest quote to underpin the property was £59,966 exclusive of VAT.

### 3 Key Issues

- 3.1 63 Hagley Road comprises a 3-bedroom semi-detached property that is owned by the Council and managed as part of its housing stock. The property is currently vacant.

- 3.2 Significant structural cracking in the single storey rear extension was identified, together with less severe cracking in the two-storey wing.
- 3.3 Three quotes were obtained from specialist contractors to underpin the foundations at 63 Hagley Road, Rugeley as recommended by the geotechnical report. The most competitive quote was £59,996 ex VAT.
- 3.4 The quote was limited to the structural underpinning work required. The property would also require other necessary works to bring it up to a Decent Homes Standard.
- 3.5 Section 11 of The Landlord and Tenants Act 1985 states that to be lettable the property will be fit for human habitation. Untreated structural issues and hazards prevent the letting of a property.
- 3.6 The market value of the freehold interest with the benefit of vacant possession is £80,000 (Eighty Thousand Pounds). The valuer has recommended the property be offered to the market via public auction due to the ongoing structural issues.
- 3.7 It is therefore recommended that 63 Hagley Road, Rugeley is declared surplus to requirements and offered for sale via public auction.

#### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:
  - (i) **The Community** - Improve the housing offer across the district
  - (ii) **Responsible Council** - 'Make the best use of our assets' and 'Be a responsible Council that lives within its means and is accountable for its actions'

#### **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 63 Hagley Road is a 3-bedroom semi-detached property that was constructed in the early 1930's. The property was likely acquired by Cannock Chase District Council when Rugeley Urban District Council merged with Cannock Urban District Council in 1974. It is owned by the Council and managed as part of its housing stock. The property is currently vacant.
- 5.2 In accordance with the Council's standard voids process the property has been inspected by the Housing Voids Team. The inspection revealed the significant structural cracking on the rear single storey extension. Subsequently a geotechnical report was commissioned, and the recommendation is to underpin the foundations at a cost of £59,996. This cost is not limited to these works and further work would be required to bring the property up to a Decent Homes Standard and ensuring that it also meets the standards required under the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018. This work would be needed before the Council can re-let the property.
- 5.3 The annual rental value of the property is in the region of £5,600 (£107.82 per/week) based on pricing as of 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025. It would take almost 11 years before the Council recovered the cost of the underpinning work alone.

- 5.4 Disposal of the freehold interest in the property will avoid the need for the Council to spend money upgrading it as it can be sold in its existing condition. The Council would receive a capital receipt that will be determined by market demand. The level of receipt will reflect the property's current condition.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

As referred to in paragraph 2.6, the cost to underpin the foundations is £59,966. The property would require additional work to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

The property was valued at £80,000, costs to put through auction have not been obtained at the time of the report but are thought to be nominal.

Any sale proceeds will be a Capital Receipt for the HRA, which will be available to fund future Approved Schemes within the HRA Capital Programme.

Any costs associated with the disposal will need to be contained within the existing HRA approved budgets.

Where occupied properties are deemed to become too unsafe, residents will be entitled to home loss disturbance payments. These payments can be covered by the capital receipt of the property.

### **6.2 Legal**

63 Hagley Road is held by the Council subject to Part II of the Housing Act 1985. The "General Consent for the Disposal of Land held for the purposes of Part II of the Housing Act 1985 – 2013", allows the Council to dispose of this property, without obtaining the consent of the Secretary of State, provided that it is sold for a price equal to its open market value.

The provision of Home Loss and disturbance payments under sections 29 and 37 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 depend upon the purpose of the displacement and are also subject to eligibility criteria in respect of any occupant. In cases where the Council owns the property, there is no Housing Order (prohibition order or demolition order) in place and no intention to improve or redevelop the property, any payment offered would be at the Council's discretion.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

None.

### **6.4 Risk Management**

As referred to in paragraph 3.2, 63 Hagley Road has undergone substantial settlement creating structural defects and the need for underpinning work has been identified. The overwhelming risk for the Council is the financial burden to correct the issue to put it back to being a viable investment and lettable. To mitigate the risk the report details the recommendation to dispose of the property, to dispose of the financial burden to the organisation.

The Council has obtained professional advice on the market value to dispose of the property and a recommendation on the best way to dispose from a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

**6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

None.

**6.6 Health**

None.

**6.7 Climate Change**

None.

**7 Appendices**

None.

**8 Previous Consideration**

None.

**9 Background Papers**

- i. CSG Consulting Engineers - Structural Inspection Report for 63 Hagley Road, June 2023
- ii. CSG Consulting Engineers - Geotechnical Report for 63 Hagley Road, October 2023
- iii. 63 Hagley Road Valuation Report
- iv. Allocations Policy

**Contact Officer:** Christian Hawkins

**Telephone Number:** 01543 456 805

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

**Key Decision:** No

## Permission to Spend - Community Safety Funding 2026/27

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Wellbeing
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Community Wellbeing

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to spend the allocated Community Safety Funding, for the purposes of improving community safety and reducing crime and disorder in the district.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to accept, and approve, the spend of £10,000 Community Safety Funding allocated to the Council by the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue and Crime, hereafter referred to as the Staffordshire Commissioner.
- 2.2 Cabinet is asked to accept, and approve, bids from the Council into the £100,000 pan-Staffordshire Community Safety Fund, which shall be launched by the Staffordshire Commissioner.
- 2.3 That authority to enter into any necessary agreements to enable the Council to spend the funding be delegated to the Head of Wellbeing, in consultation with the Chase Community Partnership.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.4 The £10,000 funding allocated to the Council from the Staffordshire Commissioner, and any successful bids, will be spent on implementing community safety initiatives across the district and will assist the Community Safety Partnership in its statutory duty to reduce crime and disorder, substance misuse and re-offending.
- 2.5 Some flexibility will be required over the period of the funding in order to be able to respond to different pressures and emerging themes and trends as they arise. For this reason, it is requested that Cabinet delegates authority for the detail of the spend to be approved by the Head of Service in consultation with the Chase Community Partnership.

### 3 Key Issues

- 3.1 All Community Safety Partnerships across Staffordshire receive funding from the Staffordshire Commissioner annually to support their work tackling crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.

## 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

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

- **Health and Wellbeing** - by helping to ensure the most vulnerable people in our district are safeguarded.
- **The Community** - by assisting in ensuring our neighbourhoods are safe.

## 5 Report Detail

5.1 The Staffordshire Commissioner allocates annual funding to all Community Safety Partnerships across Staffordshire to assist with the development and commissioning of projects to address local community safety issues.

5.2 The purpose of the funding is to give Community Safety Partnerships control and flexibility when allocating funding in their local area.

5.3 The amount of Community Safety Funding received for 2026/27 is £10,000, with the opportunity to bid into a £100,000 pan-Staffordshire fund.

5.4 The allocation of this funding is agreed at the Chase Community Partnership, before the proposals are ratified by the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office.

5.5 Funding will be aligned to the local community safety priorities identified within the Community Safety Strategic Assessment, and those identified by the Chase Community Partnership.

5.6 Funding is for a one-year period, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027.

5.7 An evaluation of spend will be submitted to the Chase Community Partnership and the Staffordshire Commissioner in April 2027.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Financial

Expected income, no implications.

### 6.2 Legal

Upon receipt of instructions to Legal Services, consideration will need to be given to the capacity within the team for the drafting and provision of advice regarding legal agreements, and whether the work will need to be outsourced or carried out in-house.

Whilst it is likely that the majority of contracts required for the delivery of funded projects shall be grant agreements, which are not subject to the Council's Procurement Regulations, Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or to the Procurement Act 2023, any contract for goods, services and/or works required for the delivery of a project shall be procured in accordance with the Procurement Regulations and the requisite procurement legislation.

**6.3 Human Resources**

None.

**6.4 Risk Management**

None.

**6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

None.

**6.6 Health**

The impact of ASB and criminality on individuals and communities is well documented, and is known to impact upon both physical and mental health. By seeking to address these issues via appropriate allocation of grant funding, it is hoped that these negative effects shall be minimised.

**6.7 Climate Change**

None.

**7 Appendices**

None.

**8 Previous Consideration**

None.

**9 Background Papers**

None.

**Contact Officer:** Oliver Greatbatch

**Telephone Number:** 01543 464 477

**Ward Interest:** All

**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

**Key Decision:** Yes

## Biodiversity Duty Report 2023-2025

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Operations
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Environment and Climate Change

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### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Biodiversity Duty Report 2023-2025 to be published on the council's website.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That members note the action taken by the council across service areas to promote biodiversity in the district in the past three years.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approves the Biodiversity Duty Report 2023-2025, including future actions to be undertaken to enhance biodiversity in the district in the next five years.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The Council is legally required to publish a report detailing the actions it has taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The Biodiversity Duty Report appended for approval sets out the wide range of measures delivered over the past three years and outlines the future actions planned for the next five years.
- 2.4 Approval of the report ensures compliance with this statutory duty and demonstrates how the council is delivering its corporate priorities and contributing to wider strategies, including the Cannock Chase National Landscape Management Plan and the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- 2.5 Endorsing the report also confirms the council's commitment to improving biodiversity across the district and its intention to continue engaging, educating, and supporting the community in achieving these goals.

### 3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Introduced by the Environment Act 2021, the council has a legal duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and to publish a report detailing the actions the council has taken to meet this duty, by no later than 26 March 2026.
- 3.2 The appended Biodiversity Duty Report sets out how the council has complied with this statutory duty. It summarises actions delivered between 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025, and outlines future measures planned for the next five years.

- 3.3 No additional funding accompanies the biodiversity duty. Future actions have therefore been developed in consultation with officers across service areas and are considered deliverable within existing resources.
- 3.4 The report will be published on the Council's website to meet the statutory deadline. Going forward, a Biodiversity Duty Report must be produced at least once every five years, with the next report due by 31 December 2030.
- 3.5 Due to anticipated local government reorganisation, Cannock Chase District Council is unlikely to exist by that time; however, responsibility for compliance will transfer to any successor authority.

## 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

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

**Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity** - "To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives" - Enhancing biodiversity supports economic prosperity by providing high-quality green spaces and wildlife-rich environments that improve the district's image, making it an attractive place to live, work and invest.

**Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing** - "To encourage and support residents to lead healthy and independent lives" - Enhancing biodiversity supports health and wellbeing by providing cleaner air and water, healthier soils, and accessible green spaces for recreation, all of which promote active and independent lives.

**Priority 3 - The Community** - "To ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home" - Action to conserve and enhance biodiversity improves the quality and character of the local environment. Creating and maintaining wildlife-rich habitats and accessible green spaces fosters community pride.

## 5 Report Detail

- 5.1 England is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world following historic and ongoing declines in biodiversity. There is a clear recognition that reversing this trend will require targeted and co-ordinated action.
- 5.2 The Government's 25-Year Environment Plan commits to halting species decline, restoring wildlife-rich habitats, increasing woodland cover, and ensuring more people can access nature close to home.
- 5.3 To help deliver these ambitions, the Environment Act 2021 introduced an enhanced biodiversity duty requiring all public authorities in England to consider biodiversity in the exercise of their functions and to take steps to conserve and enhance it.
- 5.4 The Government guidance explains how public authorities should comply with this duty by identifying actions across their range of functions. In response, the Council undertook a review in consultation with officers from the following service areas: Operations (Countryside, Parks, Public Open Space and Grounds Maintenance, Regulatory (Climate Change), Economic Development and Planning (Planning Policy and Development Management), Wellbeing (Leisure), Housing and Corporate Assets (Council Housing), and Business Support and Assurance (Communications).

- 5.5 To demonstrate compliance, public authorities are legally required to publish a biodiversity report covering a timeframe set by the authority, with an end date no later than 1 January 2026.
- 5.6 The report must include a summary of actions taken to meet the duty, plans for the next reporting period, and any other relevant information.
- 5.7 As the Council is also a Local Planning Authority, the report must include details of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), including actions taken to meet BNG obligations, outcomes from approved biodiversity gain plans, and plans for future BNG compliance.
- 5.8 The council's Biodiversity Duty Report, to comply with this duty, is provided as Appendix 1. It covers the period from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025.
- 5.9 This start date reflects the introduction of the duty under the Environment Act 2021 through amendments to section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- 5.10 For clarity, actions within the report are grouped under five themes based on Government guidance.
1. Policies and Processes
  2. Managing council land and assets
  3. People and Communities
  4. Integration and coordination with partners
  5. Biodiversity Net Gain
- 5.11 The Biodiversity Duty Report must be published within 12 weeks of the last day of the reporting period, therefore the deadline is 26 March 2026.
- 5.12 Publication will be via the Council's website to ensure compliance.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

No additional funding accompanies the Biodiversity Duty, therefore, the compilations of actions, their delivery and monitoring must be carried out using existing resources.

Consultation with officers across council functions has informed the future actions which are currently deemed deliverable using existing council resources.

It is expected that other partnership initiatives, such as The Forest of Mercia, Cannock Chase National Landscape and Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy will also contribute to conserving and enhancing the borough's biodiversity and which also may assist in securing future funding for the enhancement of biodiversity.

### **6.2 Legal**

The statutory duty requiring public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity is established under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, as amended by the Environment Act 2021.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

Future action for biodiversity as included in the report is dependent on maintaining existing staff resources.

### **6.4 Risk Management**

Failure to publish the Biodiversity Duty Report within the statutory timeframe would place the council in breach of its legal obligations under the Environment Act 2021. This could result in significant reputational damage, weaken the council's position in future partnership working and funding opportunities and attract scrutiny from government departments and stakeholders, creating further operational and governance risks.

Timely publication of the report is therefore essential to ensure legal compliance, maintain credibility and support the council's wider environmental and climate objectives.

The successful delivery of the future actions set out in the report is dependent on maintaining existing resource levels in terms of both staff and finances. Any reduction in key service areas responsible for delivering these actions would risk the council being unable to achieve its biodiversity commitments over the next five years.

### **6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

None.

### **6.6 Health**

Conserving and enhancing biodiversity will have a variety of beneficial impacts on Health & Wellbeing. For instance: direct access to nature for leisure; healthier air, land and water.

### **6.7 Climate Change**

The Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, recognising the urgency of climate action and committing to work with partners and the community to reduce carbon emissions. In 2025 the CCDC Climate Change Strategy was approved.

Enhancing biodiversity through bigger, better, and more connected habitats strengthens ecosystem resilience and ensures the continued provision of vital services such as clean air, clean water, and healthy soils. These improvements also contribute to climate objectives by helping to lower carbon dioxide levels through natural processes.

Actions such as habitat restoration, tree planting, and wetland creation deliver multiple benefits: they sequester carbon, reduce flood risk, and help cool urban areas. While these outcomes are not part of the Council's formal climate strategy, they represent significant co-benefits that complement efforts to reduce emissions.

## **7 Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Cannock Chase District Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2023-2025.

**8 Previous Consideration**

None.

**9 Background Papers**

None.

**Contact Officer:** Suzanne Wykes  
**Telephone Number:** 01543 462 821  
**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26  
**Key Decision:** No

# **Biodiversity Duty Report 2023 to 2025**

**Cannock Chase District Council**

## Introduction

The Environment Act 2021 strengthened the statutory Biodiversity Duty, requiring all public authorities, including local authorities, to take proactive steps to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. Since January 2023, councils have been required not only to consider biodiversity but to demonstrate positive actions embedded into council functions.

In addition, local authorities must prepare and publish a report every five years outlining how they have complied with the duty.

This report sets out how Cannock Chase District Council has fulfilled its enhanced duty and integrated biodiversity considerations across its operations for the reporting period January 2023 to 31 December 2025.

It details the actions taken to understand, protect, and improve the ecological value of the land, assets, and services under our influence. This includes the management of nature reserves, parks and open spaces, planning and development control, and community-involvement and education.

As a local authority, we play a central role in shaping the local environment, both through direct land stewardship and through decision-making that influences the wider landscape. Our work contributes to national commitments such as the 25 Year Environment Plan, as well as local action set out in statutory Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), National Landscape Management Plans and our own Local Plan and Corporate Plan.

## Biodiversity in Decline

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on earth, encompassing the richness of species, the diversity of habitats they depend on, and the natural processes that sustain ecosystems. Biodiversity underpins essential services upon which we rely, such as pollination of crops, soil formation, climate regulation and clean air and water. In urban and rural areas alike, biodiversity contributes to people's wellbeing by providing access to nature, attractive green spaces and resilient landscapes.

Unfortunately, biodiversity levels in England are decreasing, with wildlife populations in England having declined in abundance by 32% on average between 1970 and 2021. For many species, declines have been more dramatic such as for farmland birds which have suffered an average decline of 59%.

## England-wide Aspirations

Cannock Chase District Council's actions under the Biodiversity Duty support national commitments for nature recovery which aim to:

- Restore or create >500,000ha of wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites by December 2042
- Increase tree canopy and woodland cover in England to 16.5% by 2050
- Halt the decline in species abundance by 2030.
- Increase species abundance by 2042 to levels above 2022 baselines and at least 10% higher than in 2030.

- Improve the Red List Index for England by 2042, reducing extinction risk compared with 2022 levels.
- Reduce new invasive non-native species establishments by at least 50% by 2030 (vs. 2000 levels).
- Ensure 50% of SSSI features have actions on track to achieve favourable condition by 2030.

## Our Natural Environment

The district of Cannock Chase is home to some of the most treasured landscapes and wildlife habitats in the West Midlands.

At the heart of the area sits the Cannock Chase National Landscape, one of the busiest countryside destinations in the region. It offers wide-ranging views across heathland, forest and rolling hills, and provides space for walking, cycling, wildlife watching and quiet enjoyment. The National Landscape is recognised nationally for its scenic beauty and receives the highest level of protection.

Surrounding this is a network of green spaces, woodlands, canals, and open countryside which together give Cannock Chase its distinct semi-rural feel. Much of the district rises from lower-lying urban areas in the south to the wooded plateaux of Cannock Chase before dropping into the wide River Trent valley, creating a landscape rich in variety.

The district contains many protected natural areas, including:

- Two Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) – internationally important sites protected for rare species and habitats.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- Ancient Woodlands and Local Nature Reserves
- Sites of Biological Importance and a Local Geological Site

These areas support a wide variety of wildlife and plant species, some of which are sensitive to recreation and development pressures. Careful management and protection are essential to safeguard them for future generations.

## Policies and Processes

The Council's work to support biodiversity is guided by a set of key policies and processes that help embed nature recovery into everyday decisions and activities. These frameworks make sure that biodiversity is considered in how we plan, manage land, and deliver services, so that looking after nature becomes a routine part of the council's long-term approach.

### Corporate Plan 2022-2026

The Plan's vision includes a clear environmental commitment:

*"A local environment that is protected, preserved, and enhanced for future generations."*

This explicitly supports biodiversity enhancement as a long-term aim of the Council's overall direction.

### **Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity**

While focused on growth, this priority supports sustainable development by encouraging green industries and actions to reduce climate impacts, helping create conditions that benefit the natural environment.

### **Priority 2 – Health & Wellbeing**

The Plan highlights the importance of parks, green spaces, and access to Cannock Chase for residents' health, reinforcing the need to maintain and improve the ecological quality of these areas.

### **Priority 3 – The Community**

Commitments to maintaining parks and open spaces, supporting tree planting, and promoting sustainable lifestyles directly contribute to enhancing habitats and supporting biodiversity across the district.

### **Priority 4 – Responsible Council**

This priority includes reducing the Council's carbon emissions and seeking funding for green initiatives, supporting wider environmental resilience and indirectly benefiting biodiversity.

### **Local Plan**

Work on the Local Plan (2018–2040) is ongoing, with consultation on the main changes completed in December 2025 and the examination outcome expected in early 2026.

The Plan includes Strategic Objective 7, which focuses on protecting and enhancing the natural environment through policies that require development to safeguard important ecological assets, avoid harm to protected sites, and improve biodiversity where opportunities arise.

It also aims to strengthen ecological connectivity by maintaining linked habitats, protecting landscape character and enhancing green corridors. Policy SO7.8 ensures that Green Infrastructure is protected, expanded and built into new development to support wildlife, climate resilience and community wellbeing.

The Spatial Strategy directs development towards sustainable urban areas and prioritises brownfield land, reducing pressure on sensitive habitats and the Cannock Chase National Landscape.

Policies on climate change, pollution prevention, sustainable transport, green infrastructure and good design ensure development provides multiple benefits for nature, people and climate resilience. Requirements to minimise pollution, manage flood risk and promote low-carbon development also help biodiversity by improving air, soil and water quality.

### **Urban Forestry Strategy 2019-2024**

The Urban Forestry Strategy sets out the strategy taken by the council to protect and manage existing trees and woodlands, encouraging natural regeneration, safeguarding important habitats, and making sure new planting uses suitable and varied species that support local wildlife. It also ensures that planning decisions, woodland management and future tree planting all consider wildlife, so that habitat protection, good planting choices and ongoing care are built into routine Council work. The Strategy that has been adopted since 2004 has ensured that all trees removed are replaced on a 1 to 1 basis.

### **Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030**

The council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, and in 2025 adopted its Climate Change Strategy 2025–2030.

The Climate Change Strategy supports delivery of the Biodiversity Duty by reducing key environmental pressures and creating more favourable conditions for wildlife and habitats across the district.

Through measures such as transitioning to renewable electricity, improving the efficiency of corporate assets and decarbonising transport, the Strategy helps to lower emissions, reduce pollution and disturbance, and enhance environmental resilience. These actions, alongside strong community engagement, education initiatives and partnership working, encourage more sustainable behaviours across the district and support the long-term health and resilience of Cannock Chase's natural environment.

### **Cannock Chase Open Space Assessment (2023)**

This assessment guides land management by identifying where the *quantity, quality, and accessibility* of open spaces can be improved. It highlights opportunities for enhancing natural green spaces, improving habitat quality, and strengthening ecological networks helping the council to prioritise where land management actions, such as restoration, maintenance, or new provision, should be delivered.

### **Development Management**

The council's ecologist is consulted on relevant planning applications to ensure that national and local policy, as well as statutory biodiversity legislation, are fully considered in decision-making. The requirement for features such as swift bricks, bat boxes and holes in fencing, to allow wildlife movement through developments, are routinely attached as conditions to planning permissions to increase opportunities for wildlife within developments.

The Council maintains a service level agreement with the Staffordshire Ecological Record, which supplies ecological data, including information on Sites of Biological Importance and species records, to inform decision making. This data supports forward planning and development management by ensuring that ecological considerations are fully incorporated into relevant assessments and policies.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

The Council's Health & Wellbeing approach emphasises prevention, partnership working and the use of parks, open spaces and Cannock Chase to support active, healthy lives. This requires high-quality, accessible green environments and therefore supports the conservation and enhancement of habitats across the district.

### **Future Actions**

- **Embed** the identified habitat creation, enhancement and connectivity opportunities from the adopted LNRS into local planning policy, ensuring these are reflected in site allocations and policies.
- **Ensure** a commitment continues in future Corporate Plans to improving local biodiversity by restoring and enhancing habitats and strengthening green networks across the district. This would build on the existing aim to preserve local parks and green spaces and protect the environment for future generations.
- **Include** climate change adaptation measures that deliver biodiversity co-benefits into the next review of the Climate Change Strategy.

## Managing council land and assets

Cannock Chase District Council owns and manages a diverse portfolio of land, including nature reserves, formal parks, amenity green spaces, river and stream corridors, woodlands, cemeteries and incidental open spaces embedded within the built environment. These sites provide habitat for wildlife, support landscape character, and offer valued green spaces for residents.

Our land management approach is underpinned by the principle of enhancing ecological value wherever possible, without compromising the primary function of the land, be that a park, cemetery, sports pitch or nature reserve for example.

### Countryside Sites

The Countryside Team, alongside a small regular team of volunteers, manages approximately 217ha of council-owned semi-natural land which include our most important wildlife habitats including:

- Hednesford Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest / Local Nature Reserve; (LNR)
- Mill Green & Hawks Green LNR / Site of Biological Importance (SBI)
- Hazelslade LNR / SBI; and
- Castle Ring SBI / Scheduled Ancient Monument.

#### *Hednesford Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest*

Hednesford Hills is of national importance for its heathland habitats and has an extant Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) Agreement, which provides financial support for the site's management. This agreement is due to expire in 2028.

Management at Hednesford Hills is delivered through a combination of grazing by the Council's own herd of Dexter cattle, selective tree and scrub removal, and the creation of bare ground scrapes. These interventions maintain the structural diversity of the heathland helping support a wide range of flora and fauna.

A full habitat survey of the site was completed by the Council in 2024, providing an up-to-date evidence base to help prioritise ongoing and future management actions. Formal monitoring of the site's condition for national reporting is undertaken by Natural England. During the most recent assessment in 2018 the site was recorded as being in unfavourable recovering condition. Good, well managed habitat was noted but the site was judged to just miss the scrub and tree cover target.

In addition to Natural England's assessments, the Council conducts its own habitat monitoring to inform day-to-day and longer-term management decisions.

Hednesford Hills is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

#### *Local Nature Reserves*

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are locally important sites for wildlife, managed for both nature conservation and public enjoyment.

Both Hazelslade and Mill Green & Hawks Green LNR have extant Higher-Level Stewardship (HLS) Agreements, which provide financial support for their management. These agreements are due to expire in 2028.

Management at both sites is delivered with both conservation targets and site users in mind. Habitat and species diversity is encouraged mainly through a combination of grazing by the Council's own herd of Dexter cattle and selective tree and scrub removal.

Both sites are monitored annually to assess the condition of their key habitats providing an up-to-date evidence base to inform future management decisions.

Hazelslade and Mill Green & Hawks Green are also designated Sites of Biological Importance.

#### *Castle Ring Site of Biological Importance / Scheduled Ancient Monument*

Castle Ring is designated as a Site of Biological Importance, recognising its county-level significance for the habitats and species it supports. The site consists largely of heathland habitat and supports regionally important reptile populations. Its position within the wider Cannock Chase National Landscape makes it an important ecological stepping stone for wildlife moving across the area.

The site is managed through a combination of selective tree and scrub removal, bracken cutting, and wetland maintenance. These interventions help to maintain habitat diversity, ensuring the site continues to support a wide range of flora and fauna.

Castle Ring is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument, designated as an Iron Age hillfort. Management actions must therefore balance both biodiversity conservation and the protection of the site's archaeological features, ensuring that wildlife and heritage interests are considered together.

In addition, Castle Ring currently has both a Green Flag award and a Green Heritage award, reflecting its high standards of management, cleanliness and safety whilst also demonstrating that its historic and natural values are both well cared for and celebrated.

#### *Other sites managed by the Countryside Service*

The Countryside Service manages a further nine areas in the district, amounting to approximately 30 ha. These sites include woodlands, some located along stream valleys, as well as wooded sections of former mineral lines, and larger areas such as Fair Lady Coppice and Nunswell Park.

Fair Lady Coppice comprises of woodland, acid grassland, small patches of heathland, and damp, sparsely vegetated ground. The site supports species of conservation concern, including the dingy skipper, a declining butterfly, and overwintering birds such as waders.

Management focuses on removing encroaching scrub from the damp plateau and widening grassland rides through the developing woodland. Heathland areas on the southern side of the site are in Higher Level Stewardship until 2028, with scrub and tree cover removed cyclically to maintain the habitat.

Nunswell Park lies within the Cannock Chase National Landscape and consists of woodland and grassland habitats. A Management Plan was produced for the site in 2025 and is currently being consulted on with Cannock Wood Parish Council.

## Future Actions

As well as continuing work as detailed for the previous reporting period, over the next five years the council will also:

- Consider** the benefits and assess the feasibility of introducing conservation grazing to additional council-owned sites.
- Monitor** the outcomes of habitat interventions across sites, with a particular focus on invertebrate responses at Hednesford Hills.
- Complete** full habitat surveys of all sites managed by the Countryside Service.
- Strengthen** species recording on council-owned sites by submitting records to iRecord and taking part in national species-recording schemes at key locations.
- Produce** up-to-date management plans for all council-owned SSSIs, LNRs and Sites of Biological Importance.
- Enter** into new stewardship agreements for Hednesford Hills SSSI, Hawks Green & Mill Green LNR and Fair Lady Coppice before they expire in 2028 (subject to Natural England invitation).
- Explore** opportunities to enter relevant Countryside Stewardship schemes for other council-owned sites.
- Assess** the potential for additional council-owned sites to be designated as Local Nature Reserves and progress this where it would deliver ecological and/or community benefits and is supported politically.
- Ensure** that up-to-date biodiversity actions and priorities are incorporated into the Green Flag Management Plan for Castle Ring.
- Facilitate** and participate in research projects to improve understanding of the habitats and species found on council-owned sites and to support evidence-led management.

## Parks

The district's main parks are managed by a team of grounds maintenance personnel, supported by the Council's Tree Team, who oversee the authority's tree stock.

Alongside their formal uses, measures to enhance the biodiversity of the parks have been identified and implemented as follows.

At Cannock Park a 240-metre native hedge was planted two years ago.

At Elmore Park, around 100 metres of new native hedgerow was planted in 2023, increasing habitat connectivity and ecological value. A corner of the park near a neighbouring property has been left to grow during spring, supporting cowslips and other wildflower species. The site's tree trail was updated in 2024 and bulbs were planted around the culvert area to improve seasonal interest and biodiversity.

At Ravenhill Park, a 170-metre strip along the northern side of the sports pitch, adjacent to a hawthorn hedge, has been left unmown to support wildlife. A further 3–4-metre-wide unmown margin, extending for approximately 500 metres between the

planted trees and the inner amenity grass, provides an important habitat corridor for pollinators and small mammals. In 2023, a 155-metre native hedgerow was also planted to the south of the running track, enhancing habitat connectivity across the site.

Hednesford Park includes a soakaway and associated wildflower bund constructed to help manage localised flooding. Along the north-eastern side of the site, birch trees have been planted and the dogwood here is regularly coppiced improving habitat diversity. To the east of the playing fields, the grass is trimmed once annually, and spring bulbs have been planted to provide cover and feeding resources for invertebrates.

A 3,000m<sup>2</sup> area on the eastern side of the large amenity grassland has been left unmown to develop naturally, following issues caused by wet ground conditions. Specifically, in one area a wetland was created where water from the A460 runs into Hednesford Park. Working alongside volunteers, the ground was excavated and planted with pond vegetation to help alleviate path flooding. The project was delivered by the Forest of Mercia, with funding secured through The Friends of Hednesford Park from the Severn Trent Community Fund.

Living willow tunnels have been installed in the Hednesford Park play area, along with fences constructed from recycled willow and dogwood. Recycled woodchip produced from trees previously removed on site has been used to cover and reinforce a number of paths within the park.

Christmas trees collected in Ravenhill, Cannock, and Hednesford Park are also recycled, with the resulting chippings used to strengthen sections of natural paths or spread in planting beds throughout the district.

Habitat surveys have been carried out at Hednesford Park, Cannock Park and Elmore Park by the council's Ecologist to identify further opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Elmore Park, Cannock Park, Hednesford Park and Ravenhill Park all retained their Green Flag status in 2025. The Green Flag Award scheme places biodiversity at the heart of its judging process through a dedicated criterion and wider expectations around environmental management and climate change.

### **Other Open Spaces**

For several years, high-intensity mowing on selected areas of public open space has been replaced with a lower-intervention summer cut-and-collect regime. This approach allows wildflowers to grow, flower and set seed, creating habitat for insects and other fauna. These meadow areas also provide a welcome contrast to standard amenity grassland for residents. The regime is currently implemented across approximately 14 hectares of land, covering ten separate areas of public open space including the largest areas (>1.8ha) at Kingsway Park, Jerome Road, Cotswold Road and Anglesey Park.

Stile Cop Cemetery retained its Green Flag status in 2025.

### **Tree Planting**

Between January 2023 and 31 December 2025, a total of 1,224 trees and shrubs (excluding hedgerows) were planted on council owned land including parks, cemeteries, amenity spaces and Cannock Park Golf Course, using funds from the

Government's Nature for Climate Fund<sup>1</sup>. Most of these were native species such as rowan, oak and silver birch, which provide canopy cover to support urban cooling, help reduce flooding and create valuable habitat for wildlife.

Lengths of native hedgerow were also planted at Byron Place, totalling 30 metres, and at Barnard Way, totalling 130 metres, using the same funding.

### Future Action

As well as continuing work as detailed for the previous reporting period, over the next five years the Council will also:

- **Complete** full habitat surveys of Ravenhill Park, Green Flag sites and selected larger areas of Public Open Space to identify opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- **Continue** to identify suitable locations for specimen tree planting within areas of Public Open Space and implement planting where opportunities are identified
- **Assess** further of areas of parks and open spaces for their suitability to be managed by a summer meadow cut and collect and implement where appropriate.
- **Develop** a new wildlife area in Cannock Park, adjacent to the tennis courts.
- **Remove** scrub to open up areas of remnant acid grassland and selectively thin planted tree belts in Hednesford Park to promote good woodland structure, retaining standing dead wood where appropriate.
- **Explore** opportunities to integrate biodiversity-enhancing practices into the management of allotment sites across the district.
- **Enhance** habitat diversity and reduce maintenance requirements at Cannock Park Golf Course by infilling two former bunkers and partially infilling a third with wildflower/grass mixes, managing the areas with twice-yearly cuts.

### Environmental Practices

Chemical inputs across Public Open Spaces have been significantly reduced, with usage decreasing from approximately 150 litres of glyphosate to around 40 litres of Pistol annually. Glyphosate is now restricted to targeted treatment of Japanese knotweed and essential locations only, such as around tree bases and lamp posts.

At Cannock Park Golf Course, conventional feeds have been reduced through the adoption of products that improve nitrogen availability, alongside the use of Organic Soil Conditioner to support long-term soil health, resulting in lower overall chemical usage.

Hedge cutting within Public Open Spaces is undertaken between November and February to avoid the bird-nesting season, with any essential works outside this period subject to full checks for nesting activity and halted if active nests are found.

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<sup>1</sup> Administered by the Forest of Mercia CIC through the Trees for Climate Programme.

## Future Actions

□ **Transition** away from fossil-fuel-powered tools and vehicles used by land management personnel by adopting electric alternatives where suitable, cost-effective options are available within allocated budgets.

## Housing Stock

The Council's housing stock is an area where biodiversity considerations can be integrated directly into the residential environment. Individual gardens, communal outdoor areas and the fabric of the housing itself all offer opportunities to support wildlife, reduce environmental impact and promote nature-friendly living.

A new council-lead housing development is currently under construction on the former Aelfgar School site in Rugeley. The scheme will deliver 58 homes in total, including 29 council homes for rent. The properties are being built to the anticipated requirements of the Future Homes Standard, incorporating features such as triple glazing, solar panels, air source heat pumps, mechanical ventilation heat recovery systems and electric vehicle charging points. These measures will help reduce carbon emissions and lower energy bills for future tenants.

To incorporate biodiversity into the scheme, bat and bird boxes are included on selected properties and site fencing is designed to be hedgehog friendly. A buffer zone runs along the edge of the development which will be managed as a summer cut and collect, providing habitat for wildflowers and insects in particular.

## Future Actions

□ **Incorporate** features for biodiversity enhancement into the external envelope contract specification for council-owned housing stock, for example swift and bat nesting features, wildlife-friendly fencing etc.

□ **Review** the current voided properties policy to include features for biodiversity eg tree (fruit) planting in gardens, wildlife-friendly fencing etc.

□ **Include** biodiversity-enhancing features within the Housing Business Plan so they can potentially be integrated into future housing development and improvement programmes.

□ **Seek** innovative biodiversity solutions from contractors as part of the tendering process to encourage ecological enhancements within contracted works.

## People and Communities

Community engagement and education play a central role in the council's approach to supporting biodiversity and nurturing a strong connection between residents and their local green spaces. These initiatives build awareness, encourage participation, and strengthen local stewardship of natural environments. The programmes aim to:

- Increase understanding of local habitats, species, and ecological processes.
- Encourage active involvement in habitat management.
- Promote sustainable practices and citizen science across all age groups.

This section highlights the breadth of educational and outreach activities delivered by the council, supported by quantifiable data, where available, to demonstrate the scale and impact of this work.

### Regular Youth Engagement

A substantial proportion of engagement is delivered through weekly work experience program sessions with school and college groups, undertaken by the council's Community Officer for Parks and Open spaces, in conjunction with the Forest of Mercia. Across the academic year, these sessions typically involve around 55–60 young people per week. Activities vary by season and include practical conservation tasks across multiple parks, as well as utilising natural materials to make items such as willow fencing.

The programme is complemented by expert-led sessions (e.g., wildlife rescue, small-mammal surveys, bat monitoring) delivered with specialist practitioners through the year.

During term time, the Countryside Service host a weekly group of students from Walsall College who engage in activities such as fencing, bird box building and habitat management.

### Project-Based Youth and Community Engagement

In addition to weekly activity, the council supports targeted, time-limited projects with youth services, community groups, and scout groups, often linked to school holidays and/or external funding.

In 2025, the council worked with a range of youth and community groups on projects linked to Cannock Chase National Landscape. Activities included building bird boxes, delivering a six-week creative project with a local artist that contributed to story walks across four parks and leading visits and story-based nature walks focused on local ecology and heritage. Funding from Cannock Chase National Landscape has supported these initiatives, including artist involvement.

### Wider Community Events

From March to October, the council leads monthly bee walks across seven parks, supporting pollinator awareness and public involvement in ecological monitoring.

Guided walks are also provided on council nature reserves, often coinciding with national campaigns, such as national Heath Week. Over sixty people attended the guided walk on Hednesford Hills in August 2025.

### **Self-led Nature Trails**

The council also offers free family-friendly self-led trails through parks often aligned to national nature campaigns and seasonal themes throughout the year. These events draw consistent public participation across the park network.

### **Climate Change Awareness**

Cannock Chase Council delivered The Great Imagining Cannock Chase in March 2024, engaging over 1,500 residents, including 900 pupils from 16 schools, in climate and nature-focused learning. Forty exhibits covered themes such as biodiversity, sustainable resource use, alongside recycling, carbon literacy and renewable energy. The event strengthened partnerships, promoted nature-positive behaviour change and supported the council's wider ambitions for climate action, ecological awareness and net-zero commitments.

Throughout 2025 the council worked in partnership with TGI to develop a wider climate education programme, which has now been expanded across Staffordshire, This programme delivered a series of interactive workshops for schools and community groups, including sessions on biodiversity, a Nature Spotters Guide activity, and the popular Bog in a Box workshop, designed to introduce residents to the importance of peatlands and local ecosystems.

### **Volunteering**

In the council's parks and open spaces practical projects are undertaken with volunteers from the local community and have included wetland creation, making willow-based structures and natural-play features and undertaking path reinforcement work using recycled materials.

The Countryside Service runs a weekly volunteering day every Friday, giving the public the opportunity to support the team in managing the district's nature reserves. Activities include scrub clearance, hay making, pathway maintenance and a range of other practical conservation tasks. All tools, equipment and training are provided, and volunteers enjoy working in some of the council's most beautiful natural areas while making a meaningful contribution to their care.

Corporate Working days are also hosted on the council's nature reserves, and in the 2025, around 10 employees engaged in practical conservation activities.

Over 2025, volunteers with the Countryside Service contributed time equivalent to approximately 40% of a full-time employee.

### **Cannock Chase Can**

The Cannock Chase Can initiative supports residents to improve their health and wellbeing through both fun community-based activities and app-based challenges. Under the 'Naturally well' theme, app challenges such as the Castle Ring Centenary Photo Trail and Tales from Laburnum Avenue invite people to explore local wildlife and heritage found in our parks and nature reserves. New activities are continually added including from partners in wider Staffordshire such as Transforming the Trent valley and Cannock Chase National Landscape.

## Bee Friendly Schools

In the district, 12 schools have committed to achieving Gold-level Bumblebee-friendly School status, with the council funding their applications to support this work. The scheme, run by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, encourages schools to take practical, positive actions that improve habitats for bumblebees and other wild pollinators. To gain accreditation, schools complete a series of bumblebee-friendly actions and provide evidence demonstrating how they have created and enhanced pollinator-supporting environments.

## Future Actions

- Expand** the Guardians of Cannock Chase programme to include children and families outside of Scout or Guide groups, subject to securing appropriate funding.
- Provide** at least 3 guided bat walks for the public on selected council-managed nature reserves each year.
- Provide** a selection of wildlife themed guided walks and events for the public on council-managed nature reserves each year.
- Install** new and updated interpretation boards on council-owned nature reserves, where appropriate, to improve public understanding of the ecological value and management of each site.
- Expand** bee walks into council nature reserves, as well as parks and cemeteries.
- Deliver** a series of workshops for Bumblebee-friendly schools to help them begin their pollinator-supporting activities by introducing pupils and teachers to local pollinator species, habitat-improvement techniques and simple actions that create immediate impact.
- Support** the continuation and further roll-out of the climate change education and awareness programme, subject to securing external funding.

## Integration and co-ordination with partners

Over the reporting period, the council has worked collaboratively with a range of organisations to support and enhance local biodiversity.

### Cannock Chase National Landscape

A significant proportion of the district lies within the protected Cannock Chase National Landscape. Throughout the reporting period, elected members participated in meetings of the National Landscape Joint Committee, ensuring the district's interests were represented in shaping priorities and decision-making.

In 2025, the National Landscape published its new Management Plan, setting out measures to protect and enhance the area's natural beauty, wildlife, heritage, and sense of place while driving nature recovery, tackling climate change, and supporting responsible recreation. The plan was developed through a series of Task and Finish Groups, including the Land Management & Biodiversity group, in which the council played an active role, helping to shape proposed policies and actions.

During the reporting period, the council successfully secured several funding awards administered by the National Landscape. This included support to upgrade the pedestrian path at Castle Ring to improve the visitor experience while helping to reduce recreational pressure on the wider monument; funding for new interpretation panels at Hednesford Hills and Hazelslade nature reserves; and financial support for species-specific surveys aimed at informing tailored habitat management to safeguard important populations.

### Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Partnership

Cannock Chase Council is a supporting authority in the development of the countywide strategy for nature recovery. Officers have contributed to its preparation by participating in the Species Working Group, the Planning and Infrastructure Group, and the overarching Steering Group. Their involvement has helped ensure that the district's specific interests have been taken into account in the development of the emerging strategy.

### Species project partnerships

In the reporting period, ARG UK, working in partnership with local organisations and groups on and around Cannock Chase, developed a landscape-scale adder conservation programme. The project focused on reversing local adder declines through habitat improvement, connectivity modelling and baseline surveys, and Cannock Chase Council was as an active partner supporting this work alongside other landowners and agencies. That work is set to continue.

### Future Actions

- Continue** to work collaboratively with Cannock Chase National Landscape to develop and deliver measures that drive forward nature recovery and contribute to the Government's target of protecting 30% of our land for nature by 2030 (30by30).
- Respond** to consultations on the draft Staffordshire LNRS in a timely manner, to ensure the approved strategy identifies appropriate priorities and long-term goals for nature recovery in the district.

- Contribute** to the delivery of the priorities for habitat creation, enhancement, and species recovery identified in the LNRS, working as an active member of the Staffordshire Nature Recovery Partnership.
- Continue** to be an active member of, and contribute to, ARG UK's Cannock Chase adder conservation project to help safeguard and expand adder populations in the district.
- Engage** with the Trent Re-naturalising and enhancing waterways partnership scheme (Trent ReNEW) to support works that improve the ecological condition of the Saredon brook catchment through the district.

## **Biodiversity Net Gain**

### **Actions to meet biodiversity net gain obligations**

A Biodiversity Guidance Note has been prepared by the council as Local Planning Authority and published on the council's website. Information provided within the guidance note is designed to help applicants, ecologists and other interested parties understand the council's BNG process, and to assist decision-making.

The council encourages pre-application discussions with prospective applicants to discuss their development proposals in relation to BNG prior to submission.

The council asks an applicant to submit a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Self-Assessment Form as part of their supporting documentation if their planning application is not exempt from the BNG requirements. An associated validation checklist has been published for applicants to see if this is required.

In July 2024, the council approved a schedule of fees for monitoring significant on-site biodiversity enhancements and all off-site biodiversity enhancements resulting from Biodiversity Net Gain. Since then, relevant planning permissions have been subject to these fees.

The council employs a full-time ecologist whose responsibilities include ensuring compliance with biodiversity net gain requirements in planning applications.

### **Meeting biodiversity net gain obligations going forward**

Over the next five years, the number of significant on-site and off-site biodiversity enhancement schemes requiring council monitoring is expected to increase. To ensure that the LPA can continue to meet statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG) obligations, monitoring fees may need to be reviewed periodically to maintain sufficient ecological capacity and expertise.

The Government has recently announced an intention to raise the size threshold for sites exempt from BNG to 0.2 hectares. This change is likely to reduce the number of planning applications subject to BNG within the district. However, this reduction is not expected to decrease the number of schemes requiring long-term (30-year) monitoring, as such obligations are typically associated with larger development sites above the 0.2 hectare threshold. These larger schemes will continue to require oversight to ensure delivery of the agreed BNG unit uplift and compliance with approved biodiversity gain plans.

The council's pre-application advice service will remain an important mechanism for enabling developers to understand their BNG obligations at an early stage, supporting effective compliance and delivery of biodiversity enhancements.

### **Net gains resulting from approved biodiversity gain plans**

Major planning applications have been subject to biodiversity net gain requirements since February 2024. Small sites have been subject to biodiversity net gain requirements since April 2024.

Up to 31 December 2025, three biodiversity gain plans have been approved.

Across these approved plans:

1. The net gain in number of units has been 1.96 units.
2. The average percentage gain has been 101%
3. 79% of the net gain in units was delivered on-site, with 21% delivered off-site.  
No statutory credits were utilised.

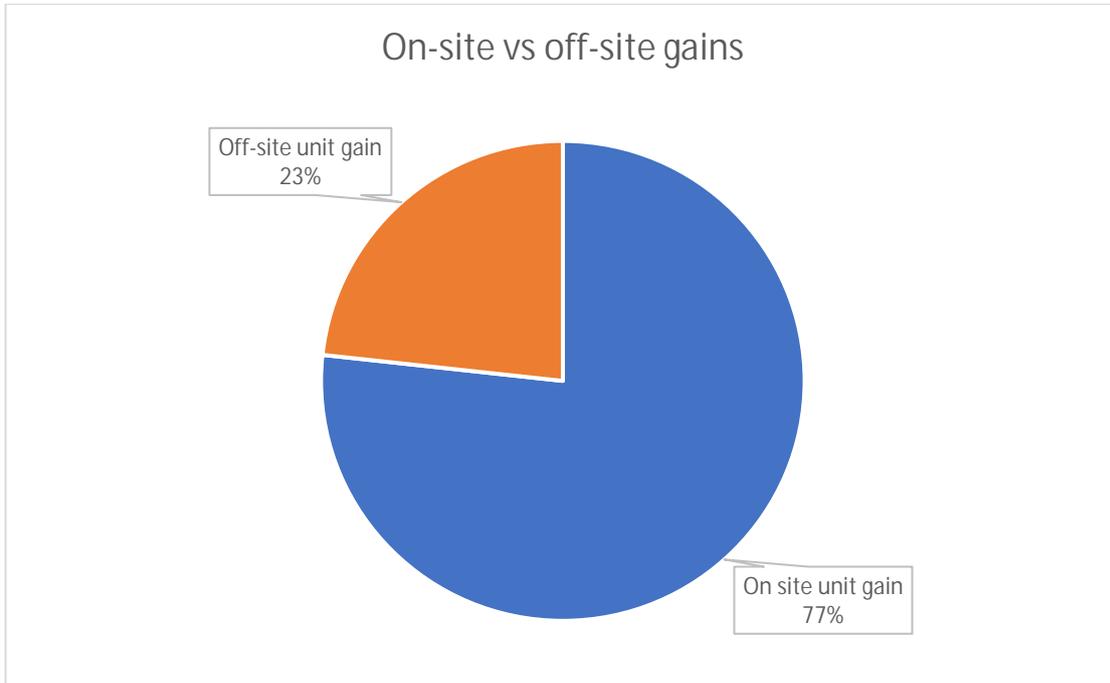


Table 1: Actions to conserve and enhance biodiversity 2026-2030

Theme	Action	Service Area
<b>Policies and Processes</b>	<b>Ensure</b> a commitment continues in future Corporate Plans to improving local biodiversity by restoring and enhancing habitats and strengthening green networks across the district.	Corporate
	<b>Embed</b> the identified habitat creation, enhancement and connectivity opportunities from the adopted LNRS into local planning policy, ensuring these are reflected in site allocations and policies.	Planning Policy
	<b>Include</b> climate change adaptation measures that deliver biodiversity co-benefits into the next review of the Climate Change Strategy.	Climate Change Team
<b>Managing council land and assets</b>	<b>Consider</b> the benefits and assess the feasibility of introducing conservation grazing to additional council-owned sites.	Countryside Service
	<b>Monitor</b> the outcomes of habitat interventions across sites, with a particular focus on invertebrate responses at Hednesford Hills.	Countryside Service
	<b>Complete</b> full habitat surveys of all sites managed by the Countryside Service.	Countryside Service
	<b>Strengthen</b> species recording on council-owned sites by submitting records to iRecord and taking part in national species-recording schemes at key locations.	Countryside Service
	<b>Produce</b> up-to-date management plans for all council-owned SSSIs, LNRs and Sites of Biological Importance.	Countryside Service
	<b>Enter</b> into new stewardship agreements for Hednesford Hills SSSI, Hawks Green & Mill Green LNR and Fair Lady Coppice before they expire in 2028 (subject to Natural England invitation).	Countryside Service
	<b>Explore</b> opportunities to enter relevant Countryside Stewardship schemes for other council-owned sites.	Countryside Service

Theme	Action	Service Area
<b>Managing council land and assets</b>	<b>Assess</b> the potential for additional council-owned sites to be designated as Local Nature Reserves and progress this where it would deliver ecological and/or community benefits and is supported politically.	Countryside Service, Parks and Open Spaces
	<b>Ensure</b> that up-to-date biodiversity actions and priorities are incorporated into the Green Flag Management Plan for Castle Ring.	Countryside Service
	<b>Facilitate</b> and participate in research projects to improve understanding of the habitats and species found on council-owned sites and to support evidence-led management.	Countryside Service
	<b>Complete</b> full habitat surveys of Ravenhill Park, Green Flag sites and selected larger areas of Public Open Space to identify opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.	Parks and Open Spaces
	<b>Continue</b> to identify suitable locations for specimen tree planting within areas of Public Open Space and implement planting where opportunities are identified	Parks and Open Spaces
	<b>Assess</b> further of areas of Pubic Open Space for their suitability to be managed by a summer meadow cut and collect and implement where appropriate.	Parks and Open Spaces, Grounds Maintenance
	<b>Develop</b> a new wildlife area in Cannock Park, adjacent to the tennis courts.	Parks
	<b>Remove</b> scrub to open up areas of remnant acid grassland and selectively thin planted tree belts in Hednesford Park to promote good woodland structure, retaining standing dead wood where appropriate.	Parks
	<b>Explore</b> opportunities to integrate biodiversity-enhancing practices into the management of allotment sites across the district.	Parks & Open Spaces
	<b>Enhance</b> habitat diversity and reduce maintenance requirements at Cannock Park Golf Course by infilling two former bunkers and partially infilling a third with wildflower/grass mixes, managing the areas with twice-yearly cuts.	Grounds Maintenance

Theme	Action	Service Area
<b>Managing council land and assets</b>	<b>Transition</b> away from fossil-fuel powered tools and vehicles used by land management personnel by adopting electric alternatives where suitable, cost-effective options are available within allocated budgets.	Countryside Service, Parks & Open Spaces, Grounds Maintenance
	<b>Incorporate</b> features for biodiversity enhancement into the external envelope contract specification for council-owned housing stock, for example swift and bat nesting features, wildlife-friendly fencing etc	Housing Services
	<b>Review</b> the current voided properties policy to include features for biodiversity eg tree (fruit) planting in gardens, wildlife-friendly fencing etc.	Housing Services
	<b>Include</b> biodiversity-enhancing features within the Housing Business Plan so they can potentially be integrated into future housing development and improvement programmes.	Housing Services
	<b>Seek</b> innovative biodiversity solutions from contractors as part of the tendering process to encourage ecological enhancements within contracted works	Housing Services
<b>People and Communities</b>	<b>Expand</b> the Guardians of Cannock Chase programme to include children and families outside of Scout or Guide groups, subject to securing appropriate funding.	Parks
	<b>Provide</b> at least 3 guided bat walks for the public on selected council-managed nature reserves each year.	Countryside Service
	<b>Provide</b> a selection of wildlife themed guided walks and events for the public on council-managed nature reserves each year.	Countryside Service
	<b>Install</b> new and updated interpretation boards on council-owned nature reserves, where appropriate, to improve public understanding of the ecological value and management of each site.	Countryside Service

Theme	Action	Service Area
<b>People and communities</b>	<b>Expand</b> bee walks into council nature reserves, as well as parks and cemeteries.	Countryside Service
	<b>Deliver</b> a series of workshops for Bumblebee-friendly schools to help them begin their pollinator-supporting activities by introducing pupils and teachers to local pollinator species, habitat-improvement techniques and simple actions that create immediate impact.	Climate Change Team, Countryside Service, Parks
	<b>Support</b> the continuation and further roll-out of the climate change education and awareness programme, subject to securing external funding	Climate Change Team
<b>Integration and co-ordination with partners</b>	<b>Continue</b> to work collaboratively with Cannock Chase National Landscape to develop and deliver measures that drive forward nature recovery and contribute to the Government's target of protecting 30% of our land for nature by 2030 (30by30).	Corporate
	<b>Respond</b> to consultations on the draft Staffordshire LNRS in a timely manner, to ensure the approved strategy identifies appropriate priorities and long-term goals for nature recovery in the district	Corporate
	<b>Contribute</b> to the delivery of the priorities for habitat creation, enhancement, and species recovery identified in the LNRS, working as an active member of the Staffordshire Nature Recovery Partnership.	Corporate
	<b>Continue</b> to be an active member of, and contribute to, ARG UK's Cannock Chase adder conservation project to help safeguard and expand adder populations in the district.	Countryside Services
	<b>Engage</b> with the Trent Re-naturalising and enhancing waterways partnership scheme (Trent ReNEW) to support works that improve the ecological condition of the Saredon brook catchment through the district.	Countryside Service / Parks and Open

## Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 3 2025/26

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	5 March 2026
<b>Report of:</b>	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Resources and Transformation

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### 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 quarter 3 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
  - The collection of Business Rates during quarter 3 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
  - The recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit during quarter 3 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
- 1.2 To seek approval to the write off of the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX 1**.

### 2 Reason(s) 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), 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 APPENDICES** 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 2025/2026 year amounts to £70.1M of which some **81.6%** was collected by the 31 December.
- 4.2 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £40.4M of which some **80.8%** was collected by the end of December.

## 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 11% of the council tax collected.

6.1.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounts to £70.1M and we have collected 81.6% to 31 December. Last year's collection figure was 81.6% for the same period.

6.1.2 Whilst trying to maintain this rate in the coming year, the team will also increase its efforts to recover older years' arrears owed to the Council.

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.

## 6.2 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 £40.4M of which some **80.8%** was collected by the 31 December. This compares to 80.1% collected in the same period last year.

6.2.3 Repeating last year's performance in the coming year will be challenging as many retail, hospitality and leisure establishments are facing increased bills as the government relief to these premises has reduced from 75% last year to 40% this year. The team are also increasing our efforts to recover older debts, which may impact on some businesses' ability to pay their current charges.

6.2.4 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.

6.2.5 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.

6.2.6 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.

6.2.7 2 Irrecoverable business rates debt of £158,876.23 are listed in the confidential appendix 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 £230K being collected in the financial year. This income is received into the General Fund, in addition to the Government subsidy and is not shared with preceptors.

## **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

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**Report Track:** Cabinet: 05/03/26

**Key Decision:** No