Staffordshire County Council

County Buildings, Stafford
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Please ask for Mike Bradbury
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Cabinet

Wednesday 20 October 2021
10:00
Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

NB. The meeting will be webcast live which can be viewed here -
https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
12 October 2021

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**

2. **Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16**

3. **Decision notice of the meeting held on 15 September 2021**   (Pages 1 - 10)

4. **Leader's Update**

   Oral report of the Leader of the Council

5. **Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 6 October 2021**   (Pages 11 - 14)

6. **Update from COVID-19 Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board**   (Pages 15 - 16)

7. **Staffordshire Means Back to Business - Oral Update**

   Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

8. **Adult Learning Disability 2022 Community Offer: Update on Learning Disability Residential Services Directly Provided by Staffordshire County Council**   (Pages 17 - 34)

   Cabinet Member for Health and Care

9. **Climate Change Annual Report and Climate Change Action Plan 2**   (Pages 35 - 68)

   Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

19. **Exclusion of the Public**

   The Chairman to move:-

   "That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of Local Government Act 1972 indicated below".

   PART TWO
   (All reports in this section are exempt)

   (Exemption paragraph 3)

Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

21. **Highways Contract Award - Pets at Home, Redhill, Stafford** (Pages 471 - 486)

(Exemption paragraph 3)

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">**Membership**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Alan White (Chairman)</td><td>Johnny McMahon</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mark Deaville</td><td>Victoria Wilson</td></tr>
<tr><td>Mark Sutton</td><td>Julia Jessel</td></tr>
<tr><td>Philip White</td><td>David Williams</td></tr>
<tr><td>Jonathan Price</td><td>Ian Parry</td></tr>
<tr><td>Charlotte Atkins</td><td>Simon Tagg</td></tr>
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Note for Members of the Press and Public

Filming of Meetings

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Recording by Press and Public

Recording (including by the use of social media) by the Press and Public is permitted from the public seating area provided it does not, in the opinion of the chairman, disrupt the meeting.

DECISION NOTICE

Cabinet meeting - 15 September 2021

Present: Mark Deaville, Julia Jessel, Jonathan Price, Mark Sutton, Simon Tagg Philip White and Alan White.

Cabinet Support Member in Attendance - Johnny McMahon

Also in attendance - Charlotte Atkins, and Philip Atkins, OBE (Local Member)

Apologies for absence: Ian Parry, David Williams and Victoria Wilson.

PART ONE

30. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

The following Member declared an interest in accordance with Standing Order 16.5:-

Member	Minute Nos.	Interest	Reason
Mark Deaville	39	Personal	Director of Nexxus

31. Decision notice of the meeting held on 21 July 2021

Decision – That the notes of the meeting held on 21 July 2021 be approved.

32. Leader's Update

Decision – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including the incredible achievement by Cheddleton's Lee Pearson in winning three more gold medals at the Tokyo Paralympics last month who, alongside Olympians Adam Peaty and Frazier Clarke, help to inspire the next generation of Staffordshire athletes; the Prime Minister's ambitious plans to reform and fund health and social care through the health care levy which will provide additional funding for the NHS, but increase costs for councils, as well as residents, as national insurance contributions rise; the Council's campaign to encourage more people to apply for care sector jobs; covid rates remaining high across the county; and the launch of the next phase of the Council's #TalkSuicide campaign, to tie in with World Suicide Prevention Day, be noted.

33. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 1 September 2021

Decision – That the minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 1 September 2021 be received.

34. Update from Covid Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board

Reasons for the Decision – To consider an update from the COVID-19 Member led Local Outbreak Control Board including the number of new cases of Covid nationally and in Staffordshire rose during August 2021 and was continuing at high levels; vaccination was limiting the number of hospitalisations and deaths from Covid, however, the NHS and social care were experiencing considerable pressure from Covid and other conditions; people should exercise personal responsibility and continue to take sensible precautions to prevent the spread of infection (maintaining good hygiene, keeping a respectful distance, and wearing face coverings in crowded indoor places, as well as testing twice weekly); the Covid vaccination programme continued to make progress with more than 1.3 million doses having been administered, and more than 80% of adults in Staffordshire having now received two doses; the current focus was on vaccinating younger adults and 12-17 year olds; and the Government was expected to announce a booster campaign for older adults as well as vaccination of 12-15 year olds.

Decision – That the report be received.

35. Staffordshire Means Back to Business - Oral Update

Decision – That the oral report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills giving an update on "Staffordshire Means Back to Business" activity including the following matters be noted:

- Staffordshire's recovery continues apace. Staffordshire saw a significant increase in Universal Credit Claimants early in the Covid crisis but recent signs of recovery with claimants reducing by nearly a fifth (17%) or 4,350 claimants between February and July and our rate of 3.9% is lower than the 6.5% regionally and 5.5% nationally.

- Although job vacancies in Staffordshire were heavily hit early in the crisis, overall levels have recovered and are now above pre-COVID levels.

- Our Ignite Programme, designed to support young people looking to start their own businesses, has enabled us to reach a significant number of students and raise awareness of both entrepreneurship and the Ignite programme through the delivery of the "Encouraging Enterprise" lesson plan. This would not have been possible without the support of the colleges who rolled it out effectively through their staff. As reported previously 7,000 students have received an Ignite lesson which must be unprecedented. We have now approved grants to support 171 companies with free training enabling them to work in a post Covid competitive environment. We are supporting 147 new apprentices which would not have been available without this initiative.

- We are seeing unprecedented levels of activity to revitalise our town centres following successful government awards through Town Deals and Future High Streets funds including proposals for the regeneration of Stafford Town Centre.

36. Call-Off Contract for the Supply of ICT Equipment and Services

	"As a county council we are committed to getting the best services delivered at the best value for Staffordshire taxpayers.
	The procurement of a contract will give us both flexibility and rigour for the ICT Hardware and Software when needed."
	Mark Deaville, Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters

Reasons for the Decision – To consider granting approval to proceed with the award of a Call-Off Contract for the Supply of ICT Hardware and Software Services from the ICT VAR Framework Agreement and to secure approval for the Director of Corporate Services to be given delegated authority to approve the award of the Contract for a period of 3 years starting 20 September 2021 to 19 September 2024 with the option to extend by 2 x 12- month periods.

Decision − (a) That Staffordshire County Council (the "Council") concludes its regulated procurement in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (the "Regulations") for the Contract.

(b) That, following the procurement process, the successful supplier be awarded the Contract for the period 20 September 2021 to 19 September 2024 and that, dependent on the quality of their delivery, the 12-month service extensions be implemented to a final contract end date of 19 September 2026.

(c) That the Director of Corporate Services be given delegated authority to:

  i. Approve the initial award of the successful supplier to The Contract and authorise the Council entering into the Contract with the successful supplier;
  ii. Approve all subsequent purchases under The Contract and authorise the Council to make further purchases under The Contract; and (if applicable) approve the 2-year extension to The Contract in its 3rd year.
  iii. (If applicable) approve the 2-year extension to The Contract in its 3rd year.

37. Developing Family Hubs in Staffordshire

	"In recent years this County Council has devoted a great deal of effort to providing help and support for families how and where they wanted it, rather than imposing a universal approach.
	Now, working together with other organisations, this next development will offer a more streamlined approach for families seeking a little help and advice.
	It will provide them with the support they need for children

	to have more opportunity in life, helped by their friends, families and communities". Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Council's vision for the development of Family Hubs in Staffordshire.

Decision – (a) That the strategic vision for the development of Family Hubs across Staffordshire be endorsed and that a period of public consultation and engagement in respect of the redesignation of Children's Centres as Family Hubs, be approved.

(b) That, subject to public consultation, the design and subsequent phased implementation of Family Hubs across Staffordshire as an integrated model of working, whilst acknowledging the future commissioning intentions in relation to the Family Support and Outreach Service and the Early Years Coordination Service (Children's Centres), be endorsed.

(c) That the procurement of a Family Support and Outreach Service be approved and that authority for decisions, including acting on behalf of Staffordshire County Council (the County Council) to enter into the required contractual arrangements, be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

(d) That authority to make decisions in relation to the development of Family Hubs in Staffordshire, including future decisions in relation to the Early Years Coordination Service, be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities.

38. High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Funding

	"We want all children with special educational needs and disabilities to be able to reach their potential by receiving the right support at the right time in their own communities, at their local school or place of education. This funding allows us to support bids which will enable pupils to be integrated and educated more inclusively closer to home". Jonatan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

Reasons for the Decision – To consider proposals for the use of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) funding.

Decision – That the proposals to use the High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) funding, as outlined below, be supported:

(i) To develop Resource Bases at Mainstream Schools for children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) or SEN Support with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs and/or Autistic Spectrum Condition.

(ii) A partnership approach with co-location of specialist provision on mainstream sites.

(iii) Increasing capacity in specialist provision to reduce the need to access placements at independent schools/out of county provision.

39.   Strategic Review of the Care Home Market in Staffordshire 2021

"Offering good-quality, affordable care that meets people's assessed needs is very important to us. We need the care home sector to be sustainable so that people can access good quality affordable care when they need it.

The past 18 months have been a very challenging time for care homes, who have played a crucial role in keeping people safe throughout the pandemic. It is now important that we look ahead and plan for services that are fit for the future."

Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care.

Reasons for the Decision – To consider proposed revised commissioning and contracting arrangements to ensure access to good quality and affordable care home placements when they are needed.

Decision – (a) That the role that care homes have played during Covid-19, and the impact of the pandemic on the sector, be recognised.

(b) That the Council's overall strategic objectives and approach to commissioning care homes be noted and endorsed.

(c) That, owning to the results of the structural and feasibility studies, it be agreed to not progress refurbishment of the Hillfield site, Burton-on-Trent to provide additional nursing home capacity.

(d) That the implementation of guide prices for care home placements be approved.

(e) That the extension and variation of the current dynamic purchasing system contract for care homes for a further period from 1 April 2022 until no later than 31 March 2023, be approved.

(f) That the re-procurement of a new dynamic purchasing system for care homes with a revised service specification, be approved and that authority be delegated to the Director of Health and Care to award new contracts through the new dynamic purchasing system, effective from April 2023.

(g) That a phased increase in the number of block booked care home beds in accordance with demand, be approved and that authority be delegated to the Director of Health and Care to award block booked bed contracts.

(h) That a review of the approach to contracting for complex residential and nursing home placements be completed and that authority be delegated to the Director of Health and Care to consider the options and implement a preferred option in consultation with the corporate Senior Leadership Team and the Cabinet Member for Health and Care.

(i) That the opportunities to use technology and innovation to support care homes to meet the challenges identified in the report be noted.

40.   Treasury Management Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

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<td>"We always look to achieve the best value for money for our tax payers and we do this by running an efficient county council.

Coping with the Covid-19 pandemic continues to put additional pressures on resources, but we continue to manage our finances prudently while doing and spending what is required. By using cash reserves rather than borrowing more, we have been able to achieve substantial savings in what still remain challenging times.

As well as being prudent, our low risk investment strategy which focuses on lending to low risk institutions, means we have been well placed to deal with challenges arising from the UK leaving the European Union and the ongoing pandemic.

We continue to provide advice and support along with access to funding for local businesses, as we work to get our economy back on track.

Like many other councils we continue to face financial pressures and uncertainty over long term funding of some services. We will continue to spend and invest where necessary, focusing our efforts and resources on where they are most needed."

Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</td>
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Reasons for the Decision – To inform the Cabinet of the Council's investment and borrowing activity during 2020/21 including both borrowing and investment decisions taken throughout the year in the light of the interest rates and economic conditions prevailing at the time.

Decision – (a) That the treasury management activities for the year ended 31 March 2021, including the Prudential Indicators outturn detailed in Appendix 4 to the report, be noted.

(b) That the use of the Minimum Revenue Provision at 31 March 2021, as set out in paragraphs 31 and 32 of the report, be approved.

(c) That it be noted that the current Annual Investment Strategy is considered prudent and sufficiently robust to meet any market challenges created by the UK's decision to leave the European Union and pressures caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and that Officers will continue to monitor the position.

41.   Decisions taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers

Decision – That the following decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated powers be noted:

Cabinet Member	Decision
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)	In approving, in accordance with Government requirements, a variation to the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2021/2022 and 2022/23 to ensure that children previously in state care and adopted from outside England and Wales are given equal top priority in oversubscription criteria alongside children currently in care and previously in care from within England and Wales.
Cabinet Member for Health and Care	In approving proposals to relocate and merge Boney Hay and Tamworth Specialist Day Opportunities to Lichfield.

42.   Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 20 October 2021 to 16 February 2022, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

Subject Matter	Contact
Impact of COVID-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Progress - Update October 2021 and Way Forward	Name: Janene Cox OBE Tel: (01785 278368
Staffordshire Bus Strategy - Bus Service Improvement Plan	Name: Clive Tompson Tel: (01785) 276522
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2 2021/22	Name: Kerry Dove/ Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
Supplementary Capital Programme for Schools 2021/2022	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Climate Change Annual Report and Climate Change Action Plan 2	Name: Clive Tompson Tel: (01785) 276522
Adult Learning Disability 2022 Community Offer: Update on Learning Disability Residential Services	Name: Kelly Gray Tel: 07815 999002

Directly Provided by Staffordshire County Council	
Nexxus Trading Services Limited - Annual Report 2020/2021	Name: Dr Richard Harling MBE Tel: (01785) 278700
Formal Report of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (Cabinet Member for Education	Name: Tim Moss Tel: (01785) 277963
Branston Locks Primary - Proposed 2FE and Associated S106 Contributions (Wave School)	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Dry Mixed Recycling Treatment - April 2022	Name: Clive Tompson Tel: (01785) 276522
Treasury Management Half Yearly Report 2021/22	Name: Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
Integrated Service Model for In-House Day Opportunities and Respite	Name: Kelly Gray Tel: 07815 999002
The Future of Replacement Care Services (Learning Disabilities)	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
IA2609 Framework for Responsive Property Maintenance and Day Works	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3 2021/22	Name: Kerry Dove/ Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354

43. Exclusion of the Public

Decision – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

PART TWO

44. Proposed 1FE Expansion at Oldfields Hall Middle School, Uttoxeter
(Exclusion paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To consider proposals for the expansion of capacity at Oldfields Hall Middle School to provide additional middle school places to mitigate the impact on education of new residential developments in Uttoxeter Town.

Decision – That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

45. Transforming Stafford Town Centre - A Programme of Key Developments
(Exemption paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To update the Cabinet on key town centre regeneration projects in Stafford Town Centre.

Decision – That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

Alan White
Leader of the Council

Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee Meeting held on 6 October 2021

Present: Alan White (Chairman)

Mark Deaville   Philip White (Vice-Chairman)
Ian Parry

Apologies: Jonathan Price

Also in attendance: David Smith

31. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

32. Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 September 2021

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

33. Proposed Leases to Academies

Proposals were submitted to lease the sites of two Academies to their Trusts for a 125 year period at a peppercorn rental in line with the expectations of the Department for Education for those schools converting to Academy status.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the grant of 125 year leases, at a peppercorn rental, to the two Academies detailed in the schedule to the report.

34. Stonnall Youth and Community Centre/ Stonall Community Centre/ The Hut - Proposed Early Surrender of Lease

Details were submitted for the proposed early Surrender of the Lease of Stonnall Youth and Community Centre, Stonnall Community Centre/ The Hut to Shenstone Parish Council.

The Committee were advised that the Parish Council have reviewed their community property needs and determined that they do not wish to take the freehold of the Property. It was reported that the Parish Council favour the current management committee becoming a formal community body and taking over the responsibility of the community centre.

The Committee were requested to consider the proposal to provide a tenancy at will to a lead member of the management committee for a maximum period of 6 months whilst the group created a corporate body.

RESOLVED – That (a) the lease to Shenstone Parish Council be terminated early, subject to the county council receiving £18,324 in lieu of the demolition of the buildings on the site and the Parish Council meet the County Council's legal costs in arranging the early termination.

(b) the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets be delegated approval to enter into a Tenancy at Will for the temporary occupation and management of the property for a maximum of 6 months.

(c) future long term arrangements be reported to committee in due course.

35. Tri Veterans Support Centre, Hassell St, Newcastle ST5 1AR - Proposed renewal of Tenancy at Will

Details were submitted for the proposed renewal of Tenancy at Will to the Tri-Veterans Support Centre.

It was reported that negotiations for a new lease or a purchase of the building were ongoing and the Veterans have recently made an application for a grant to purchase the property under the Community Ownership Fund and are currently awaiting the results.

RESOLVED – That approval be given for the Tenancy at Will to the Tri-Veterans Support Centre to be renewed whilst the results of a grant application are known and to allow time for a subsequent sale of letting be agreed and finalised.

36. Community Hub, Northfield Village, Stone Road - Proposed Grant of Lease

Details were submitted for the proposed grant of a Lease of the Community Hub on the Stone Road site for 20 years at a peppercorn rent from 2021 to the Wrekin Housing Group Limited.

RESOLVED – That approval be given for the lease of Community Hub, Northfield Village to be granted to the Wrekin housing Group Limited; the final details of the lease to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets.

37. Burntwood Youth Centre and Community Office - Cherry Close, Burntwood WS7 4RJ - Proposed Renewal of Lease

Details were submitted for the proposed renewal of lease of Burntwood Youth Centre and Community Office to Liberty Jamboree on similar terms to the existing lease.

RESOLVED – That approval be given for the Lease of Burntwood Youth Centre and Community Office to Liberty Jamboree to be renewed on similar terms to the existing lease; any actions required to implement the decision be delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets.

38. Land off Falkland Road, Lichfield - Proposed Transfer

Details were submitted on the proposed Transfer of Land off Falkland Road, Lichfield to Lichfield and Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust.

It was reported that Cadent need to move a gas main incorrectly located in part of the land, so it is intended for the transfer to be completed in two phases. Zone B as soon as reasonably practical and Zone C following the completion of the works.

RESOLVED – That approval be given for the land off Falkland Road, Lichfield, to be transferred to Lichfield and Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust in two phases, for nil consideration, to facilitate the continued restoration of the canal in the Lichfield area.

39.   Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

40.   Community Managed Library - Rising Brook - Proposed Transfer of Lease

Details were submitted for the proposed Lease of Rising Brook Library.

RESOLVED – That approval be given for the Lease of Rising Brook Library on the terms indicated in the report; delegated authority be granted to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities.

Chairman

Staffordshire
County Council

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Update from Covid Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board

Introduction

1. The number of new cases of Covid in Staffordshire remains high, about 50% above the England average. Cases are particularly high among school age children. Nearly half of all new cases are in 5-18 year olds and the difference between the Staffordshire and England case rates is due to relatively higher numbers of cases in this age group.

2. Schools have been experiencing large outbreaks which have been substantially disrupting education as large numbers of pupils and teachers have been off sick. We are providing schools with advice about measures they could implement at their discretion to prevent and manage outbreaks and reduce the impact on education and the wider economy.

3. Vaccination is limiting the number of hospitalisations and deaths from Covid. However, the NHS and social care are experiencing considerable pressure from Covid and other conditions.

4. People should exercise personal responsibility and continue to take sensible precautions to prevent the spread of infection. This means maintaining good hygiene, keeping a respectful distance, and wearing face coverings in crowded indoor places, as well as testing twice weekly.

Covid vaccination

5. Progress with Covid vaccination has slowed. More than 1.3 million doses have now been administered. In adults over 50 more than 90% have received two doses and a booster vaccination programme has now commenced. In younger adults uptake of two doses is lower. A programme of vaccination of 12-15 year olds in schools has started, and vaccination of 16 and 17 year olds is ongoing.

Local Outbreak Management Plan

6. The Council will maintain Covid defences for at least the remainder of 2021/22. This includes testing and contact tracing, as well as managing outbreaks and supporting the most vulnerable. These arrangements are

set out in our Covid Local Outbreak Management Plan. This will be updated in line with emerging Government policy.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Staffordshire Covid Local Outbreak Management Plan

Contact Details

Report Author: Dr Richard Harling
Job Title: Director for Health and Care
Telephone No.: 01785 278700
E-Mail Address: richard.harling@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire
County Council

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Adult Learning Disability 2022 Community Offer: Update on Learning Disability Residential Services Directly Provided by Staffordshire County Council

Cllr Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care said,

"We want to ensure that people who need care can access it, and that our services are fit for the future. By refurbishing Hawthorn House, we will make sure that adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities can be cared for in an environment that best suits their needs, and in line with the Care Quality Commission's Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture ethos.

"These proposals have been welcomed by parents and carers of the current residents, and will allow them to continue to live together, whilst giving them the care their require."

Report Summary:

In October 2019, Cabinet approved the continued direct provision of residential care for adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities in Lichfield, providing 15 beds for countywide use on the Scotch Orchard site. Unfortunately, the Care Quality Commission indicated that a new residential home was unlikely to be registered as it did not align with their Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture guidance.

The rationale for continued direct provision and redevelopment of residential care remains extant: an ongoing need for services is anticipated and the existing Hawthorn House facility is in a poor state of repair - it does not offer the best living environment for residents or value for money for taxpayers.

Alternative options for redevelopment of residential care have been explored and the recommended option is to extend and refurbish the Hawthorn House lower building to accommodate up to 15 residents.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Approve extension and refurbishment of Hawthorn House lower building to accommodate up to 15 residents, as detailed in this report.

b. Approve disposal of the Hawthorn House upper building once the new lower building development is complete.

c. Delegates authority to the Director for Health and Care to procure and award contracts for the construction works.

![Staffordshire County Council logo]

| **Local Members Interest** |
| Janet Eagland – Lichfield Rural North |

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Adult Learning Disability 2022 Community Offer: Update on Learning Disability Residential Services Directly Provided by Staffordshire County Council

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Approve extension and refurbishment of Hawthorn House lower building to accommodate up to 15 residents, as detailed in this report.

b. Approve disposal of the Hawthorn House upper building once the new lower building development is complete.

c. Delegates authority to the Director for Health and Care to procure and award contracts for the construction works.

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

1. In October 2019, Cabinet approved the continued direct provision of residential care for adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities in Lichfield, providing 15 beds for countywide use on the Scotch Orchard site.

2. Unfortunately, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) indicated that a new residential home was unlikely to be registered as it did not align with their Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture guidance, with an emphasis on 'small and ordinary housing' for people with a learning disability.

3. The CQC's registration process requires providers to construct any new building before they can apply for registration as a new service. Proceeding with the Cabinet decision therefore presented a very high risk that the Council might invest significant sums developing the Scotch Orchard site only for the CQC to refuse to register the new residential home.

4. The rationale for continued direct provision and redevelopment of residential care remains extant. The assumptions underpinning the recommendation for 15 beds for adults profound and multiple learning disabilities are still valid: the number of adults with a learning disability requiring residential care is likely to remain relatively constant over the next 10-20 years, and it is likely that complexity of need will increase as people live longer with more associated health conditions

5. The existing Hawthorn House facility is in a poor state of repair - it does not offer the best living environment for residents or value for money for taxpayers. Investing in a new development will support the modernisation of the service and will enable greater use of technology to empower independence for residents and modern working practices for staff.

Options appraisal and recommendation

6. A range of alternative options for redevelopment of residential care have been explored with the financial benefits analysed using a Net Present Value (NPV) methodology, as set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Hawthorn House Options Appraisal

Options	1A Extend and refurbish lower building (design A)	1B Extend and refurbish lower building (design B)	2 Two new 6 bed homes at Hawthorn and Scotch Orchard	3 No capital investment
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Cost of Change	0.742	0.742	0.557	0.371
Capital Investment	4.857	5.872	7.560	-
Capital Receipts	0.969	0.969	1.081	0.792
NPV (30 years)	10.173	9.339	0.568	5.566
Total MTFS revenue saving over 5 years	1.120	0.987	-0.379	0.234

7. The recommended option 1B to extend and refurbish the Hawthorn House lower building to accommodate up to 15 residents has an NPV of £9.4m over 30 years. This was preferred over alternative design option 1A as it would have a lower impact on residents during construction works.

8. Extension and refurbishment of Hawthorn House would not trigger a new registration with the CQC, and the Council's existing registration can be used and amended. The extended and refurbished home would be able accommodate all current residents. In the future it would be used to meet the needs of adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities where the independent market is unable to offer a quality service at an affordable price. Parents and carers of the current residents have welcomed the recommended options.

Design and works

9. The recommended site and building plan are shown in Appendix 1. The extended and refurbished building would be on two wings. Construction would be in three phases with the intention of minimising disruption to residents:

   a. In phase one a first new wing would be built on the vacant plot of adjacent land. This will provide 10 new bedrooms with ensuite, one separate specialist bathing facility and small communal space. When phase one is complete residents currently living in the lower building would move into the new bedrooms in the first wing.

   b. In phase two the vacant lower building would be isolated, demolished and rebuilt as a new second wing, providing five bedrooms with ensuite, separate specialist bathing facility and communal space for dining and socialising.

   c. In phase three the existing communal spaces and staff facilities located in between two new wings would be refurbished. When phase three is complete, residents currently living in the upper building will move into the new bedrooms in the second wing.

10. The proposed timeframe for design work to be completed and building work commissioned is during the remainder of 2021 and through 2022, with construction to start in spring / summer 2023 and to complete towards the end of 2024. Once construction is complete the site will be separated, and the upper building sold for a capital receipt.

Legal Implications

11. Planning permission would be required for the proposed building and use of site. The site has development constraints upon it which would be addressed through the Town and Country Planning process. Further site investigations and reports will be necessary as follows:

   a. Refurbishment/demolition survey for asbestos

b. Tree survey in accordance with BS 5837:2012
c. Drainage survey
d. Phase 2 ground investigation, including contamination testing
e. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
f. Pre-application planning advice.

12. Procurement of construction works will follow the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's own internal procurement regulations. The Council will procure construction works through one of four framework agreements:

a. Constructing West Midlands
b. Consortium Procurement
c. Fusion 21
d. Crown Commercial Service

Resource and Value for Money Implications

13. The recommended option has a strongly positive NPV of £9.8m over 30 years. Sensitivity analysis suggests that this could be between £5.1m and £14.3m over this period, and that it remains positive over shorter time periods at £5.4 over 20 years, £2.9m over 15 years and £0.1m over 10 years.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Hawthorn House recommended site and building plan

CIA Checklist and Executive Summary
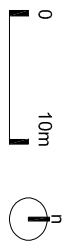
Contact Details

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Hawthorn House

Upper House

Railway line

SP

10

16

18

20

24

Site Entrance

HAWTHORN CLOSE

New Build

New Build (GF+FF)

Existing building remodelled

secured gardens

Proposed Car park

demolish existing staff house for new extension

Main E

5
6
7
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13

1
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OPTION 2 - KEY
(Refurbishment & Extension)

New extension
GF+FF - 1177sqm

existing building - remodelling
GF - 212sqm (Heavy)

new car park and road (tarmac)
895sqm

paving
2875sqm

New green spaces
984sqm

0   10m

Community Impact Assessment Checklist and Executive Summary

Name of Proposal:

Adult Learning Disability Residential Care in Lichfield – Investing in Hawthorn House

Project Sponsor:

Richard Harling – Director of Health and Care

Project Manager:

Kelly Gray – Care Services Lead

Date Completed:

31/08/21

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Final Checklist

Prior to submitting your Community Impact Assessment (CIA), please ensure that the actions on the checklist below have been completed, to reassure yourself / SLT / Cabinet that the CIA process has been undertaken appropriately.

Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
The project supports the Council's Business Plan, priorities and MTFS.	YES	Provider Services strategic plan 2021 - 2024
It is clear what the decision is or what decision is being requested.	YES	Provider Services strategic plan 2021 - 2024
For decisions going to Cabinet, the CIA findings are reflected in the Cabinet Report and **potential impacts are clearly identified and mitigated for** (where possible).	YES	Included in Cabinet report.
The **aims, objectives and outcomes** of the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.	YES	Provider Services strategic plan 2021 - 2024
The **groups** who will be affected by the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.	YES	Current residents of Hawthorn Close, Lichfield and Hawthorn House. Staff who work at Hawthorn House.
The **communities** that are likely to be more adversely impacted than others have been clearly identified.	YES	Current residents of Hawthorn Close, Lichfield and Hawthorn House.
Engagement / consultation has been undertaken and is representative of the residents most likely to be affected.	YES	Staff and family engagement completed on 19th August 2021, all happy with the proposal and excited about the prospect of a new building.
A range of people with the appropriate knowledge and expertise have contributed to the CIA.	YES	Content of the CIA was considered from the options appraisal process which included Provider Services, commissioning, property, and finance officers.
Appropriate evidence has been provided and used to inform the development and design of the policy, service, or project. This includes data, research, engagement/consultation, case studies and local knowledge.	YES	Gathered and considered through options appraisal process, completed July 2021.

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Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
The CIA **evidences** how the Council has considered its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and how it has considered the impacts of any change on people with protected characteristics.	YES	Evidenced in the CIA and by the building option recommended to reduce the impact on current residents.
The next steps to deliver the project have been identified.	YES	Feasibility estimates and plans provided by Entrust which detail high level plans. Further plans will need to be completed once Cabinet approval to proceed.

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Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is intended to be a collation of the key issues and findings from the CIA and other research undertaken. This should be completed after the CIA and research has been completed. Please structure the summary using the headings on the left that relate to the sections in the CIA template. Where no major impacts have been identified, please state N/A.

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
PSED What are the impacts on residents with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010? Highlight any concerns that have emerged as a result of the equality analysis on any of the protected groups and how these will be mitigated. It is important that Elected Members are fully aware of the equality duties so that they can make an informed decision, and this can be supported with robust evidence.	Adults with learning disabilities and autism who currently reside at Hawthorn House, and their parents/carers	Provides a new, modern, and homely environment Individuals will receive high quality support to meet their assessed and eligible care and support needs, which are both sustainable and demonstrate value for money	Disruption to ten residents while their new home is being constructed	Phased construction schedule to minimise the disruption to residents The Council will ensure adherence to the Care Act regarding assessed eligible care and support needs Continued engagement with all key stakeholders to design the building and understand the impact
	Current and future staff of Hawthorn House	A new building will provide a modern and well-designed work environment for staff Having appropriate facilities and amenities will make components of their role easier and more enjoyable The Council will continue to	Risk of redundancies from a review of staffing ratios once construction is complete	Regular and meaningful engagement and communications about the progress of the project, the outcomes and the impact. Staff (and representative Trade Unions) will be consulted about the potential impact on their employment, and appropriate HR processes and protocols adhered

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		employ a skilled and trained workforce		to.
Health and Care How will the proposal impact on residents' health? How will the proposal impact on demand for or access to social care or health services?	People with a primary need: learning disability and/or autism, and associated needs	Residents will receive appropriate support to meet their eligible care and support needs.		
	Current and future residents of Hawthorn House	The service and staff will be required to promote and enable people to live a healthy lifestyle, through the provision of appropriate care and support, as per their assessed care and support needs.		
		Accommodation will be accessible and adapted to meet the needs of the people using the service – positively impacting people who use services and staff who support them	The development of alternative accommodation will take 12-24 months to come into fruition, meaning continued occupation of buildings deemed not wholly suitable to meet needs	Schedules of planned repairs and maintenance will continue for the duration of occupation in the current accommodation – with reactive repairs and maintenance as required. Services carry out routine Health & safety Inspections / Audits, for the purpose of regulatory requirements

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		The Council will continue to meet assessed eligible care and support needs, through the provision of sustainable services. Ways of working align with The Care Act (inclusive of Choice Policy) and Whole Life Disability Strategy		
		The Council will continue to provide residential care, enabling people to remain living in their chosen local community.		
Economy How will the proposal impact on the economy of Staffordshire or impact on the income of Staffordshire's residents?	Current and future residents of the Lichfield area	The Council has clearly specified its market position in respect to residential care services – thus supporting provider intelligence and planning of services in the future. The Council maintaining a position in the marketplace will promote competition.		

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		Entrust (on behalf of the Council) will undertake a competitive process to appoint for contractor for the required building works		
	Current and future staff of Hawthorn House	Staff will be providing care and support in purpose-built accommodation with access to required aids and equipment, positively impacting on the risk of injuries sustained in the workplace.	The development of alternative accommodation will take 12-24 months to come into fruition, meaning continued occupation of buildings deemed not wholly suitable to meet needs.	Schedules of planned repairs and maintenance will continue for the duration of occupation – with reactive repairs and maintenance as required. Services carry out routine Health & safety Inspections / Audits, for the purpose of regulatory requirements
		The Council will continue to employ a skilled and trained workforce	Risk of redundancies from a review of staffing ratios once construction is complete	Regular and meaningful engagement and communications about the progress of the project, the outcomes and the impact. Staff (and representative Trade Unions) will be consulted about the potential impact on their employment, and appropriate HR processes and protocols adhered to.

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Environment How will the proposal impact on the physical environment of Staffordshire? Does this proposal have any Climate Change implications?	Current Hawthorn House site and buildings	The Council will seek to maximise the use of its assets – including land and accommodation. Subsequently, this will positively impact on the associated running costs The Scotch Orchard site can be released for capital receipt The top half of the Hawthorn House site can be released for capital receipt	The upper portion of the Hawthorn House site is sold for use which is not appropriate and would put the service or residents at risk	Engagement with Property colleagues and stakeholders to ensure the top part of the site is sold for appropriate use, which maintains the safety of the service and residents.
		Potential reduction in energy usage and CO2 emissions through better insulation, heating, and lighting systems and there may be the opportunity for introducing solar panels on roofs to make the building more sustainable		The council invest in sustainable energy and heating solutions in the build process to decrease the carbon footprint of the building.
Localities / Communities How will the proposal impact on	Neighbouring residents of Hawthorn Close, Lichfield		There may be noise generated from the construction	Communication with residents about the construction period.

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Staffordshire's communities?				Reduce impact of construction-related noise by contractors working business hours only.

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Staffordshire County Council

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Climate Change Annual Report and Climate Action Plan Action Plan 2

Cllr Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change said,

"The County Council can be proud of the significant positive steps made last year that are highlighted in the annual report. It has set us in the right direction to achieve our net zero target.

"This is our first report since declaring the climate change emergency it and allows us to share our achievements and our plans for the future.

"We still have a lot more to do, and many challenges to overcome if we are to achieve our target. I am confident the work over the last year has set a strong foundation for our net zero journey."

Report Summary:

Tackling Climate Change and becoming a net zero organisation by 2050 is a key priority for Staffordshire County Council and a "green thread" throughout our Strategic Plan, meaning we think climate change in all we do to limit our impact on the planet.

The report feeds back from the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the their meeting held on the 7 September 2021 where Members commented on the Council's first Climate Change Annual Report (as required by the approved Climate Change Strategic Development Framework). The Annual Report records the significant reduction that has been made in the Council's carbon emissions since declaring a Climate Change Emergency in July 2019.

Finally, the report seeks approval of the Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2) which contains specific actions to be undertaken by the Council prior to 2025 which will assist in our journey to become net carbon zero by 2050. It should be noted that the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at their meeting held on the 7 September 2021, reviewed the draft CCAP 2 and provided valued input to shape the final document.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Note the Council's Climate Change 2021 Annual Report which records the positive progress that has been made on our target to become net carbon zero by 2050.

b. Note the comments of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at paragraphs 13 to 16, when they considered both the 2021 Annual Report and the draft Climate Change Action Plan 2.

c. Approve Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2) which lists our key climate change mitigating actions over the next 4 years.

![Staffordshire County Council logo]

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Climate Change Annual Report and Climate Action Plan Action Plan 2

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Note the Council's Climate Change 2021 Annual Report which records the positive progress that has been made on our target to become net carbon zero by 2050.

b. Note the comments of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at paragraphs 13 to 16, when they considered both the 2021 Annual Report and the draft Climate Change Action Plan 2.

c. Approve Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2) which lists our key climate change mitigating actions over the next 4 years.

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background and Progress

1. The Climate Change Action Plan 1 (CCAP 1) containing 22 specific actions was approved and launched at the end of October 2020 and the Climate Change Strategic Development Framework was approved by Cabinet in February 2021.

2. Strong progress is being made on the 22 specific actions contained in CCAP 1 and it should be noted that some actions have a timeframe of more than one year.

3. A climate change survey of Council staff was carried out in November 2020 and a key theme from the output of the survey was the need to improve general awareness of climate change. A corporate training package has been developed over the last few months and has recently been launched.

4. An internal project group, with officer representatives from all appropriate teams, has been meeting regularly since December 2020 and this group has been used to develop Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2). CCAP 2 is envisaged to be a plan which will be current until 2025, although it will be reviewed yearly to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose.

5. The internal project group has also been used to develop a 'greenprint' of how the Council can achieve its ambition to become net carbon zero by 2050. This work will need to be developed further over the coming months but is clear that carbon sequestration will be key to the Council meeting its legal obligations.

6. Work has also been taking place with the District and Borough Councils to see how climate change efforts across the Staffordshire local authority network can be better co-ordinated for maximum impact. Part of this work has been facilitated by Keele University who have, to date, hosted three workshops. The output from the workshops has been presented to a joint meeting of senior members and officers.

7. The County Council recognises it has a wider leadership role to play in collaborating with public and private partners in supporting the county of Staffordshire become net zero.

Annual Climate Change Report

8. The annual climate change report is attached as **Appendix 1**.

9. The report notes a significant reduction in carbon emissions of c12,700 tCo2e from 2018/19 to 2019/20, a reduction of some 25%. This reduction is predominantly as a result of switching to a green energy electricity tariff in the summer of 2019. It should be noted that this significant reduction in annual emissions is unlikely to be replicated going forward and future reporting is likely to show slower progress due to the nature of the challenge before the authority.

10. The report provides an indication of the carbon emissions by area of operation following an audit of the 2019/20 data. The format is consistent with the refresh of the 2018/19 carbon baseline carried out for Climate Change Strategic Development Framework.

11. The report also provides an overview of achievements around the five core themes contained in the Climate Change Strategic Development Framework which link to the actions in CCAP 1.

12. The report provides details on the Climate Change Member Fund that was launched last year. As set out in the report, 116 grants were awarded and lessons are being learnt so that improvements can be made should it be agreed that the fund is run in subsequent years.

13. The Council's first Annual Climate Change Report was reviewed by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 7 September 2021. The report was welcomed by the Committee and several suggestions were made on how the report could be improved in subsequent years. It is intended that the suggestions made by Committee Members will be considered when the report is reviewed in August 2022.

Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2)

14. The CCAP 2 is a corporate action plan owned and delivered by the whole organisation. The Sustainability Team, based in the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills department have a role to co-ordinate and support the delivery of net zero, but it will only be achieved by the whole organisation. As both the annual review and CCAP 2 demonstrate, tackling Climate Change is everyone's responsibility.

15. The draft CCAP 2 was reviewed by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 7 September 2021. Several observations and comments were made by Committee Members and where appropriate these have been incorporated in the final version of CCAP 2 which is attached as **Appendix 2.** Committee Members, recognised the achievements set out in the 2021 Annual Plan and supported Cabinet's ambition to see this agenda progressed with pace.

16. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members did not suggest any changes or additions to the actions contained in the plan but felt that greater detail should be provided on how success on each of the actions would be measured. It was noted that further detailed information did sit behind the draft plan but that ultimately only one measure mattered and that was the carbon emissions emitted by the Council. It was further noted that the Climate Change Strategic Development Framework sets out that these are to be measured annually and reported publicly. A future Cabinet Paper will set out in more detail the milestones we will measure success against on our journey to net zero by 2050.

17. As mentioned previously CCAP 2 includes actions until 2025 although it is intended that the plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

18. It is intended that progress on specific actions contained in the plan will be reviewed and recorded in subsequent climate change annual reports.

This will ensure that progressed is tracked and Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee have asked that the Climate Change Annual Report is presented on a yearly basis along with any intended changes to specific actions contained in CCAP 2.

Timescale

19. The Council has made a commitment to become net carbon zero by 2050. The developing 'greenprint' shows this to be possible, but it is likely to be a major challenge which will require significant carbon sequestration.

20. The actions contained in CCAP 2 will in some cases take longer than one year to fully action, but it hoped that all will be completed by 2025.

21. It is proposed that the future Climate Change Annual Reports and any changes the draft CCAP 2 will be presented to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

22. It is intended the Climate Change Members Action Fund (round 2) will be launched at the Members Autumn Event held to be held on the 8 November 2021.

Legal Implications

23. The Council has a legal obligation to become net carbon zero by 2050.

24. The measures outlined in this report will assist the Council in reaching governments desired aims set out in May 2019.

Risks Identified

25. The task of achieving net carbon zero for the authority by 2050 is going to be challenging and is likely to require significant carbon offsetting. The road map to achieve net zero will be set out in the 'greenprint' which is currently in production.

26. The aim of achieving net carbon zero for Staffordshire is a much bigger task as the Council emits less than 1% of the c6m tonnes of carbon produced in Staffordshire annually. Action on that will need to be co-ordinated at a national, regional and local level if this is to be achieved.

27. Financial provision has been made in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which spans a period of five years. Future iterations of the MTFS will consider any long term financial support requirements. Individual projects (such as sequestration) that require funding will have individual business cases.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

28. Budget provision has been made in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to support climate change activities.

29. The budget available in 2021/22 is being used to support actions in CCAP 1 and will be used to support CCAP 2 activities once approved.

Summary

30. Good progress has been made on the Climate Change agenda since last summer.

31. The 2021 Annual Report outlines the main achievements made and records a significant reduction in the Council's carbon emissions from 2018/19 to 2019/20.

32. The attached CCAP 2 is a considered list of actions which will assist the Council in reaching its ambition to become net carbon zero by 2050. The plan contains activities which will be relevant until 2025 although it is proposed to review annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Climate Change Annual Report (2021)
Appendix 2 – Climate Change Action Plan 2 (CCAP 2)

Contact Details

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Staffordshire
County Council

Climate Change

Annual Report 2020/21

Doing Our Bit to make
Staffordshire
Sustainable

Climate Change
Annual Report 2020/21

Forward

The consequence of climate change is getting ever more prominent and the scientific evidence is clear there is an urgency to start addressing the issues now before irreversible damage occurs.

Staffordshire County Council has a key role to play in tackling climate change by reducing the emissions from our services, working with others to lower emissions and helping to create a county which is more resilient to climate change.

We take climate change very seriously and since declaring a climate change emergency in July 2019 we have been delivering projects and putting plans in place to identify how we will achieve net zero by 2050.

I am proud of the significant positive steps made last year. They have set us in the right direction to achieve our net zero target. This is our first Annual Report since declaring the Emergency and allows us to share our achievements, the plans we have in place and the ambitions for the future. We may still have many challenges to overcome if we are to achieve our target, although I am confident the work over the last year has set a strong foundation for our net zero journey.

Simon Tagg
Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

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Introduction

This annual report provides details of the performance of Staffordshire County Council (SCC) in the area of carbon management and monitoring. It presents our carbon emissions for 2019/20, sets out our achievements over the past year and also highlights the challenges ahead.

In July 2019 the Council declared a climate change emergency and a target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This replaced the previous commitment to reduce carbon emissions to 80% of the 1990 baseline.

As a first step towards achieving the net zero goal the Council published the first Climate Change Action Plan in November 2020.

The plan identified five key areas for action:

- **organisation carbon reduction**
- **air quality**
- **natural environment**
- **waste**
- **behaviour change**

The Strategic Development Framework released in February 2021 sets out how the authority will work towards achieving the revised carbon emissions target, using the five key areas identified for delivery in the Action Plan.

Staffordshire County Council Emissions

The Council has made a commitment to monitor its carbon emissions each year and is calculated during the following financial year. The emissions presented in this report represent the financial year 2019/20.

Two additional activities of corporate fleet and Amey (Highways) grey fleet were included within scopes for the 2019/20 monitoring. As these activities only produced an additional 107 tCo_2e (fleet 97 tCo_2e and Amey grey fleet 10 tCo_2e) it did not require an adjustment to the 2018/19 baseline.

The Councils total emissions for 2019/20 was 37,967 tCO_2e, a decrease of 12,685 from 50,652 tCO_2e the previous year. This decrease is largely attributed to maintained schools and corporate buildings transferring to a renewable energy tariff in August 2019, as well as street lights and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) converting to a renewable tariff the following October. Although transferring to a renewable tariff has substantially reduced our carbon footprint we continue to investigate and prioritise reducing our energy needs across all our services.

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Figure one compares the emissions by area of operation from 2018/19 to 2019/20. Apart from highways, which had a very small increase all other areas of operation experienced a decline in emissions from the previous year. The data for water supply and treatment for maintained schools and corporate buildings was not available for 2019/20. Water only forms a small part of the total emissions and a constant of 99 tCO_2e from the previous year was applied.

Figure 1 Carbon emissions comparison by area of operation
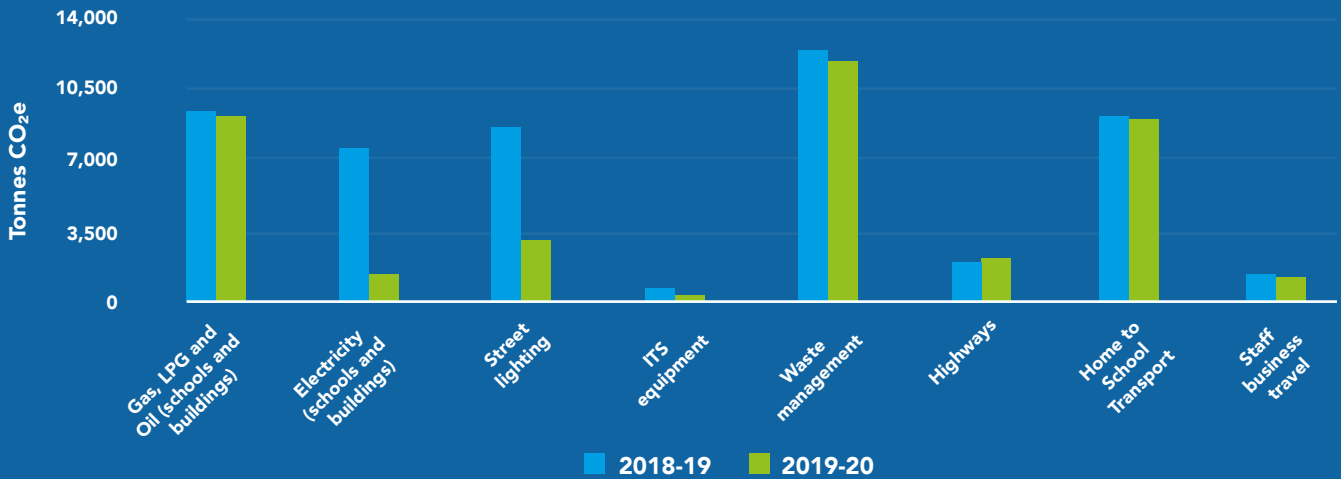
With the shift to a renewable energy supplier, waste management now forms the largest proportion of the Councils carbon footprint, with home to school transport and heating of our schools and corporate buildings collectively making 79% of all the Councils emissions.

Figure 2 carbon emissions by area of operation 2019-20 (tonnes CO_2e)
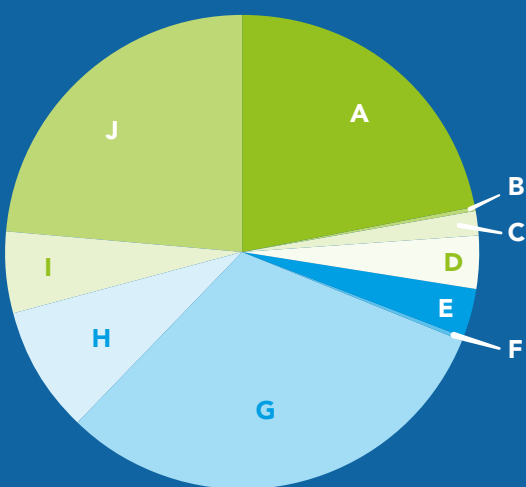
A. Gas consumption - 8425

B. LPG consumption - 35

C. Heating Oil consumption - 673

D. School and Buildings - Electricity consumption - 1293.8

E. Fleet - 97

F. Staff Travel- 1243

G. Water Supply and Treatment - 99

H. Waste Handling - 11775

I. Electricity Street Lighting and ITS - 3312

J. Highways (Amey) - 2095

K. Home to School Transport - 8919

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Achievements

Organisational carbon reduction

Schools and corporate buildings – The Staffordshire County Councils maintained schools and corporate buildings transferred over to a renewable energy tariff in August 2019, which offset 5,175 tonnes of carbon in 2019/20. Almost £1.5 million pounds has been invested in 41 maintained schools on energy reduction projects to improve the heating systems and provide more efficient lighting. Just over £800,000 was invested in corporate buildings, such as children's centres libraries and enterprise centres on heating systems, improved insulation and more efficient lighting. Chasewater Innovation Centre and Cannock Chase Enterprise centre installed biomass boilers to allow a transition to a renewable heating system.

Renewables – The County Council have photovoltaics (solar PV) installations on 10 libraries and 14 County Farms, which put 274,000 kwh back to the grid in 2019/20, the equivalent of saving 70 tCo_2e. Options are being investigated for a large scale solar farm project. Provisional scoping work to consider potential sites and the investment required to develop the project is in progress.

Street Lighting – Staffordshire were successful in receiving Salix funding to upgrade existing street lighting to modern LED equivalents. The LED project will upgrade 47,700 lights work has started and will be delivered over a 4 year period, reducing emissions by 2,650t per annum and saving the council over a million pounds a year.

Natural Environment

Flood Management – Staffordshire has been experiencing increased flooding, especially in the last few years. Last year 281 properties reported internal flooding with an estimated damage and recovery cost in excess of £8 million. Rather than just installing hard-engineering solutions, the Council is also investing in natural flood management designs and approaches. In 2020/21 £140,000 was invested in soft engineering works, such as community earth bunds and community fencing across 8 sites to reduce flood risk. Looking forward, the Flood Risk Team have conducted a Buildings at Risk Analysis and are also commissioning an innovative Community Vulnerability Assessment to better understand the risk of flooding and to help identify a forward plan of schemes.

The Flood Risk Team have also been successful in obtaining national funding for an innovative community resilience scheme across a 6-year programme. This will lead to enhanced community resilience through improved and innovative digital and physical infrastructure working with regional and public sector partners, universities and charity.

Habitat management – Our Regeneration and Highways teams continue to enhance the County's prosperity through schemes including i54 and highways improvements, such as the Western relief road in Stafford.

This year as part of these schemes, thousands of native trees were planted to form woodlands and hedgerows for the enhancement of local landscape and biodiversity habitats, along with enhancing wetlands/ponds. All of which will have a positive effect on reducing our carbon impact.

Waste

Waste campaigns - 2020 saw the launch of the Waste Savvy Facebook page providing helpful information on waste and recycling, which achieved over 100,000 views. This was also supported with the recruitment of 25 'waste savvy' volunteers who throughout the year provided nearly 50 online sessions to community groups and schools on the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling more.

Compost improves the soil structure and can reduce the amount of watering needed, which is really important as we adapt to our changing climate. Discounted compost bins were offered to residents, with 1,500 bins issued over the year. This campaign has been supported by the Waste Savvy volunteer project who provided webinars, including on the do's and don'ts of home composting.

Mixed Recycling Facility – Staffordshire County Council is leading on the scoping for a new mixed recycling facility to take all of Staffordshire's kerbside recycling for sorting, with over 100 sites reviewed. An area has been identified which would offer the greatest reduction haulage/associated carbon miles and has received support from the District Councils.

Highways - The Councils Highways Contractor Amey, throughout the 2020/21 period, continue to trial new materials such as Warm Mix Asphalt as well as GI Pave which include bitumen additives to increase asphalt material shelf-life, longevity and wearability. These measures reduce carbon and waste output whilst maintaining quality highway maintenance and make the surface more resilient to the more extreme weather conditions of climate change. 100% recycling of used road construction material continues as well as operational depot/site waste achieving on average recycling of 80-90%.

Air Quality

Air Quality and schools – Covid19 had a significant impact on school engagement last year. Online events and communications replaced the planned face to face events to deliver air quality messages.

Active travel to school is being encouraged. SCC awarded a charity £500 to build safe storage areas for bikes at 10 schools. A further 13 schools received £6,857 of funding through the Councils Climate Change grant for onsite school cycle parking and bike sheds.

£281,000 was invested in the Council Bikeability scheme and delivered 10,000 training sessions to provide children with the practical skills to cycle safely on the roads.
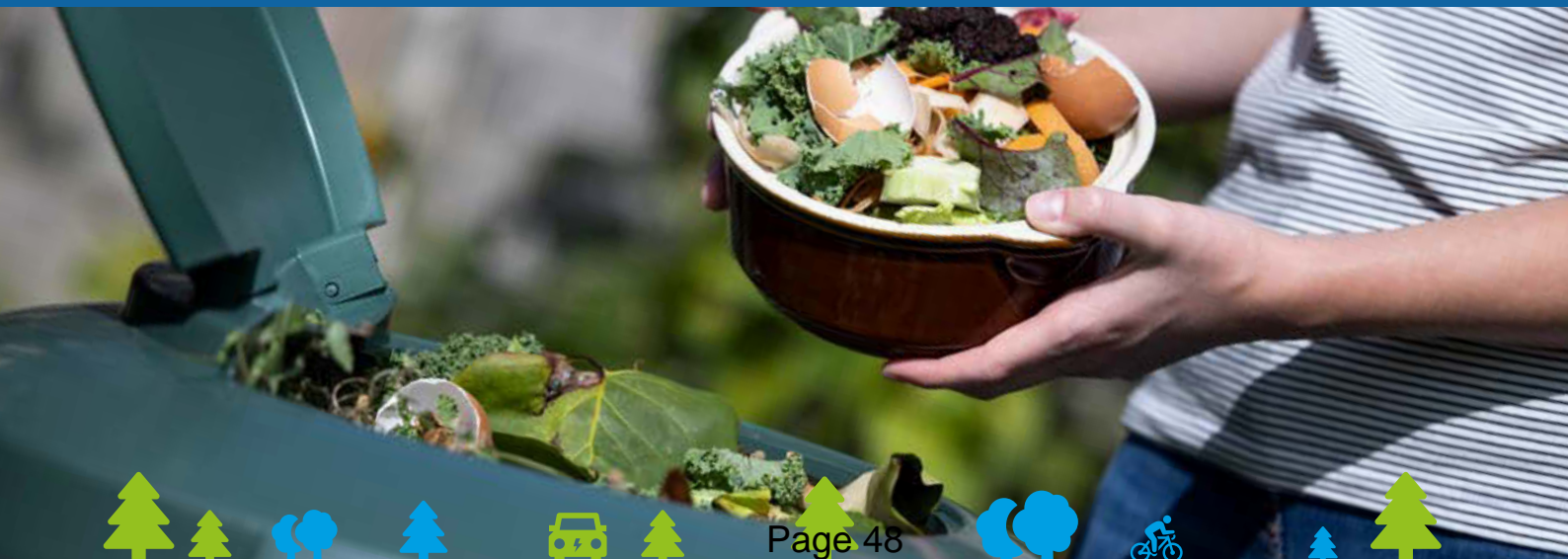
Behavioural Change

Working with businesses – SBEN launched the GROWTH mapping diagnostic tool for businesses in February 2021, with 17 businesses registering to have an assessment in just one month. The tool helps businesses to identify their strength and weaknesses on sustainability and provides advice on how to analyse and prioritise environmental sustainability goals.

SBEN deliver a Low Carbon Business Evolution Programme to help businesses across the Stoke and Staffordshire LEP reduce their carbon footprint and increase energy efficiency. Through offering free specialist low carbon reviews to businesses and grant funding of up to 60% to implement the recommendations the programme delivered a saving of 465 tonnes of carbon over the year for Staffordshire businesses.

Climate Change funding – The Climate change action fund, launched in November 2020 provided funding to local schools, community groups and parish councils to help reduce the impact of climate change. The scheme attracted a wide diversity of applications and awarded £76,000 across 114 applicants.

Successful applications ranged from upgrading lighting to LED in schools and community buildings, building bike shelters in schools and tree planting in schools and community spaces. For further information on the scheme see appendix 3.

Our approach to managing climate change - Following the Councils climate change declaration to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 an action plan was published in November 2020. The Plan listed 22 initial actions for the Council to progress, based on 5 priority themes.

To complement the Climate Change Action Plan and to provide an update to the Green Shoots (2011) publication a Climate Change Strategic Development Framework was published in February 2021. This framework sets out the long term approach to delivery in working both internally, with partners and the Staffordshire community to achieve the net zero carbon emission target.

Next steps

To achieve net zero the Council needs to achieve a reduction of 1600 tonnes of carbon each year from the 2018/19 baseline. Last year we exceeded this target through transferring to a renewable tariff for schools, corporate buildings and street light electricity. Although we are ahead of our target for carbon reduction we recognise that there are some significant challenges ahead with many of the easy quick win solutions now completed. We also recognise that we will not be able to eliminate all of our emissions by 2050 and will start investigating offsetting opportunities such as tree planting.

A refresh of the climate change action plan is in progress to identify new programmes and projects for the next five years. Extensive consultation with the diverse range of services the council provides has taken place to identify challenging practicable targets.

The last year has predominantly focussed on our internal processes and programmes. Our Strategic Framework identifies the importance of taking a coordinated action with other Staffordshire councils, businesses, the voluntary sector and residents. It is our ambition to work towards a co-ordinated approach to work towards achieving shared goals.

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Appendix 1

Staffordshire County Council approach to Climate change

The County Council has championed the climate change agenda for many years and our carbon reduction strategy, Green Shoots, published in 2011 built on previous commitments to this agenda. Staffordshire County Council recognises that climate change is the biggest environmental challenge facing the world today and has reflected this by identifying climate change as one of the four key principles in the Councils Strategic Plan.

With the setting of new legislation in May 2019, through an amendment to the Climate Change Act 2008, the UK became the first major economy to pass a law requiring the country to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050. This means that the country needs to remove as much carbon from the atmosphere as it emits.

Following the publication of this new legalisation, the County Council committed itself to this agenda by declaring a climate change emergency in July 2019 to also achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This replaced the previous commitment to reduce carbon emissions to 80% of the 1990 baseline.

We have seen a considerable reduction in our carbon emissions from the initial 1990 baseline of 200,000 tonnes. This is partially attributed to many of our schools converting to academies which, once converted are not included as Council emissions. A number of carbon reduction measures have been implemented since this time which has reduced the carbon impact of our services.

The County Council recognises that a range of actions are needed to reduce the Council carbon emissions. We adhere to the carbon hierarchy principles of avoiding and reducing emissions as a priority, where emissions cannot be reasonably reduced any further we consider sequestering.

AVOID

MINIMISE

SUBSTITUTE

SEQUESTER

OFFSET
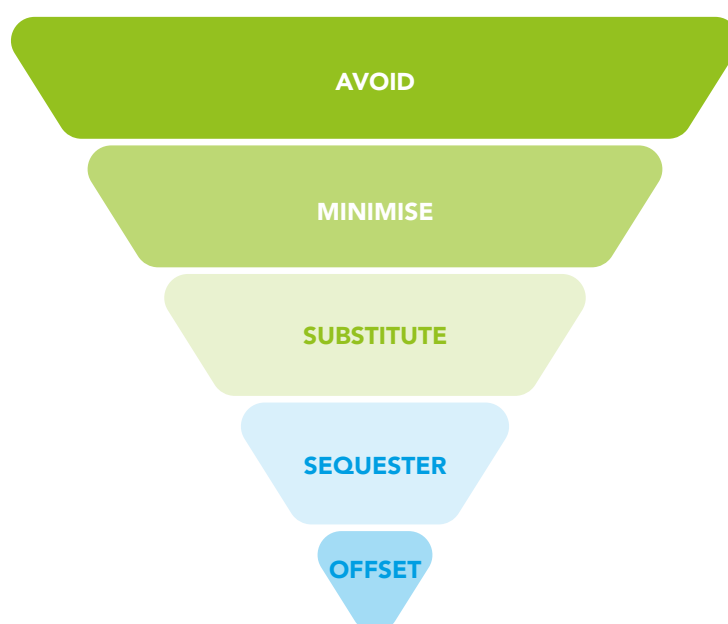
We also recognise that we need to put in measures so we can adapt to our changing climate.

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Appendix 2

How we measure our carbon emissions

Each year Staffordshire County Council monitors it's carbon emissions although it has no statutory duty to report these emissions. Due to the complex structure of the Councils operations, with many services operated under contract or lease, SCC has selected to report on emission sources which it has operational control over, i.e. those services which the Council has the full authority to introduce and implement its operating policies.

The DEFRA 2019 carbon conversion factors, provided for use by UK and international organisations to report on greenhouse gas emissions have been used to calculate the 2019/20 emissions.

In 2018/19 we reviewed what we reported against and established a new baseline incorporating a wider range of activities, including services previously unrecorded in the baseline such as home school transport and waste disposal/recycling.

Schools which have converted to academies are no longer included as a Council emission. Academy schools are in total control of their operations and Staffordshire County Council receive no income for their operation or management. The Council is however committed to sharing information with the academies to encourage adoption of the key strategies and so reduce their energy consumption and emissions too.

Greenhouse gas emissions are recorded against the three standard scopes for reporting.

Scope 1 – All direct emissions – these emissions arise as a direct result of our activities under our control. For Staffordshire County Council this includes

- gas consumption from all maintained schools and corporate buildings
- liquified petroleum gas (LPG) usage from corporate buildings
- heating oil consumption from maintained schools
- fuel used for fleet vehicles

Scope 2 – Indirect emissions – these emissions are our emissions associated with the consumption of electricity purchased for maintained schools and corporate buildings. Where the electricity is 100% sourced from a registered renewable supplier, emissions are zero.

Scope 3 – All other indirect emissions – this includes a much wider remit and includes the activities which we do not own or directly control, for example services under contract. This includes:

- business miles associated with staff travel
- passenger kilometres associated with staff travel via train
- water consumption (supply and treatment) from all maintained schools and corporate buildings
- contracted waste operations and processes
- electricity consumption associated with street lighting and ITS equipment
- fuel consumption associates with Amey (Highways) operation
- home to school transport.

Appendix 3

Climate Change Action Fund

The climate change action fund ran from 2 November 2020 to 26 February 2021. Grants of up to £1000 were invited from schools, voluntary and community groups, societies, charities and parish councils. To encourage a spread of funding across the county, each county councillor received an allocation of £2,000 to award to their area.

148 funding requests were received, with £76,074 being awarded across 115 applicants. Of the 115 successful applicants, 72 of these received the full amount requested. Lower levels of funding were awarded to applicants where parts of the project were not considered eligible for funding or Councillors had insufficient budget to fund a project in full. Reduced funding was awarded to 43 applicants.

Projects which were considered high priority to receive full funding included:

- energy efficiency measures including LED lighting upgrades, improved insulation and improvements to glazing either to reduce excessive solar gain or improve thermal efficiency.

- bike racks and scooter pods to encourage more active travel and reduced car use
- tree planting

Projects representing little or no medium to long term carbon benefit or adapting to our changing climate were not funded and included:

- general biodiversity improvements, such as wildflower planting on areas not currently intensively managed
- outdoor play areas and equipment
- Improving environmental awareness, unless it specifically related to climate change.

For any project to be delivered the landowner had to demonstrate permission for the project was granted, a number of projects were unable to receive landowner permission.

Introduction

Staffordshire County Council recognises that climate change is the biggest environmental challenge facing the world today and has reflected this by identifying climate change as one of the four key principles in the Council's Strategic Plan.

Staffordshire County Council committed itself to this agenda by declaring a climate change emergency in July 2019 to also achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The Strategic Development Framework released in February 2021 sets out how the authority will work towards achieving its carbon emissions target.

The County Council recognises that a range of actions are needed to stop or reduce the Council's carbon emissions. These actions are to either stop carbon emissions, develop ways to remove carbon that is already in the atmosphere (sequestration) or help communities and businesses prepare for the impact of a changing climate (adaptation). In achieving these actions, the authority will play its part in the global effort to reduce the impact of Climate Change and meet its net carbon zero target.

The Council will monitor its carbon emissions each year, to track the success of these actions. This plan will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to deliver the Council's commitment to the climate change agenda.

Simon Tagg - Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

Key Themes

Theme 1: Carbon Reduction

Theme 2: Air Quality

Theme 3: Natural Environment

Theme 4: Waste

Theme 5: Behavioural Change

Carbon Reduction

The Carbon Reduction theme has the most amount of actions within the plan. These actions cover internal staff training, resource use and efficient operation of services as well as starting to change the way that we work.
The actions also look to include climate change thinking in policy and Governance processes.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CN-01-21	Ensure climate change and sustainability impacts are considered in decision making, including land disposals and budgets.	• Revise the Cabinet Report standard template to include a section on climate change. • Business case templates to include financial benefits or consequences of delivering low carbon alternatives. • Procurement process to include consideration of the impacts on climate change.	• Mar 2022 • Mar 2022 • Mar 2022
CN-02-21	Ensure sufficient resources are available to support business areas in identifying opportunities and understanding carbon impacts.	• Identify the resources required to progress the climate change agenda across the council. • Liaise with the Staffordshire Business Environment Network (sben) to identify any opportunity to share expertise between organisations. • Climate Change team to provide expertise and support to business areas to develop ideas to deliver innovation.	• Mar 2022 • From Nov 2021 • From Nov 2021
CN-03-21	Research sequestration and other offset potential actions.	• Identify best practice ideas from other local authorities and industry. • Consider the outcome of the Renewable Energy Audit. • Outline options and make recommendations for sequestration and/or offset projects.	• Mar 2022 • Mar 2022 • Mar 2022

Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CN-04-21	Continued liaison with district and borough councils to discuss how planning considerations can include climate change mitigation and adaptation.	• Ensure climate change is a standing agenda item for the Staffordshire Development Officers Group.	• From Nov 2021
CN-05-21	Invest in improving driving styles to reduce preventative carbon emissions.	• Roll out eLearning green driving module for Highways.	• Dec 2021
CN-06-21	Ensure effective vehicle utilisation for entitled home to school transport pupils.	• Issue all school children with a Smart Pass to monitor usage to identify any inefficiencies in the system. • Evaluate results and consider if any service changes can be made.	• Mar 2022 • Mar 2022
CN-07-21	Investigate the potential of using pick up points for Home to School transport and Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils.	• Liaise with Members, Families & Communities Service and SEN schools to see what scope there is to introduce pick up and drop off points.	• From Nov 2021

Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CN-08-21	Increase the number of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.	• Work with district and borough councils to agree a consistent approach to EV infrastructure across Staffordshire. • Investigate the potential to upgrade electricity supply in SCC building stock to facilitate EV charging in retained property portfolio. • Develop an EV Infrastructure Strategy and Low Emissions Vehicle Infrastructure Action Plan • Maximise opportunities to bid for Department for Transport funding, including workplace charging fund (at SCC buildings) and on street residential charging fund. • Work with Amey to roll out EV charging across all highways depots.	• Mar 2023 • Mar 2022 • Mar 2024 • From Nov 2021 • From Nov 2021
CN-09-21	Investigate the transition of fleet to alternative fuels or more carbon efficient options where appropriate by 2025.	• Consider the transition of fleet vehicles to low carbon fuels or low carbon technology.	• Mar 2022
CN-10-21	Reduce the emissions from Highways vehicles.	• Analyse telemetrics data to optimise routes and driver behaviour. • Investigate potential for introducing automated systems, such as automatic gritting.	• Mar 2022 • Mar 2022

Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CN-11-21	Complete a review of all SCC owned or leased buildings with service areas to identify future needs.	• Develop business asset plans in each district and borough and analyse the business assets for long term functionality.	• Jun 2022
CN-12-21	Pilot using warm air from data centre to heat floor above.	• Develop agreement with contractors for provision of air cooling system at QB data centre. • Advance planning for air cooling system at County Archive.	• Mar 2022 • Mar 2022
CN-13-21	Improve energy efficiency of all suitable SCC owned buildings.	• Collate data on running costs, energy usage, type and condition of lighting, boilers and insulation. • Calculate running cost and impact per square metre. • Identify the properties that are most inefficient. • Develop programme of work that looks at replacing lighting, insulation and boilers.	• Mar 2022 • Dec 2021 • Dec 2021 • From Jun 2022
CN-14-21	Install Building Energy Management Systems to all suitable buildings.	• Identify SCC owned buildings that do not have a Building Energy Management System (BEM) and prioritise installations.	• Dec 2022

Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CN-15-21	Move to battery operated plant tools wherever possible.	• Review SCC owned equipment and usage. Replace where possible. • Establish potential for battery operated tools to be specified in future ground maintenance contracts and apply if possible.	• TBA • Nov 2021
CN-16-21	Emissions Monitoring.	• Continue to monitor and report the Council's annual carbon emissions.	• Ongoing

Air Quality

The Councils single highest contributor to emissions comes from home to school transport fuel consumption. This activity accounts for 27% of our overall total carbon footprint. The Council aims to improve air quality by working with vehicle operators within the county through encouraging the introduction of more efficient engines as well as using the authorities influence on vehicle operators within the county to reduce fossil fuel use.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
AQ-01-21	Investigate the impact of introducing a standard requirement for Euro5 or better for home to school transport contracts.	• Market test feasibility (cost & availability) of including Euro5 as a standard requirement.	• Aug 2022
AQ-02-21	Work with local bus operators to improve the energy efficiency of public transport in Staffordshire.	• Agree a bus service improvement plan with interested local bus operators with an agreed transition path to low emission buses.	• Mar 2022

Natural Environment

The natural environment is key to removing carbon out of the atmosphere, through carbon sequestration. The focus of this theme is to maximise the benefit the councils land holding has on the climate. New land management opportunities will be identified to further enhance the positive carbon impact of County land with additional benefits of enhanced biodiversity.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
NE-01-21	Commission a study to determine the current sequestration / storage of carbon in natural habitats on SCC landholdings and the potential to increase it through tree planting and habitat enhancement.	• Engage with consultants to produce a review of land/habitats in Staffordshire (including carbon impact, carbon storage benefits, potential opportunities, other benefits such as social and GIS data). • Review report outcomes and recommendations and produce business case to take forward recommendations. • Develop a standard list of attributes accessible to all GIS users.	• Mar 2022 • Sep 2022 • Sep 2022
NE-02-21	Undertake a programme of tree planting and habitat enhancement.	• Identify opportunities for small and large scale tree planting. • Identify opportunities for carbon sequestration through habitat enhancement.	• Sep 2022 • Sep 2022
NE-03-21	Review policies that impact on our management of habitats.	• Review land management policies and consider options to lower carbon intensity and/or improve biodiversity.	• Mar 2022

Waste

Waste is the Council's biggest source of emissions making up 38% of the total Emissions. These emissions include not only the emissions from the waste generated by the Council but also Staffordshire households. It measures the emissions from handling the waste at the recycling centres and the emissions from operating the energy recovery facilities for handling all of Staffordshire's household waste

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
W-01-21	Consider the long term capacity needs for Energy Recovery Facilities (ERF) in Staffordshire.	• Consider contract requirements for an ERF at Hanford. • Plan for contract requirements when the ERF at Four Ashes reverts entirely to SCC in 2039.	• Mar 2022 • Dec 2023
W-02-21	Plateau growth in waste to 0% by 2025, using 2019 pre-pandemic tonnage as the baseline.	• Deliver communications campaigns to encourage behaviour changes. • Work with district and borough councils collection authorities to identify common opportunities to boost recycling levels. • Hold a climate change & waste conference.	• Ongoing • Dec 2022 • Mar 2022
W-03-21	Reduce food waste and garden waste in the residual waste stream.	• Investigate options for a single food waste procurement contract to assist the districts and borough councils to introduce separate food waste collections ahead of proposed legislative changes. • Promote use of home composting bins. • Continue to support the Waste Savvy volunteer programme.	• Mar 2022 • Dec 2021 • Ongoing

Waste

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
W-04-21	Increase recycling at the Recycling Centres.	• Deliver a communications campaigns to reduce non recyclable waste and encourage good recycling habits. • Regularly review the range of materials that can be recycled at the Recycling Centres to react to new opportunities.	• Ongoing • From Nov 2021

W-05-21	Ensure that haulage from Recycling Centres is completed with the maximum permitted weight for each load.	• Carry out tool box talks with site staff on the importance of compacting and how to do it.
		• Ensure that:
		  ◦ All plant operatives have appropriate JCB training for efficient use of equipment.
		  ◦ Load height in containers forms part of supervisor/ team leaders routine.
		  ◦ Minimum / maximum load height indicators are drawn on each container.
			• From Mar 2022
			
			• From Mar 2022

W-06-21	Investigate feasibility of moving to alternative fuels for the Recycling Centres haulage and onsite vehicles.	• Consider the potential for use of alternative fuels/low carbon fuels to be specified for outsourced haulage and owned vehicles and equipment.	• From Mar 2022
W-07-21	Development of Staffordshire Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to reduce haulage requirements.	• Progress scoping for Staffordshire MRF.	• Mar 2022

Behavioural Change

Climate change is a problem that is facing everyone. To tackle the issues it will need everyone to make changes to their daily lives. The council plan to work with business and other Councils within Staffordshire to produce a joined-up approach to tackling climate change that reaches beyond just the actions of the Authority.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
BC-01-21	Offer funding through the Climate change action fund.	• Launch Round 2 of the fund.	• Nov 2021
BC-02-21	Communication and behaviour change campaign for staff and residents on climate change.	• Increase climate change awareness in all staff through a variety of media channels under the Making Staffordshire Sustainable branding. • Increase climate change awareness in residents through the Making Staffordshire Sustainable branding and by delivering bespoke internally developed campaigns, supporting and promoting national campaigns and working in partnership with the district and borough council's. • Help to promote and share climate change information with schools.	• Mar 2022 • Ongoing • Jun 2022

Behavioural Change

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
BC-03-21	Develop an adaptation strategy and plans) for SCC to reduce the impact of the changing climate.	• Develop a Climate Change Adaptation plan.	• Dec 2023
BC-04-21	Work with businesses to raise awareness and reduce their carbon footprint.	• Work with Staffordshire Business Environment Network (sben) to identify opportunities to forward climate change agenda. • sben to roll out carbon calculator for businesses.	• From Nov 2021 • From Nov 2021
BC-05-21	Establish a Sustainability Board.	• Board to set a countywide strategic direction in ways of working to support the transition to Net Zero.	• Mar 2022

Programme Funding

- The Council has dedicated and secured over £5.4m of support to our net carbon zero journey over and above usual budget allocations.

- A further £1m Investment Fund has been made available over a 5 year timeframe, specifically for Sustainability projects to support the climate change agenda, which will be subject to successful business case bids.

- The Council pledges to maximise external funding opportunities that will assist in the delivery of this plan.

County Council Climate Change Investment	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Investment
	£	£	£	£	£	£
MTFS Budget - Revenue Funding	690,000	585,580	585,580	285,000	285,000	2,431,160
External Funding						
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme	0	3,005,350	0	0	0	3,005,350
Total Investment (Internal & External funding)	690,000	3,590,930	585,580	285,000	285,000	5,436,510

Programme Roadmap

- The overarching KPI is our annual carbon footprint, which is currently 37,967 tCO2e – this KPI needs to be on the trajectory outlined below in order to remain on target to achieve our commitment

- Whilst our aspirations are high, it is realised that we can not reach net zero without some carbon sequestration or offsetting, this action forms a key role within this plan
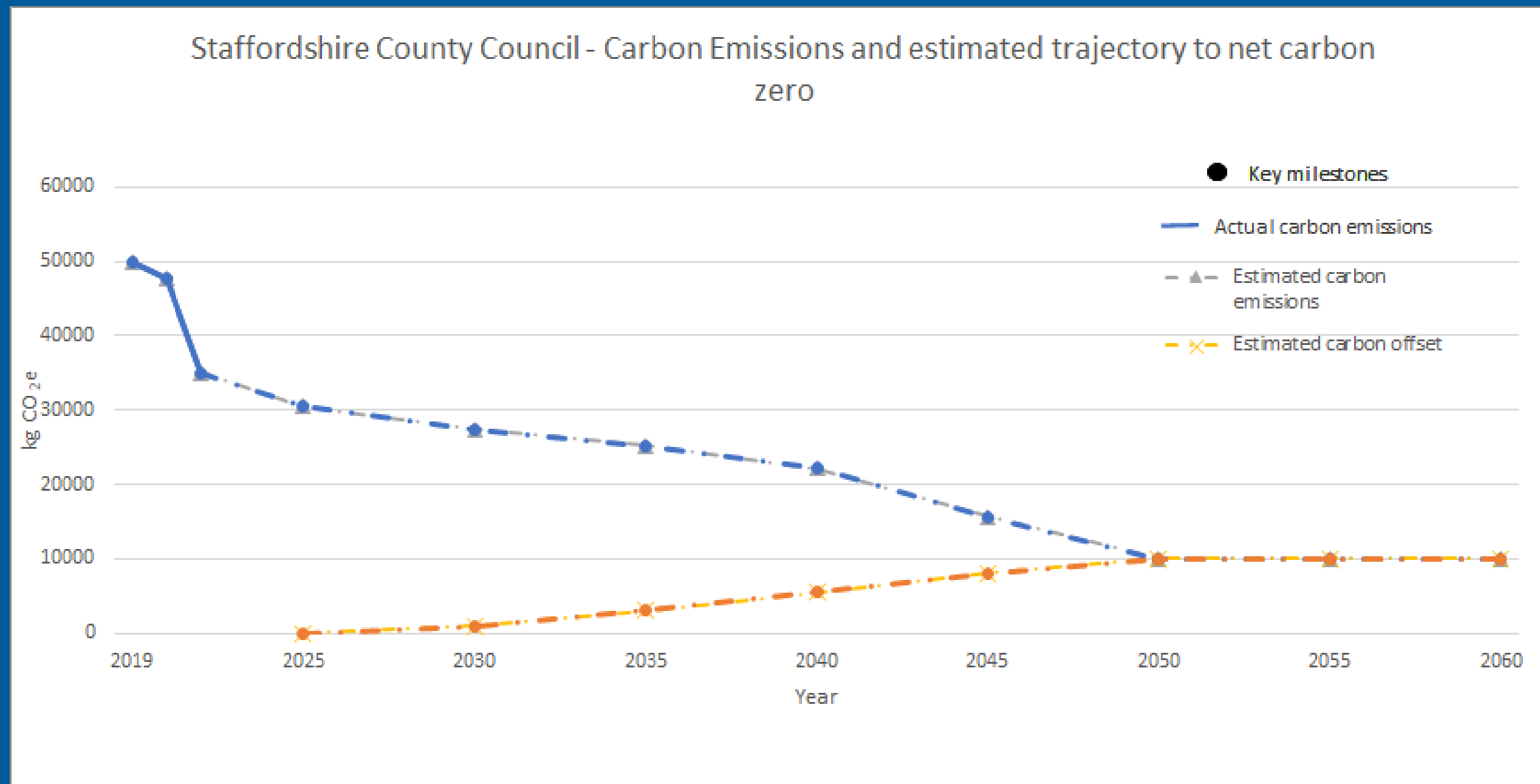
Staffordshire County Council - Carbon Emissions and estimated trajectory to net carbon zero

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Formal Report of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Cllr Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) said,

"We are committed to supporting post-16 students who are from low-income families and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan who require specialist assistance due to a learning difficulty or disability.

Having worked with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman on this case we have apologised to the family and put right our mistake and we have reviewed how we assess post-16 transport applications for students with Special Educational Needs."

Report Summary:

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) provide independent and impartially investigated complaints about councils and other bodies within their jurisdiction. The LGSCO have decided that it is important to raise awareness of this investigation as the complaint investigated was highlighted as a recurrent fault of the Council.

The LGSCO have issued a formal public interest report and require the report to be considered at Cabinet.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Consider the Formal Report from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in relation to Post -16 transport for a SEND child.

b. Consider the recommendations made as part of the investigation report and the finding of "Report issued: upheld; maladministration and injustice"

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Formal Report of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Consider the Formal Report from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in relation to Post -16 transport for a SEND child.

b. Consider the recommendations made as part of the investigation report and the finding of "Report issued: upheld; maladministration and injustice"

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. The appended Formal Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in relation to Post 16 travel for a SEND child.

2. The LGSCO investigate complaints about "maladministration" and "service failure". The finding of the Report issued is upheld; maladministration and injustice.

3. The LGSCO have decided due to a recurrent fault that this formal report is to be issued as a Public Interest Report.

4. Since the LGSCO have found the complainant and her daughter have suffered in-justice as a result of fault, under Section 31(s) of the 1974 Act, the Council must formally consider the appended Formal Report at a high decision-making level such as Cabinet.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Formal Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Investigation into a complaint about Staffordshire County Council (reference number: 20 010 985).

Contact Details

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Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

Investigation into a complaint about

Staffordshire County Council

(reference number: 20 010 985)

17 August 2021

The Ombudsman's role

For more than 40 years the Ombudsman has independently and impartially investigated complaints. We effectively resolve disputes about councils and other bodies in our jurisdiction by recommending redress which is proportionate, appropriate and reasonable based on all the facts of the complaint. Our service is free of charge.

Each case which comes to the Ombudsman is different and we take the individual needs and circumstances of the person complaining to us into account when we make recommendations to remedy injustice caused by fault.

We have no legal power to force councils to follow our recommendations, but they almost always do. Some of the things we might ask a council to do are:

> apologise

> pay a financial remedy

> improve its procedures so similar problems don't happen again.

Section 30 of the 1974 Local Government Act says that a report should not normally name or identify any person. The people involved in this complaint are referred to by a letter or job role.

Key to names used

Mrs J   The complainant
K   Her daughter

Report summary

Education
Mrs J complained the Council refused to fund travel costs for her daughter K, to attend school. A Tribunal had decided attendance at that school was not unreasonable public expenditure. And there is no viable public transport route to the school. This means Mrs J has had to arrange her own transport to get K to school.

Finding
Fault found causing injustice and recommendations made.

Recommendations
To remedy the injustice caused, we recommend that, within three months of the date of this report, the Council:

- apologise to Mrs J and K for the faults identified;

- pay Mrs J £300 to acknowledge the uncertainty and the resulting upset caused to K and her family by the flawed decision-making process; and

- reconsider K's appeal having regard to the issues outlined as fault in this report.

If the Council decides K is eligible for help with transport, it should backdate eligibility to the start of the Autumn 2020 term. The Council can deduct the costs the family would have incurred as part of their contribution to the transport costs, as set out in its post-16 transport statement.

Within three months of the date of this report, we also recommend the Council take the following action.

- Provide us with evidence that relevant staff, appeal decision-makers and panel members have received information about the lessons learned from this case, regarding taking account of travel time.

- Audit a sample of 20% of transport applications for the 2020/21 school year for post-16 students who have applied on special educational needs (SEN) or other disability grounds where the Council has refused transport, where it previously provided it. The Council should check it has made a proper assessment in line with the statutory guidance and its own transport statement. It should check whether decision-makers have considered the time it took applicants to attend school. It should consider where there is evidence of a journey taking more than 75 minutes. If there is, it should follow the principles set out in this report.

- Following the audit, if the Council finds cases in the sample where the decision was flawed, it should then review all the post-16 students who have applied for transport on SEN or other disability grounds and the Council has refused it but previously provided it for the 2020/21 school year.

We welcome that the Council has accepted our recommendations.

The complaint

1. Mrs J complained the Council has refused to fund travel costs for K to attend school. A Tribunal had decided attendance at that school was not unreasonable public expenditure. And there is no viable public transport route to the school. This means Mrs J has had to arrange her own transport to get K to school.

Legal and administrative background

The Ombudsman's role and powers

2. We investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. In this report, we have used the word 'fault' to refer to these. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint. We refer to this as 'injustice'. If there has been fault which has caused an injustice, we may suggest a remedy. *(Local Government Act 1974, sections 26(1) and 26A(1), as amended)*

3. We may investigate matters coming to our attention during an investigation, if we consider that a member of the public who has not complained may have suffered an injustice as a result. *(Local Government Act 1974, section 26D and 34E, as amended)*

4. Under the information sharing agreement between the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), we will share this decision with Ofsted.

The law and guidance about post-16 school transport

5. For children attending school between the ages five and 16, the rules about transport provision specify some groups of children, with special educational needs (SEN), for whom councils *must* provide free transport.

6. Councils do not have a duty to provide free transport, in the same way, to young people of sixth form age in education or training. This means students aged 16 to 18. However, councils must publish an annual transport policy statement setting out the arrangements for the provision of transport that they consider necessary, to help students of sixth form age to attend education or training. Arrangements for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities must be explicitly set out in the policy.

7. In considering what arrangements it is necessary to make for sixth form pupils, councils must have regard to:

   • the needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to attend an education establishment if no arrangements were made; and

   • the distances, and journey times, between the homes of people of sixth form age and education establishments suitable to their needs.

8. The Education Act says, in considering if it is necessary to make arrangements, a council should consider the nature of the route which the individual could reasonably be expected to take. *(Education Act 1996, section 509AB)*

9. The statutory guidance *'Post-16 transport to education and training'* says councils must take account of various factors.

   • The needs of those who could not access education or training if no arrangements were made – they should consider the needs of the most vulnerable or socially excluded and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

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- The distance and journey time of the place of learning from the home. Councils can use the statutory walking distance for children of compulsory school age as a benchmark (up to 75 minutes each way is usually considered reasonable for that age group). As with children of compulsory school age, young people should be able to reach their place of learning without undue stress.

- The cost of the transport to the place of learning and of any alternative way of ensuring attendance there – councils should target help on those who need it most, particularly families on a low income.

- Councils may ask parents for a contribution towards transport costs, but should exercise discretion in doing so, and have arrangements to support low income families.

10. There are rules specific for young people who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. But there is no *automatic* entitlement to transport, for sixth form age students, to an institution named in an EHC Plan.

The Council's Post-16 transport statement 2020-21

11. The Council's statement says:

    "*We support those beginning a course aged between 16 to 19 who are low income, and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who require specialist travel assistance due to a learning difficulty or disability, through the Staffordshire Post 16 travel assistance scheme…".*

12. Regarding students with special educational needs or a disability, the Council's statement says it will offer support (after a financial contribution from the parents) if:

    "The student is unable to walk or use public transport (even when accompanied) due to their learning difficulty or disability; and

    The student is attending the nearest suitable school, college or Local Authority funded training provider offering the course as specified by the Local Authority and named in the Education, Health and Care plan, regardless of the distance to travel."

    "Support will be offered to low income students for a contribution of £494, or to non-low income students for a contribution of £625."

    "Staffordshire County Council may be able to provide travel assistance through the offer of a personal travel budget. Under this scheme the student will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements."

13. For young adults who start a new course, aged between 19 and 25, the Council's *Post-16 transport statement 2020-21* lists other conditions. These include whether family members could transport the student and whether this would be reasonable.

How we considered this complaint

14. We produced this report after:

- considering Mrs J's complaint and the documents she provided;

- making enquiries of the Council and considering its response; and

- considering our Focus Report, 'All on Board?' which highlights some of the common failings seen in school transport provision.

15. In deciding to issue a public report on this complaint, and in making wider recommendations for service improvements, we have considered previously upheld Ombudsman decisions about post-16 school transport against Staffordshire County Council.

16. We sent a draft report to Mrs J and the Council and invited comments. Mrs J and the Council accepted the draft report's findings.

What we found

Background

17. Since 2010, the Council has recognised that K has special educational needs. Most recently, the Council has met those needs through an EHC Plan. In 2017 K was assessed and diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. By 2019 K was in the process of moving to a new school, which was around 25 miles from her home. This school was named in her EHC Plan.

18. Mrs J had appealed a Council decision on a change to K's EHC Plan. In June 2019 a Tribunal decided, among other things, that K's transport budget, to the new school, was not unreasonable public expenditure. After the Tribunal, the Council finalised K's EHC Plan.

19. The Council paid Mrs J the transport costs as a personal budget.

The events we have investigated

20. K was due to move to post-16 education in September 2020, at the same school as she had been attending. On 28 April 2020 the Council sent a letter to parents, including Mrs J, about post-16 transport. The letter advised there was no legal guarantee to free travel assistance for post-16 students.

21. On 21 May Mrs J wrote to the Council, responding to the Council's 28 April letter. She noted it was less than a year from the June 2019 Tribunal, that had decided K's travel budget was not unreasonable public expenditure. She noted the round trip to K's school was over 50 miles, with no direct bus. And that K would not go on public transport, because of her autism. The Council did not respond to that letter.

22. Later in the year, Mrs J instructed a solicitor, who wrote to the Council with a letter before action. This was about another education related matter and the transport provision. The solicitor advised their view was the Council's Post-16 transport statement was unlawful. The Council's response advised it did not agree with the solicitor's assertion. But in August it advised the solicitor it would consider K's eligibility for post-16 transport based on the facts set out in Mrs J's 21 May letter.

23. On 14 August, the Council wrote to Mrs J with its decision that K did not qualify for travel assistance. It advised this was because it needed:

    "…*evidence that a young person cannot walk or travel on public transport, even if accompanied, as a measure of the extent their SEND affects them and not the availability of local routes. Distance does not form part of the criteria*."

24. K started her sixth form studies in September. Mrs J advises that she has driven K to school, because of the distance and the lack of public transport routes.

25. Mrs J asked the Council to review its decision. The Council did not change its view, including after Mrs J supplied further information. At the end of September and early October the Council emailed Mrs J. It advised:

- "*Students with a learning difficulty or disability can often use public transport to make the journey to school or college when accompanied. If that is the case we would not offer post 16 travel assistance. Work or childcare commitments are not generally considered a reason to not arrange such accompaniment…*";
- it did not believe an exception to its policy was applicable.

26. In November 2020 Mrs J emailed the Council again, setting out the route to the college. She set out how the journey by public transport would take from approximately 0730 to 0930; two hours. She noted "…*an escort would spend all day travelling to and from [the school] in order to support [K] to and from school.*"

27. The Council offered Mrs J the chance to attend an appeal, but she declined. In January 2021 the Council wrote to Mrs J with its response to her appeal:

    "Where the information presented evidences that the young person could travel on public transport if accompanied, there is no requirement that there will be direct buses or other public transport available from the home address to school. The measure is only whether the young person would be able to make the journey even if accompanied."

    It decided K was not entitled to travel assistance.

28. The appeal panel minutes note issues it took into account. These included:

- "*Mum hasn't provided information as to why she cannot transport [K] to College*";
- "*Distance is not classed as exceptional circumstance*";
- "*Inability* [quoted exactly from the original text] *of a bus is not an exceptional circumstance*";
- "*Applied policy correctly, deemed child not entitled, then parent should make suitable arrangements to transport.*"

The Council's response to our enquiries

29. Mrs J complained to us. In response to our enquiries, the Council advised:

    "*The Council considers that we have no evidence available that demonstrates that [K] would not be able to make a journey by public transport if she were supported by a nominated adult. Also no evidence has been provided that explains how such a journey may affect her and/or what strategies or approaches have previously been used to support her during times that she travels within the local community, and what the outcome has been.*"

Conclusions

30. Part of Mrs J's complaint is the Council was ignoring the findings of a Tribunal that had decided the Council should fund K's travel to school. But in the months after the Tribunal, K moved to post-16 education. The rules on school transport change for post-16 education. That meant the Tribunal's decision was no longer relevant – the rules it based its decision on were different. So we cannot uphold that part of Mrs J's complaint.

31. The Council's policy says it will offer travel support if a student "*…is unable to walk or use public transport (even when accompanied) due to their learning difficulty or disability*" and they are attending a school named in the Education, Health and Care Plan, "*regardless of the distance to travel*". It does not list other

considerations for 16-18 year olds (but does for young people starting a course after this age).

32. K is attending the school named in her EHC Plan. So that school is the correct one for the Council to decide if it is necessary for it to arrange transport to.

33. Mrs J gave the Council information that the journey to K's school by public transport was excessively long at two hours each way. We have checked and agree it would take K significantly longer than the benchmark journey time of 75 minutes, recommended in the statutory guidance.

34. The Council's view is the actual journey is irrelevant. But the statutory guidance says young people of sixth form age should be able to "*reach their place of education without incurring stress, strain, or difficulty so that they would be unable to benefit from the education offered".* The examples in the guidance include a young person having to make several changes of public transport which results in an unreasonably long journey time.

35. So the length of the public transport journey for K is longer than the benchmark suggested in the statutory guidance. This is irrespective of how K's disability affects her ability to use public transport. Mrs J says K cannot use public transport. The Council says it has not seen any evidence of strategies Mrs J and K have used to support her. But to support K, Mrs J would need a viable route to use. Consequently, the Council's decision was flawed. It was not in accordance with the statutory guidance on journey time, with no cogent reasons why the Council departed from this.

Did the fault cause an injustice?

36. We do not decide whether the Council must provide transport assistance for K. We investigate whether the Council considered the application and appeal correctly. We cannot question the merits of a decision taken properly by the Council. However, as we have found fault in the Council's consideration of the application (and appeal), it brings the decision into question.

37. Mrs J and K were left with uncertainty about whether the Council's decision might have been different had the Council's panel considered how the journey time exceeded the guidance.

Wider issues

38. In August 2020 we issued our most recent upheld decision about post-16 transport against Staffordshire County Council. We have upheld other complaints against the Council about this issue in recent years. Some of the faults found in those decisions are similar to faults we have found in this investigation and include:

- not considering individual circumstances; and

- making decisions that are not consistent with its own policy when read with the statutory guidance.

Recommendations

39. The Council must consider the report and confirm within three months the action it has taken or proposes to take. The Council should consider the report at its full Council, Cabinet or other appropriately delegated committee of elected members and we will require evidence of this. *(Local Government Act 1974, section 31(2), as amended)*

40. In addition to the requirements set out above, the Council has agreed, within three months of the date of this report, to:

- apologise to Mrs J and K for the faults identified above;

- pay Mrs J £300 to acknowledge the uncertainty and the resulting upset caused to K and her family by the flawed decision-making process; and

- reconsider K's appeal having regard to the issues outlined as fault in this report.

41. If the Council decides K is eligible for help with transport, it should backdate eligibility to the start of the Autumn 2020 term. The Council can deduct the costs the family would have incurred as part of their contribution to the transport costs, as set out in its post-16 transport statement.

42. Within three months of the date of this report, the Council has agreed to take the following action.

- Provide us with evidence that relevant staff, appeal decision-makers and panel members have received information about the lessons learned from this case, regarding taking account of travel time.

- Audit a sample of 20% of transport applications for the 2020/21 school year for post-16 students who have applied on SEN or other disability grounds where the Council has refused transport, where it previously provided it. The Council should check it has made a proper assessment in line with the statutory guidance and its own transport statement. It should check whether decision-makers have considered the time it took applicants to attend school. It should consider where there is evidence of a journey taking more than 75 minutes. If there is, it should follow the principles set out in this report.

- Following the audit, if the Council finds cases in the sample where the decision was flawed, it should then review all the post-16 students who have applied for transport on SEN or other disability grounds and the Council has refused it but previously provided it for the 2020/21 school year.

We welcome that the Council has accepted our recommendations.

Final decision

43. We uphold the complaint. The Council has agreed to our recommendations, so we have completed our investigation.

Staffordshire
County Council

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Impact of Covid-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Progress – Update October 2021 and Way Forward

Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

"Since the easing of restrictions, it has been fantastic to see our schools, our businesses and our hospitality and our leisure sectors once again fully reopening their doors.

"While Covid and its legacy will be with us for some time. we must look forward to rebuilding our economy, ensuring that our children get the schooling they need and that people can once again aspire to happy, healthier and rewarding lives.

"As a county council, we remain at the forefront of managing Covid and also managing the impact it has had own our services and the communities we serve.

"The pandemic has shown Staffordshire's strengths: Our resilience, our determination and our compassions. It is also opened up new ways of smarter working which will be invaluable as we go forward with our lives."

Report Summary:

This paper details the high-level impacts which the COVID-19 pandemic has had upon our communities, the economy and the organisation.

We recognised that recovery from the pandemic would not be a traditional recovery and that it would take an extended period of time and therefore this is the third paper to Cabinet.

This paper describes the high level priorities which have been identified for recovery across the County Council and our continued progress against these; and it details our on-going approach to the leadership, influencing and monitoring of the recovery process moving forwards.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Notes the impact of Covid-19 on Staffordshire since October 2020;

b. Notes the progress being made towards resetting the Corporate Strategy;

c. Notes the progress made towards delivering the high-level priorities and plans from each recovery area; and

d. Endorses Staffordshire County Council's approach to the leadership, influencing and monitoring of the Recovery process moving forward.

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Impact of Covid-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Progress – Update October 2021 and Way Forward

Recommendations of the Leader of the Council

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Notes the impact of Covid-19 on Staffordshire since October 2020;

b. Notes the progress being made towards resetting the Corporate Strategy;

c. Notes the progress made towards delivering the high-level priorities and plans from each recovery area; and

d. Endorses Staffordshire County Council's approach to the leadership, influencing and monitoring of the Recovery process moving forward.

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. On 17th June 2020 Cabinet endorsed the Staffordshire County Council (SCC) approach to Recovery, to understanding the impact of COVID-19 on Staffordshire, and the high-level priorities and plans from each of the directorates and recovery areas (Impact of COVID-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Approaches). An update on progress was received on 21st October 2020 (Impact of COVID-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation – October 2020 Update).

2. Since October 2020 the prevalence of COVID-19 within our communities increased to a peak in January 2021, before an additional lockdown on 4th January had an impact; with cases increasing again from April 2021 as restrictions gradually eased, following the implementation of the government roadmap out of lockdown. The final easing of most restrictions on July 19th happened at a time of increasing case numbers and they have continued to rise across the Summer months, however, the success of the vaccination programme has meant that hospital

admissions and death rates have so far remained low. It is not the government's current intention to reimpose restrictions.

3. The Health Protection Board (HPB), required as part of the Local Outbreak Control Plan continues to oversee surveillance and management of incidents and provides support to local IMTs addressing specific outbreaks within our communities. Alongside this, the Member-led Local Outbreak Control Board ensures democratic oversight of the Local Outbreak Control Plan development and the management of incidents overall and individually. It also leads communication with communities about the overall management of incidents.

4. It is acknowledged that moving forwards society will have to learn to live with COVID-19 and the council has an approach to doing this, with some thoughts on likely short – medium term scenarios, organisation and societal impact, and learning and considerations to take forward as we recover, discussed in the paper Living with COVID-19 (Richard Harling, July 2021).

5. The SCC COVID Defence Force will be maintained, focussed on the priorities of testing, contact tracing and outbreak management for at least the remainder of 2021/22 and possibly longer term with the duration and capacity greater in more worse cases scenarios, and there is funding to support this.

6. Although government restrictions have tightened and eased over the first half of 2021, progress has been made across SCC towards organisation and service recovery. This has been managed through existing governance structures and overseen by the Planning and Recovery Group (PRG) as restrictions eased between March and July 2021. We have endeavoured to ensure that our services remain open wherever possible, so that we can continue to support our residents, communities, and businesses.

7. As Lockdown restrictions were removed in July 2021 moving forward, we need to manage recovery where it falls to SCC to do so, influence others where this is appropriate and monitor the situation so that we are able to respond quickly, if needed, to any changes and to ultimately ensure recovery progresses for our residents, communities and organisations.

Understanding the Impact of COVID-19

8. Coronavirus COVID-19 continues to circulate around the world and in the UK. As of 15th September 2021, there have been over 225 million confirmed cases and more than 4.5 million deaths globally, with over 7 million confirmed cases and almost 155,000 deaths in the UK.

9. Case rates in the UK and locally, are rising, as social distancing restrictions have been relaxed. Hospitalisations have plateaued, and remain considerably lower than during previous peaks, as a direct result of the vaccine programme. As at 11th September 2021, Staffordshire recorded a 7-day rate per 100,000 population of 366.0, higher than the national figure (285.6) and the regional figure (319.9).

Resetting the Corporate Strategy

10. Following the May 2021 elections, work to develop the Strategic Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022-26 is underway and will continue throughout the Summer and Autumn. This work has been informed by both the response to COVID-19 and our recovery process, the completed plan and financial strategy will be considered by Cabinet and Full Council in early 2022.

Priorities for Recovery

11. As detailed in the June 2020 and October 2020 Cabinet papers, each directorate is leading recovery for its own area, and recovery which cuts across all the directorates is being led through recovery groups linked to the four principles – communities, digital, people and climate change.

12. Detailed progress against the priorities for each directorate and corporate principles groups, alongside an updated Community Impact Assessment are appended:

   a. Appendix 1 Health and Care
   b. Appendix 2 Families and Communities
   c. Appendix 3 Economy, Infrastructure and Skills
   d. Appendix 4 Corporate Services
   e. Appendix 5 Communities
   f. Appendix 5A Libraries
   g. Appendix 5B Children's Centres
   h. Appendix 5C Archives and Heritage
   i. Appendix 6 People
   j. Appendix 7 Digital and Climate Change
   k. Appendix 8 Community Impact Assessment

SCC management, influencing and monitoring of the recovery process moving forward

13. As we emerge from lockdown restrictions the Local Authority has stepped back from some of the direct support provided to our communities and businesses during the pandemic. However, there is still a need to manage

some service specific elements of recovery, to monitor some key data sets to understand where additional intervention might be required, and to support and influence the local economy, our communities and partners as we learn to live with COVID-19.

14. Tabulated below are summaries which demonstrate how we intend to do this across SCC directorates and corporately.

a. Health and Social Care

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Health and Social Care		
Manage	**Monitor**	**Influence**
ASC Manage increased flexible working including video and telephone social care assessments Levels of referrals and ensure prioritisation of those at greatest risk		
Care Commissioning Ensure care market resilience through provision of advice to care providers around infection prevention and control Distribute government grant funding related to COVID Alternatives to building based day services and replacement care	**Care Commissioning** Monitor market to identify trends and future capacity requirements, especially care homes	**Care Commissioning** Working with NHS to improve urgent care and to prepare for winter 2021/22 Promote the value of the care workforce alongside NHS
In-house Learning Disability Provider Services	**In-house Learning Disability Provider Services** Best practice guidance and regulations	**In-house Learning Disability Provider Services** Promote SCC in-house services as a social

| New ways of providing support including remote electronic interactions

Ongoing infection control, testing and vaccine compliance to reduce risks of outbreaks in services.

Public Health
COVID response and outbreak management

Manage initiatives to increase support for stop smoking services, alcohol treatment services, mental wellbeing and resilience, healthy lifestyles, and workplace health

Continue to implement the Supportive Communities plan agreed in Feb.
COVID outbreak management | regarding COVID-safe practice across a range of regulated and non-regulated settings.

Monitor market demands for flexible, integrated services, provided in the community.

Public Health
Monitor trends in cases of COVID, hospital admissions, vaccination uptake and variants of concern.

Monitor community activity and assets, and build on the success of the Supportive Communities initiatives | care employer of choice, encouraging the social care industry as a positive choice for young people.

Be an industry leader in COVID-safe practice.

Public Health
Influence the public to healthier lifestyles through a program focussed on obesity

Work with partners to provide a more joined up approach to people with multiple complex challenges.

Enable and support further development of community assets and strengths-based care. |

b. Families and Communities

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Children and Families (Communities in a separate section below)		
Manage	**Monitor**	**Influence**
Workforce Consistency of services, maximising virtual opportunities whilst maintaining face to face contact where required	**Workforce** Staff welfare Offering a blend approach to returning to the workplace from 1st Oct,	**Workforce** Promote well-being services and online e-learning.

Virtual training for workforce and support for newly qualified social workers Manage returning to the office where possible to improve emotional support available to staff, for new staff to receive practical support and to ensure teams able to deliver the aims and objectives of the transformation	ensuring risk assessments in place for most vulnerable. Monitoring staffing levels and consider contingency around flu season.	
	Youth Offending Service Numbers of children and backlog in courts now at normal levels. The YOS Management Board will continue to monitor.	
Education Solutions for emotionally based school refusals which have increased during COVID Manage increased demand for attachment and trauma training for schools Ensure Personal Education Planning completion rates recover to pre-pandemic levels for children in care Implement new duties from DfE for Virtual School Headteacher from September 2021	**Education** Monitor school attendance, linked to both increased numbers being educated at home and some families failing to return children to school Attendance patterns across different ages and phases of statutory education Monitor permanent exclusions and the reasons. Virtual School overseeing a COVID recovery plan to	**Education** The return of face to face alternative provision The use of restorative practice in schools in response to fixed term and permanent exclusion The use of the graduated response in education settings to support the social, emotional, and mental health and other needs of children and young people

Provide advice to schools and education settings upon the actions required when implementing COVID-19 outbreak management plans	minimise the impact of gaps in learning on attainment and progress	Provision of effective support in terms of Local Outbreak management and clear advice and guidance to settings to reduce and help manage/reduce COVID disruption to education. Effective planning of the roll out of the 2021 Flu vaccination and 12-15-year-old COVID -19 vaccination plans Influence education settings to have effective Outbreak Management plans
Children with Disabilities Establish a dynamic purchasing scheme to attract new entrants and increase market capacity and availability of urgent care packages. New contracts live April 2022	**Children with Disabilities** Monitor impact of dynamic purchasing scheme on children's disability care market	**Children with Disabilities** Influence the market through establishing a dynamic purchasing scheme Influence schools and providers to ensure children with disabilities able to access all aspects of their support packages
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Manage the provision of support sessions in schools and communities to address increased demand across the CAMHS system Focus on early years and staff wellbeing as part of the DfE second phase Wellbeing for Education Recovery		**Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health** Work with partners to influence policy and planning across the system

Domestic Abuse Continue to work with partner commissioning organisations and the provider (New Era) for the domestic abuse contract to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on service delivery and to enable increased provision to address increased demand.	**Domestic Abuse** Monitor demand on provider	
Children's Social Care Manage numbers of Children in Care – identifying difficulties with shortage of placements that meet the needs of the most complex, and increased costs Manage increased numbers of Children with Disabilities on the edge of care entering care due to reduced school attendance, reduced health support, reduced availability of respite and home care. Continue to manage increase in prevention referrals to YOS. Continue to manage the increased numbers of children in care due to court closures and timescales to complete proceedings	**Children's Social Care** Monitor number and nature of referrals to ensure the right support Social workers in schools to monitor this cohort of children Court delays. Prepare for changes post 1st Oct	**Children's Social Care** Provide advice and support to Tier Two providers (Early Help) to manage backlogs and address areas of concern Utilisation of in-house resources to provide creative support. Dynamic purchasing in place/Home to support agencies support children remaining at home Health and safety review of current arrangements beyond 1st Oct Influence Partners in the wider children and families' system to

Manage family time arrangements with reduced building capacity until October 1st and convening foster career support groups. Ensure Business Continuity Plans are up to date and have actions to mitigate against risks.		support through earliest help

c. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills		
Manage	**Monitor**	**Influence**
Review the existing Economic Recovery, Renewal and Transformation Strategy agreed by Cabinet in June 2020, and related strategic priorities.	Monitor the current state of the Staffordshire economy to ensure we support and develop the economy further - % on government support; Universal Credit claimant count; numbers on furlough; job vacancies; skills shortages	Influence partners and businesses to capitalise on the opportunities that have arisen, to hasten the development of the Staffordshire economy and to support business to thrive
Manage the Staffordshire Means Back to Business (Additional Restrictions Grant) programme, launched in April 2021 to deliver against the Strategy through four workstreams	Through the Programme board consider delivery statistics monthly working with our Districts and Boroughs to ensure programmes are effectively implemented across the County.	Work with the private sector to ensure the Programme remains up to date and effective.
Deliver the i54 Western Extension site, to be largely complete July 2021	Monitor job creating announcements in Staffordshire	Support the Districts and Boroughs through enhanced 2 tier working in the delivery of their Town Deal and Future High Street

		Fund Programmes to promote job growth and activity in our urban centres.
Ensure the County is well positioned to benefit from programmes being developed by central government including Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Funding		Infrastructure led growth to ensure as our economy recovers and thrives, we have the infrastructure to support communities as a result of economic growth.

d. Corporate Services

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Corporate Services		
Manage	**Monitor**	**Influence**
Registration Service Manage the backlog of wedding ceremonies and related increased admin work to remove backlog **Governance** Ensure voting meetings are held physically following the repeal of emergency legislation Review Governance, updating as and when necessary along with communication of changes **Legal IMT** Manage the return of team members supporting IMT to their substantive roles		**Governance** We will continue to make the best use of technology whilst adhering to the relevant legislation. We will work with organisations such as LGA and LLG to lobby Government to allow for the use of virtual attendance at Committee meetings.

Workflow Realigning staff who had been tasked to provide support on COVID Regulations.	**Workflow** Changes in statutory obligations or requirements in relation to specific subject areas that impact on legal practice.	
Transformation Project Legal support and guidance support to the children's system transformation	**Transformation Project** Monitor legal risks arising as a direct or indirect consequence of the project.	
Backlogs Support to F&C and H&C and Court system to address remaining backlogs		**Backlogs** Continue to liaise with HMCTS and key partner agencies to highlight and propose developments and solutions to the backlog.
Property Support to property on building additional housing and capital receipts and realisation of assets, work which did not reduce during the pandemic		
Emergency Planning/Response Respond to COVID-19 and evaluate the impact across service delivery, including community and citizens' impact	**Emergency Planning/Response** Monitor resource resilience and ability to respond to concurrent or major incidents Review and monitor BCPs and ability to respond during COVID – critical services list Monitor Staffordshire uptake to vaccination programme, SCC and	**Emergency Planning/Response** National resilience Strategy - call for evidence National 'big resilience Conversation' – post COVID Civil Contingencies Act consultation LRF roles, responsibilities and Structures (inc funding)

	provider staff to ensure continuity of service Monitor and evaluate new risks eg Cyber and ensure relevant plans to mitigate risk(s)	– multiagency response and recovery National risk & resilience planning, assurance and governance
Property Manage the development of Shire Hall in Stafford Support and respond to COVID-19 building control and changing ventilation standards and new workplace guidance.	**Property** Monitor compliance and implement revised controls to premises where needs identified	
Policy & Insight Process and analyse a wide variety of information related to COVID-19 to enable Staffordshire to identify and respond rapidly to outbreaks **Customer Services** Manage the dedicated phoneline to support the public with IAG to improve isolation compliance Streamline processes to release support to support Local Outbreak Control and other parts of SCC Continue new ways of working employed through pandemic as	**Policy & Insight** Monitor data sets to ensure rapid response if needed to changing COVID situations **Customer Services** Monitor demand across all services. Current trends demonstrate that some service area demand is higher than pre-pandemic levels in 2019	**Policy & Insight** Dashboards shared with Local Resilience Forum to enable evidence-based decision making across Staffordshire. **Customer Services** Working with partners internally to influence the Customer Journey

normal services resumes and demand increases		
People Services Ensure suitable resources available to effectively deal with the People Response and recovery requirements (see section and link to the People section) Ensure that our people policies, processes and procedures reflect and support our new ways of working Ensure that we can provide the appropriate people focused data and insight to inform business needs and decisions Ensure that our SMART working vision supports our new ways of working following COVID-19 Ensure that we develop an ambitious vision for SMART working based on the experiences that COVID-19 has provided us Ensure that we use opportunities post COVID-19 to increase our ability to work agile effectively	**People Services** That the people strategy priorities support organisation through living with COVID	**People Services** Workforce planning for long term needs to ensure COVID does not impact organisational performance Influence a new culture for the organisation where SMART is embedded in the way people work, buildings are configured around activity undertaken and technology supports this approach SMART is how we work ensuring the needs of the business come first

e. Communities

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Communities		
Manage	**Monitor**	**Influence**
Libraries Fully operational services with ongoing COVID-secure environments to keep staff and customers safe, subject to further review Phase in regular activity programmes Re-introduce soft furnishings and toilet access with Zoono Cleaning in place Support and enable the return of IT Buddies	**Libraries** Monitor PC use to increase availability where possible. Monitor number of people attending events and activities, increasing capacity in line with social distancing guidelines. Consider when to reintroduce overdue charges. Monitor the impact of COVID-19 on income for the service.	**Libraries** Work with partner organisations to encourage Community Managed Libraries to recover their library offer and ensure a consistent approach across Staffordshire. An update on SCC Libraries recovery will be submitted to DCMS by October 8th
Children's Centres Provision of Childcare, Family Time and health and wellbeing appointments, in line with government guidance. The Early Years Coordination Service continues to facilitate a virtual offer which is supported by a broader Family Hub Offer	**Children's Centres** H&S site visits been carried out. H&S advice is to maintain low numbers and social distancing which is impacting on recovery	
Archives and Heritage Increase capacity for onsite visitors and volunteers from 1st October.	**Archives and Heritage** Monitor occupancy rates in visitor spaces, the increase of capacity with social distancing guidelines, and the	**Archives and Heritage** Work with other local authority archive services through Chief Archivists in Local

Recover small scale onsite events and workshops.

Continue to promote onsite and remote volunteer offer. Promote digital offer and online events, and remote copying/research services to offset income shortfalls.

Recruit Project Officer for Pandemic War Diary project to record the corporate response to COVID-19 | impact of COVID-19 on income for the service | Government Group to influence continued recovery of services. |
| **Rural**
Availability of contract cleaners to enable public toilet provision

Explore how to restore volunteering on public rights of way network, transport impacting on service delivery

Resume meeting provision at Chasewater Innovation Centre and at leased buildings though capacity remains reduced

Trading Standards
Manage COVID-19 related enforcement and prevention activities where applicable

Support to premises owners for return of | **Rural**
Monitoring numbers at Chasewater Innovation Centre and leased buildings with reduced capacity and impact on service | **Rural**
Working with parishes and user groups on local schemes where possible to achieve volunteering outcomes |

spectators at sporting events Coroners inquests continue to be held, making use of digital facilities with limited attendees in person and remote access for most. Inquests requiring a jury are taking place making use of the County Council Chamber.		
E,I&S Community Work Resumption of road safety education Manage the increased workloads due to impact of isolation on school transport Manage restrictions at Household Waste Recycling Sites To help maintain the substantial rise in walking and cycling levels during the pandemic, all opportunities are being taken to secure funding to provide permanent improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, in line with the 2021 version of Staffordshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	**Road Safety Education** Monitor the opportunities to deliver in schools and the take up of new digital resources	**Road Safety Education** Continued engagement with priority schools to prioritise delivery of in-school activities

Supportive Communities & Volunteering		Supportive Communities & Volunteering
Manage dissemination of grant to VCSE groups to support groups reopening post COVID		Through the Volunteering Task and Finish Group, influence residents and staff to increase the number of volunteers
Roll out Community Champions approach to other localities		
Adapt the Do-It volunteering platform to ensure sustainability		
Manage the new Volunteering Task and Finish Group to increase the number of volunteers into key service areas impacted by COVID-19, review the offer for volunteers and internal policies		

f. People

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
People		
Manage	Monitor	Influence
Continue to manage local outbreaks through the current third wave of the pandemic both for Core Workforce and Education and Early Years	Monitor building occupancy to ensure staff comfort and safety and SMART working	Positively influence the wellbeing of staff through Lifting Lockdown Implementation Plan & Winter impacts to manage anxieties, and communications – webinars, online mental health training, wellbeing offer
Retain current COVID building arrangements until end Sept 2021 and complete a review and recommendations in line	Monitor Outbreaks in workplaces/educational settings and ensure effective response and learning.	
	Monitor ventilation levels through Premises Managers and respond	From October 2021 positively influence the

with the Governments Winter Plan update.

Implementation of new Ventilation to manage delta variant and complete required workplace C02 monitoring. Manage outcomes with support from Strategic Property.

Ongoing communication with staff around SMART working

Review using space differently in SP1 to support SMART working

Complete HSW refresher training for Fire Marshalls, Evacuation Chair use etc

Launch effective vaccination Policy to effectively ensure legal compliance with regulation to ensure all employees that work in or attend a CQC registered care home are fully vaccinated/hold valid exemption by 11th Nov.

Revise Wellbeing Strategy in October 2021, tailored to the changing needs of staff and new ways of working | effectively to any risks identified.

Monitor that employees required to be fully vaccinated/hold valid exemption is in place to ensure compliance on the 11th November.

Monitor consultation on the widening of employee groups that may form part of the requirement for COVID 19 vaccination for deployment in role, allowing effective planning.

Monitor H&S standards are maintained across the organisation | wellbeing of staff through implementing a revised Wellbeing Strategy tailored to the changing needs of staff and new ways of working.

Influence effective management and planning of the 12-15-year pupil COVID 19 vaccination

Influence through effective education, encouragement, and support workforce to be fully vaccinated especial frontline and care staff. Including booster vaccination as they become eligible.

Influence employees to be winter resilient by accessing Flu vaccinations to support protection of vulnerable service users and residents of Staffordshire and support our own Business continuity arrangements |

Effective Flu vaccination programme for SCC and Education Workforce		

g. Digital

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Digital		
Manage	Monitor	Influence
Ongoing development of our digital programme, which will reflect the 'living with COVID' world we now find ourselves in.		

h. Climate Change

Staffordshire County Council Role in Recovery from COVID-19 Moving Forwards		
Climate		
Manage	Monitor	Influence
Development of a blueprint to help shape and describe the road to net carbon zero for Staffordshire		Influence Staffordshire Business Environmental Network to drive forward a green-led recovery conversation

A Pandemic "War Diary" and Lockdown Memories

15. Two projects have been developed by the Archive and Heritage Service which will become the corporate and community record/ memory of COVID-19 for Staffordshire. Their purpose is:

   a. To capture the official record of Staffordshire County Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic which will be transferred to the Archive and Heritage Service as a resource for future research.
   b. An oral history project to capture the experience of members and officers during the pandemic.
   c. A publicly accessible book/brochure to share the story of how SCC managed the response and create a lasting legacy.

d. Use the Lockdown Memories project which is capturing the community response to COVID-19 to provide additional information and context for the formal record.

16. The intention is to publish a book which will detail how SCC managed the response by March 2023 and deliver a Lockdown Memories exhibition at the Staffordshire History Centre between March and June 2024.

Director of Public Health Report

17. The Director of Public Health Report is an annual independent report by the Director of Public Health. This year's report is entitled "COVID-19 in Staffordshire: Impact and Opportunities" and reviews the pandemic from March 2020 up until the last easing of restrictions on 19 July 2021.

18. The report, which will also inform the Pandemic 'War Diary', details how Staffordshire has been affected by COVID-19, the SCC response and what we have learned which we can build upon. It is anticipated the report will be formally available by October 31st, 2021. A presentation has been delivered to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and it is intended that this report will lead the way for the JSNA, which will build our knowledge about the longer term impact so of COVID-19; and for a refreshed Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy which will seek to articulate a strategic response for the next 3-5 years.

Finances - Impact on MTFS

2020/21

County Council Financial Outturn

19. Since the 2020/21 budget was set, COVID-19 has become a global pandemic requiring a combined response from public sector services and which is also having a severe impact on the economy. Central Government have issued four payments of general grant to local authorities, plus grant to compensate for lost income, totalling £48.6m for Staffordshire. This has enabled SCC to support the additional pressures of continuing to provide vital services during the pandemic while protecting both workforce and residents.

20. The table below sets out the outturn of additional costs relating to the pandemic, plus lost income and delayed savings caused by the crisis. This can be funded by the government grant provided.

	£m
Additional Costs	35.407
Lost income	2.680
Delayed savings	3.940
Sales, Fees & Charges Grant	(1.733)
Grant funding	(46.896)
Carried forward into 21/22	(6.602)

There were £0.680m of costs incurred in 2019/20 which have been funded from the grant.

21. All grants received by Staffordshire County Council regarding COVID 19 in 2020/21 are listed below. The General COVID Grant can be used for all spend, the remaining grants are specific and go directly to services, the majority of which are paid out to suppliers. As the pandemic is having an impact across more than one financial year, some of the grants below will be carried forward into 2021/22 and are committed to fund the County Council's continuing response.

	£m
General COVID Grant Funding (incl. SFC grant)	46.896
Test and Trace	8.233
Adult Social Care Infection Control	18.183
Lateral Flow Testing in Care Homes	2.463
Workforce Capacity Adult Social Care	1.771
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	1.094
Food and Essential Supplies	0.823
Home to School Transport	0.661
COVID Winter Grant	2.316
Sales, Fees and Charges Funding	1.733
Contain Outbreak Management	22.114
Local Transport Authority Grant	0.314
Adoption Support Fund	0.225
Growth Hub	0.873
Schools Fund	0.644
Catch Up Premium	1.872
Mental Health Support	0.138
Other	0.332
Total	**110.685**

22. In addition, a contribution of £5m has been made from the COVID-19 grant to the Local Taxation Loss Reserve which will be used to smooth

out the impact of the pandemic on local taxation in future years. This will be used to fund the 25% of lost local taxation which is not being funded by the government, in addition to other impacts such as reductions in tax base.

23. The county council has managed its response to the pandemic in a range of different ways. Some of this has been by diverting resources from planned activities to supporting the outbreak. In other instances, additional resource capacity has been brought in to assist. Specific use of third sector support has also been facilitated by the additional grant funding. Additional costs have been incurred in a range of areas including:

    a. setting up vaccination centres
    b. additional transport costs
    c. supply of food
    d. supply of essential protective equipment
    e. additional cleaning services
    f. testing and tracing response
    g. waste disposal arrangements; etc.

24. Services have also suffered from reduced income levels from fees and charges as activity has been curtailed or stopped due to the restrictions and measures in place to control the virus.

25. There has also been a significant impact on planned cost reduction programmes which have been delayed due to the need to divert staff and resources to COVID response activities or have been delayed due to external factors such as the closure of the courts services. Many of the delays impact over multiple financial years.

26. Of particular concern is the uncertainty about the longer-term impact of the pandemic on the care market, which has resulted in higher costs and loss of income for providers, will continue for the foreseeable future. The latest funding settlement for Local Authorities was only for one financial year and there is a risk around future government allocations, particularly considering the significant grant funding provided to tackle COVID-19. Furthermore, and as described in paragraph 4 and Appendix 1the latest indications are that society will be living with the virus for much longer than had initially been anticipated.

27. There have also been some delays in delivering aspects of the Capital Programme however it is pleasing to note that a final outturn of £132m is broadly at levels experienced prior to the pandemic.

2021/22 and beyond

28. In the current financial year funding levels provide some stability to continue the recovery work and provide some capability to fund further response activity as and when the need arises. Latest forecasts suggest that the council will manage within existing budgets (as supplemented with COVID-19 grant) for the 2021/22 financial year

29. However future years are much more uncertain. Prior to the pandemic there were a range of 'unknowns' which included the 2020 Spending Review, The Fair Funding Review, Business Rates Retention, Adults Social Care Green Paper, reforms of schools funding and SEND and it is still not known when these reviews will begin.

30. This lack of clarity makes longer term financial planning extremely difficult, and in some cases impossible; these issues have not gone away because of COVID-19. In fact, the current crisis has added some additional problems notable around council tax and business rates collections as well as having a significant impact on income from fees and charges and cost reduction programmes that councils are delivering to balance their budgets.

31. The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight on the funding issues facing local government and the care sector. Through a combination of a huge local effort and non-recurrent funding we have been able to mount a successful response, limit the number of cases, and maintain care and support for vulnerable people. This is not sustainable without a longer-term funding settlement. Local government has been living 'hand to mouth' for years and this has prevented us from being able to make the long-term investments in the care sector. Without sustainable funding the care sector will remain fragile and will not be resilient to future emergencies.

32. This level of uncertainty does mean that SCC should ensure that it maintains suitable flexibility in its plans, funding decisions and unallocated reserves to help it respond to events as they unfold. It remains imperative that the £62m cost reduction programme is delivered.

33. We must as part of our overall strategy continue to work closely with government to identify solutions to the current problems, however it seems likely that difficult decisions lie ahead particularly with regard to the total quantum of funding that the sector has identified that it requires to deliver what our residents need.

Risks Identified

34. There is a risk that COVID-19 may re-emerge, either through a new variant or decreasing vaccination immunity levels, and this will impact upon our recovery timescales, dependent on the nature and scale of the outbreaks, and whether this results in local or national lockdowns. Planning for Living with COVID-19 has been considered and a paper was presented to SLT in July 2021.

35. The risk to SCC's finances and MTFS remains, as the costs of recovery and potential of further outbreaks are currently unknown, linked to unknown increased demand, future funds, and funding settlements from central government.

36. There is a risk that the response and recovery of individual partners may inadvertently negatively impact the SCC's plans.

37. There is a risk that individual partners recover in silos, reducing the likelihood of improved future public sector provision.

38. There is a risk that SCC does not take the learning from the response and recovery to date, and transformation programmes are limited as a result.

39. There is a wider social impact risk from COVID-19 on residents' individual finances and mental health, which may mean SCC will have to intervene more actively to support our residents and wider communities.

Continued Leadership and Management of Recovery

40. The SCC Planning and Recovery Group (PRG) was reinstated in March 2021 to oversee the easing of restrictions from the January 2021 lockdown and the related recovery to services and support for communities.

41. Given the significant progress to date and acknowledging both the length of time we can reasonably expect recovery to take, and the existing governance structures used to monitor delivery against plans, it is proposed again to stand down the PRG and manage recovery through business as usual channels.

42. Recovery Groups within Directorates will remain for as long as coordination of activity is required and be managed through the existing governance structures. Decisions which require escalation will be taken

to SLT as usual. Data monitoring will continue through the Insight Team as part of the Local Outbreak Plan.

43. A small planning and recovery team led by the Director for Corporate Services will continue to meet regularly to coordinate any SCC-wide recovery which may be required.

44. The partnership Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) is now scheduled to meet every month rather than every two weeks, meeting only if there is something specific to discuss. It will remain in operation for as long as the Staffordshire Resilience Forum, advised by the RCG, considers it necessary.

45. A study by Keele University (Appendix 9: Group processes and interoperability: A longitudinal case study analysis of the UK's civil contingency response to Covid-19) in which the Staffordshire Resilience Forum (SRF) Chair, SCC Director for Health and Care and other colleagues participated, has provided a reflective examination of the response to COVID-19 in Staffordshire linked to the national situation and central government guidance, and provides key learnings for partners locally and nationally moving forward.

Legal Implications

46. There are no specific legal implications to report at this stage.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

47. Please refer to Finance section above (paras 19 - 33).

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 Health and Care
Appendix 2 Families and Communities
Appendix 3 Economy, Infrastructure and Skills
Appendix 4 Corporate Services
Appendix 5 Communities
Appendix 5A Libraries
Appendix 5B Children's Centres
Appendix 5C Archives and Heritage
Appendix 6 People
Appendix 7 Digital and Climate Change
Appendix 8 Community Impact Assessment
Appendix 9 Group processes and interoperability: A longitudinal case study
        analysis of the UK's civil contingency response to Covid-19

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Appendix 1

Heath and Social Care

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care & Safeguarding:

a)   Increased flexible and mobile working. We continue to operate video and telephone social care assessments and reviews to enable staff to work flexibly, whilst also supporting staff to complete assessments face to face safely where this is required.

b)   We have Harnessed the improved ways of working that were evident during the pandemic response, including First Contact continuing to complete assessments quickly and effectively.

c)   Impact on referrals: We continue to see high levels of referrals across our services, and will continue to monitor these levels of demand and prioritise individuals at greatest risk

Care Commissioning:

d)   Recover operations: Our brokers continue to support our colleagues in adult social work as they respond to high levels of referrals. Together with our colleagues in MPFT adult social work, we have completed reviews of patients who were placed by the NHS into temporary accommodation during the first phase of Covid-19, and arranged ongoing placements as appropriate

e)   Improve urgent care. We are continuing to support the NHS to minimise unnecessary emergency admissions to hospital and facilitate timely discharge and we are working with the NHS to prepare for winter 2021/22

f)   Ensure care market resilience. We continue to provide advice to care providers about infection prevention and control, PPE, social distancing and 'shielding', and 'test and trace', as part of our COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan. We have continued to distribute government grant funding for infection control and testing. We have also worked closely with the NHS and the care market to promote vaccination of care home residents and staff (ahead of legislative requirements for staff in care homes to be vaccinated). We continue to promote the value of the care workforce alongside the NHS

g)   Review the care market. We continue to monitor the care market to identify trends and we have progressed a review of future market capacity requirements in the context of the impact of COVID-19 on the care sector, especially care homes. We continue to trial alternatives to building based day services and replacement care where appropriate to ensure support in the context of enhanced requirements for hygiene and social distancing.

In-house learning disability provider services:

h)   We have developed new ways of providing support in the context of enhanced requirements for hygiene and social distancing, including the use of remote electronic interactions.

i)   Finally, there is a need to acknowledge the impact the past year have had on our workforce and those working in the wider care sector and we continue to provide effective support through what has been, and may continue to be, a challenging period.

Public Health

The 19th July has seen the removal of most restrictions in England, however as cases continue to rise in the country and in Staffordshire, SCC and its partners continue to have a significant role to play in minimising ongoing transmission by managing outbreaks, contact tracing, communications and community insight and supporting the ongoing vaccination programme.

Public Health has implemented a range of interventions to improve those health behaviours that are associated with COVID-19 risks and those problems that stem from the restrictions in place to manage the pandemic, including:

a. Obesity – excess weight is associated with poorer health for people catching COVID-19. We have therefore initiated a long term programme designed to help people achieve a healthy weight that involves stakeholders from a range of different organisations. The plan is for partners to come together to explore how resources can be better used to encourage people to eat a healthier diet and take more exercise. A number of communications campaigns have already been delivered to provide people the information they need to lose weight and a range of projects will be delivered during 2021/22 and beyond.

b. Smoking – similarly, people who smoke often have greater health complications associated with COVID-19. We have therefore significantly increased the size of the stop smoking services in order to support more people to quit.

c. Alcohol – there is some evidence of people drinking more during the pandemic, not necessarily at the most problematic rates but at levels that are detrimental to health. We have therefore relaxed the eligibility criteria for alcohol treatment services to enable more people to received support.

d. Mental wellbeing/ social isolation – many people have struggled with the social restrictions put in place during the pandemic. We have therefore implemented a range of approaches to help people improve their wellbeing – not least through digital ways of connecting people socially.

e. Complex cases – the pandemic has highlighted the vulnerabilities of those people with multiple complex challenges, such as rough sleeping, addiction and mental illness. We are working with partners to provide a more joined up approach and have recruited new staff to support this client group.

f. Workplace health – businesses have suffered enormously through-out the pandemic. We have therefore developed a programme to enable employers to offer their staff access to resources to enable people to improve their health and reduce absenteeism.

Supportive Communities

In November 2020 Cabinet endorsed an updated Supportive Communities plan and the Supportive Communities priorities for 2021/22 were agreed in February 2021. Since October 2020 the following activity has been undertaken to support recovery:

a. Digital

 i. Launched a refreshed web based digital offer to ensure that older adults and people with additional needs had the knowledge and resources to support themselves at home.

 ii. Enhanced this offer through the delivery of targeted Coronavirus Information pages, the HealthApp finder, and the Do It Staffordshire volunteering platform to help people stay safe and well as they self-isolated.

 iii. Designed with practitioners the At Home platform, a virtual house that showcase aids and gadgets easily through commercial outlets that supports independence at home

b. Workforce

 i. Supported operational teams, including First Contact and area-based practitioner teams, to utilise new and existing digital resources. Identified and trained 46 digital and Assistive Technology Champions with representation across the adult social care operational teams

 ii. Facilitated, in partnership with Support Staffordshire, 56 Supportive Communities training sessions aimed at enhancing skills and providing a comprehensive toolkit covering: signposting and resources; communication and safeguarding; assistive technology and digital skills; COVID myth busting

c. Communities

 i. Worked closely with partners, including the voluntary sector, to ensure vulnerable citizens (including the clinically extremely vulnerable) had access to the support they needed through the lockdown.

 ii. Supported 1350 Staffordshire residents to step up to volunteer through the iCare and iCount campaigns.

 iii. Provided our communities with information, advice and guidance and linked them to voluntary and local community resources.

iv. Supported 149 Mutual Aid Groups to step up during the Covid-19 pandemic to support their communities with varying local offers, through effective relationships with our partners (including local anchor organisations).

v. In October 2020 launched 18 Community Help Points in trusted venues in local communities e.g. libraries and community venues. These provide a non-digital offer information, advice, and guidance and to actively signpost to very local community assets

vi. A new way of connecting and engaging with communities was developed to tackle fake news linked to Covid and to increase the uptake of the Covid vaccine in the Burton area. The Community Champions programme recruited 50 voices with a reach of over 1,000 people from the Burton community. This included local community representative, individuals, VCSE, Public and private sector. This group has successfully targeted two-way communication resulting in an increase in Covid compliance and vaccine uptake. The plan is to roll this engagement model and approach to other localities

vii. Disseminated £200k grant funding to support local community groups to stay open and deliver a level of provision between January to June 2021. In addition, a further £50k in small grants is being disseminated by Support Staffordshire Locality Officers. This also includes training, advice, and support for groups to 'open-up' post Covid

viii. There have been several successful campaigns using the nudge theory approach to help tackle some of the potential negative impacts of Covid for example the Happy At Home Christmas gifting campaign and the Let's beat Loneliness Together campaign

Appendix 2

Families and Communities (see Appendices 5, 5A, 5B and 5C for Communities)

Families and Communities have a number of recovery workstreams covering the full spectrum of services, these include:

- Workforce
- Youth Offending Service
- Education
- Children with a disability
- Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health
- Children Social Care

Each of the workstreams has monitored the impact on the services they deliver and the children and families we service and have workplans in place that outline the arrangements in place to mitigate the impact and to recover services to pre-COVID levels.

Workforce:

The numbers of colleagues available for work has remained consistent however there has been a recent increase in sickness and leavers compounded by challenges recruiting agency social workers to support. Despite this, we have continued wherever possible to provide consistency of services for children and families across Staffordshire with some aspects still being delivered through virtually. The recovery plan covering areas of the service is addressing the plan to move into a new way of working maximising virtual opportunities whilst maintaining face to face relationship-based contact where required. The children's system transformation is now progressing alongside the COVID recovery planning and as such the impact on the workforce across each area cannot be separated.

The wellbeing of the workforce remains high priority with team managers discussing the impact of COVID in supervision and one to one sessions. Additionally, self-care workshops continue to be delivered to colleagues from workforce development to support this. In the recent children and families health check, 78% stated that their wellbeing is important to their manager and within the national social work health check which compares our responses against the LGA Standards for Employers of Social Workers we scored above both regional and national averages for our support for social workers during COVID.

The training offer continues largely to be delivered virtually however with some training now taking place face to face in a COVID safe manner where appropriate – in February 85% of the children and families workforce responding to the health check confirmed they find virtual training easier to attend and would like this to continue. The programme of support for newly qualified social workers has been redesigned to take into account the experiences of new workers during their training and will now include face to face support in small groups. Similarly, development of the student programme has also been progressed to ensure we continue to offer high quality student placements supporting Staffordshire County Council as a learning organisation alongside developing our recruitment strategy.

Youth Offending Service:

The numbers of children known to the YOS is now up to expected levels and the backlog in courts has now reduced to normal levels. The YOS Management Board have included 'Learning from COVID' within the Annual Youth Justice Plan and will be monitoring full recovery through the quarterly Board meetings

Education:

There has been a rise in emotionally based school refusal, in some children this is new and for others this has become more entrenched over the last few months. We have had a session with the EP service to review how we can use the graduated response toolkit on emotionally based school refusal. The Virtual School EP is leading solution circles to look at solutions for individual children.

There has been a large increase in demand for attachment and trauma training for schools.

There has been a dip in Personal Education Planning (PEP) completion rates 84% in the Spring Term compared to 96% in Spring 2020 due to impact of social worker shortages and case load pressures. Where PEPs are being completed, we are seeing a rise in quality in all key stages of education e.g. PEPs rated good or outstanding rose from 57% in Spring 2020 to 83% in Spring 2021. This reflects the training and focus on PEP quality.

We have seen increasing numbers of children being educated at home due to closure of bubbles in schools. We had 94% attendance at the start of the summer term and we currently have 84% attendance.

Recovery for children in care will focus on ensuring that PEP completion rates are back to their pre-pandemic levels however given the benefits of on-line PEPs we will continue to have a mixture of face to face and online meetings. Children in care have been consulted in the development of a policy for future PEP meetings.

The governing body of the Virtual School is overseeing a COVID recovery plan with a view to minimising the impact of gaps in learning on attainment and progress. The Governing Body has also specifically focused resource in supporting early years and post 16 children where we had seen some dip in uptake of early years provision and an increase in the number of children not in Education Training or Employment.

As part of the DfE response to the Children in Need Review and the impact of the pandemic on children with a social care involvement, a set of new duties have been announced for the Virtual Head with the expectation that they are implemented from September 2021.

The VHT will be expected to
  - **be a strategic leader**
  - **champion the cohort of children with social workers**
  - **enhance partnerships with education settings**.

> **engage with a research partner to develop an evidence of what works for children with a social care involvement in education.**

Staffordshire has been allocated 146K to implement these duties and consultation is taking place on how these duties will be implemented by Staffordshire.

Since 8 March 2019, Staffordshire schools have continued to report strong attendance levels across mainstream schools; whilst special schools have also seen positive attendance, as is to be expected, this sector is struggling to fully engage all its families in regular full-time attendance. Across all of Staffordshire schools we have continued to ask schools to contact the family social care worker if the child's attendance is a concern, additionally we have monitored those parents who have failed to return their children to school, ensuring that in each case the school has put strategies in place to address the causal factors. In addition, we have re-introduced the issuing of penalty notices to parents for unauthorised leave and irregular attendance. Since the 8 March, we have issued 580 penalty notices and have received 142 requests from school for interventions relating to attendance. Current attendance data available to SCC indicates attendance overall to be at 94.1%. The last full year of pre-Covid data for 2018/19 showed overall attendance at 95.4%, so as expected there is a slight reduction.

Children with Disabilities

The third lockdown in the early part of 2021 proved the most difficult for us in respect of adequate capacity on the care market for children with disabilities, which was compounded by the cumulative effect of the Pandemic over time on the resilience of the families in receipt of support, as they had in many cases taken on more care themselves whilst isolating clinically vulnerable and extremely vulnerable family members during 2020 and the early part of this year. As a result, we needed to source more packages from non-contracted providers to fill what was a 'care gap' from January-March. Whilst we succeeded in maintaining packages of care throughout this did have a knock on effect on spend, and where at the end of quarter 3 we were under-budget for this provision, by the end of quarter 4 our spend overall came in at around £0.2M over budget for agency provided care. The overspend of £0.2m in 2020/21 (s17 payments) was offset however by other underspends in the Disability Teams budget (e.g salaries £0.1m / direct payments £0.250m). The Disability Teams budget overall in 20/21 was £4.3m vs spend £4.1m i.e. an overall underspend of £0.2m.

As the demands on the care market have eased a little through the spring we have been able to source the majority of packages via framework providers, but an over-reliance on a small number of providers, particularly in East Staffordshire, does mean the capacity from the market for this provision is likely to remain challenging for the remainder of 2021. Plans to address this are set out in another Cabinet Paper **- Intensive Support for Children with Disabilities -** which is scheduled for discussion at Cabinet in July 2021

What recovery will look like for the Children's Disability Care market moving forwards

SCC must provide care and support for children who meet the eligibility criteria for this under relevant provisions within the Children Act 1989, Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970, and Children & Families Act 2014 amongst others. Our current market lacks breadth and sourcing urgent packages, particularly for children with the most complex needs, is challenging. From the summer, we will be preparing new specifications for this support, undertaking extensive market engagement activity, and ultimately openly tendering for this to attract new entrants to the Staffordshire Market.

By establishing a Dynamic Purchasing System crucially this will allow us to add more providers over time, under properly contracted arrangements. The detailed plans for this piece of work are included in Cabinet proposals for **Intensive Support for Children with Disabilities,** discussed at Cabinet in July 2021. Evaluations of the success of this approach will be reported to the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee from next year, once new contracts go live on April 1st 2022.

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

The impact of the January lockdown and related restrictions has resulted in increased demand across the CAMHS system.

Referrals into the SCC and CCG commissioned service for emotional health and wellbeing demonstrate this increased demand and have been consistently high since January 2021. Recovery approaches are underway with work in schools and communities resuming where it is possible to do so. Plans include school transition workshops, peer support groups and a series of short support sessions for children and young people over the summer. Virtual delivery enables children, young people and parents/carers to fluidly access support via group and individual intervention sessions, whilst face to face delivery has also begun.

The Staffordshire e-newsletter (Kind Minds) continues to be developed and issued to share information regarding services, training and resources to support children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Initially with an intended audience of education professionals this has a growing reach. Currently a feedback survey is out for completion to ensure that this partnership newsletter continues to be of value and is meeting the needs of its audience effectively.

SCC Officers have representation at the STP/ICS CAMHS Board and are therefore involved in workstreams linked to governance arrangements across the system, the emergence of an access policy, post COVID clinical planning, looked after children and the development of a system-wide landing/web page.

The DfE/DHSC 'Well-being for Education Return' project webinars have now been successfully delivered across Staffordshire. Feedback from education professionals in attendance suggests that these sessions have provided reassurance, useful resources and local service information.

What will recovery for Children's Mental Health look like going forwards?

More recently, the DfE have announced a second phase called 'Wellbeing for Education Recovery'. SCC intend that early years and staff wellbeing will be our focus. SCC are currently exploring a range of ideas including a virtual gym and wellbeing sessions, along with Mental Health First Aid and personal resilience training. We are also exploring peer support apps for both education staff and young people.

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools (MHSTs) delivery continues to develop in the post lockdown school environment across the three districts of Staffordshire that now have coverage. Recent announcements via the CCG suggest that one additional district of Staffordshire will gain an MHST in January 2022.

Domestic Abuse
The impact of the January 2021 lockdown and subsequent recovery over March – June 2021
In the October 2020, we reported that at the end of quarter 1 (April – June 2020) performance remained comparable with the same period in the previously year. At the start of the first lockdown, New Era (our commissioned domestic abuse services provider) saw a drop in the number of referrals to the service, although these did pick up again in May and had reached the level of the previous year by the end of May / early June. After the first lockdown was lifted, numbers of referrals increased by approximately 5% on those recorded at the same point last year. Following the return to school in September 2020, demand for services increased further. Initially this increase was not unusual, as referrals tend to increase at the start of school terms. However, the number of referrals has now reached volumes of around 30% greater than the same period last year.

What recovery will look like moving forwards?
Staffordshire Commissioner's Officer are the lead commissioner for the domestic abuse contract, which is jointly funded by SCO, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke City Council. The three commissioning organisations continue to work closely together and with the provider to mitigate against the impacts of the Covid pandemic on service delivery.
Since the first lockdown, domestic abuse support services have significantly adapted their delivery methods to ensure continuity of service and credit should be given to the dedication of their staff through this extremely challenging period. Services retained their 'front door' to victims and their families and the perpetrator programme has been adapted appropriately. For both victim and perpetrator services, availability of support and services has been maintained throughout the pandemic, largely via remote working arrangements and online delivery but with some face-to-face support where appropriate and safe to do so.
Recent funding secured from the Ministry of Justice, along with some identified underspend within the contract, has enabled the Victim Service to fund additional posts in areas of the service which are experiencing high demand. In addition, commissioners are identifying additional resources to address demand and to further increase staffing capacity. They are working with New Era to understand how waiting

lists can be reduced and what the financial investment would need to be to facilitate this.

CSC Recovery

Demand for services & referrals
FRT report referrals remain static across the system with a slight reduction in the number of phone calls and contacts. A reduction in referrals is anticipated due to the impending closure of schools for the summer holidays; however, this is a yearly occurrence; therefore, referrals are now reported to be at pre covid levels. The majority of referrals tend to be for the Early Help Service and whilst some areas have seen an increase in EH referrals, there has been an overall reduction from March to May.
One of the key challenges is the delay with some of the tier two providers who have accrued some backlogs with a waiting list of up to 10 weeks. This has also been compounded by the fact some tier two services are still not delivering face to face services. The EPDO's are working closely with these providers to address areas of concern and provide advice and support.
The demand for children's placements has continued with a national and local shortage of placements equipped to offer the placements that meet the needs of children with the most complex needs.

Children with a disability, many remained attending school on a part-time time table with little or no direct health support and extremely restricted short break/respite support. Hospice support has been significantly reduced, home care support has been difficult to acquire due capacity in the system and the impact of covid on adult services- with many older adults remaining in their homes in preference to residential care. This has led to an increased number of families experiencing significant pressures and reaching breaking point with more disabled children either on the edge of care or coming into care.

There has been an increase in prevention referrals in YOS; however, there are no current concerns regarding the ability to allocate work. There are no current backlogs in the criminal Courts.

Court capacity
The closure of the courts for a period during each lockdown and the move to virtual hearings has had a significant impact on the timeliness of both private and public law cases, the 'backlog' has technically been removed by the allocation of court dates to all cases however, these are significantly more delayed than pre-covid timescales. In children's social care the impact of the delays is that court proceedings are lasting up to 46 weeks rather than the previous 26 weeks, in practice, this means children and families experience uncertainty and delay in planning, additional assessments, statements and direct work is required over the duration of proceedings including extra statutory reviews and social work involvement is extended in many cases-

therefore impacting on the capacity in the system and the number of children in our care.

Venue capacity

Restrictions around building/room/ cleaning capacity to support family time arrangements will remain in place until 1st October 2021.

Fostering Service have raised concerns in relation to the ability to convene the much needed and valued foster carer support groups due to the current restrictions and venue capacity.

Returning to the office

A key part of CSC's recovery planning is in respect of the return to the office for staff. Whilst the Government has announced this week a plan of, 'everyone back to work' from 19th July 2021, the Local Authority have confirmed the current restrictions will remain in place until 1st October. Steve Lycett continues to have lead responsibility for this and will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this.

The group considered the continuation of the restrictions post 19th July would have an adverse impact upon several areas and felt staff should be encouraged to return to the office without delay. Key concerns include:

- The emotional wellbeing of the staff who will have to continue to work in isolation given the very limited opportunities to meet their teams and receive the required emotional support given the nature of the job they do.
- It is anticipated there will be an influx of new staff joining the LA over the next few months and it is imperative they receive the practical and emotional support from their team from the outset
- The need to work closely with the teams to plan and deliver the aims and objectives of the transformation.

What will recovery look like, what is SCC responsible for and how will this be managed

CSC have been operating as BAU for many months. FRT and respective HOS will continue to monitor, review and plan accordingly as referrals are received. There has been a marked increase in the complexity of referrals received and more recently we have seen a noticeable increase in incidents of family breakdown for older teenage children especially, who have required the support of IPS or have needed to be looked after by the Local Authority. Family Meetings / FGC will continue to be progressed by all Team Managers and Social Workers for all families to ensure a plan of support is in place without delay.

The Local Authority has also seen an increase in referrals for self-harm indicating a deterioration in parental and child mental illness as a consequence of the covid pandemic. FRT will continue to monitor and review these referrals and ensure families are progressed in a timely manner and are signposted to the right services at the time of need. The Social Workers in school's initiative will also have a key role in monitoring and reviewing this cohort of children.

Recovery for CWD will be children having full access to all aspects of their support packages to ensure short breaks provide families with carer relief to enable them to continue caring for their children.

Appendix 3

Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Our Economic Recovery, Renewal and Transformation Strategy was agreed by Cabinet and scrutinised by the Prosperous Select Committee in June 2020. At that time, the impact of the crisis on the economy was unclear. While there is still some uncertainty around the longer-term impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, through the 4-step route out of lockdown we have seen the gradual re-opening of our economy.

Uncertainty does remain, and it is therefore very important that our Strategy and associated delivery plan(s) are relevant and capable of responding to whatever situation becomes a reality over the coming months and years.

To recap, our current Strategy sets out our priorities for the next five years through four non-linear phases:

a. **Respond** – support our businesses and residents through the Covid19 pandemic.
b. **Recover** – create the conditions to support our businesses and residents to return-to-work as soon as possible.
c. **Renew** – continue to progress those priorities that will play an important role in achieving our ambitions to develop the local economy beyond the current crisis.
d. **Transform** – utilise the opportunities presented by the current economic conditions by supporting the transformation of the local economy to be digital, clean and higher-value.

The five economic themes of *business environment*, *people*, *infrastructure*, *place* and *ideas* that form the integral part of our Strategic Plan and the national and local industrial strategies remain relevant, but the strategic priorities aligned to these themes have been reconsidered in response to the Covid19.

There are several key issues to consider that cut across all of the themes including the need to meet carbon-neutral targets, supporting inclusive growth to ensure all our residents benefit from the development of the local economy including within urban and rural areas and communicating and engaging effectively with our businesses and residents, thereby creating a strong Staffordshire identity.

As we move into Stage 4 of the national recovery plan, our intention is to now review our existing Strategy. But it is important to reflect on our current situation and how we can support and develop further Staffordshire's economy.

Current state of the Staffordshire Economy

Overall, the proportion of working age Staffordshire residents on a Government support schemes is estimated to be at 9%, which lower than the national average of 11% and regional averages of 12% as greater numbers of Staffordshire residents have been able to return to work. This data, which covers the period up to August 2021 is significantly lower than when last reported to the Committee when the Staffordshire figure stood at 14.2%.

The claimant count (Universal Credit) in Staffordshire at August 2021 stood at a total of 20,340 claimants with a claimant rate of 3.8% of the working age population much lower than the 5.1% last reported to the Committee. However, not all will be out of work. Whilst there have been some announcements of potential redundancies, due to the move to Universal Credit claimant count figures now also include those that have had a lower income through Covid-19, including furloughed staff and part time employees, short-term layoffs and self-employed that have paused or ceased operating.

The claimant count rate is still relatively low in Staffordshire (3.8%) compared to regionally in the West Midlands (6.3%) and nationally (5.3%), however, it is young people, the lowest paid (including those in manual occupations, more routine or less skilled jobs) and part-time workers who continue to feel the impact of the economic shock the most.

Unemployment and those claiming benefits has reduced slowly over more recent months, however, there remains a considerable number of employees furloughed within the county (19,300) albeit this number is significantly below that experienced during the third national lockdown which began in January 2021.

Whilst the furlough scheme has been further extended to the end of September 2021, the contribution of employers to the scheme rose to 20% in August. There is still a great deal of uncertainty around the future health of the economy, particularly as economic support measures are reduced or stopped.

There is room for some cautious optimism, The Bank of England has stated that the UK economy will enjoy its fastest growth in more than 70 years in 2021 as Covid-19 restrictions are lifted, with the economy expected to grow by 7.25% this year which follows a contraction of 9.9% in 2020 the biggest in 300 years.

In terms of the wider ongoing economic impact from the pandemic, UK Gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have grown for a fifth consecutive month in June 2021, by 1.0%, but remains 2.2% below its pre-pandemic level (February 2020).

Services continued to be the main contributor to GDP's recovery in June 2021, growing by 1.5% in June 2021 following a revised 0.7% growth in May 2021. Health activities contributed the most to services output as visits to GPs increased in June 2021, while hospitality benefitted from its first full month of indoor dining since coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions were eased on 17 May. Food and beverage services activities was again the main contributor to the growth in consumer-facing

services, growing by 10.1% in June 2021. This is reflective of the easing of restrictions allowing businesses in retail, hospitality and the visitor economy to reopen.

The Bank of England is now expecting the unemployment rate to peak at 5.5% later this year, which is far below the 7.75% it predicted in February. It is expected that extra Government spending such as the extension of the furlough scheme until the end of September, a stronger recovery, and an assumption that the long-term damage from the pandemic will be smaller than previously expected will all help limit job losses.

The job vacancies data also shows signs of economic recovery with a significant uplift in recruitment over recent months to above pre-COVID levels. This is reflective of the further opening up of the economy with more businesses being able to open as restrictions ease. Staffordshire has seen a year on year growth in job vacancies in August of 53%, or more than an additional 9,200 vacancies. The total number of unique vacancies in Staffordshire stood at 26,750 jobs in August 2021.

As more jobs become available, there are increasing signs of skills shortages in a number of sectors, with insufficient labour supply to meet demand. This is currently particularly relevant in digital/IT roles, social care (both adults and children), hospitality such as chefs and waiting staff, haulage HGV drivers, and engineering.

Within Staffordshire there have been several positive major job creating announcements in recent months including:

- JCB is recruiting 100 new welders for its Staffordshire factories as demand for its products continues to grow. Recruitment is underway at the manufacturing giant's world headquarters, as well as at is plants in Cheadle and Uttoxeter. This month, JCB will also welcome an additional 15 recruits on to its fabrication and welding apprenticeship. In the past three years, almost 70 welding apprentices have passed their courses and gained permanent employment at the group.
- Six hundred new jobs are being created at two Screwfix distribution centres in Staffordshire. The trade tools, accessories and hardware products retailer is on the look out for hundreds of new, full-time employees across its sites at Stafford and Lichfield.
- National retailer Just for Pets has secured an additional two stores in the West Midlands as part of its UK expansion drive. Just for Pets has opened its largest space to date in Stafford, a 10,000 sq ft store on Kingsmead Retail Park.
- IT solutions provider Instem has acquired one of its competitors in a deal worth £11.4 million. The Staffordshire-based business has taken over life sciences software company PDS Pathology Data Systems Ltd. Headquartered in Switzerland, and with offices in the United States and Japan, PDS has been a direct competitor of Instem for more than 25 years. All of its 35-strong workforce will now be fully integrated into the Instem business, increasing Instem's operational capacity, particularly in the United States, Swiss and Japanese markets.

- A group of Staffordshire-based companies have launched a higher apprenticeship scheme – and are on the lookout for seven new recruits. Bri-Stor Group has seven vacancies across its four companies. The 500-strong group, which is based in Hixon near Stafford, has taken on at least 13 engineering apprentices every year for the last 11 years.

Staffordshire Means Back to Business (Additional Restrictions Grant)

A key component of our response through the Strategy has been enhanced two tier working with our Districts and Boroughs through Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG). The programme has been designed in discussion with District and Borough Councils, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chambers of Commerce. It allows for the pooling of the ARG the local authorities received from central government, together with a significant contribution from Staffordshire County Council (£862,000). This programme was approved by Cabinet in January 2021.

It was designed to be cross cutting and to respond to all four component parts of the Strategy (respond, recover, renew, and transform) through the following work streams:
- Staffordshire 500, Apprentices Wage Support
- Nil Cost Training for Employers Top Up Project
- Small Business "To Thrive" Financial Support (including business start up, capital support through loans and grants to enable Covid related adjustments)
- Ignite (encouraging young people to start their own businesses)

All 8 Districts and Boroughs have signed up to the programme framing their contribution within the context of how they see the issues faced by their local economy can be assisted.

The total programme value is £5.0m including match funding from outside Staffordshire. The 8 Districts, plus SCC have contributed a total of £3.5m to the scheme. In total £1.8m has been committed to be spent with Staffordshire businesses.

Staffordshire Means Back to Business ARG was soft launched in April using the County's strategic contribution as the catalyst to activate interest across the County. Each individual Borough and District was "activated" as and when their approvals were in place (we were able to operate at different speeds and yet not withhold opportunities because of the County's umbrella investment). The outputs to date are detailed below:

Committed outputs	Staffs Apprenticeship 500 Output	Nil Cost Training Top Up Output	Business Start Up - Start Up Loans Output	Business Start Up - Ignite Output	Business Start Up - Start Up Output	Small Business 'To Thrive' Output	Total Output
Cannock Chase	47	26	1	10	19	2	**105**
East Staffordshire	12	27	0	22	27	4	**92**
Lichfield	22	29	0	47	8	4	**110**
Newcastle-under-Lyme	22	27	1	88	42	6	**186**
South Staffordshire	8	15	2	42	12	5	**84**
Stafford	43	35	3	35	87	4	**207**
Staffordshire Moorlands	11	29	2	38	57	5	**142**
Tamworth	11	8	1	15	13	6	**54**
Total Commitments	**176**	**196**	**10**	**297**	**265**	**36**	**980**

With our partners, much has been done in a very short period. The Back to Business Programme (ARG) is subject to monthly progress meeting to understand where take up has been lighter than expected, and to push appropriate marketing. Although we anticipate a lot of activity in the next few months as we move into Stage 4 and businesses really start to trade more fluently.

Spotlight on i54 Western Extension

i54 Western Extension again cut across all themes of the strategy as ARG did, yet in a slightly different way. Whilst much of the work was underway, it was about practically responding to the pandemic, to continue to create the opportunities that would assist the economy to recover, renew and transform, without introducing delay and faltering activity. Taking the lead to create the right conditions for growth and working as part of a strong Joint Venture Partnership, we continued to deliver the 60 acre i54 Western Extension site, which will now be substantially complete by the end of July. This creates the opportunity for our economy to thrive.

With the commitment of Staffordshire County Council, City of Wolverhampton Council, South Staffordshire Council and both the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and Black Country Local Enterprise Partnerships to bring forward the site, a funding package was confirmed in early 2019 allowing the access road serving the site to be developed and completed in March 2020 two weeks ahead of programme.

Despite the many challenge caused by the Covid 19 pandemic and periods of wet weather, the project team have worked safely throughout, with an advanced work package for the main earthworks programme completed on schedule in July 2020 with the current main earth works package following directly after.

In preparing the development platform, which can accommodate up to 1 million square feet of employment floor space, the team have successfully moved 86,300m3 of topsoil, excavated, processed and placed 145,000m3 of weathered and hard rock and installed half a kilometre of drainage.

There are already some very exciting opportunities at an advanced stage of negotiation with two occupiers including an exclusivity agreement and Heads of Terms signed with a modern methods of manufacturing company and advanced discussions with another international manufacturing business. Without continuing to deliver this scheme through Covid, these opportunities would not be realised so soon.

As well as the employment opportunities on the site, there will also be enhancements to access to Wobaston Road through provision of a new cycleway, the formation of new habitats and a significant improvement to the bridleway which was diverted round the site as part of the works.

Conclusion

We are seeing positive signs of recovery in the Staffordshire economy which continues to perform ahead of the national and regional picture. Returning to pre pandemic levels of economic activity will take some time and there will undoubtedly be some negative impacts as it restructures and adapts to future challenges and opportunities.

Our Strategy recognises that many opportunities have arisen that we need to grasp to hasten the development of the Staffordshire economy, such as the increase in homeworking and positive environmental impacts. Delivering our Strategy and taking full advantage of these opportunities will further enable the Staffordshire economy to *renew* and ultimately *transform* into a place where clean, productive businesses are created and thrive whilst existing business are supported to fully participate in the new economy.

Appendix 4

Corporate Services

The recovery focus areas for Corporate Services are Registration Service, Governance, Legal and Property. The corporate functions of Digital and People are captured through the Principles workstreams.

Registration Service

1. From October 2020, the registration service had begun to recover towards business as usual. Death registrations are still conducted by telephone, but all other appointments were continuing to be conducted face to face. The backlog of births had been caught up with only 50 births remaining from the original backlog of over 900.

2. Unfortunately, the death rate started to rise again slightly in November-December, with a large rise in Covid related deaths. An increase to over 100 in November.

3. The second national lockdown beginning on November 4th saw more disruption to wedding ceremonies, as ceremonies were again suspended, until December. The third national lockdown commencing in January 2021 until March saw all ceremonies again suspended and added to over 1000 ceremonies that were already postponed from 2020. The overall number of ceremonies cancelled or postponed by the end of the lockdown is over 1500.

4. March saw a large-scale recruitment of casual staff to cover the excess ceremonies scheduled in 2021, with July-August alone having nearly double the amount of ceremonies seen in a pre-Covid year. These extra ceremonies add a large amount of admin work with approx. 2000 email enquiries into the service per month, an increase of over 130% on pre-Covid figures. The excess ceremonies also see an increase in notices of marriage of over 35% in Q1 to over 1900 appointments. Compared to pre-Covid, business as usual numbers, July-September has seen over 700 excess ceremonies.

5. Deaths continue to be registered by phone, with electronic transfer of paperwork from GP's to registrars, and from registrars to funeral directors, using powers given by the Coronavirus Act. Feedback from the public is positive, removing the need for them to physically attend an office, but the process of 'triaging' this paperwork and contacting the next of kin to book an appointment proves labour intensive, and adds extra strain to the service whilst ceremony demand is at an all-time high.

6. The easing of restrictions through summer 2021 sees a return to full citizenship ceremonies, clearing any backlog from spring when ceremonies were conducted individually via digital meetings.

Governance

7. The emergency Regulations 2020 for virtual meetings ceased after 7 May 2021. Since then, Committee meetings with voting members of the Council have reverted to taking place in a "physical" format.

8. The benefits of virtual and hybrid meetings will continue to be employed, however, where appropriate including for "guests" at meetings and for, such as Scrutiny pre-meetings, inquiry days, work planning days.

9. The review of Governance continues, with the Constitution and Schemes / Sub Schemes of Delegation being updated as and when necessary along with the communication of any changes.

Legal Services

10. Legal Services have continued to offer a full range of services throughout the pandemic and have reacted and adjusted its priorities to align with the changing priorities of SCC generally and specifically in relation to Covid.

11. Team members from the employment and contract teams who were previously tasked to provide high level support to IMT are now embedding back into their former substantive roles although, by virtue of their dedication and hard work, they continued servicing their own areas of work whilst supporting IMT.

12. The team have offered support to and are working within the changing climate caused by the Children and Families System Transformation Programme. This includes offering advice and guidance on any risks within the programme and working to support implementation of the programme through the provision of training.

13. The team are working with Families and Communities, Health and Care and the Court System to address any remaining backlog in court cases in childcare and Adult Social Care.

14. The team continue to work on ensuring that development can proceed at pace supporting the building of additional housing and bringing support for the creation of new educational establishments. Contrary to initial expectation this work did not reduce during the pandemic. The work of the team on capital receipts and realisation of assets also supports very important income generation for SCC.

Property

15. Progress by the Property group includes a successful bid for funding from Get Building Fund through the Stoke and Staffordshire LEP, for the development of the Shire Hall in Stafford. The relevant planning permission and listed building consent have been granted and works are planned to commence shortly.

Policy and Insight

16. The Policy and Insight Team continue to direct significant analytical capacity and capability to support Local Outbreak Control. The team is managing, processing and analysing a wide-variety of different data on a daily basis, to enable Staffordshire to identify and respond quickly to rising COVID-19 cases and outbreaks. The team continues to maintain, a suite of interactive dashboards that bring together all the key datasets related to COVID-19 and which are updated daily. These dashboards are shared across the Local Resilience Forum to enable evidence-based decision making across Staffordshire. The Team is also providing regular situational reports for a wide variety of different outbreak boards and incidents.

17. Beyond Local Outbreak Control, the team are also supporting the long-term recovery from COVID-19, assisting Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team to develop the Strategic Plan for 2022-2026.

Customer Services

18. Customer Services: Customer Services continue to play a crucial role through supporting the ongoing response required to the COVID-19 outbreak. The flexible nature of the resource has enabled the team to respond quickly to demand.

19. To date the Local Outbreak control has been supported by making over 60,000 phone calls to positive COVID-19 cases and their associated contacts, contributing to the successful control of a number of outbreaks. The team continue to work with our local district partners to improve intelligence and continue enforcement efforts.

20. A dedicated phone line has been developed to support the public by providing one front door for support. Information, advice and guidance regarding care needs, financial support and food, is given to improve isolation compliance across Staffordshire.

21. The Customer Service team is working to streamline other processes and call types, working with service areas directly, to release as much resource as possible. This resource is also being used to support Local Outbreak control and other parts of SCC who are working hard to support the public.

22. As normal services resume and demand increases, the Customer Service team are working hard continue the new ways of working that were employed during the peak of the pandemic.

Appendix 5

Communities

Overall buildings-based recovery has been slower than anticipated due to local guidance and social distancing measures which have been maintained

The ongoing impact of this is increased isolation, loneliness and is impacting on people's ability to remain independent and resilient.

We are seeing a number of parents who would have previously been fine with the social support now needing additional services and help.

Section A – Recovery Update (October 2020 – July 2021):

Below is an update on recovery of community-based services / support since the previous Recovery Update Cabinet Report in October 2020:

1. Libraries:

1.1.   During 2021, we have continued to recover the physical library offer in line with government and sector guidance. Aspects of the service have been reintroduced gradually at each recovery milestone. This includes:

- **From 12 April** - PC access, printing, study space and managed browsing in static libraries

- **From 17 May** – extended opening hours – including late nights, Saturday afternoon and Sunday opening; managed browsing on our mobile libraries; meeting room use for small groups and 1-1 sessions

- **From 19 July** - SCC libraries reverted to full opening hours; quarantining of stock ceased; meeting rooms were made available for hire, subject to Risk Assessments; mobile library routes were extended

1.2.   To keep library staff, volunteers, and customers safe, mask wearing continues to be encouraged in public areas. Hand sanitising, one-way systems, QR codes, Perspex screens have remained in place and are subject to further review.

1.3.   While the recovery of the physical library offer has been slow, the digital library offer continues to grow.

2. Children's Centres:

2.1.   Since June 2020, appropriate Children's Centres have continued to provide Childcare with adherence to the appropriate Government Guidance.

2.2.   Since August 2020, appropriate Children Centres have continued to facilitate Family Time for children in our care. This continues to be a priority for the County Council as

we seek to meet the needs of our children and their families whilst also responding to the requirements of the Courts.

2.3. Since September 2020, appropriate Children Centres have recommenced health and wellbeing appointments. Recommencement of health and wellbeing provision has continued to be embedded in line with the recovery plans of health partners.

2.4. The Children's Centre Early Years Core Offer reassumed in April 2021 in line with the appropriate Government Guidance. Due to requirements of this, Government Guidance restrictions have remained in place. This has led to a reduction in provision available through the Centres compared to pre-Covid-19. Considering this, the Early Years Coordination Service continues to facilitate a virtual offer which is supported by a broader Family Hub Offer.

3. Archives and Heritage:

3.1. Archives and Heritage continued to operate with Staffordshire Record Office open on an advanced booking basis for four spaces supported by a remote enquiry and copying service.

3.2. Public services were suspended in November 2020 and from January to 13 April 2021 in line with national restrictions. A remote service was maintained with staff working from home. Staff continued to work from home and from the office where required to manage collections, deliver the public service or to enable them to deliver their role.

3.3. The William Salt Library remains closed with the agreement of the William Salt Library Trust. Access to the collection is provided through Staffordshire Record Office.

3.4. Stoke on Trent City Archives reopened to the public on 12th May 2021 on a phased basis. Lichfield History Access Point reopened on a booking only basis on 29 June 2021.

3.5. **The service launched the Lockdown Memories project in July 2020 to record the community experience of the pandemic. The Pandemic War Diary project has been approved to record the corporate response to COVID-19.**

4. Rural (including Country Parks and Rights of Way):

4.1. All countryside sites and car parks remain fully open with COVID signage in place. This includes the Visitor centres at Cannock Chase and Chasewater being open, toilet facilities at most sites, parking machines operational at Chasewater, Marquis Drive and Milford. The Great War Hut at Marquis Drive remains closed at present.

4.2. Volunteers are back supporting the country parks. Additional marshals are in place at Chasewater and Cannock Chase for weekends and bank holidays to help manage safety (particularly fire, water safety and parking issues) and engage with visitors.

4.3. Cafes are open at Cannock Chase, Chasewater and Froghall Wharf and the play area is now open at Greenway Bank. New play areas are being installed at Cannock

Chase and Chasewater during July and August. Trading vendors (ice creams) have been appointed on new COVID-19 terms.

4.4. Environment and Rights of Way staff are generally working from home but undertaking field work following COVID-safe guidelines.

4.5. Availability of contract cleaners is impacting on public toilet provision at some sites, impacting on visitor experience.

5. Trading Standards and Coroners:

5.1. Trading Standards Services have continued to operate with the majority of staff working from home and dealing with the majority of issues by telephone and email.

5.2. Inspections and visits to business premises have taken place where necessary following Covid-19 guidance ensuring contractual and statutory work has been completed.

5.3. Trading Standards have continued to co-ordinate and carry out Covid-19 related enforcement and prevention activities in partnership with Police and District colleagues. This includes serving formal Directions on premises where there have been breaches of Covid -19 restrictions legislation.

5.4. Officers engaged with the Sports Grounds Safety Authority (SGSA) and sports ground premise owners planning in advance of the return of spectators into sports grounds and have supported the premise owners with the sporting events that have recently taken place with reduced capacity crowds .

6. Economy, Infrastructure & Skills community work:

6.1. The recovery of community assets and activities with E,I&S continues to be managed within their respective service areas as business as usual or is monitored through other Recovery Groups.

6.2. The Flood Risk Management team continue to investigate and seek solutions to property flooding problems and have won a £6m bid from Defra to improve community resilience to flooding.

6.3. The School Crossing Patrol service continues to adapt to specific needs at individual schools and road safety education is starting to resume within the classroom as well as through the provision of on-line resources developed during the pandemic.

6.4. School Transport is fully operational, though during June there has been a significant increase in number of pupils isolating which has impacted on a number of routes serving schools across the county (increasing workload as a result)

6.5. Local bus services are now operating at / or close to 100%, patronage levels have increased on average to around 60% of pre pandemic levels.

6.6. Household Waste Recycling Sites remain open, with certain restrictions in place.

7. **Supportive Communities (taken from Public Health update) & Volunteering**

7.1. Supportive Communities has worked closely with partners, including the voluntary sector, to ensure vulnerable citizens (including the clinically extremely vulnerable) had access to the support they needed through the lockdown. It has provided communities with information, advice and guidance and linked them to voluntary and local community resources.

7.2. 149 Mutual Aid Groups have also been supported to step up during the Covid-19 pandemic to support their communities with varying local offers, through effective relationships with our partners (including local anchor organisations).

7.3. In October 2020 18 Community Help Points were launched in trusted venues in local communities e.g. libraries and community venues. These provide a non-digital offer information, advice, and guidance and to actively signpost to very local community assets

7.4. A new way of connecting and engaging with communities was developed to tackle fake news linked to Covid and to increase the uptake of the Covid vaccine in the Burton area.   The Community Champions programme recruited 50 voices with a reach of over 1,000 people from the Burton community. This included local community representative, individuals, VCSE, Public and private sector. This group has successfully targeted two-way communication resulting in an increase in Covid compliance and vaccine uptake.

7.5. £200k grant funding has been provided to support local community groups to stay open and deliver a level of provision between January to June 2021.

7.6. There have been several successful campaigns using the nudge theory approach and tied to #DoingOurBit to help tackle some of the potential negative impacts of Covid-19. This include the Happy At Home Christmas gifting campaign and the Let's beat Loneliness Together campaign.

7.7. The Do-It Staffordshire platform been used by SCC and NHS partners throughout lockdown. This has involved supporting with urgent issues and requests such as supporting vaccination centres, hospitals, 'entitled to' benefit checker, and temporary mortuaries. 1350 Staffordshire residents to step up to volunteer through the iCare and iCount campaigns.

7.8. In addition, the Do-It iCount platform (our internal volunteering platform), has received urgent demand for internal volunteers due to lockdown, Health Protection Board requests, and help required by the NHS. We have had 156 unique iCount volunteers since the Do-It iCount platform went live in September 2020 to date – mostly in response to second peak lockdown demands in January / February.

Section B – Priorities moving forward for recovery

8. **Libraries:**

8.1. To rebuild customer confidence and encourage increased engagement with the library offer regular activities will be phased in from September (e.g. Baby Bounce and Rhyme, Places of Welcome, IT Buddies) and the re-introduction of overdue charges will be delayed until 1 Oct

8.2. We continue to work with our partner organisations to support the CMLs to recover their library offer and ensure a consistent approach across Staffordshire's library network

8.3. Attached as appendix A is the Staffordshire Libraries COVID-19 phased recovery plan.

9. Children's Centres:

9.1. Recovery of Children's Centres is continuing with provision increasing over the Summer 2021. The Service is continuing to seek specialist Health, Safety & Wellbeing information, advice, and guidance as it becomes available in order to ensure the Children Centre recovery continues at pace.

9.2. Family Time for children in our care continues to be a priority for the County Council as we seek to meet the needs of our children and their families whilst also responding to the requirements of the Courts.

9.3. See appendix B for an updated 'Reopening Children's Centres Recovery Plan' for further details on priorities for recovery moving forward.

10. Archives and Heritage:

10.1. From 19 July the service will recover its onsite volunteer offer with groups returning to Staffordshire Record Office on a phased basis through to September/October 2021.

10.2. From September/October the service will re-establish activities and events, complying with social distancing as appropriate. Capacity for onsite visitors will be reviewed. The Pandemic War Diary project will begin to record Staffordshire County Council's response.

10.3. SCC Archives and Heritage will be promoting the onsite visitor offer, the return of volunteers, recruitment of new volunteers to support the offer, and the return to Stafford town centre. SCC will also be promoting the digital offer and online events.

10.4. SCC Archives and Heritage **will be monitoring** occupancy rates in visitor spaces, the increase of capacity with social distancing guidelines, and the Impact of COVID-19 on income for the service.

10.5. For further information, please see attached an updated Staffordshire Archives and Heritage Recovery plan at Appendix C.

11. Rural (including Country Parks and Rights of Way):

11.1.   We are exploring how we can restore volunteering on the Rights of Way network, pending changes in guidance and a health and safety review. Transport is a key constraint on many parts of the network, and this is impacting on service delivery.

12. Economy, Infrastructure & Skills community work:

12.1.   Highways maintenance and construction activities will continue to take place to keep the road network accessible for all; and Highway support continues to be provided to local councils and businesses adapting to changes in social distancing requirements.

12.2.   To help maintain the substantial rise in walking and cycling levels during the pandemic, all opportunities are being taken to secure funding to provide permanent improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, in line with the 2021 version of Staffordshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

13. Trading Standards and Coroners:

13.1.   Coroners inquests continue to be held, making use of digital facilities with limited attendees in person and remote access for most. Inquests requiring a jury are taking place making use of the County Council Chamber.

14. Supportive Communities & Volunteering

14.1.   A further £50k in small grants is currently being disseminated to VCSE groups by Support Staffordshire Locality Officers. These small grants will be used to offer training, advice, and support for groups to 'open-up' post Covid

14.2.   Following the success of the Burton Community Champions work, Public Health also intend to roll this engagement model and approach to other localities.

14.3.   As people are returning to work and social events, the focus of the Do-It volunteering platform needs to change to ensure it is sustainable. The platform will be developed to accommodate the needs of the Community Champions programme as it expands, enabling a digital space to share and communicate trusted information and local priorities.

14.4.   Champions will also be able to use the platform to recruit volunteers as part of the wider Do It Staffordshire communications plan. Through the Volunteering Task and Finish Group (see below), decisions will be made of the future volunteering priorities of the county council and where the platform fits within them.

14.5.   Following discussions at the Communities Leadership Group, a Volunteering Task and Finish Group has been established. The first meeting of the group took place on 12th July with officers involved in volunteering from across the Council, as well as our VCSE Strategic Capacity Building Partner. The purpose of this groups is to:

- **Increase the number of volunteers** into key service areas that have been impacted by Covid-19.

- **Review our offer for volunteers** in order to ensure the Council can provide a consistent and attractive offer and a positive experience for volunteers.

- **Review our internal policies** on volunteering to support and encourage our staff to volunteer within their communities.

Appendix 5A Libraries Recovery – Steps and Tiered restrictions from 2 December 2020 – 1st October 2021

The library offer within each step/tier is subject to Government guidance, review and library risk assessments

	Under review	October	September	Not before 16 August	Tier 1 Step 4 19 July	Tier 2 Step 3 17 May	Tier 3 Step 2 12 April	Tier 4	Tier 5	Full Lockdown
Libraries open 10am – 4pm							✔	✔	✔	
Libraries closed after 5pm							✔	✔	✔	
Stafford Library closed on Sundays							✔	✔	✔	
Standard opening hours					✔					
Staff based at one library only							✔	✔	✔	✔
Staff to provide relief between libraries					✔	✔				
Staff to work from home where possible/redeployed								✔	✔	✔
Mobile Library Service order and collect					✔	✔	✔			
Mobile Library Service browsing					✔	✔				
Housebound Service					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Transport between libraries					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Order & Collect					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Grab & Go					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
PC Access				Increase availability from 16.8	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Printing					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Photocopying staff assisted					✔	✔				
Public Photocopying			✔							
Study space					✔	✔	✔			
Browsing					✔	✔	✔			

Overdue Charges	✓									✓
Virtual events					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Virtual activities					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Events		✓ social distancing maintained			✓					
Activities					✓ BBR starts September					
Bus passes					✓					
Blue Badges	✓									
IT assistance					✓					
Toilets			✓ Zoono Cleaning	✓	available for meeting room hire & emergencies					
Requests					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Reading Group requests					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
New book deliveries					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
New audio deliveries					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bookstart deliveries					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ restricted delivery of packs to Astonfields
Meeting room use for 1-1 sessions conducted by partners such as job club, Everyone Health etc					✓	✓				
Meeting room use by partners for small group sessions					✓	✓				
Meeting room use by SCC staff for small groups					✓	✓				

Meeting Rooms hire					✔ with RAs in place					
Library spaces for meeting			✔							
Refreshments			✔							
Reading Friends					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Places of Welcome			✔	✔						
IT by Telephone					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
IT Buddies			✔ reintroduce from 16 August							
Collection HQ work					✔	✔	✔			
Stock management					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Volunteers resume in SCC libraries e.g. BBR, shelving			✔		BBR starts September					
Schools Library Service					✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Test and Trace					✔ optional	✔	✔			
Book Quarantine						Or spray	✔			
Plastic seating			✔							
Soft furnishings in library spaces			✔ Zoono Cleaning	✔						

Appendix 5B - Reopening Children's Centres Recovery Plan Overview:

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) is seeking to facilitate the Recovery of Children's Centres through Step 2 of the new HM Government Roadmap – see below: -

HM Government

STEP 2

NO EARLIER THAN 12 APRIL
At least 5 weeks after Step 1

BUSINESS / ACTIVITIES

All retail

Personal care

Libraries and community centres

Most outdoor attractions

Indoor leisure inc. gyms
(individual or household use only)

Self-contained accommodation

All children's activities

Outdoor hospitality

Indoor parent and child groups
(up to 15 people, excluding under 5s)

LARGER EVENTS

Funerals
(30 people)

Weddings, wakes, receptions
(15 people)

Event pilots

TRAVEL

Domestic overnight stays
(household only)

No international holidays

COVID-19 ROADMAP 2021

Please note that Childcare on site, Family Time and Social Care bookings and Health Appointments are already taking place. This Recovery Plan demonstrates the introduction of the recommencement of the Children's Centre Early Years Core Offer.

Phase:	Phase One:	Phase Two:	Phase Three:
Target Dates:	W/C 22/03/2021	W/C 29/03/2021	W/C 10/04/2021
Function:	Communication is sent to all providers to confirm the reopening of the Early Years Core Offer. This will specify the age range of 0-2 years to ensure we can support new parents back into socialisation. 1 x session per centre / outreach venue running at any one time to prevent exceeding the 15 people outlined within the government guidelines giving us control of communal areas. Deadline of Friday the 26th March to express an interest in returning to the centres.	Early Years Coordinator to liaise with the providers to confirm room bookings. Inductions to take place and risk assessment to be agreed and implemented prior to commencement of sessions. Priority to be given to ensure 0-2 age range is taken into consideration and a variety of services can be offered. All providers need to arrange their own booking system to ensure drop in is not available.	Final arrangements in place ready for commencement of services on the 12/04/2021.
Centres:	Cannock Chase Children's Centre Western Springs Children's Centre East Staffordshire Children's Centre Hill Street Children's Centre Newcastle Children's Centre Maryhill Children's Centre Charnwood Children's Centre Silkmore Children's Centre		

	Landywood Children's Centre Staffordshire Moorlands Children's Centre Leyfields Children's Centre Glascote Children's Centre
Additional Comments:	Government Guidance will be reviewed daily, and this process will be amended to suit. Arrival and departure will be coordinated to ensure that no more than 15 attendees will be on site to attend a session ensuring social distancing is always maintained. Face masks will always be worn by adults whilst on site unless they have a medical exemption. Children are not required to wear face masks in line with the government guidance. Providers will need to ensure the rooms and touchpoints are cleaned and disinfected prior to leaving the site or starting a new group. Providers to ensure that they fully understand and adhere to the buildings COVID secure risk assessment as well as their own session risk assessment.

The above dates and content continue to be subject to change as we await further Government Guidance.

Appendix 5C - Staffordshire Archives and Heritage Recovery Plan – Update 14 September 2021

Recovery June-September 2021

Our recovery was phased with phase 1 being the first reopening in July 2020 just for Staffordshire Record Office gradually recovering our full opening hours. Phase 2 reinstated the full opening hours and included Saturday opening. A summary of this phase of recovery was reported in the 6 July 2021 update. From 19 July we implemented phase 3 of our recovery:

- We re-introduced volunteer group sessions using the Learning and Archive Resource Centre, following social distancing and hygiene guidelines. 39 volunteers have returned (27 onsite, 12 working remotely).
- We delivered Lockdown Memories sessions to schools (delayed from January)
- We have continued to engage with people through social media
- We have planned onsite events with partners to commence September/October
- We have delivered our onsite services at Staffordshire Record Office through our full opening hours offering six spaces for visitors requiring advance booking and pre-ordering of documents. Quarantining of documents has ceased in line with The National Archives guidance.
- Stoke on Trent City Archives is also open on temporary opening hours in accordance with the City Council guidelines.

Priorities for phase 4 recovery from 1 October 2021

A H&S representative has visited Staffordshire Record Office to review the spaces, COVID-19 measures, CO_2 measurements, ventilation and processes to manage visitor numbers. Based on the discussion from 1 October we will increase capacity for volunteers and visitors onsite but still maintaining social distance and management processes. Our priorities are:

- The number of visitor seats will increase from six to eleven spaces maintaining distance and ensure seats are directed away from one another. Mask wearing when moving around will be encouraged.
- Advance booking and pre-ordering of documents will continue but it will be possible to accommodate appointments on the day and some production of documents throughout the day.
- Volunteer spaces will increase from six to eight. Remote volunteering will continue to be supported.
- Small scale events with twelve spaces and workshops with eight spaces will be resumed. Online talks will continue to be offered.
- Recruit Project Officer to deliver Pandemic War Diary project.

Appendix 6

People

Since October 2020 the Health & Safety Team have continued to support all core council businesses and education/early years establishments to manage the impact of Covid-19, alongside contributing to the vaccination management of Social Care & Health staff.

In addition, the team have developed vaccination and lateral flow testing management arrangements, agreeing this with the Trade Unions implementing in February 2021.

The team have been managing local outbreak control throughout the county for education and early years establishments, along with supporting the council's own workforce with local outbreak control management. During this time there have been 1036 settings who have experienced Covid-19 impacts at least once and many of the schools several times during the last 12 months. Several of the SCC residential care homes, children residential, frontline C&F and H&C teams and workplaces have had to manage Covid -19 cases and outbreaks.

The team continues to manage local outbreak through the current 3rd wave.

A paper has been drafted, presented and agreed with SLT focused on 'Lifting Lockdown' and the readiness of our buildings to support this. SLT have agreed to retain current Covid building arrangements until the end of September and retaining physical changes like current ventilation standards and touchdown centres till the end of 2021, with a view to reviewing this position early December.

A webinar is planned for early July with premises managers to make sure that they're ready to meet the future increasing demand and occupancy numbers against desks that are available (there will be an expected 50/60% reduction).

A special edition of 'The Knot' was shared with staff on 15th June which included FAQ's around the lifting of lockdown, this will be reinforced with ongoing communication messages through various staff communication channels. Current messages are that SCC has been a SMART working organisation since 2017 and will continue to be so into the future – working locations are based on business need and through agreement with line mangers.

Special attention will be focused on triangulating and reporting occupancy rates with data taken from the desk booking system, card access system and the number of people connecting remotely.

In addition, Head of Property is working on an approach to working differently within the physical premises of SP1, particularly focused on using the physical space in a different way to support a SMART way of working and repurposing office space. This is a longer-term piece of work and there will not be physical changes in place for the lifting of lockdown in July.

Other actions implemented to support:

- Ongoing provision of PPE to meet increasing demand and to respond to changing PPE guidelines
- Inspection on Covid secure buildings, following up on any areas of concern or complaints raised.
- Supporting surge testing in Leek, Newcastle and Tamworth (achieving over 90% staff tested and over 70% of all pupils being tested in test areas) having a direct impact on 'breaking' the curve in Leek and Newcastle, actually reducing the impact amongst the 11-17 age group.
- Regular Head Teacher briefings and Governor webinars have been held to communicate key messages and ensure that there is a forum for concerns to be raised and answered.
- Held regular trade Union briefing sessions to keep TU colleagues aware of current impacts and how Covid-19 is being managed and to complete any required consultation.
- Updated HSW guidance in line with national guidance changes and to promote effective best practice standards
- Reviewed ventilation management with strategic property to ensure compliance with HSE guidance. Also completed webinar with school to ensure effective ventilation without compromising fire safety.
- Followed up on HSE Inspections to resolve any comments raised – Only minor issues raised by HSE as they were satisfied with our COVID Secure arrangements.
- Developed Lifting Lockdown implementation plan to support organisation during transition from 19th July Freedom Day through to winter to ensure we keep most of our Covid management arrangements to support colleagues to return to office safely and manage staff anxieties. Communication plan to support this also developed.
- Regular wellbeing webinars held to support employees working at home which have been well attended.
- Mental Health training moved to online options to maintain effective access to training.
- Maintained all wellbeing offer and support to our people to support mental and physical health.
- Completed flu vaccination programme to support vaccination

HSW service review all guidance changes daily and then revise guidance and messaging as needed.

Next steps

- HSW & Communications have session to review all messages to our people on 13th July once 19th July is confirmed.
- A paper has been drafted, presented and agreed with SLT focused on 'Lifting Lockdown' and the readiness of our buildings to support this. SLT have agreed to retain current Covid building arrangements until the 1st October, this decision will be supported with the communication of key messages and retaining physical Covid secure workplace arrangements. Current ventilation

standards will be maintained until the end of 2021, with a view to reviewing this position early December.

- A webinar is planned for 9th July with premises managers to make sure that they're ready to meet the future increasing demand and occupancy numbers against desks that are available (most premises have just under 50% capacity).
- Increase HSW refresher training for Fire Marshals, Evacuation Chair use etc has also been planned for.
- Revising vaccination management arrangements to deal with introduction of compulsory vaccinations in adult social care, care homes and staff that regularly attend these settings.
- Revise councils Wellbeing Strategy Sept 2021 onwards to include Financial Wellbeing offering and other wellbeing tailored to meet the changing needs of our people and to help new ways of working.

HSW will remain responsible for Covid Response activities in schools and SCC workplaces moving forwards as well as supporting HPB LOC for Education and Early years

Appendix 7

Digital

Immediate recovery for the Digital Programme has now been completed. Ongoing development of our digital programme continues, which will obviously reflect the 'living with covid' world we now find ourselves in.

Climate Change

Since the previous recovery paper the Council has published a [Climate Change Strategic Development Framework](#) for Staffordshire and agreed a Year 1 Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP). An annual report is currently being prepared which will highlight achievements on the road to net carbon zero and will lead to the development of CCAP 2.

In terms of recovery much has been said of a green led recovery at a national level. This is an element that needs further consideration locally and we are well placed with our long-established Staffordshire Business Environment Network (SBEN) who can help drive this conversation. It must be remembered however the road to net carbon zero is a long one for Staffordshire and the authority is currently developing a blueprint which will help shape and describe how this ambition is achieved.

Community Impact Assessment

Name of Proposal: Impact of COVID-19 on SCC Communities, Economy, and Organisational and Recovery Approaches

Project Sponsor (if applicable):
Janene Cox OBE, Assistant Director Culture, Rural, and Safer Communities
Kerry Dove, Head of Strategy and Digital

Project Manager (if applicable) or Lead: Deborah Sullivan, Senior Project Manager

Date: July 2021 **v1.0**

the knot unites

Community Impact Assessment – COVID-19 Recovery Approach:

1.   Introduction:

1.1.   This is a CIA on Staffordshire County Council's **approach to the planning and recovery from COVID-19**. It builds upon a CIA produced in September 2020 which considered initial impacts of COVID-19 on our communities, the economy and organisation. The recovery process will take an extended period, and as such this CIA will be updated in line with Cabinet decisions and updates where appropriate. It will also be appropriate for separate individual CIAs to be produced when substantial proposals are made.

2.   COVID-19 – Overview:

2.1.   COVID-19 continues to circulate around the world and in the UK. As of 12 July 2021, there have been 5,155,243[1] confirmed cases and 128,431 deaths in the UK. Within Staffordshire, as of 12 July 2021, there have been 73,121 confirmed cases and the number of deaths up to 2 July 2021 is 2,707. The below table shows that East Staffordshire has experienced both the highest number of cases and highest number of deaths. Over the course of the pandemic the hardest hit district has changed from one to another. Please note that the figures include cases from care homes and prisons and numbers of these vary from district to district – South Staffordshire has a disproportionately large percentage of the prison population.

Area name	Cumulative lab-confirmed cases	Cumulative Rate	Cumulative Deaths
Cannock Chase	8240	8177.7	303
East Staffordshire	11282	9421.0	468
Lichfield	8193	7821.0	324
Newcastle-under-Lyme	10621	8205.3	407
South Staffordshire	9932	8833.5	305
Stafford	10304	7505.8	371
Staffordshire Moorlands	7029	7140.8	302
Tamworth	7520	9804.9	227
Staffordshire	**73121**	**8313.4**	**2707**

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[1] Cases in the UK | Coronavirus in the UK (data.gov.uk)

2.2. The UK has had a number of COVID-19 restrictions placed upon it since the first national 'lockdown' was imposed in late March 2020. In July 2020 most 'lockdown' restrictions were lifted, however in September 2020 restrictions were tightened and a patchwork of local restrictions were imposed across England. Two further 'lockdowns' were imposed in England in November 2020 and January 2021.

2.3. In March 2021, England began a phased exit out of 'lockdown'. This consists of a four-step plan[2], forming part of the Government's wider roadmap to 'cautiously but irreversibly' ease restrictions. In July 2021 England moved to step 4 of the roadmap with the removal of all legal limits on social contact but with the warning from Government that the pandemic is not over and to proceed with caution.

2.4. A successful UK vaccination programme is a key factor in enabling the remaining restrictions to be lifted. As of 12 July 2021, a total of 80,795,852 vaccinations have been given in the UK, with 45,923,721 being first doses and 34,872,131 being second doses.

3. Staffordshire response to Covid-19:

3.1. Staffordshire continues to respond strongly to the pandemic and will maintain Covid defences such as testing, contract tracing and outbreak management. This will likely be the case for the remainder of 2021/22 and possibly longer-term, with the duration and capacity of defences varying dependant on the severity of outbreaks.

3.2. Staffordshire has made good progress with the vaccination programme with more than two thirds of the adult population having received two doses. This ranges from >90% of over 50s down to <25% of those aged 18-30. The success of the vaccination programme means that the future course of the pandemic is more predictable and more optimistic.

3.3. Staffordshire has a sophisticated testing programme that provides a range of testing options to suit the needs of the resident. Community, surge, at-home and workplace testing have all played a key role to identify the virus in Staffordshire and to assist the County in its outbreak response.

3.4. We have worked closely with our multi-agency partners across the public sector to respond to Covid-19, strengthening existing relationships and developing new ways of working where required. We have also worked closely with our communities, including the local VCSE sector, who have been vital in supporting our response. Through the Council's Recovery work and our recently agreed Communities Delivery Plan 2021/22, we will continue to learn from the response to the pandemic and work together to empower our residents to support themselves and each other.

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[2] COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021 (Summary) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

4.   Summary of Engagement

4.1.   At the heart of all our recovery plans and activities is considering and understanding the impacts of COVID-19 on our residents and communities. As recommended in previous CIAs, the Council undertook a COVID-19 Residents' Survey to understand how the pandemic has affected the people of Staffordshire and their views on priorities for recovery. Between August and September 2020, we received more than 3,900 responses to the survey. This is the largest response to a cross-cutting survey in some time.

4.2.   Findings show that almost two thirds (63%) experienced an overall negative impact on life, compared with 12% who reported a positive impact. Further findings include:

- The overall negative impacts experienced include not seeing friends and family, being unable to travel and being worried about vulnerable friends and family.

- The overall positive impacts experienced include saving money, spending more time outdoors and / or with immediate family, however those with disabilities / long-term medical conditions are less likely to have experienced the latter two positive impacts

- Over half of residents increased their use of digital by doing more online shopping and chatting more online.

- Over half of residents provided support to others and almost all of these people indicated that they were willing to continue.

- Some of the greatest concerns looking forward include the recovery of the local economy, the impact on the environment / climate, mental health and wellbeing, and access to health care.

4.3.   A further COVID-19 residents survey is due to take place in August and September 2021 to ensure the County Council continues to listen to residents to understand how the pandemic continues to affect the people of Staffordshire.

5. Emerging Recommendations

5.1. Based on the updated assessment below, this CIA makes the following overarching recommendations in order to continue supporting the recovery process:

- **Engagement** – Ensure the results of the previous and future Covid-19 surveys are considered when developing recovery plans, business plans, and new Strategic Plan.

- **Mitigations** – Ensure the mitigations set out in this CIA continue to be delivered and are aligned as appropriate to minimise the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on residents with protected characteristics.

- **Contingency planning** – Ensure all contingency planning is updated in the event of further waves of the pandemic.

- **CIAs** – Produce individual CIAs if further significant changes to community-related services are proposed.

Protected Characteristics:	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations

• **Race**	All	People of all ethnicities will continue to benefit from the safe recovery of Council services and assets.	• Evidence has demonstrated that some ethnic groups are at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19, being severely ill and dying from COVID-19.
			• Risks to BAME groups will continue to be monitored as restrictions lift and if new variants pose specific impacts.
				• SCC have and will continue to support all residents, including extra measures for ethnic minorities where necessary and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by:
				  o Managing local outbreaks, particularly in communities with high numbers of BAME
				  o Provision of Public Health IAG in accessible way ensuring residents whose first language is not English are fully informed
				  o Contract tracing to reduce further transmission
				  o Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme
				
				• Specific programmes of work are taking place that will support BAME communities during recovery including the Community Champions programme in Burton to engage with

				local communities and promote vaccine uptake
				
				• In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place for BAME communities, particularly if:
				   o New variants pose a specific concern
				   o Council services have to reduce/shut
				
				• Consider lessons learnt from Covid-19 when developing our Diversity and Inclusion Objectives, and strengthen our approach to engaging and collaborating with our workforce and community on diversity and inclusion issues

• **Disability**	All (in particular people over 70 with long-term conditions)	People with disabilities will continue to benefit from the safe recovery of Council services and assets.	• Evidence has demonstrated that people with disabilities have been at greater risk from COVID-19, due to access to services, isolation and digital exclusion. However, as restrictions have lifted and Council services fully reopen the risk greatly reduces.
			
			• Risks to disabled people will continue to be monitored as restrictions fully lift and if new variants pose specific impacts.
				• SCC have and will continue to support people with disabilities where necessary and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, for example:
				   o Managing local outbreaks
				   o Provision of Public Health IAG in accessible way e.g. for people with learning disabilities, the visibly impaired, residents who are isolated and/or digitally excluded as a result of a disability, are fully informed

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				○ Contract tracing to reduce further transmission ○ Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme ○ Targeting take-up of vaccinations ○ Continue to ensure the implications of disabled people are considered in the redesign of all services and measures are in place in community assets as part of recovery. - Specific programmes of work are taking place that will support people with disabilities during recovery, for example: ○ To support digital inclusion, the SEND Adult Learning Disability team have been consulting residents with disabilities and their carers online during the pandemic. The libraries have introduced 'digital buddies' to provide phone support for digital skills. The Digital Device Recycling scheme has been introduced to benefit residents most likely to be at risk of digital exclusion. ○ The Supportive Communities programme has provided communities with information, advice and guidance and linked them to voluntary and local community resources.

					o Community Help Points have been launched in community venues to provide a non-digital information/signposting offer. • In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if: o New variants pose a specific concern o Council services have to reduce/shut
• **Sex**	All	People of all genders will continue to benefit from the safe recovery of Council services and assets.	• While both genders are affected by COVID-19, evidence shows that men are more likely to be severely ill and/or die from COVID-19, particularly those in older age groups. • Services that support each sex that are usually provided in community assets, together with services that are used by higher numbers of women pose risks when lockdowns/restrictions are in place, e.g. breastfeeding support groups, alcoholism support groups, domestic abuse support. • However, as restrictions have lifted and Council services fully reopen the risk greatly reduces.		• SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by: o Managing local outbreaks o Provision of Public Health IAG o Contract tracing to reduce further transmission o Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme o Targeting take-up of vaccinations • Specific programmes of work are taking place that will support families during recovery, including: o Health and Wellbeing provision o Facilitating 'family time' for children in our care o Facilitating virtual Family Hub Offer

			• Risks will continue to be monitored as restrictions fully lift and if new variants pose specific impacts.	• In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if:
				  ○ New variants pose a specific concern
				  ○ Council services have to reduce/shut

• **Age**	All (in particular older people, including those with long-term conditions, and children and young people).	People of all ages will benefit from the safe recovery of Council services and assets.	• All age groups are at risk of COVID-19; however, evidence shows that older age groups and younger people have been at greatest risk.
			
			Older people:
			
			• Older people are at greater risk of being severely ill/dying from COVID-19.
			• Older people also suffer wider implications of lockdowns / restrictions e.g. isolation and loneliness, digital exclusion, care services
			• However, as restrictions have lifted and Council services fully reopen the risk greatly reduces. Older people have also been prioritised for vaccinations which has reduced risk.
			• Risks will continue to be monitored as restrictions fully
				• SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, for example:
				  ○ Managing local outbreaks
				  ○ Provision of Public Health IAG, particularly those who are elderly and digitally excluded
				  ○ Contract tracing to reduce further transmission
				  ○ Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme
				  ○ Targeting take-up of vaccinations, particularly to younger age groups
				  ○ Engage with schools to address specific issues
				
				• Specific programmes of work are taking place that will support older people during recovery, for example:
				  ○ The libraries have introduced 'digital buddies' to provide phone support for digital skills. The Digital Device Recycling scheme has been introduced to benefit

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			lift and if new variants pose specific impacts.
			
			Younger people:
			
			• Younger people are most at risk of lockdowns / restrictions, particularly those who are vulnerable, have SEND / disabilities, have low educational attainment, depend upon Council/care services/support.
			• There is increasing evidence that younger people may be more at risk of long Covid and less likely to take up the vaccine.
			• There is also increasing evidence that young people may suffer long term mental health issues associated with isolation in first lockdowns and anxiety regarding educational attainment and the ending of isolation for under 18s / ending of school bubbles
			• Younger people also have specific risks associated with COVID-19, including the impact of lockdown on vulnerable families and the longer-term impact of social isolation on young people, their education and mental / physical health.
				residents most likely to be at risk of digital exclusion.
				  o The Supportive Communities programme has provided communities with information, advice and guidance and linked residents to voluntary and local community resources.
				  o Community Help Points have been launched in community venues to provide a non-digital information/signposting offer.
				
				• Specific programmes of work are also taking place that will support children, young people and families during recovery, including:
				  o Facilitating Family Time for children in our care and the Virtual Family Hub offer.
				  o We are continuing to engage with young people through our VCSE Strategic Capacity Building partnership contract, which includes engaging with and representing the views of young people across the county. This includes the Wellbeing and Health Action Map (WHAM) plan, a resource that helps support young people to reflect and learn about their own emotional health and wellbeing and develop their own plan to improve it.

				However, as restrictions have lifted and Council services fully reopen the risks reduce, however risks should continue to be monitored and mitigations put in place where necessary	In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if: ○ New variants pose a specific concern ○ Council services have to reduce/shut
• **Religion or Belief**	All	People of all religions and beliefs will benefit from the safe recovery of Council services and assets.		• COVID-19 lockdowns / restrictions impacted upon people wishing to attend religious services / ceremonies and practice their faith • However, as restrictions have lifted community assets have reopened	• SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by: ○ Managing local outbreaks ○ Provision of Public Health IAG ○ Contract tracing to reduce further transmission ○ Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme ○ Targeting take-up of vaccinations • Specific programmes of work are taking place that will support communities during recovery including the Community Champions programme in Burton to engage with communities and promote vaccine uptake • In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if:

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				- New variants pose a specific concern - Community assets have to shut
Gender Reassignment	All	People who have undergone gender reassignment or are transitioning will benefit from the recovery of Council services and assets.	- People who have undergone gender reassignment or are transitioning are potentially at greater risk of physical and mental health issues due to less support being available during COVID-19 lockdowns / restrictions to services - However, as restrictions have lifted the risk reduces.	- SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by: - Managing local outbreaks - Provision of Public Health IAG - Contract tracing to reduce further transmission - Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme - Targeting take-up of vaccinations - In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if: - New variants pose a specific concern - Access to support/health services are reduced
Sexual Orientation	All	People of all sexual orientations will benefit from the recovery of Council services and assets	- LGBT people are potentially at greater risk of mental health issues due to less support being available during COVID-19 lockdowns / restrictions to services - However, as restrictions have lifted the risk reduces.	- SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by: - Managing local outbreaks - Provision of Public Health IAG - Contract tracing to reduce further transmission - Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme

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				○ Targeting take-up of vaccinations - In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if: ○ New variants pose a specific concern ○ Access to support/health services are reduced
Pregnancy and Maternity	All	Pregnant women will benefit from the safe recovery of Council services and assets	- Services that support pregnant women that are usually provided in libraries and children's centres (e.g. mother's support groups, breastfeeding support groups etc) have not been fully accessible during lockdowns / restrictions - However, as restrictions have lifted and support services have resumed the risk has decreased. There is a risk that pregnant women may feel anxious about being vaccination and this and other potentially risks should be monitored	- SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by: ○ Managing local outbreaks ○ Provision of Public Health IAG ○ Contract tracing to reduce further transmission ○ Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme ○ Targeting take-up of vaccinations particularly to pregnant women - In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if: ○ New variants pose a specific concern ○ Access to support/health services are reduced

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• **Marriage and Civil Partnership**	All	The recovery of Council services and assets will benefit marriages and civil partnerships where appropriate.	• Whilst national lockdowns / restrictions have affected weddings and civil partnership ceremonies, there are no specific issues that impact upon people who are married or in a civil partnership	• SCC have and will continue to support people and build public confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by:
				  o Managing local outbreaks
				  o Provision of Public Health IAG
				  o Contract tracing to reduce further transmission
				  o Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme
				  o Targeting take-up of vaccinations
				  o Communications to people/businesses to take personal responsibility to help reduce the risk of COVID-19 during large social gatherings such as weddings
				
				• In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if:
				  o New variants pose a specific concern
				  o Access to services are reduced

• **Impact on SCC Staff**	All staff	The recovery of Council services and assets will allow staff to return to Council buildings where appropriate and safe to do so.	• SCC have and continue to support staff to work in a way that suits individual needs and circumstances in order to manage risks to the workforce, however risks should continue to be monitored particularly as restrictions are lifted and the	• SCC have and will continue to ensure staff feel safe and confident about how and where they work. • There are restrictions and safety measures in place for people who wish to visit the workplace. • There is ICT equipment available and support for people who wish to work from home.

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			Council reviews its working arrangements for staff, consideration should be given to: • Staff who wish to continue to work at home but are being strongly encouraged to return to the office • Staff who wish to return to the office but feel anxious doing so • Staff whose mental well-being has been affected due to increased and continued working from home	• Staff should be continually reminded of the mental health support available e.g. ThinkWell and MindKind • Workplace COVID-19 restrictions remain in place until October 2021. This will be reviewed in September and it is recommended that risk to staff continues to be considered during any decision making on working arrangements.
			• Some staff continue to be disproportionately pulled into the Covid-19 response risking increased stress levels and long working hours.	• Ensure SLT monitor and manage capacity/workload within teams who are responding to Covid-19 • Encourage staff to take their annual leave
• **Communities / localities**	Districts with higher proportion of older people. Districts with higher levels of deprivation and unemployment.	The recovery of Community assets and services has taken place in each district, and will allow communities to access more support services, leisure and cultural activities.	• The risks have been reduced due to targeted measures taking place in specific localities e.g. ○ Managing local outbreaks ○ Provision of Public Health IAG ○ Contract tracing to reduce further transmission ○ Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme	• SCC have and will continue to support communities / localities and build confidence as COVID-19 continues to circulate and restrictions lift, by: ○ Managing local outbreaks ○ Provision of Public Health IAG ○ Contract tracing to reduce further transmission ○ Maintain its successful flexible and responsive testing scheme ○ Targeting take-up of vaccinations

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			o Targeting take-up of vaccinations
			
			• Risks should continue to be monitored and mitigations put in place in specific localities as necessary
			
			• The VCSE sector has been vital to supporting communities to recover from Covid-19. However, national evidence has shown that the VCSE sector is facing increasing demand and reducing resources. Parts of the VCSE sector will be at increased risk, and the sector will continue to need supported to recover and remain sustainable.
				o Communications to people/businesses to take personal responsibility to help reduce the risk of COVID-19
				o Provide capacity building support for the VCSE sector affected by Covid-19 through the Communities Delivery Plan. This will include the VCSE Strategic Capacity Building Partnership, Do-It Staffordshire, Covid-19 fund etc.
				o Encourage individuals to continue to 'do their bit' within their communities
				
				• In the event of future variants and lockdowns/imposition of restrictions, SCC will monitor impacts and ensure mitigations are put in place, particularly if:
				  • New variants pose a specific concern
				  • Access to services are reduced

• **Economy**	Districts with higher levels of deprivation and unemployment. Local businesses and skills providers	The recovery of Council services and assets is allowing SCC to provide greater levels of support for employment, skills, infrastructure and businesses which is aiding the economy	• Some communities in Staffordshire have been more impacted than others and this will have implications for recovery (e.g. East Staffordshire recording the highest number of COVID-19 related and excess deaths, Cannock Chase and Tamworth reporting the	• Identify financial implications arising for skills provider's economic viability • SCC to support businesses to build confidence whilst remaining responsible and cautious as final restrictions lift to ensure premises remain open to support the economy

			Supporting the recovery of town centres and businesses is supporting communities and economic recovery and the further lifting of all restrictions will aid this further	highest unemployment rates in Staffordshire). • Business sectors that are at risk following COVID-19 include retail, wholesale, and manufacturing. Communities that are most reliant on these areas of business (such as Staffs Moorlands and Tamworth) will potentially see a higher level of impact. • Economic viability of skills providers is at risk.	
• **Environment**	All		The use of countryside and green spaces significantly increased when lockdowns / restrictions were in place, and people continue to utilise this resource which aids mental and physical health and well-being	• COVID-19 and the resulting lockdown has resulted in improvements to the environment (lower emissions etc) – however the recovery of services and end to restrictions may result in emissions going back to pre-lockdown levels • Transport is a key constraint for volunteers on the Rights of Way Network which is impacting on service delivery • Volunteers at country parks / rights of way may be anxious about returning to volunteer which could result in a constraint to delivery • Increased use of countryside may impact negatively upon the natural environment	Specific programmes of work are taking place that will support the environment during recovery, including: • Continuing to support the use of country parks and public rights of way with added Marshalls in place during busy periods to help manage safety • Provision of new play areas at Cannock Chase and Chasewater • Taking opportunities to secure funding to provide improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure due to a rise in levels during the pandemic • Exploring options to increase the number of Rights of Way volunteers As recovery continues, it is recommended that consideration also be given to:

				• The balance between use of countryside spaces for health reasons and the impact upon the natural environment • Promotion of green travel / climate change measures to ensure emissions do not go back to pre-lockdown levels

Group processes and interoperability: A longitudinal case study analysis of the UK's civil contingency response to Covid-19

Abstract

Our case study explored a Local Resilience Forum's (LRF) civil contingency response to COVID-19 in the UK. We undertook 19 semi-structured ethnographic longitudinal interviews, between 25th March 2020 and 17th February 2021, with a Director of a Civil Contingencies Unit and a Chief Fire Officer who both played key roles within their LRF. Within these interviews, we focused on their strategic level decision-making and how their relationship with national government impacted on local processes and outcomes. Using a form of grounded theory, our data describes the chronological evolution of an increasingly effective localised approach toward outbreak control and a growing resilience in dealing with concurrent emergency incidents. However, we also highlight how national government organisations imposed central control on aspects of the response in ways that undermined or misaligned with local preparedness. Thus, during emergencies central governments can undermine the principle of subsidiarity and damage the ways in which LRFs can help scaffold local resilience. Our work contributes to the theoretical understanding of the social psychological factors that can shape the behaviour of responder agencies during a prolonged crisis. In particular, the implications of our analysis for advancing our conceptual understanding of strategic decision-making during emergencies are discussed.

Introduction

The UK's civil contingency response to Covid-19 has involved a vast network of national and local response agencies. Therefore, a central issue has been interoperability: the extent to which Category 1 (e.g., the emergency services and local authorities) and Category 2 (e.g., public utility companies) organisations can work together effectively in evolving and complex circumstances[1]. To explore this key issue, we first outline the multi-agency structures that are central to an understanding of the UK's response to major incidents, before then turning to the literature on interoperability and decision-making during emergencies. We argue that an empirically driven theoretical model of intergroup relations is needed and therefore advance the utility of the Social Identity Approach, before presenting an analysis of the group-level factors that may have (re)shaped the relationships between local responder agencies and the government during the first year of the pandemic.

The UK's multi-agency response to major incidents.

The Civil Contingencies Act (herein 'CCA', 2004) is the major legislative framework underpinning the UK's national response to major incidents[2]. The CCA places statutory duties on Category 1 and Category 2 responders to make sure that partner agencies work collaboratively and collectively to respond effectively to emergency situations through their involvement in Local Resilience Forums (LRFs). LRFs are defined by police boundary areas throughout England and Wales, and they are mandated by the CCA to be the "…*principal mechanism for multi-agency co-operation*" in emergency situations (Cabinet Office, 2003, p. 11). Correspondingly, there is a requirement that LRFs meet at least once every six months so that the forums can act as the vehicle through which a range of CCA mandated duties can be fulfilled. According to the Cabinet Office (2003), these duties relate to a) assessing the risk of an emergency occurring and planning and preparing accordingly (through the development and maintenance of a Community Risk Register), b) maintaining and updating emergency and business continuity planning arrangements, c)

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[1] See: https://www.ukfrs.com/sites/default/files/2017-09/JESIP%20Joint%20Doctrine%20-%20The%20Interoperability%20Framework.pdf

[2] A major incident is defined in the UK by the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (2016) as "*An event or situation with a range of serious consequences which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agency*" (p. 8).

communicating with the public, d) promoting business continuity, e) sharing information and f) multi-agency cooperation.

In response to a major incident, an LRF stands up a Strategic Coordinating Group (or 'Gold Command Group'). The SCG membership is determined by the Chair of the LRF and the SCG depending on the type and location of an incident. However, it usually comprises representation from the same Category 1 and 2 organisations as the LRF, as well as other invited senior officers who hold specialist expertise that will contribute to the response. The purpose of the SCG is to provide the overall strategic vision and leadership throughout the duration of the emergency. As such, membership is usually restricted to those who hold the most senior positions within a given organisation (e.g., the Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constable usually represents the police on the SCG).

In addition to SCGs it is normative to have a separate Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) or ('Silver Command Group'). TCGs are "*…tasked with interpreting strategic direction, developing tactical plans, and coordinating actions and resources*" (Waring et al., 2020, p. 633). Furthermore, there are several Operational thematically organised sub-groups that are mobilised to deliver the strategic objectives identified at SCG level (e.g., communications). Thus, a key distinction between the LRF as opposed to the SCG/TCG is that LRFs are engaged in resilience planning and therefore draw on emergency preparedness guidance. Whereas SCGs/TCGs are established to deal with the response to an emergency/incident and are consequently steered by the Cabinet Office's 'Emergency Response and Recovery' non-statutory guidance that sits alongside the CCA[3].

Additionally, some localities in the UK have chosen to make strategic multi-agency investments in a Civil Contingencies Unit. These comprise teams of specialist planners who support the LRF in preparing for local and/or national emergency

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[3] See:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/25 3488/Emergency_Response_and_Recovery_5th_edition_October_2013.pdf

incidents. CCUs work to support all responder agencies to meet their statutory duties defined by the CCA, to develop and maintain multi-agency plans for Category 1 responders, to provide multi-agency training for the LRF, to provide 24-hour call out capacity should an emergency event occur and to deliver underlying administrative support to the LRF[4]. Thus, there is a complex myriad multi-agency groups involved in a response to an emergency incident and it is this framework through which local authorities across the UK responded to Covid-19. Accordingly, interoperability is a key concept to which we now turn.

Interoperability and decision-making during emergencies.

Power (2018) describes that researchers' who are focused on inter-agency collaboration during emergencies draw on a body of psychological research that explores teams and groups in other contexts, most notably work organisations (e.g., Salas et al., 2005, 2008, 2018). This body of work carries important assumptions about the psychological formation of social groups and intergroup cooperation that can be defined as the interdependence perspective (see Turner, 1985). As Salas et al. (2005) outlines, there are two important aspects to this theoretical outlook: 1) that shared cognition or situational awareness is fundamental to effective interoperability but that 2) this shared cognition is defined as an aggregate of individual knowledge (Cooke et al., 2000). Consequently, as Turner (1985, p. 246) argues, from this interdependence perspective, "*a 'group' is merely the product of interpersonal relations and processes…*". Thus, whilst there is a recognition that 'team' or group-level processes and relations are crucial to an understanding of interoperability during emergencies (Power, 2018), existing research tends to focus on *individual* cognition and in particular 'biases' such as 'decision-inertia' (e.g., Alison et al., 2015; Power, 2015; Shortland et al., 2018) and the impact that these cognitive 'defects' have on intergroup cooperation, coordination, and communication.

For example, Power & Alison (2017) interviewed 31 senior commanders (from the ambulance, fire and rescue and police services) in the UK to explore the decision-making challenges that they have faced in the context of managing emergency

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[4] E.g., https://www.dorsetprepared.org.uk/about-the-lrf/the-dorset-civil-contingencies-unit/

situations. Their analysis depicted two forms of cognitive 'uncertainty': endogenous factors which related to uncontrollable characteristics of the situation such as time pressure and emotional demands, including fear. They also identified a series of exogenous uncertainties which related to the commanders' perceptions of their team(s) capacity to respond effectively including levels of communication, trust and inter-agency competition and conflict. Power and Alison (2017) go on to argue that these challenges can create a form of cognitive dissonance whereby commanders 'redundantly' oscillate between the negative consequences that might arise from both acting (to potentially save lives) or not acting (to prevent further harm).

From this interdependence perspective, a key cognitive 'bias' inhibiting effective judgements is what Alison et al. (2011) term 'accountogenic decisions'. Correspondingly, accountability is defined as "*…the process of having performance assessed by an audience or audiences with the power to reward or punish based on their appraisals*" (CREST, 2020, p. 4). Thus, the positive function of accountability is that it will encourage decision-makers to make improved judgements and outcomes. However, the negative consequences of accountability on decision-making arise from people trying to consider too much information in such high-risk circumstances as emergency situations (CREST, 2020). Due to limited cognitive capacity and load this leads to a failure to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information (Waring et al., 2013). Additionally, accountability can motivate decision-makers to protect themselves, with limited cognitive resources being "*…directed away from focusing on the incident to focusing on how other people might view actions in the future and how related punishment can be avoided*" (CREST, 2020, p. 4).

Van Den Heuvel, Alison and Crego (2012) argue that these cognitive biases can lead to a form of implementation avoidance where actions are not taken due to responders being stuck in the information gathering and planning phase. Accordingly, the potential impact can be mitigated if decision-makers effectively implement the stages outlined in the iterative SAFE-T model of emergency decision making (i.e., Situation Assessment, Plan Formulation, Plan Execution and Team Learning). Strategies to facilitate this are outlined by CREST (2020), that include: a) the importance of training to build up decision-maker experience in maximising limited cognitive resources, b) 'awareness raising' of the problems of decision inertia and the corresponding need for

decision-makers to "…*accept the concept of non-optimality*" (p. 5), c) to encourage goal-focused thinking, and d) frequent practise and feedback to encourage efficiency and creative decision-making.

Thus, in summary, existing research on interoperability and decision-making in emergency situations emphasise the importance of 'team processes' and accountability dynamics, yet this work often focuses on individual-level cognitive processes and solutions. To explore the complex intra and intergroup relations involved in a multi-agency emergency response there is a need for a theoretical model that recognises the reality of groups as an analytical unit, to explore the group-level processes and accountability dynamics that impact on strategic decision-making during emergencies.

The importance of (inter)group processes and relations.

Davidson et al. (2020a, 2020b, 2020c) have recently argued that the Social Identity Approach (SIA) is an important theoretical framework for understanding the relations between responder agencies and government during the Covid crisis. The SIA jointly comprises Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and Self-Categorisation Theory (Turner et al., 1987). Central to the SIA, is the idea that the self-concept is hierarchical, comparative and context specific. Accordingly, you can define yourself in each context in terms of your personal identity (as "I") or at a more inclusive level in terms of a social identity (based on your psychological group memberships, "we"). From this perspective, social identity is "…*a model of one's position within a set of social relations along with the actions that are possible and desirable given that position*" (Neville & Reicher, 2018, p. 12).

Therefore, in contradistinction to the interdependence perspective, the SIA recognises the psychological reality of the group (Turner, 1985), with group behaviour being qualitatively different from the mere aggregate of interpersonal relations and instead the outcome of a psychological shift from personal to social identity (Turner, 1982). Furthermore, it is acknowledged that groups do not operate in a social vacuum, in isolation from other groups (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Rather, society comprises myriad social groups that "*...stand in power and status relations to one another*" (Hogg and Abrams 1988, p. 14). This has important implications for an understanding of how

multi-agency groups such as LRFs function, since the analytical focus is on the complex and changing array of intergroup relationships of those involved in an emergency response (e.g., local stakeholders, national response agencies and government), all of whom differ in terms of status and power (Davidson et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2020c).

For example, from a SIA perspective, Davidson et al. (2021) argue that for LRF interoperability to be effective, the multiple partners must build a shared sense of identity (a sense of 'we-ness') at the superordinate level (i.e., inclusive of all people involved across organisational boundaries). In so doing, this facilitates the emergence of a new identity with shared norms, values and goals and enhances the partners' ability to work together to overcome challenges. Based on an analysis of interviews with UK Bluelight service personnel during the first wave of Covid-19, they demonstrate that 'vertical' intergroup relations (i.e., those between LRFs and government agencies) served to undermine the effectiveness of horizontal intergroup relations (i.e., between partners within the LRF). Local responders sought to mitigate this by 'widening' horizontal relationships by developing a network of regional connections to neighbouring LRFs.

These findings accord with those of the UK's Covid-19 National Foresight Group who conducted three Interim Operational Reviews between April and October 2020 (Hill et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2020c) and a subsequent integrated report (Hill et al., 2021), all of which focused on exploring the experiences of the pandemic response from key stakeholders including members of LRFs, SCGs and government officials. They reported that national government organisations often imposed central control on aspects of the response in ways that often disrupted or challenge the preparedness undertaken locally (Hill et al., 2021).

The present study.

As the above discussion demonstrates, the UK's response to Covid-19 involves a complex multi-agency response at both the local and national level. Yet extant research and theory into interoperability during emergency situations is often focused on individual-level decision-making biases and seeking solutions to ameliorate these cognitive limitations. Accordingly, what this body of research does not tend to explore

is the complex group-level factors that (re)shape the relationships between different responder agencies and the government, especially during a prolonged pandemic. More broadly, a key limitation of emergency teamwork research is the lacuna between research and practice (Power, 2018; Wilkinson et al., 2019). Indeed, Power (2018, p. 28) concludes that to bridge this gap researchers *"…must have buy-in from practitioners operating in the real-world who can implement findings, and commitment from researchers that their research findings have contextualized and relevant application to support practice"*.

Thus, to address these limitations, we undertook a case study approach with our focus on the experience of the first year of the pandemic from the perspective of two senior responders both of whom played key roles within their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Strategic Coordination Groups (SCG). In so doing, we sought to advance the literature in several important ways. First, previous research (e.g., Wilkinson et al., 2019) has often utilised training scenarios to explore SCG decision-making. Whilst there is the capacity to create compelling and realistic incidents these are usually relatively small-scale and cannot compare to 'real-life' emergency management (Power, 2018). Thus, our study focuses in on the strategic decision-making of responders longitudinally and during a prolonged crisis with an evolving and dynamic political and societal context.

Second, we sought to address the gap between research and practice. Therefore, our approach was one of co-production from the outset with our interviewees not only being co-authors of this work but also informing the analysis and providing ongoing assistance with the policy impact and dissemination of this research.

Third, theoretically, we sought to move beyond individualist explanations for strategic decision-making during emergencies which focusses on cognitive biases and instead we aim to contribute to the understanding of the social psychological factors that can shape the behaviour of responder agencies during a pandemic (Davidson et al., 2021; Radburn et al., 2021; Stott et al., 2021). Specifically, the following analysis explores the complex set of vertical (e.g., between LRFs and government agencies) and horizontal intergroup relationships (between partners within the LRF) and how these group-level dynamics changed and shaped the nature of the civil contingency response that an LRF was able to deliver during the first year of the pandemic. In so

doing, there is a particular emphasis on strategic level decision-making at the local level and how the relationship with national government impacted on local processes and outcomes.

Method

Data collection.

The first, second and fifth author undertook 19 interviews, between 25th March 2020 and 17th February 2021, with a Director of a Civil Contingencies Unit (fourth author) and a Chief Fire Officer (third author), who both played key roles within their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Strategic Coordination Groups (SCG). Additionally, 3 interviews were undertaken with other Chief Fire Officers across this period, all of whom played senior roles in their respective LRF/SCG. This material informed the analysis and equated to 20 hours, 28 minutes and 49 seconds of audio which were subsequently transcribed. In practice, the interviews usually ranged between 30 minutes to an hour and took place every two-to-three weeks using the online platforms Zoom or Microsoft Teams. The interviews took the form of a debriefing session where we explored the interviewee's current challenges and decision-making, what issues they anticipated they may encounter in the future, as well as following up on any of the issues raised in the previous interview. Additionally, we collected a range of secondary data sources including newspaper articles, research reports, transcripts of government announcements and media press conferences.

Analytic strategy and presentation of data.

The first and second authors undertook a form of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) to arrange the data both chronologically and thematically. Thus, secondary data sources were used to produce detailed timelines of key national events and issues (e.g., government announcements) and through this process we developed and grouped the interviews into three broad chronological phases or stages. Whilst there is a degree of overlap, the first phase includes the period from the advent of national lockdown in England on the 23rd of March 2020 through to the Prime Minister's announcement indicating that restrictions would be gradually eased on 10th May. The second phase then covers the period from May 2020 to the first imposition of 'tiered' localised restrictions at the beginning of October. The third phase explores the period

from October through to when England went into a further national lockdown in December 2020. Having grouped the transcripts chronologically, they were then (re)read and semantically coded to draw out key episodes as exemplars of theoretical relevance. Accordingly, there was a particular emphasis on the horizontal (inter)group relationships within the LRF/SCG and vertical (inter)group relationships between the LRF/SCG and central government agencies.

Through this process, the first and second author developed a form of 'composite narrative' (Willis, 2018) where the perspective of both interviewees (the third and fourth authors) were incorporated to produce a combined account of events. The analysis was then 'sense checked' by all authors, two of whom (the third and fourth authors) were able to draw on their considerable and ongoing personal and professional experience to interrogate and refine the content. As Willis (2019) outlines, a 'composite narrative' approach has two clear advantages: 1) it facilitates an emphasis on preserving the complicated and contextual accounts of our interviewees and 2) the narrative form "*… can help to build understanding of particular people and groups, in ways that are accessible to non-academic audiences*" (p. 477). Once an initial analytical structure was created, we met as a research team several times to discuss, refine, and adapt the analysis so that we achieved the best 'fit' with the dataset. Quotations presented within the following analysis were all taken directly from the interview transcripts and were judged to be the best exemplars of the themes generated.

Analysis

Phase 1: 23rd March to 10th May 2020
SCG leadership.
By the time of the first interview on 25th March, a Director of Public Health (DPH) had been appointed as the Chair of the SCG[5]. However, at that time one of the primary decisions involved declaring a major incident. This triggered discussions as to whether

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[5] The decision to appoint a DPH Chair was in line with the pre-planned national response to a flu pandemic. Local responders were told by government to use this guidance as the basis of their response to COVID-19.

the Chair should shift to the police[6]. There was some resistance to this idea among several of the stakeholders who wanted to declare a major incident but maintain a health led approach. This was primarily because they judged a police force led approach would be more 'command and control' oriented and therefore undermine the more collaborative multiagency approach that was already in place. To resolve the contention, the SCG compromised by developing 'trigger' plans for changing the chair depending on the emerging and evolving context (e.g., the relative salience of the maintenance of public order) and a mechanism whereby partners endorsed the chair at the start of each meeting. This was then adapted to be a decision taken at the end of the meeting to reflect the pace of the response and, if change were to occur, to provide an opportunity to brief the new postholder.

Centralised versus localised response.

A salient national issue from the announcement of a national lockdown on 23rd March was the need to identify and support vulnerable people. This immediately introduced a logistical problem for the SCG and LRF in identifying who these individuals and households were. This was initially defined via the NHS database of clinically extremely vulnerable people, but it was apparent to them that this would not be able to identify everyone at the local level. In parallel, in response to the crisis the Information Commission Office relaxed the rules it had previously imposed in relation to data sharing between local partner agencies. This then enabled the local stakeholders in the LRF to improve their interoperability by sharing data in a manner that had not been seen as possible before the pandemic. As one stakeholder explained:

> *"…the relaxation of the rules mean that I now have access to data about those people in this county who are shielded and therefore are the most vulnerable from the worst sort of outcomes from fire in their homes. Same as police, worst outcomes from a point of view of crime as an individual. A reversion back to where the rules were will mean that that will get stopped. So, that sharing and that ability to be*

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[6] Typically, the police will assume the role of the SCG Chairpersonship in an emergency where: "*There is an immediate threat to human life*; "*There is a possibility that the emergency was a result of criminal or terrorist activity*"; or "*There are significant public order implications*".
See: https://www.jesip.org.uk/uploads/media/pdf/5_Strategic_Co-ordinating_Group_Roles_Responsibilities.pdf

thoughtful about how we use the plethora of data that we have about our residents could get lost". Int. 29/04/20.

Having identified vulnerable people in the county, emphasis then shifted to establishing the infra-structure necessary to deliver food parcels to them. The LRF set up a distribution network involving a central hub with eight district centres. Each centre was then free to agree food procurement contracts locally. However, by the 1st of April it had become apparent to the SCG that the government had decided to centralise control of delivering food parcels and that as a result several locally agreed supply contracts had been subsequently lost to this central procurement process, in ways that undermined supply at the local level. Moreover, when the government food parcels subsequently arrived, they contained produce that was unsuitable for distribution to individual households (e.g., perishable items with short shelf life, 20 kilo bags of rice that required sub-division).

Food distribution was the first of several issues that formed a pattern over the course of the pandemic whereby government centralisation and micromanagement of important aspects of the contingency response disempowered the LRF's emerging ability to creatively solve local problems. For example, by 10th April, the government was coming under intense media scrutiny for the failure to provide frontline healthcare staff with adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), with the Health Secretary announcing that a 'Herculean effort' is underway to resolve the issue[7]. Within the LRF, the operational challenge again revolved around procurement. Rather than developing procurement contracts locally the LRFs were instructed by Government that Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government (DHCLG) would be issuing PPE directly to LRFs, with associated directives on how it should be distributed to partner agencies[8]. The SCG subsequently allocated their supplies of PPE in line with this top-down instruction only to be told within 36 hours that the guidance had changed. This placed the SCG in the difficult position of having to potentially recall and redistribute PPE stocks, causing tension between the LRF partners.

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[7] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52248423
[8] It is the SCG rather than the LRF that has a defined response role according to the CCA, indicating a level of government misunderstanding of its own legislation and guidance.

By 14th April, it was also becoming increasingly clear that nationally the admission of care home residents discharged from hospital without being tested for COVID-19 was causing outbreak clusters. Yet at the same time, deaths in care homes were not being included in the daily death figures, with several charities including Age UK warning that older people were being 'airbrushed' out of official statistics[9]. Accordingly, in response the Care Quality Commission (CQC) – a government agency responsible for regulating all health and social care services in England – was mobilised by the Government. A mission statement published on the 15th April[10] highlighted that the CQC would endeavour to utilise their national infrastructure to tackle the lack of COVID-19 testing in the adult social care sector. It also made clear that the CQC would launch a regular data collection intervention to ascertain the number of deaths within the care sector and to identify the specific *"COVID-19 related pressures – such as shortages of PPE – from services who provide care for people in their own homes'[11].*

This centralised imposition came as a surprise to the SCG, and several stakeholders felt it undermined their partnerships, with one interviewee describing the CQC on the 29th April as the "*new player in the response arm*". This concern was amplified when the CQC informed the local partners to stop providing information through to the LRF data collection cell and that instead the CQC would act as the conduit for information and access. Thus, rather than scaffolding the local response this government led national intervention created fissures in this local partner's relationships that they had worked hard to build from the bottom up through the LRF.

A third example, from late April onwards was an increasingly prominent issue nationally, Test, Trace and Isolate. Accordingly, the government appointed Baroness Dido Harding on 7th May as the Chair of the £37 billion national but privately run 'Test and Trace' programme[12]. Thus, by the beginning of May a key issue for the SCG was how the national test and trace infrastructure would intersect with their LRF response. This was especially important given that the Prime Minister had announced plans to

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[9] See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-52455072

[10] https://www.cqc.org.uk/news/stories/cqc-sets-out-next-steps-support-adult-social-care-during-covid-19-pandemic

[11] https://www.cqc.org.uk/news/stories/cqc-sets-out-next-steps-support-adult-social-care-during-covid-19-pandemic

[12] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-chair-of-coronavirus-test-and-trace-programme-appointed

significantly ease lockdown restrictions in the coming weeks. The Test and Trace system was designed and rolled out nationally but contained elements of local delivery. Accordingly, two largescale testing sites had been set up within the jurisdiction of the SCG as part of the national programme. Again, for the SCG and LRF, the issue revolved around centralised control not meeting local need. For instance, the CQC superseded local arrangements for testing by directing all care homes to apply for testing at the national sites using the government website. However, these locations had not been included on the list of test centres available to the public through 'gov.uk'. This meant that care home staff were instead being offered testing sites that were hundreds of miles away, despite substantial local capacity.

At the same time, the SCG and LRF were told that contact tracing would be devolved to the Local Authorities. Because of this, the LRF moved to create a specialist tracing operational cell which was led by a local authority. However, the LRF did not know what the contact tracing was supposed to entail (e.g., face to face meetings, Swabbing, Phone calls, etc). It was therefore extremely difficult for the tracing cell to mobilise the necessary activity and resources.

Phase 2: 10th May to 30th September 2020

Liberalisation and shifts to localised legal accountability.

It is apparent that as early as the 22nd April the SCG and LRF had reached a level of stability, refining their local response. Their strategic intentions and objectives were formalised and agreed and operational sub-groups delivering those objectives were operating with far less strategic direction necessary. This continued period of LRF 'stabilisation' coincided with a reduction in cases and deaths nationally, with the Prime Minister declaring on 30th April that the UK is 'past the peak'[13]. There was then the announcement by the Prime Minister on May 10th that there would be a 'phased unlocking' of restrictions throughout June and July (e.g., allowing meeting non-household members outside, and the reopening of retail outlets, pubs, and restaurants). This was shortly followed by newspaper revelations on the 22nd May that the Prime Minister's Chief Political Advisor had broken lockdown guidelines to drive his family hundreds of miles from London to Durham. In defending the Adviser's

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[13] See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-52493500

actions, government ministers consistently evoked the notion of 'personal responsibility' and choice[14].

Thus, the liberalisation of government restrictions, change in messaging towards 'stay alert'[15] and the political rhetoric of 'common sense' and 'personal judgement' arguably formed part of a framework whereby central government were seeking to devolve the responsibility of pandemic response to local structures (e.g., LRFs) and the public (e.g., employers, employees) to avoid blame for any uptick in cases and deaths in a potential second wave[16]. This shift by government was thus seemingly about the avoidance of legal accountability and liability. One of our stakeholders paraphrased a powerful account of the situation from the perspective of a key decision-maker within the SCG:

> *I think it's like, right folks, we* [the Government] *fixed it. We're going to give it to you* [local responders] *and then when it all goes wrong, it's not our fault* [the government]. *We gave it to you in good order. It's your fault it's all gone wrong.* Int. 27/05/20.

Local outbreak control.

From as early as May 10th, the Prime Minister repeatedly suggested that England would implement a 'whack-a-mole' approach to control outbreaks in particular geographical areas, with localised public health measures being the primary response rather than a return to a national lockdown[17]. The first area to be subject to this was Leicester. On the 28th June, The Sunday Times reported that the government were considering imposing a localised lockdown in Leicester due to rises in infections[18]. By the 29th June, this was announced as policy by the Health Secretary[19], with the

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[14] E.g. https://www.politicshome.com/news/article/dominic-cummings-row-minister-says-families-should-try-their-best-to-follow-lockdown-rules

[15] The 'roadmap' towards loosening restrictions on May 10th was accompanied with a change of government messaging from the clear 'Stay at home, protect the NHS, save lives" to the near-universally derided slogan "Stay alert, control the virus, save lives".

[16] For instance, a report by the Independent SAGE group of scientists criticised the Prime Minister's speech outlining a 'return to work' strategy without providing any framework or guidance as to how that could be safely achieved. See: https://www.independentsage.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/The-Independent-SAGE-Report.pdf

[17] https://news.sky.com/video/coronavirus-prime-minister-says-well-be-doing-whack-a-mole-on-local-flare-ups-11986745

[18] See: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-53206506

[19] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-53229371

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restrictions (including the closure of non-essential shops) coming into force the following day[20]. To support this approach the government set up a £9 billion central agency – the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) – with the aim to scaffold the local response with this new largescale national resource[21].

However, mirroring their earlier experiences with the CQC, by the 8th July a key issue for the SCG and LRF was that there was a complete lack of clarity as to how the fledgling JBC would interface with existing response structures and thus what the JBC's precise role and purpose would be. This highlighted to our participants a continued experience of disconnect between the central and local level of the response. For instance, a key lesson they established from the experiences of local authorities in Leicester was the need for quick and operationally meaningful testing data to identify hotspots before spread becomes exponential. However, in common with responders in Leicester, our LRF found that national data gathering often did not correspond to what was needed locally. For example, the national testing data fed back into the national intelligence picture, which was not immediately available to partners within the LRF. By comparison, local testing data fed into local modelling and was immediately accessible. Moreover, the national Pillar 2 community testing data recorded a person's generic occupational data (e.g., 'factory worker'). This form of data was insufficient to enable an effective response and target local public health interventions, since there was a need for specific employment details and work addresses.

By contrast, the benefits of locally driven response to community outbreaks were becoming increasingly clear. For example, the SCG had developed a bespoke bandings 'thermometer'. This was also a 'live' and dynamic dashboard that worked on a traffic light classification system (i.e., green, yellow, and red) and enabled SCG/LRF partners to work to a shared and commonly agreed framework for how to respond swiftly to local outbreaks. The dashboard utilised both quantitative (e.g., case rates) and qualitative data (e.g., the 'look and feel' on the ground in communities) and

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[20]   https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/leicester-lockdown-rules-restrictions-confirmed-4279424

[21]   https://www.researchprofessionalnews.com/rr-news-uk-politics-2020-7-government-spending-9bn-on-covid-19-joint-biosecurity-center/

allowed responders to determine what a local outbreak control response should look like based on the latest health data. The specificity of the data meant that the focus could be narrowed to specific premises or geographical areas, meaning that public health measures could be tailored to the specific circumstances and localities.

As one stakeholder made clear, the dashboard was an outcome of their effective local multi-agency partnerships and their collaborative leadership approach to outbreak management. This was highlighted in the LRF's response to two different 'types' of spikes in COVID-19 cases that occurred in August. The first example related to community transmission within households in a specific geographical area. Through access to the locally developed dashboard, the LRF and SCG were able to quickly determine that there were clusters of infections occurring within three geographical wards in the region. These clusters predominantly related to infections of South Asian families who often lived in multi-generational households. To suppress the outbreak, the local authority was able to draw on well-developed relationships with local community and faith leaders to embed these community leaders in the subsequent response (e.g., setting up testing in Mosques). Consequently, messaging for the importance of testing and maintaining social distancing was led by respected community members rather than "*unfamiliar people in suits*".

The second example related to a business premise rather than household transmission. Through social media the LRF became aware that a pub had breached social distancing rules, with hundreds of people attending over a three-day period. Unlike instances of geographical community spread, it was not immediately obvious from the data that there had been a serious outbreak since people had attended from across the LRF region and beyond. This example exposed a weakness of the national track and trace system since the central programme relied on venues collecting accurate and complete contact details of those attending. Without this information the nationally employed remote call staff did not have any other capacity to locate those who had been to the pub. Given that the pub in question had only gathered details for four people across the three-day period, the SCG had to mobilise their multiagency communications group. Accordingly, the printed press, social media and other websites were "*milked*" by LRF partners to encourage people who had been to the pub to attend a pop-up testing site created in the adjoining beer garden. Whilst the

pop-up site attracted over 1,000 people across a three-day period, by comparison the 'out-of-town' largescale national testing centre lay relatively dormant, utilising only 11% of its capacity. Therefore, this incident was subsequently fed back into the DHCLG by the LRF as a 'problem case' that emphasised the requirement for testing to be embedded within communities.

By 15th September there were increased numbers of infections across the county and the Upper Tier Local Authorities had set up Incident Management Teams (IMT) to provide specialist oversight of each significant outbreak of cases. Yet the ability of IMTs to respond and suppress infection rates was significantly curtailed due to the continued inadequacy of the national testing infrastructure. Thus, to address this issue the SCG chose to set up a local testing system to run in parallel to the national system so that the LRF would have access to data and thus be able to undertake fine-grained contact tracing. This involved establishing an independent booking system, testing locations and a workforce at considerable expense to the local authorities and competition from centralised procurement processes. As one stakeholder described, the SCG and LRF were essentially having to bypass the multi-billion-pound national infrastructure because it was not fit for local need. Consequently, they instead sought to empower and fund local ingenuity and entrepreneurialism.

> *The county council has said we'll swallow the costs, but they are eye watering. They are making a pragmatic decision about cost versus health and they are throwing money at it. We've done extraordinary* things. *We've shaken every contact tree we can get to try and find somebody with a lab. We're going internationally now to get that lab capacity. But it's madness. It is absolute madness that we are having to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds on tests that should be provided. The foundation of the government's track and trace system.*
> Int. 15/09/20

Phase 3: 30th September to 31st December 2020

Political Tiers.

On 30th September, the Prime Minister warned that the UK was at a 'critical moment' with cases, hospitalisations and deaths all increasing[22]. A day later the BBC reported that a three-tiered alert level system would be deployed in England[23]. Tier 1 would be geographical areas with fewer than 100 Covid cases per 100,000 people and the prevailing national 'baseline' measures would be applicable in these areas (e.g., social distancing, facemask wearing on public transport, the 'Rule of Six'). Tier 2 would involve enhanced measures such as a ban on inside gatherings for areas where cases were above 100 per 100,000. Tier 3 would be applied to those areas with "*significantly higher rates of transmission*", with "*full lockdowns*" imposed, including closures of shops and other non-essential businesses.

By 2nd October it was already clear to our stakeholders that a Tier approach would be problematic. For instance, the LRF was aware that their geographical footprint was 'sandwiched' between two COVID hotspots from both the north and the south which contained major urban conurbations and thus areas where people travelled in and out for work. By the 14th October, the implementation issues of the Tier system were becoming more acute, with infections in the LRF's region rising. For example, there was no definition of the indicative triggers for a change in Tiers or the geographical boundary areas and how granular they would be (e.g., whether Tier decisions be made at the ward, district, or borough level).

Moreover, a key issue from the LRF's perspective was the degree to which there would be local consultation with regards to Tier decisions and who ultimately had the final decision. As it materialised, the decision for which Tier each of the two LA areas within the LRF's jurisdiction would be placed in was taken at weekly 'Bronze' level national meetings that included DPHs and officials from national bodies such as PHE. The meetings were also attended by the Health Protection Board (HPB) which had "*…a range of reporting arrangements into key elected members and political meetings*"[24].

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[22] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54362900
[23] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-54371943
[24] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks/covid-19-contain-framework-a-guide-for-local-decision-makers#roles-and-responsibilities

With the increased prominence of the HPB, political actors were now playing a direct role in the trajectory of operational decision-making for the first time. This new political dynamic had the potential to undermine key stakeholder relations at a local level.

The SCG had achieved agreement on the stance to seek to move to a common Tier for the whole county to maintain consistency and standardisation for both organisational delivery and public information sharing and compliance. For instance, the police were concerned about the consequences of the alert level changing across the county, with officers having to enforce enhanced Tier 2 restrictions in Local Authority 'A' and Tier 1 rules in neighbouring Local Authority 'B'.

During October 2020, it was indicated that one of the local authority areas would be moving to a different Tier to others in the county. The political dynamic, which included lobbying by political representatives, led to a decision being taken outside the SCG's agreed stance, which ultimately had different impacts upon partners in the LRF. Up until this point in time, the relationships between local and national tiers had predominantly been through officer contact but this marked an added dynamic for the SCG to consider, namely the roles political representatives had now been given within response decision making.

Therefore, whilst the government had been acting independently of local responders throughout the response, this episode was an example of local responders starting to act independently of each other. This was due to the increasing political dimension of operational response decision-making which created fissures in well-established local partnerships. However, the key difference from our stakeholder's perspective was that the SCG were able to utilise their strong personal informal and formal relationships to work through their differences at a local level in a way that was often not possible nationally with government.

By the 31st October all authorities entered Tier 2 restrictions, yet on the same day the Prime Minister announced a new four week lockdown to be implemented from the 5th November. This again highlighted the lack of communication and coordination from government, with local responders finding out about the national restrictions through the media. This was experienced as completely undermining the LRF's public

messaging campaign, which focused on the move from Tier 1 to Tier 2 and the associated curbs on indoor socialising.

On the 21st November, towards the end of the second national lockdown, the media reported that the government was planning to implement a stricter Tier system in England once the national lockdown ended on 2nd December[25]. This meant that by 2nd December both LA areas were placed into Tier 3 – the highest level of restrictions – again with no prior local consultation. Instead, the JBC informed the outcome, with no input locally. As one stakeholder put it: "*We don't know the names or the faces or the roles of those people that are actually putting those recommendations in. So, that opaque* [Tier] *system is even worse than it was before*". By this point, there had already been considerable speculation in the media about the potential relaxation of restrictions during the Christmas holiday[26]. Thus, it was extremely difficult for the LRF to plan and communicate with the public effectively, with the regulations changing from Tier 1 to Tier 2, to a national lockdown, to a revamped Tier 3, to the prospect of a Christmas 'grace' period in the space of a few weeks.

Concurrency and local resilience.

Yet, despite this continuing uncertainty at a national policy level, the LRF and SCG were increasingly confident in their local preparedness to deal with concurrent incidents because of the relationships they had built up throughout the pandemic. Correspondingly, by 2nd December their approach was characterised by pragmatism and the reality that other major incidents (including, at this time the prospect of a 'no deal' Brexit) would involve the same personnel and so it was inefficient to duplicate response structures. Instead, in the event of a concurrent incident, they planned to utilise existing operational sub-groups, broadening their scope to embrace any additional impact on their remit.

Thus, the need to administer the vaccine in mid-December was not viewed by our stakeholders as a new phase of the pandemic but rather a continuation of a long-running response process, characterised by the disconnect between the national and

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[25]   https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/21/england-to-enter-stronger-three-tier-system-after-lockdown

[26] https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/families-allowed-meet-week-christmas-covid-lockdown/

local level. For instance, the SCG and LRF were initially informed by government that largescale vaccination centres would be set up by the military as part of a national roll-out plan. However, the local level were then subsequently tasked with building the required infrastructure. Accordingly, this was viewed as simply the latest example of initial centralised government control, followed by decentralisation to the local level once delivery problems emerged.

> [There has been]*…this pattern of behaviour that we've seen from the government, that is: put a national system in place, the national system fails, they scrabble around for a few months, and then they give it to the local level to manage when it's got too hot to handle. Now that isn't a bad thing because we can manage it locally and actually xShire's been really brave.* Int. 02/10/20

Discussion

The aim of this paper was to explore the complex group-level factors that (re)shaped the relationships between different local responder agencies and the government, during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve this, we undertook a case study approach. From March 2020 to February 2021, we regularly interviewed two senior responders, both of whom played key roles within their Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and Strategic Coordination Groups (SCG). Through these ethnographic semi-structured interviews, we documented contemporaneous evidence of the key challenges that they faced, how they overcame these challenges and the issues that they foresaw emerging in the future.

Our analysis suggested that the LRF and SCG developed an effective localised approach toward outbreak control and a growing resilience in dealing with concurrent emergency incidents. Part of this success seemed to revolve around their capacity to build a shared sense of identity between responders at the local level and this togetherness and collaborative leadership empowered their local response (Haslam et al., 2020). Yet all the way through national government agencies imposed central control on aspects of the response in ways that undermined, duplicated, or misaligned with their preparedness locally (see also Hall et al., 2021). Therefore, our analysis cautions against an approach that seeks to artificially untangle 'horizontal'

relationships from 'vertical' relationships because the experience and decision-making of local responders during the pandemic could not be adequately understood without reference to the actions and decisions of other groups such as the government.

Our findings have implications for the theoretical understanding of strategic decision-making during emergencies. For instance, our case study has challenged the notion of 'decision-inertia' and the corresponding conceptual focus on the 'ultimate' decision-maker (Alison et al., 2015; Power, 2015; Shortland et al., 2018), at the expense of studying the complex (inter)group processes and relations that characterise emergency decision-making and outcomes (see Davidson et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2021; Stott et al., 2021). For example, our analysis has demonstrated the overt centralised political control of key aspects of the pandemic response, infrastructure, and resourcing that structurally constrained and sometimes actively undermined the capacity of local strategic leaders to respond optimally. Thus, political choices, including the imposition of centralised bodies such as the CQC and JBC, negatively impacted on the outcomes that local leaders were able to deliver in ways that are not explained by those in the LRF and SCG redundantly oscillating between action and inaction. Instead, strategic level local responders were operating and navigating a complex array of intergroup relationships characterised by a continued disconnect between central government and the LRF/SCG (Hill et al., 2021). The ability for the LRF to function successfully in this context often meant that senior leaders had to skilfully navigate central response structures and agencies to empower local partner activity and entrepreneurialism.

Moreover, our analysis highlights the need to broaden the conceptualisation of accountability beyond the idea that *personal* responsibility for decision-making motivates leaders to prioritise their own self-protection from censure (CREST, 2020). Instead, our paper shows that accountability can also operate at the intergroup level – that powerful groups such as a government can operate strategically in ways that seek to offload *collective* or group-level responsibility to less powerful groups or individuals (Cronin & Reicher, 2006, 2009; Reicher, 2021). Therefore, accountability relates to relations between groups as much as it refers to how leaders handle personal responsibility under intense pressure. Accordingly, strategic decision-makers must consider and resolve (often competing) accountability concerns from a range of

different 'audiences' (c.f., Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012) or groups (e.g., 'the public', media, politicians). Our work points to the utility of exploring how senior decision-makers balance or navigate these different accountability concerns (Cronin & Reicher, 2009).

More generally our analysis highlights the value of a locally embedded and funded public health response to pandemics (Scally, 2020). For instance, the analysis showed that the LRF partners were able to utilise their pre-existing knowledge of their communities and relationships with key community leaders in ways that empowered local people to achieve key goals such as increased testing and enhanced public health messaging in virus 'hotspots'. Our findings also demonstrated the relative impotence of national 'remote' systems such as Track and Trace compared to responses that were embedded within communities. Thus, our analysis suggests that local authorities are well placed to garner public support and legitimacy for, and compliance with, public health directives. This is, in part, through their ability to position themselves as '*of*' the community and acting *for* the community (c.f., Radburn et al., 2018, Radburn & Stott, 2019; Reicher & Stott, 2020; Stott et al., 2020). What is needed is appropriate funding and scaffolding from government agencies to support these activities (Reicher & Stott, 2020).

Yet our case study additionally highlights that the UK government appear to have consistently undermined the principle of subsidiarity throughout the pandemic (c.f., Hill et al., 2020a, 2020b, 2020c), despite this being a key principle underpinning the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA). Thus, our analysis demonstrates the need to review the government's relationship to operational incident management to protect local authorities from unnecessary central interference. Much like the effective local response to outbreaks relied on the LRF empowering the public, subsidiarity should mean that central authorities scaffold local authorities by providing support for aspects of the response that cannot be delivered locally. Although rare, our analysis did highlight one example of effective centralised scaffolding. The ICO's decision to relax data sharing rules decision served to empower local interoperability and thus enabled enhanced protection of vulnerable people. Therefore, one implication of our analysis is that there should be greater flexibility for inter-agency data-sharing (Waring et al.,

2018) where the Civil Contingencies Act may 'trump' data protection issues in emergency situations.

Despite these insights, there are some important limitations to our analysis that need to be acknowledged. These relate primarily to our case study approach which is both a key strength and weakness. On the one hand, we were able to utilise unfettered and continued access to two senior responders involved in the response of one LRF to the pandemic. This meant that we were able to document and explore the key local issues and challenges as they understood them. Accordingly, we were able to relate their strategic decision-making at a local level to their ongoing relationship with government at a national level throughout the first year of the response to the pandemic. However, whilst our approach may have naturalistic generalisability – that is, the findings resonate strongly with those experiences of key responders from other LRFs/SCGs (e.g., Hill et al., 2021), equally, our analysis may be limited to the locality in which we focused on. Additionally, the voices of other key responders within the LRF/SCG we have explored may have changed or challenged the 'composite narrative' (Willis, 2018, 2019) we have presented.

Notwithstanding these caveats, our work has contributed to the theoretical understanding of the social psychological factors that can shape the behaviour of responder agencies during a prolonged and unprecedented crisis. Our paper points to the critical importance of the relationships between the groups involved – both in terms of 'horizontal' relations within local response structures and the 'vertical' relations between the LRF/SCG and government. Our case study analysis demonstrated that during the COVID-19 pandemic the UK government operated in ways that undermined the principle of subsidiarity and damaged the ways in which the LRF could mobilise to help scaffold local community resilience.

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31

Community Impact Assessment Checklist and Executive Summary

Name of Proposal:

Impact of COVID-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Progress - Update October 2021 and Way Forward

Project Sponsor:

Janene Cox OBE, Assistant Director Culture, Rural, and Safer Communities

Project Manager:

Deborah Sullivan, Senior Change Manager

Date Completed:

16/09/21

Final Checklist

Prior to submitting your Community Impact Assessment (CIA), please ensure that the actions on the checklist below have been completed, to reassure yourself / SLT / Cabinet that the CIA process has been undertaken appropriately.

Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
The project supports the Council's Business Plan, priorities and MTFS.	Yes	
It is clear what the decision is or what decision is being requested.	Yes	Note impact, progress and endorsement of approach requested
For decisions going to Cabinet, the CIA findings are reflected in the Cabinet Report and **potential impacts are clearly identified and mitigated for** (where possible).	Yes	This is an updated CIA on Staffordshire County Council's approach to the planning and recovery from COVID-19. This recovery process will take an extended period, and as such the CIA will be regularly updated.
The **aims, objectives and outcomes** of the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.	Yes	
The **groups** who will be affected by the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.	Yes	The updates to this CIA reflect both the details of the recovery plans as they have developed, as well as additional learning gathered from the community response to COVID-19 and any engagement with residents, staff, and partners.
The **communities** that are likely to be more adversely impacted than others have been clearly identified.	Yes	The updates to this CIA reflect both the details of the recovery plans as they have developed, as well as additional learning gathered from the community response to COVID-19 and any engagement with residents, staff, and partners.
Engagement / consultation has been undertaken and is representative of the residents most likely to be affected.	Yes	Engagement with communities has taken place where appropriate and findings have informed recovery plans
A range of people with the appropriate knowledge and expertise have contributed to the CIA.	Yes	
Appropriate evidence has been provided and used to inform the development and design of the policy, service or project. This includes data,	Yes	Data and learning have been taken from the response to COVID-19 pandemic to inform development of recovery plans.

Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
research, engagement/consultation, case studies and local knowledge.		
The CIA **evidences** how the Council has considered its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and how it has considered the impacts of any change on people with protected characteristics.	Yes	
The next steps to deliver the project have been identified.	Yes	

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is intended to be a collation of the key issues and findings from the CIA and other research undertaken. This should be completed after the CIA and research has been completed. Please structure the summary using the headings on the left that relate to the sections in the CIA template. Where no major impacts have been identified, please state N/A.

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
PSED What are the impacts on residents with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010? Highlight any concerns that have emerged as a result of the equality analysis on any of the protected groups and how these will be mitigated. It is important that Elected Members are fully aware of the equality duties so that they can make an informed decision, and this can be supported with robust evidence.	The nature of this pandemic means all residents will be impacted, including those with protected characteristics	All residents including those with protected characteristics will benefit from the recovery of council services	It is anticipated those with protected characteristics may face risks as different services are recovered. BME communities are over-represented in cases of COVID-19 and changes to services or support may result in risks to this community. Older people and people with disabilities are at greater risk of COVID-19 and any changes to support may result in risks for this group of people. There may be risks for individual members of staff who have protected characteristics or are vulnerable	All recovery plans consider further the impact on those with protected characteristics. Update CIA to reflect any implications and mitigations

Staffordshire County Council

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Health and Care How will the proposal impact on residents' health? How will the proposal impact on demand for or access to social care or health services?	The recovery plans for the COVID-19 crisis have the potential to affect health outcomes of all residents.	Plans aim to maintain health benefits achieved during the crisis, such as residents taking more exercise and to focus on areas identified where demand has increased	Manage increased flexible working including video and telephone social care assessments Levels of referrals and ensuring prioritisation of those at greatest risk	All recovery plans consider further the impact on the health of residents and the impact on demand for and access to social care and health services. Update CIA to reflect any implications and mitigations
Economy How will the proposal impact on the economy of Staffordshire or impact on the income of Staffordshire's residents?	Inclusive growth cuts across all priorities within the strategy, with the aim being that growth will benefit all residents.	The Strategy sets out how we will create a more prosperous Staffordshire to the benefit of all our residents.	Not delivering the strategy has the potential to adversely affect our resident's economic wellbeing, including for specific groups.	The Strategy is a living document and will be updated accordingly to reflect changing conditions to ensure we are continuing to have a positive impact on the development of the local economy.
Environment How will the proposal impact on the physical environment of Staffordshire? Does this proposal have any Climate Change implications?	The recovery plans are council-wide and will affect all residents. The recovery of Council services and assets will allow greater support for countryside and green spaces.	It is aimed to develop recovery plans which implement sustainable services with positive impacts for the environment.	Plans do not consider sufficiently the impact on the physical environment of Staffordshire or climate change.	All recovery plans consider further the impact on the physical environment and climate change. Update CIA to reflect any implications and mitigations
Localities / Communities How will the proposal impact on Staffordshire's communities?	All residents and communities will be impacted by the recovery.	The recovery of Council services and assets will allow communities to access	Districts / boroughs with older age profiles (e.g. South Staffordshire, Lichfield), may	All recovery plans consider further the implications for local communities as they develop. Recovery plans that work closely with the VCSE

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		more support as well as leisure and cultural activities.	be more at risk from COVID-19 during recovery. Less affluent communities in Staffordshire are likely to be more impacted and this will have implications for recovery (e.g. higher numbers of COVID-19 related and excess deaths, higher unemployment rates). The VCSE sector has supported communities during COVID-19. However, parts of the sector are potentially at risk of being less sustainable if recovery plans don't consider support / the capacity of the VCSE sector.	(e.g. Health and Care, Families and Communities, and the Communities recovery plans) consider the impact of recovery on the VCSE sector. Update this CIA to consider implications for communities and recommend mitigations.

Staffordshire
County Council

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2021/22

Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

"Dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic remains our focus and we continue to do what is required to control the spread of the virus and keep people safe.

"COVID-19 is still very much with us and over Quarter 2 we have seen a steady increase in the number of cases. The impact that COVID-19 can have on lives and potentially on livelihoods is still very real. The vaccine has been a game changer and in Staffordshire 82% of adults have had both vaccines. Maximising vaccine uptake amongst those eligible, including booster doses and extending vaccine roll out to children aged 12 to 15, will all help to reduce the spread. As we approach autumn and then winter, we need to continue to keep people safe, keep the economy moving and reduce the pressures on our hospitals.

"We still face capacity issues and challenges in adult social care but in September, we had the long-awaited announcement from Government on how this will be funded. While many people will welcome the cap of £86,000 on people's contribution to their own care when they are elderly, the introduction of a 1.25% health and care levy on working people will be a difficult pill for many to swallow. In the short term the money will go into the NHS to clear the backlog of appointments and operations and will increase the county council's costs. So, we need to see more detail of how these proposals will work in practice.

"We will continue to support those who need us most, including the care sector and vulnerable families, children and communities. We continue to provide advice and support for businesses, as we work to get our economy back on track. We have plans in place to ensure we bounce back stronger and generate new opportunities for better jobs, improved lives, and a greener county for everyone."

Cllr Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources said,

"Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic continues to put extra pressures on our finances, but we continue to manage them effectively and are doing what is needed and spending what is required.

"We have used the extra funding and grants from Government to help support the additional pressures of continuing to provide vital services while protecting our residents. All council departments continue to deliver against their recovery priorities, whilst progressing with activities in the organisation's Delivery Plan.

"The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast saving of £1.992m (0.4%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £8.119m (1.5%) at Quarter 1.

"Like many local authorities, we still face financial challenges including in adult social care and in children's social services. We have had the announcement from Government on the long-term funding of adult social care, which was good to see, but we do need to see more details of how this will work in practice.

"We will continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible and to ensure that we provide good value for money for local tax-payers. Well managed finances also mean we can invest in our future and grow our economy post pandemic."

Report Summary:

This quarterly Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council's progress, performance, and financial position in delivering against our Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan.

Recommendation

We recommend that Cabinet:

a. Notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.

b. Approve the use of up to £3.2m of the Exit and Transition Fund to support the cost of redundancies associated with the Children's Transformation programme.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2021/22

Recommendation of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

We recommend that Cabinet:

a. Notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.

b. Approve the use of up to £3.2m of the Exit and Transition Fund to support the cost of redundancies associated with the Children's Transformation programme.

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Background

1. All parts of Staffordshire County Council continue to deliver against key service priorities, whilst also progressing with the activities outlined in the organisation's Delivery Plan. This report provides an update on Quarter 2 activities for each service area: Health and Care; Families and Communities; Economy, Infrastructure and Skills; and Corporate Services.

2. **Summary**

3. At the end of Quarter 2 the overall assessment on the council's performance and financial position is AMBER. Although significant progress has been made across the organisation during the quarter, challenges remain in relation to capacity and demand across all service areas. There continue to be areas of financial risk in Adult Social Care and Families and Communities, with further details included within this report and its appendices. The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast saving of £1.992m (0.4%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £8.119m (1.5%) at Quarter 1.

4. **Health and Care**

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Amber	Green

1. Significant progress has been made across Health and Care in Quarter 2, both in leading the council's response to COVID-19 and exiting lockdown plans, and in the recovery of key adult social care services. The AMBER delivery rating reflects considerable progress made to date, whilst continuing to manage some key challenges. Following the national trend, there continues to be high demand for adult social care assessments, leading to capacity issues, with work underway to understand and respond to this demand. The home care market is also experiencing rising demand, compounded by recruitment and retention challenges. The GREEN finance rating reflects significant in-year underspend, despite longer term cost pressures.

2. Demand and capacity continue to have been exacerbated by COVID-19, leaving more people needing extra support in their homes and more staff required to provide it. As the local economy has been re-opening, care providers have experienced an increase in staff turnover, which has led to some people having to wait longer for less urgent care packages. To tackle these issues, the council is maximising the effective use of available capacity, incentivising take-up of packages of care and working with care providers to support recruitment. Details of vacancies can be found at Nexxus or through the national portal.

3. In addition to existing recruitment and retention issues, COVID-19 has also permanently increased costs in social care due to requirements for enhanced infection prevention and control. These pressures have been met short term by non-recurrent funding from Government, but the council will need to continue to lobby for a sustainable longer-term settlement.

4. The care home market in Staffordshire will be reviewed to ensure the council can continue to offer quality care, value for money and timely access to care in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. A paper to the council's Cabinet has outlined the important role care homes have played throughout the pandemic, and the impact it has had on the care home market.

5. The number of COVID-19 cases in Staffordshire have continued to rise during Quarter 2, following national and regional trends. In the seven days to 7th October, 4,524 cases of COVID-19 were confirmed in

Staffordshire, a rate of 512.2 per 100,000 population. This was higher than both the regional rate (414.0) and the national rate (355.3). Residents can keep up to date with the latest case figures in Staffordshire, including a district breakdown by clicking here.

6. During Quarter 2, the council has continued its response to COVID-19 through Local Outbreak Control activity, including:

   a. Management of COVID-19 incidents and outbreaks.
   b. Flexible and targeted testing facilities to support the asymptomatic testing model and the NHS vaccination programme. Staffordshire has made good progress with the vaccination programme with 87% of the adult population having received their first dose and nearly 82% having received two doses as at 17th September.
   c. The distribution of c.£1.5m of Infection Control Fund grant to 324 care services (as at 15th September 2021) to support providers to maintain enhanced infection control measures to reduce COVID-19 transmission in care settings.
   d. The distribution of c.£1m of Rapid Testing Fund grant to 198 care homes (as at 15th September 2021) to support providers to maintain ongoing testing arrangement for staff and residents.

7. Work is ongoing to deliver the council's Public Health & Prevention plan, with a focus on mitigating the ongoing public health risks from COVID-19. Recent activity includes a conference around mental health and physical activity by 'TogetherActive' to address mental health/suicide prevention in sports settings; exploring NHS Health Check options in the workplace; developing the latest Stoptober communications campaign that will run during September/October (including targeting businesses using LinkedIn); and engaging with Parish Councils to help tackle loneliness and isolation.

8. In Staffordshire there has been an increase in referrals to the National Diabetes Prevention Programme, despite a decline nationally. As a result, NHS England is promoting the Staffordshire model as good practice.

9. The council with partners has been working collaboratively since March to tackle the impact of the operations at Walleys Quarry. A Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) of Staffordshire Resilience Forum agencies has been established and they continue to work on a range of tasks including further preparations of forthcoming engagement events, scenario planning, communications work, and monitoring of the wider situation. The SCG partners have committed to holding two further public engagement events in October. Additional mental health support is also being offered to residents aged 16 and over who live or work near the

site and are experiencing emotional distress owing to the odours from the site.

10. The next phase of the #TalkSuicide campaign was launched to coincide with World Suicide Prevention Day on Friday 10th September. It aims to raise awareness of the issue and to make it easier for people to talk about it. Sadly 10 lives are lost to suicide each month across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with the highest suicide rate in the area being men in their 40's and 50's. People can find out more about the campaign at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/talksuicide.

11. The extension of the Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential supplies scheme, in conjunction with the Energy Saving Trust, has enabled a further 500 households to access emergency support with their energy bills. The learning taken from the Winter 2020 scheme will enable improved planning for the coming winter to further support families who may continue to struggle with the end of the furlough scheme.

12. The council was recognised by the National MJ Achievement Awards 2021 in September; with two finalists in the categories of Corporate Director of the Year and Public Health Improvement, for the Supportive Communities Programme. Dr Richard Harling, Director for Health and Care, was a finalist for Corporate Director of the Year for being a supportive and innovative leader and bringing people together to work in partnership to strengthen the council's pandemic response. The Supportive Communities team was a finalist for the programme's community-based approach to health and wellbeing, as well as its important role in supporting the response to the pandemic.

13. From a Finance perspective, the Health and Care forecasted outturn at Quarter 2 is a saving of £1.012m, compared to a £5m saving in Quarter 1. There remains a range of high risk Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings within this area, with the directorate seeking alternative savings where necessary. In addition, the level of client debt is above target and work is ongoing to recover this. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £4.367m.

14. **Families and Communities**

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Amber	Amber

15. Significant progress has been made across the Families and Communities service area in Quarter 2. The overall AMBER performance ratings reflect much work that has taken place during the quarter, balanced with managing some key issues. Staffordshire has been experiencing a rise in children in care demand, as well as capacity challenges associated with the implementation of a large-scale children's system workforce structure to help tackle demand. In addition, increasing cost pressures within Children in Care and the SEND High Needs Block (Dedicated Schools Grant deficit) has potential to impact on the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

16. The Children's Transformation programme is key to tackling the challenges of demand and capacity, particularly in relation to Children in our Care. Work to progress the transformation continues across the service, including the new district operating model set to go live in October 2021, supported by a new workforce structure and some streamlined pathways and processes. Work also continues on the SEND transformation with its first workstream, aimed at ensuring a more consistent approach to data, process and improvement, now underway. Phasing of further transformation is currently being planned in line with the recruitment of key vacant leadership roles.

17. At the 24th September 2021, there were 1,252 children in care in Staffordshire; which represents a reduction in September but an overall increase compared to the Quarter 1 position (1,245) and slightly higher than the revised business case number. The rate is 73.1 per 10,000 which is higher than the most recent national benchmark (67 per 10,000 – Nov 2020) but lower than regional (85.6 per 10,000 at end of June 2020).

18. At the 24th September 2021, the number of children subject of a child protection plan was 569 (33.4 per 10,000); which is a reduction compared to the Quarter 1 position (576) and remains below the most recent national and regional benchmarks. (National - 43 per 10,000 at the end of December 2020, Regional – 43.5 at the end of June 2020).

19. More detailed work is also being undertaken to better understand the children exiting care population in Staffordshire as part of the Newton project, which is a wider study that the council has been approached to be involved in as part of the county council network. Six local authorities are taking part, with findings helping the council to understand local context as well as national challenges and learning.

20. In Quarter 2, the council achieved successful outcomes for a further 309 families through the Building Resilient Families and Communities (BRFC)

programme, which combined with the 316 successful outcomes achieved in Quarter 1 is already 76% of the annual target for 2021/22 (817) set by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). If current performance is maintained the council is on track to exceed this target.

21. Families needing help will benefit from a county wide support network under new proposals. Cabinet agreed in September to build on its existing 'early years' delivery to support families with children aged up to 18 years old – or to 25 in the case of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The 'Family Hub' network will build upon existing children's centres and be based in the community to provide practical support. The proposals for the hub will go out to consultation later this year and will include joint working across different agencies and voluntary sector groups so that people only tell their story once.

22. All Staffordshire schools reopened following the summer break, with COVID-19 testing completed on site. The council will be supporting schools, young people, and parents, working with the local NHS to roll out the vaccinations for 12-15-year olds and minimise disruption for pupils. The vaccinations themselves will be delivered by the same nursing teams who carry out flu vaccinations in schools during the Autumn term.

23. Funding to create new school places and improve existing provision for children with SEND is being made available to Staffordshire schools. An additional £2.4 million has been made available by the Department for Education to support the council's five-year SEND strategy. Staffordshire currently has more than 6,300 children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). From January 2021 to September (17th) 2021, 84% of EHC plans have been issued in time in Staffordshire; this is above the most recent national average of 61%.

24. Many Afghan families who helped British Forces have been placed in short-term accommodation in Newcastle-under-Lyme by the Home Office, until they are offered permanent homes around the country. The council alongside other local public services and the NHS are supporting these families with health, education, and other needs, and have also been inundated with offers of support from the community. A JustGiving page has been set up in partnership with local charity the Community Foundation for Staffordshire, to take donations that will be used to buy clothes, children's toys, and other essential items.

25. The Trading Standards team continues to support businesses and the council through safeguarding and compliance advice. Between April and August 2021, the team has dealt with over 6,400 engagements and

interventions with businesses; with over £320,000 prevented from being lost to scams and fraud through the council's intervention.

26. Work is ongoing to deliver the council's 2021/22 Communities Delivery Plan which aims to promote social action in local communities and to build capacity in the voluntary and community sector. The final quarter of Year 5 of the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Strategic Capacity Building Partnership Contract (April – June 2021) saw 225 organisations provided with one to one development support, c.£3.7m external funding secured by VCSE organisations (c.£2.8m of this was for COVID-19 related projects and support) and 60 individuals supported to access local volunteering opportunities. A delivery plan for Year 6 (the final year) of the contract has also been developed and agreed with commissioners and providers.

27. In terms of the financial position at Quarter 2 for Families & Communities, there is a forecast overspend of £1.657m, an increase of £2.6m since Quarter 1, reflecting the rise in the number of Children in our Care and the need for placements. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £8.410m.

28. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills**

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Green	Green

29. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is currently on track in terms of both Delivery and Finance in Quarter 2. The overall GREEN performance ratings reflect considerable progress made across the service against its key plans, whilst continuing to respond to a number of ongoing challenges.

30. Work continues to bring day-to-day management and running of Staffordshire's Household Waste Recycling Centres back in-house. Governance arrangements are in place and a range of project plans are in development for key elements of the service. A Dynamic Purchasing System (procurement system for material off takers) and haulage tender (solution for haulage from operational take over) are both live. Residents will see no difference when the changeover happens in 2022, although there are plans to improve facilities and encourage more advanced recycling methods.

31. The council continues to support local businesses to survive, adapt and continue to operate as part of delivering its 5-year Staffordshire Means Back to Business Strategy. A key part is ensuring the right conditions for

growth in Staffordshire's town centres, particularly as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Working in partnership with Stafford Borough Council, Cabinet has agreed to invest in the Stafford Future High Street Fund proposals which will regenerate parts of Stafford town centre as well as delivering improvements to the Market Square and other surrounding streets. This builds on the investment to create new enterprise space at the Shire Hall. The Eastgate Regeneration scheme is also moving forward. The demolition of the former Magistrate Court and Probation Services building will make way for longer term development and improve links between the Riverside retail development and the town centre.

32. Businesses across Staffordshire have continued to be supported by the council and its partners through a range of targeted initiatives, to help mitigate the impact of COVID-19. Some specific examples are included below.

33. The Countywide Redundancy Task Group, in partnership with the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) and partners, continues to meet fortnightly providing support to businesses and residents impacted in relation to redundancies, as well as implementing the wider Plan for Jobs programmes such as Kickstart, Restart, and promoting Sector-based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs). To date the group has supported 1,926 individuals, with 35% moving into a positive outcome at the point of intervention.

34. Staffordshire Start-Up Loan scheme is assisting those made redundant or unemployed to start up new businesses with loans of between £3,000 and £5,000, with no interest or fees. As at 2nd September 2021, 10 start-up businesses supported through the scheme. Furthermore, the new Staffordshire Start-Up course (delivered through Staffordshire Chamber) is ongoing with 263 businesses signed up to the course by the 20th August.

35. As part of the £5m [Staffordshire Means Back to Business Support Scheme](), the council's Ignite Programme was launched earlier in the year; it is a programme of free advice, workshops, mentoring and support for post-16 further education students looking to set up their own business in Staffordshire. During Quarter 2 the Ignite business start-up session was delivered to 7,000 further education students.

36. Work continues to deliver the council's apprenticeship programme. The Staffordshire Apprenticeship 500 initiative began on 1st April 2021 and at the end of August had received 87 applications, resulting in a possible 147 apprenticeship starts.

37. The latest out-of-work claimant figures have decreased to 3.8% of the working age population in August 2021, continuing the downward trend seen since February 2021. Whilst Staffordshire has previously been experiencing a rise in claimant numbers due to COVID-19, the county's position remains well below regional (6.3%) and national (5.3%) averages. The proportion of young claimants, aged 18-24, has increased from 3.7% in March 2020 to 5.7% in August 2021, with 'A Plan for Jobs 2020' initiatives such as the Kickstart Scheme being put in place to support Staffordshire's young people's employment prospects, to help prevent them becoming long-term unemployed.

38. Staffordshire's Economic Growth Programme, which began in 2014, has continued to create and safeguard jobs and enable house builds. As at end of July 2021, 10,421 jobs have been created/safeguarded and 4,076 new houses enabled.

39. In August, the 60-acre first phase of the i54 Western Extension was completed within the programmed period despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and poor weather. Progress has also been made with the Lichfield Southern Bypass (LSB) and Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR), with the former scheduled to open in October 2021 and the latter in November 2021.

40. Following recent changes to Government guidance, the council is currently reviewing its discretionary Temporary Vacant Seat Scheme, with a six-week public engagement exercise underway. This is set to run until midday on the 12th October 2021, with proposals being considered and a final decision to be taken after this date.

41. In September the council released its Climate Change Annual Report 2020/21 that described the steps it has taken to reduce its carbon emissions. The report highlights a significant 25% reduction in the council's carbon emissions in the first year since a climate change emergency had been declared. This has been achieved mainly by transferring all corporate council buildings, maintained schools, streetlights, and traffic signals to run on renewable energy.

42. Furthermore, the council also published its draft (2021-2025) Climate Change Action Plan which was reviewed by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee and will be presented to Cabinet in October 2021. The document outlines how the council aims to continue to make progress towards the nationally set net zero target of 2050. The plan includes proposed actions such as increasing electric vehicle charging points across the county, improving the energy efficiency of all council owned buildings, looking into carbon offsetting options for areas such as disposal household waste, which are going to be impossible to eliminate.

43. Working with the council's Active Travel Team, Heath Hayes Primary Academy in Cannock and St Edwards CofE Academy in Leek have both won the Regional School Travel Awards for their work promoting greener travel and combatting air pollution outside their schools. The awards are given to schools who have demonstrated excellence in supporting sustainable travel. Both schools are involved with the Staffordshire County Council's Air Aware Project to raise awareness of air pollution and to encourage less polluting and more sustainable journeys.

44. A successful 12-month trial to bring sustainable transport to Stafford and Newcastle-Under-Lyme through electric scooter hire came to an end in September. Since the trial started in September 2020, the council has been working with its transport partner Amey and electric scooter providers Ginger and Zwings to trial 200 micro mobility e-scooters in the towns, with over 40,000 rides taken across the county. The council and partners are now working together to bring an electric bike rental scheme to Staffordshire in the coming months.

45. The financial position at Quarter 2 for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is a forecast saving of £0.367m, compared to a saving of £0.137m in Quarter 1, with small forecast savings across the service. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £2.033m.

46. **Corporate Services**

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
Green	Green

47. Corporate Services is currently on track in terms of both Delivery and Finance in Quarter 2 and continues to provide vital support to the organisation in delivering on its priorities, as well as significant activity in support of Local Outbreak Control. Whilst the overall GREEN performance ratings reflect a great deal of activity that has taken place to progress its plans, like other service areas it continues to manage challenges regarding capacity to deliver some of its day to day work.

48. Over the next two years the council aims to raise £17m through the sale of unused land and buildings to fund transformation of services and activity, in line with new Government regulation. To date the council has delivered c.£7m in year through the sale of eight assets, including farms. In addition, all work on the council's priority property projects is progressing well and on track to deliver, including an additional c.£5million to support the school's maintenance programme. There does

however remain procurement issues associated with many construction materials; an issue that is also being experienced nationally.

49. The Member's Fund for this year was launched at a Members event on June 24th. The fund is still linked to COVID-19; however, it now has a broader 'recovery' remit. The fund will focus on supporting community groups that are thinking about their future offer, who they work with, and how they fundraise / stay sustainable following COVID-19. As at 8th October, 84 applications for funding had been received for funding across Staffordshire.

50. Digital inclusion remains a key priority and work is continuing to address barriers to this in Staffordshire. More than 100 devices have been donated as part of 'Donate IT' Digital Device Recycling Scheme and these are now being distributed to people who are at risk of digital exclusion in the county.

51. Over the last quarter, work has continued on the roll out of the new Staffordshire story and place brand. This has included the launch of a dedicated ambassador portal within the "We Are Staffordshire" website, with almost 80 ambassadors now registered, and a partnership project with Staffordshire University Business School to engage young people in "We Are Staffordshire" key projects.

52. Work to deliver the council's internal People Strategy is ongoing. The council's new Employer Brand, aimed at attracting and retaining talented people in the council's workforce, is now live. Wellbeing of the workforce also remains a key priority, with the development of a new Wellbeing strategy agreed during Quarter 2 in preparation for implementation from October 2021.

53. An outcome of the COVID-19 response has been a significant reduction in sickness absence levels; currently 9.85 days (2.59 days short term, 7.26 days long term) lost per employee (August 2021), representing a reduction of 7.7% from the same period last year (2.74 days short term, 7.93 days long term). However, with the easing of lockdown, the council has seen a slight increase in absence levels. Absences relating to diagnosed/suspected cases of COVID-19 account for 1.19 days lost per employee over this period (12% of total), but this has been outweighed by improvements against most other absence reasons. Of note is the reduction in musculoskeletal absences, currently 1.57 days lost per employee, a reduction of 15% from last year.

54. In Corporate Services the financial position at Quarter 2 is a forecast saving of £0.9m, compared to a saving of £0.325m in Quarter 1. This is largely due to staffing vacancies and increased incomes. The forecast financial impact of COVID-19 for the directorate is £0.486m.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Finance Quarter 2 Summary
Appendix 2 - Finance Quarter 2 Detailed Report
Appendix 3 - Corporate Checklist
Appendix 4 - Revenue Forecast Outturn 2021/22
Appendix 5 - Capital Forecast Outturn 2021/22
Appendix 6 - Financial Health Indicators 2021/22

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Latest Financial Summary

The following graphs summarise the financial performance of the council. Full details are contained in this report.

The graphs and charts are compiled using quarter 2 forecast information.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a saving of £2.0m (0.4%). Due to Covid 19 Central Government have issued additional grant payments to support the additional pressures of continuing to provide vital services while protecting the workforce and local residents.

There has been request for the use of £0.310m of the Exit and Transition Fund which was established in 2018/19.

There is a forecast non-Covid saving of £14m on Care Commissioning Older People Placements budgets. The reduced number of placements has lead to this forecast – it does also mean that it is possible the forecast income may not be achieved and this will be monitored throughout the financial year.

Savings are categorised into confidence of delivery. There are £1.625m savings that are delivered as at quarter 2. There are £1.284m savings classes as Low confidence and some of those savings are £1.204m of Adult Social Care Client Income savings and £50,000 for Care Commissioning Single Management Team.

The latest capital outturn projection is £129.5m, compared to the quarter 1 position of £126.7m, an increase of 2.3%. This projection is a fully funded position. This increase is due to additional developer contributions and basic needs funding for two new build schools, offset by reductions across the capital programme. More details can be found in the report.

Within the national context, the retail price index is currently 4.8%, and the latest consumer price index is 3.2%. GDP is estimated to have decreased by 1.1% in the three months to June 2021, but has increased by 0.1% in July 2021. Current unemployment figures show Staffordshire benefit claimant rate remains below that of the West Midlands and Great Britain.
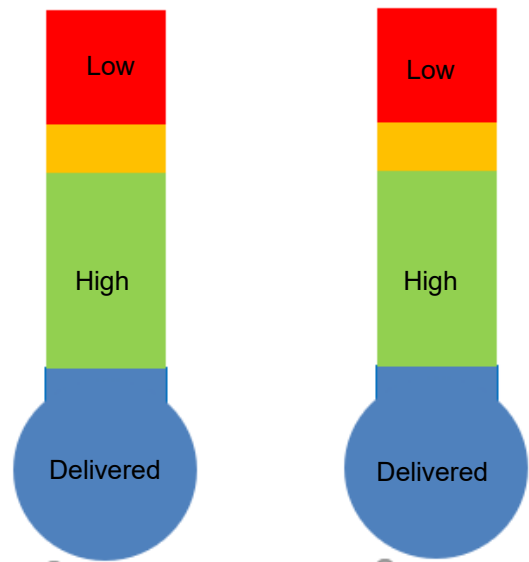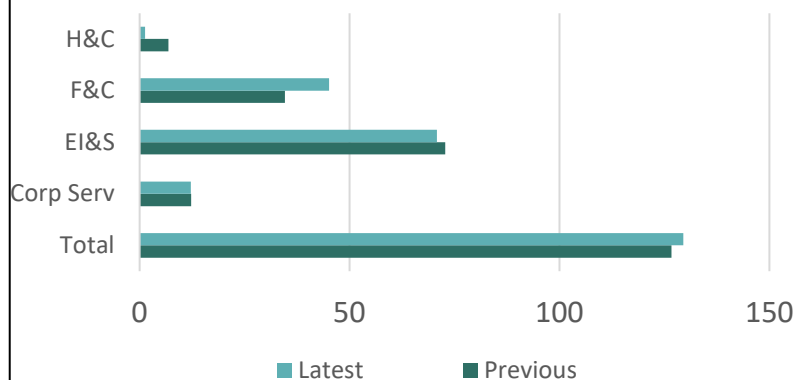
Revenue Budget Variance

	Covid Impact	Normal Service Overspend
H&C	1.9%	-0.4%
F&C	5.0%	-0.7%
EI&S	2.7%	-0.5%
Corp Serv	1.4%	-2.7%
Total Inc. C19 Grant	-0.1%	-0.2%
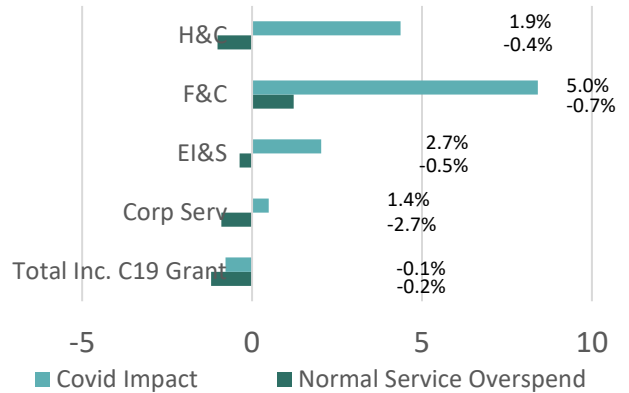
Savings Tracker – Target £5.682m

Quarter 1 - £5.682m   Quarter 2 - £5.682m

Low / High / Delivered

Capital Programme

	Latest	Previous
H&C		
F&C		
EI&S		
Corp Serv		
Total		

Introduction

Revenue Forecast

1.   The latest revenue forecast outturn (as provided in appendix 4) shows a forecast saving of £1.992m (0.4%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £8.119m (1.5%) at quarter 1.

2.   Since 2020/21, Covid 19 has been a global pandemic requiring a combined response from public sector services, which is also having a severe impact on the economy. In 2021/22 Central Government has issued general grant to local authorities, totalling £16.2m, in order to support the additional pressures of continuing to provide vital services during the pandemic while protecting both workforce and local residents.

3.   The table below sets out the current forecast of additional costs relating to the pandemic, plus lost income and delayed savings caused by the crisis.

	£m
Additional Costs	4.237
Lost income	1.936
Delayed savings	9.046
Grant funding	(16.204)
Remaining Grant / (Shortfall)	0.985

All grants received by Staffordshire County Council in 2021/22 for Covid 19 related activities are listed below. The General Covid Grant can fund activity in all service areas, the remaining grants are specific and go directly to services. All grants allocated for Covid-related activities will be utilised in full, over the medium term, in order to fund the additional expenditure caused by the pandemic.

	£m
General Covid Grant Funding	16.204
Adult Social Care Lateral Flow Testing	3.713
Adult Social Care Infection Control	5.346
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	1.477
Local Support Grant	0.523
Practical Support Framework	0.681

Covid Winter Grant	0.678
Contain Outbreak Management	4.182
Total	**32.804**

4.   The following paragraphs consider the key financial issues in each of the council's portfolios.

5.   **Health and Care**   **Covid impact - £4.367m**
                          Normal service forecast – £1.012m saving

6.   *Adults Social Care & Safeguarding*   *Covid impact - £0.240m*
                          Normal service forecast – £0.102m saving

7.   Overall, the service is forecast to save £0.102m. Covid related costs are forecast to be £0.240m.

8.   There are currently a number of vacancies in the Adult Learning Disability Team (ALDT) which have proven difficult to fill. This has led to a forecast saving of £0.521m. A review of the ratio of qualified to unqualified staff is planned which could lead to higher costs in the future. Agency staff may also be required to maintain service delivery during the year.

9.   Section 75 agreements for both Mental Health North and South are now in place and it is forecast that the costs will be in line with the budget. It is also forecast that the £0.154m MTFS saving for Mental Health North will be delivered in full.

10. There is a forecast saving of £0.560m in the Learning Disability In-house Residential services due to staff vacancies in the first half of the year. There is also a forecast saving of £0.125m for the Specialised Day Opportunity Service due to some transport savings and some additional cross boundary income. Reviews of these services are taking place which may lead to changes to the way they operate and will have a financial impact in the future.

11. Cabinet have previously agreed capital investment in Douglas Road and Hawthorn House sites, with the financial analysis demonstrating a positive benefit for the council. Unfortunately, building costs are increasing as a result of a global shortage of materials due to the Coronavirus pandemic. It is therefore

proposed to allocate £2m to the capital cost of these schemes. This will also minimise future borrowing costs for the council.

12.   There is a forecast overspend of £1.130m for care systems. This is because the service has repaid in full all future years' borrowing repayments for the care system, which will save £0.539m in future years.

13.   There are other small variances totalling a forecast saving of £26,000.

14.   Care Commissioning   *Covid impact - £4.127m*
                                              Normal service forecast – £0.910m saving

15.   Overall the service has a forecast saving of £0.910m, and Covid related costs are forecast to be £4.127m. There is an assumption that any additional costs related to the pandemic will be met from the Covid-19 funding allocations received by the Council.

16.   The Older Peoples placement budget is now forecast to save £14.951m compared to the £5m reported at quarter 1.

17.   The number of people in residential and nursing placement is significantly lower than had been budgeted for in the MTFS as a direct result of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is despite increases during the first quarter as the final reviews have been completed for those clients discharged from hospital under pathway 3. However, the overall number of service packages resulting from pathway 3 haven't materialised, thereby compounding the reduction in overall placement numbers. This has resulted in a total of 290 fewer placements than in the budget as at the end of July 2021 and a forecast saving of £11.042m. The Older Peoples placement budget includes £7m additional budget that was provided in the MTFS to mitigate risks in the care market. Given current numbers and future forecasts on the number of starters and levers, it appears as though this will not be required in 2021/22.

18.   The reduced number of placements has resulted in a forecast £2.829m income shortfall from residential and nursing client contributions compared to the budget. This means that it is most unlikely that the service will achieve the additional growth in income that we had budgeted in year.

19. There is a forecast saving of £0.923m on Older Peoples Home Care budget. Analysis of the dynamic home care data shows that the number of hours provided has remained relatively stable recently, however there is a forecast of increased demand, so it is possible that this saving may reduce as we move through the financial year.

20. There is a forecast saving of £0.186m on the Older Peoples Direct Payments budget, which was adjusted to reflect the ongoing reduction of people in receipt of a direct payment since April 2019.

21. The Older People's Day Care budget is forecast to save £0.413m because of lower activity due to the pandemic.

22. The Older People's In-House Residential budget is forecast to save £0.216m, but future demand is still uncertain so this position may change later in the year.

23. There is a forecast saving of £0.469m on the Older People's Short Stay Respite budget, again due to lower activity due to the pandemic.

24. The Mental Health budget was increased this year in recognition of the growth in placement costs during 2020/21. The service is forecast to overspend by £0.263m largely due to a forecast overspend on the placement budget of £0.339m because of an increased costs of direct payments and homecare. This has been partially offset by a small forecast saving on Mental Health contracts of £76,000. It is forecast that the £0.2m Mental Health contract MTFS saving will be delivered in full. There remains a risk of further increases in Mental Health referrals due to the impact of the pandemic.

25. The Learning Disability placement budget is forecast to save £2.882m. This saving is due to reductions in the number of people with learning disabilities being cared for in nursing homes as well as savings on homecare, direct payments and replacement residential care (respite care). Residential and supported living costs are slightly above budget. We are seeing the full benefit of increases in health income negotiated in recent years. There is a continued risk that the Community Offer and Reviews Programme MTFS savings will not be delivered in full. This forecast is based on the assumption that other smaller MTFS savings will be achieved in full. It is also assumed that any additional unplanned care costs resulting from the pandemic will be met from additional

grant funding. There remains a risk that demographic growth and care price increases could exceed the budget forecasts, but these will be monitored as we move through the year.

26. The council will continue to work with the local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to support the discharge of people with learning disabilities or autism from specialist hospitals to community-based setting under the Transforming Care Partnership (TCP). Because the National Health Service England (NHSE) reduced the amount of funding that accompanied each individual, there has been a substantial cost pressure for the Staffordshire Health and Care economy. It is expected that there will be a further grant allocation from the government to support future discharges, but this has not yet been confirmed. There remains a risk of further cost pressures in 2021/22 as a result of this programme. The latest forecast is that the county council could incur an overspend of over £4m this year. The council is working with its health partners to try and agree a new cost allocation model. However, there still remains a risk of further costs pressures for the remainder of the MTFS period.

27. The new Carers service went live in April 2021 following a delay caused by the pandemic. It is forecast that there will be a small saving of £15,000 in year. There is also a saving forecast on the Advocacy contract of £77,000 and it is expected that the £0.150m contract saving will be delivered in full.

28. Following the resolution of a contract dispute on the Section 75 Contract with the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) there is now a small forecast saving on the Reablement contract of £80,000. However, the final inflation uplifts on the MPFT Section 75 have not yet been agreed. There is therefore a risk that these uplifts could exceed the assumptions built into the budget.

29. There is a forecast saving of £0.116m for the Learning Disability and Mental Health Commissioning Team due to staff vacancies held in the first half of the year.

30. Prisoners related care activities are forecast to save £0.263m due to staffing savings and lower care costs.
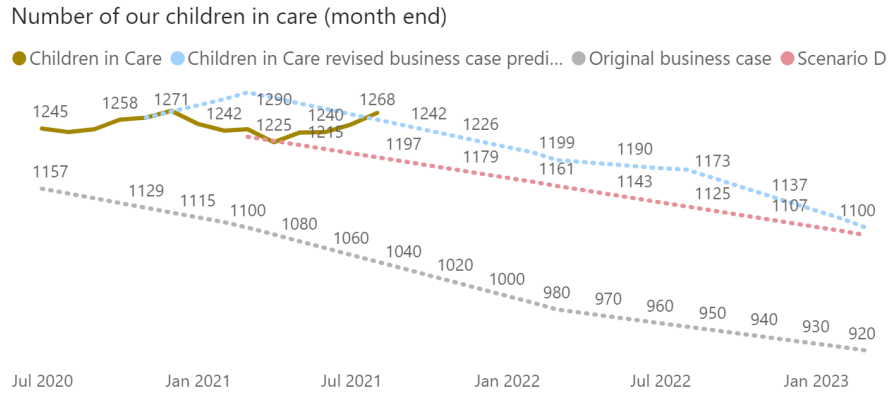
31.   The Physical Disabilities Placement budget is forecast to save £0.649m, mainly as a result of fewer people in residential and nursing placements. There are also savings on homecare, direct payments and supported housing. These savings have been offset by some small overspends and a forecast shortfall in income.

32.   Other variances total a forecast saving of £0.140m.

33.   Forecasting future numbers and price pressures under current circumstances is extremely difficult, so we will continue to monitor the position closely throughout the remainder of the financial year. In addition, we are currently seeing unprecedented demand for assessments. There is a significant risk that this will translate into higher numbers of people in care through 2021/22 and it is therefore possible that the current forecast saving will reduce. Furthermore, there are significant recruitment and retention issues in the care market as the sector competes with other areas of the economy that have now reopened, such as retail and hospitality, to fill vacancies. This can ultimately have a knock-on effect to the council as providers are not able to take on new packages due to staff shortages. This scarcity will most likely result in prices being driven up. To mitigate this risk, it is proposed that a £7m contribution is made to the care risk reserve.

34.   Staffordshire County Council wants to improve its internal systems and the wider digital offer to its residents and partners. This can enhance the working environment for colleagues, improve internal processes, reduce costs, and provide new data insights. In addition, technology and new data insights can be used to develop relationships with our communities, enabling and encouraging more residents to help themselves and each other. It is therefore proposed that a £7m contribution is made to the IT reserve to enable this digital transformation.

35.   There is a risk that the council will not be able to recover outstanding debt through courts due to the backlog arising from the pandemic. In addition, the Legal Team are working through some historic, complex cases and it is possible that the council will not recover all outstanding sums. It is therefore proposed that the Health & Care bad debt provision is increased by £2m.

36.   The council has been allocated a further £3.903m in 2021/22 for Adult Social Care Infection Control and Testing Fund ring fenced grant. The guidance

identified a proportion of the funding be passported directly to care homes, drug and alcohol settings and community providers with the remainder to be allocated at the council's discretion. A report was submitted to SLT setting out proposals to allocate and spend the funding in line with the grant conditions. Funding needs to be passported to providers or spent by 30 September 2021, with any unspent allocation to be returned to the Department of Health and Social Care.

37.   The additional Covid related costs of £4.367m consists of; £2.646m unachievable savings that have been reprofiled to future years, £0.530m additional staffing costs that have been incurred to support the ongoing response to the pandemic and ensure continuity of services, £0.6m additional expenditure to support the provider market such as providing a care home loan scheme, and £0.591m of other exception costs.

38.   **Families & Communities**   **Covid impact - £8.410m**
                                    Normal service forecast - £1.225m overspend

39.   *Children's Services*   *Covid impact - £7.766m*
                                    Normal service forecast - £1.657m overspend

40.   The forecast overspend of £1.657m is £2.6m higher than the forecast saving reported at quarter 1 and reflects the rises in the number of Children in our Care and the need for placements.

41.   The forecast overspend includes £1.4m within Children in our Care, including £2.4m in the placement budget partially offset by additional grant for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and staff vacancies, as well and a forecast overspend in the Independent Conference Chair service of £0.3m due to additional staffing levels.

42.   This surge in demand is reflected across the region – and similarly across the country – and has put inevitable pressure on supply. This has been exacerbated by carers and workers needing to self-isolate. Alongside the increased numbers, there has also been an increase in the unit costs, partly due to some complex children being placed and partly due to limited capacity.

43.   The recent rise in demand is a concern and, with numbers now exceeding the revised business case assumptions, could put at risk the delivery of planned MTFS savings.

Number of our children in care (month end)

● Children in Care ● Children in Care revised business case predi... ● Original business case ● Scenario D

1245 1258 1271 1290 1240 1268 1242
1242 1225 1215 1226
1157 1197 1199 1190
1129 1179 1161 1173
1115 1143 1137
1100 1125 1107 1100
1080
1060
1040
1020 1000
980 970 960 950 940 930 920

Jul 2020   Jan 2021   Jul 2021   Jan 2022   Jul 2022   Jan 2023

44.   Short term, we are monitoring closely children entering care and those which are leaving and due to leave. This should aid more accurate predictions. A medium term action plan has been developed to unblock hurdles in the leaving care process by speaking directly with front line practitioners, national benchmarking as well as understanding the uptake of Family Group Conferencing.

45.   Due to Covid 19, planned transformation works and savings of £6.4m impacting across Children's Services have seen delays, and have been reprofiled within the MTFS accordingly.

46.   Transformation

47.   The Families and Communities Directorate is currently working through the final stages of its transformation programme in readiness for a targeted implementation date of 25 October 2021.

48.   The redesign, which is informed by best practice, seeks to change both the practice and culture across the children's system and it has impacted upon just over 2,000 staff. It will enable a whole system approach, bringing together children's social care, SEND and Inclusion, the Place Based Approach and commissioning. It is essential for the delivery of revised practices / cultures that underpin the necessary MTFS savings and stabilisation of SEND.

49.   Significantly, and whilst some redundancies were anticipated, the number and cost was difficult to assess when the business case was initially approved.

50.   As a result of these processes, the latest expectation is that 31 staff will be made redundant at a cost of c £2.8m. To reduce and mitigate the impact of redundancy, the restructuring of roles and people to align to the new operating model the process has been managed in accordance with the Council's 'Staffing Protocol' policies.

51.   This reflects the latest position only and remains fluid while the recruitment process continues throughout September/October. Based on the latest position, a further 14 staff are currently 'going through the process' and remain at risk over and above those staff identified above and – in a worst case scenario – this could see the total number of staff redundancies increase to 45 and a cost of c £3.2m. The proposal is that this additional cost of redundancy is recognised and funded from the Exit and Transition Fund.

52.   Education Services   *Covid impact - £0.417m*
                                                    Normal service forecast - £0.264m saving

53.   The forecast saving is a result of budget savings in historical pension liabilities an additional income in areas such as schools' admissions.

54.   SEND transport is currently forecast to be breakeven due to additional resource that was allocated to the service this year. However there remains a risk that contract retendering due later in the year that could lead to further pressures in this area.

55.   There are Covid costs relating to SEN transport cleaning.

56.   SEND High Needs Block

57.   The High Needs Block is currently forecast to overspend by £7.5m and reflects continuing growing demand for SEND support. This overspend will be charged against the DSG reserve which, at the end of 2020/21 was already £2m in deficit. Staffordshire County Council is not alone in this difficult financial predicament, in fact it is a position shared by the majority of councils across the sector.
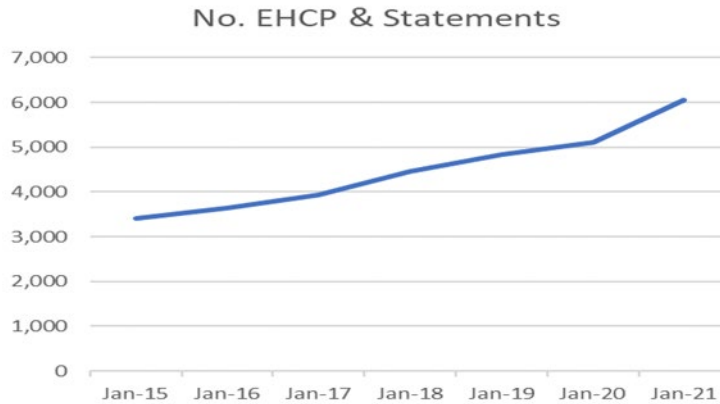
58.	It is forecast that the SEND transformation programme, with the full roll out of the district hub model, will provide a more inclusive system that enables the necessary early support and intervention to manage demand within overall resources. However, this will take time and will not generate the immediate savings required to address the current shortfall.

59.	Given the latest forecast overspend, the deficit is likely to increase this year and in future years until such time that the SEND transformation plan can impact:
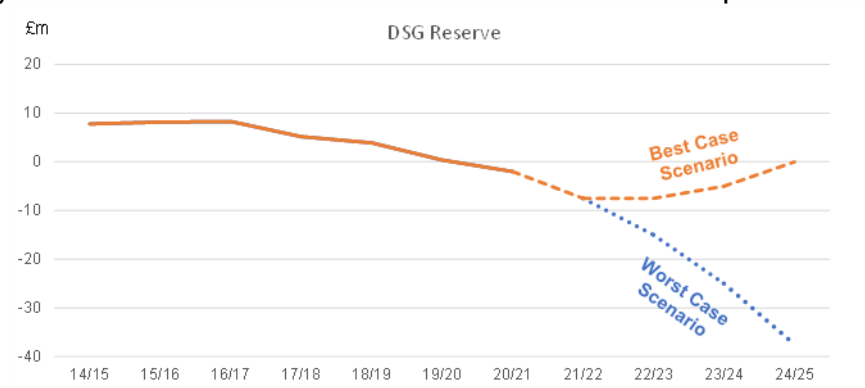
60.	Schools Forum, at is meeting in October 2020, approved a deficit management plan utilising surplus Growth Fund money that will be transferred to the DSG reserve. It is estimated that, for 2021/22, this will be around £1m - £1.5m, but given the worsening financial position outline above further action will be required.

61.	The council has currently outline in consultation with all maintained and academy schools' proposals for a 0.5% funding switch in 2022/23 – equivalent to £3m – from the school's block to support high needs as permitted within DfE guidance. This will be considered by Schools Forum at its meeting in October 2021.

62.   *Culture & Communities*   *Covid impact - £0.135m*
Normal service forecast - £21,000 saving

63.   This forecast saving is largely due to reduced transports costs. Covid 19 has led to reduced income for the service from reduced trading activity.

64.   *Rural County*   *Covid impact - £92,000*
Normal service forecast - £92,000 saving

65.   The forecast saving largely due to one off staffing vacancies of £0.3m held pending the re-organisation of the service, to be carried out in the final quarter of the financial year, partially offset by increased costs of £0.2m for Rights of Way and Carpark repairs due to increased usage.

66.   The pandemic has led to loss of income for the service from reduced trading activity, parking and penalty fines.

67.   *Community Safety*   *Covid impact – nil*
Normal service forecast - £55,000 saving

68.   The forecast saving is due to service contract savings which have resulted from the impact of Covid 19 are likely to return to normal levels for the remainder of the financial year.

69.   **Economy, Infrastructure & Skills**   **Covid impact - £2.033m**
Normal service forecast - £0.367m saving

70.   *Business & Enterprise*   *Covid impact - nil*
Normal service forecast – breakeven

71.   The service is forecast to breakeven, however there are forecast overspends against the Magistrates Court holding costs and planning application fee income. These overspends are off set by additional grant income from Growth Hub activities, forecast surpluses on Enterprise Centres, and a vacancy within the Economic Growth team.

72.   Infrastructure & Highways   *Covid impact - £0.310m*
                                                     Normal service forecast – breakeven

73.   The forecast for the service is breakeven, which is no change from quarter 1.

74.   There are various forecast overspends in a number of areas including
       Sustainable Development and Highways Maintenance, but these are being
       managed by forecast savings within the Community Infrastructure and then
       Network Management areas. These variances will be continually reviewed as
       we move through the financial year. The forecast position also includes
       transferring £0.590m of additional permit income to reserves as the estimated
       over recovery for this year.

75.   The expected impact of the pandemic is forecast to be £0.310m, which is
       largely a continued loss of income for street parking and bus enforcement in
       the Regulation and Governance area, and a small number of increased costs
       for Safe Operating Procedures such as PPE.

76.   Transport, Connectivity & Waste   *Covid impact - £1.723m*
                                                     Normal service forecast - £0.277m saving

77.   The Transport and Connectivity area is forecast overspend by £0.154m, this
       includes savings within the operational Transport budgets which are offset by
       making a provision of £0.6m for the remaining three years of the Local
       Transport Assessment Works.

78.   Extra Covid 19 costs include providing additional cleaning on home to school
       transport until the end of July and additional transport capacity to avoid full and
       standing buses at peak times.

79.   The Sustainability and Waste area is forecast to save £0.430m, which assumes
       the MTFS Green Waste recycling credits saving of £0.5m will be achieved. This
       forecast saving also includes a provision for likely additional costs relating to
       the Household Waste Recycling Centre mobilisation project of £0.2m and
       consultants working on the Hanford incinerator project of £0.2m. It should be
       noted that waste budgets are demand led and will need continued close
       monitoring throughout the year to track tonnages and cost as social restrictions
       are eased and any 'new normal' is established. The outturn position for the
       HWRC budget is also being closely monitored as there is an emerging risk of

higher than anticipated costs in this area. If required this will be reflected in the next quarterly reporting.

80.   There is a forecast of £1.160m for the impact of Covid 19 on Waste. This is an increase of £0.630m from quarter 1, and is due to the cost of additional tonnages which have been seen since March 2020 as a result of the change in working habits but also the loss of third party income to the Energy from Waste sites as a result of this increased tonnage. This forecast is going to be reviewed in depth ahead of quarter 3 as there is still uncertainty around the impact of Covid 19 within these budget areas, and there is a risk that this may be a longer-term issue which would put the wider Waste budget and current MTFS under more pressure.

81.   *Skills*   *Covid impact – nil*
Normal service forecast - £90,000 saving

82.   The service is forecast to save £90,000 which is due to vacancies within the team, there is also a small forecast saving on Community Learning Groups.

83.   **Corporate Services**   **Covid impact - £0.486m**
Normal service forecast - £0.9m saving

84.   The service is forecast to save £0.9m, this includes a forecast savings within Assets, Business Support and Strategy due to staff vacancies, and additional income within Registrars due to the higher number of weddings now being booked as social restrictions are lifted. These savings are partially offset by a forecast overspend within HR which is the non-delivery of MTFS savings.

85.   There are forecast to be £0.486m Covid 19 related costs, which includes costs of temporary mortuary facilities extension and the closures of the first annual leave purchase scheme window.

86.   **Centrally Controlled**

87.   The business as usual saving of £0.150m is within Pooled Buildings and relates to savings on energy and electricity costs.

88.   The Covid 19 related costs include forecast loss of rental income and potential additional costs to modify the office space in SP1 post Covid 19.

89.   The Insurance budget is £3.633m and this covers all types of insurance required such as Property and Liability. The type of insurance with the largest cost is the liability insurance which covers both public and employer liability, officials and professional indemnity insurance. This policy is going out to tender shortly, in order to obtain an insurer for a policy start date of 1st May 2022. Therefore there is a risk that the cost of insurance increases.

90.   The pay award for 2021/22 is currently under negotiation but has not yet been agreed. The MTFS for the current year assumed 0% increase for pay, following the Spending Review in November 2020 which announced a pay freeze for the public sector. Any pay award for the current year would therefore need to be funded from the Contingency budget.

91.   When the MTFS was produced, it assumed 1% for non-pay inflation would be incurred during 2021/22. Current rates of inflation are higher than this and in addition, further monies are required to replenish the Exit and Transition Fund which is being used this year to fund the Children's Transformation programme. In light of this, it would be prudent to use any underspend in this current year to increase the Exit and Transition Fund.

92.   **Capital Forecast**

93.   Appendix 5 compares the latest capital forecast outturn of £129.5m, an increase from the quarter 1 position of £126.7m. The key reasons for this increase of £2.7m are set out in the following paragraphs.

94.   **Health and Care**   **Forecast spend £1.343m**

95.   There has been a decrease of £5.780m since the quarter 1 report. This is due to the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic which has resulted in uncertainty over demand and capacity requirements moving forward, therefore current plans are on hold for new build nursing homes at Histon Hill and Rowley Hall with complete budgets rephased to 2022/23 and 2023/24.

96.   **Families and Communities**   **Forecast spend £45.122m**

97. *Maintained Schools*   *Forecast Spend £44.307m*

98. There has been an increase of £4.155m since quarter 1 due to two new schools builds being introduced into the programme – Parks Farm of £2.7m and Fradley Park Primary of £2.2m. These schemes are primary funded from developer contributions and additional basic needs. These increases are offset by various budget refinements across the rest of the programme of £0.725m.

99. There has been a £6.410m increase due to a number of new smaller schemes being added to the programme, funded from a mix of school contributions, Third Party contributions and additional government School Condition Allocation grant that will be used to further address condition priorities in schools.

100. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills**   **Forecast spend £70.825m**

101. *Economic Planning & Future Prosperity*   *Forecast spend £11.198m*

102. There has been a decrease of £0.571m since quarter one, this is due to reduction in i54 Western Extension as we approach the end of the project and risk and contingency budgets are reduced by £0.668m, this is partially offset by minor budget refinements including Redhill, Eastgate Regeneration and others totalling £97,000.

103. It if forecast that £0.3m will be spent from the Farms Investment Fund. This includes a pilot County Farm Small Grant Scheme of up to £0.1m and an investment of £0.120m to make improvements at one of the holdings on the Woodhouse Estate, providing a modernised Starter Dairy Farm.

104. *Highways Schemes*   *Forecast spend £57.818m*

105. There has been a reduction of £1.199m since the quarter 1 report, this is due to changes across a number of projects within the programme, most notable being the refinement of Stafford Western Access Route as the project nears completion and risk allowances have been reduced by £0.257m.

106. **Finance and Resources & ICT**   **Forecast spend £0.689m**

107. There has been a reduction of £65,000 since quarter 1 due to the refining of the Data Centre refresh budgets.

108. **Financial Health**

109. Appendix 6 provides a forecast outturn performance against the key Financial Health Indicators approved as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

110. There have been 98.0% of invoices paid within 30 days of receiving them at the end of August, exceeding the financial health indicator target. This position also reflects early payments to suppliers to help them with cashflow during the pandemic.

111. The estimated level of outstanding sundry debt over 6 months old is £19.827m, this is over the target of £14.7m by £5.127m. This is a decrease of £86,000 since the quarter 1 report. The debt recovery process involves chasing by a range of methods with the eventual escalation to the external collection agent or to Legal for the possibility of a court decision to recover the debt. It should be noted that a return to full debt recovery services, including legal action was only possible from September 2020 due to Covid 19.

112. The level of CCG health debt over 6 months old is £1.2m below the target figure. This is a decrease of £0.220m since the quarter 1 report.

113. Client debt now stands at £9.496m and could potentially increase as a consequence of the on-going pandemic. A working group has been established to look at why clients are not paying debts and to implement ways to avoid clients getting into debt in the first instance, this includes an initiative to encourage and assist clients with setting up direct debit instructions.

Debtor Type	2021/22 Target	30/06/2021	30/09/2021 Est	Increase / (Decrease)

	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health Bodies & CCGs	3.900	2.969	2.749	**(0.220)**
Other Govt. and Public Bodies	2.000	3.247	3.233	**(0.014)**
Other General Debtors (Individuals & Commercial)	4.700	4.015	4.349	**0.334**
Health & Care Client Debt	4.100	9.682	9.496	(0.186)
TOTAL	**14.700**	**19.913**	**19.827**	**(0.086)**

Equalities implications:
Through the delivery of county council business plans, service delivery is increasingly reflecting the diverse needs of our various communities.

Legal implications:
There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Resource and Value for money implications:
The resource and Value for money implications are set out in the report.

Risk implications:
The risk implications concern the robustness of the forecast outturn which may change owing to pressures on services with a consequent effect on county council functions being able to keep within budgets and a potential call on balances.

Climate Change implications:
Staffordshire's communities are places where people and organisations proactively tackle climate change, gaining financial benefit and reducing carbon emissions' is one of the county council's priority outcomes. Through the monitoring and management of this outcome; climate change and carbon emissions are being addressed in an active manner.

Health Impact Assessment and Community Impact Assessment screening:
Not required for this report.

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Revenue Forecast Outturn 2021/22

	Revised Budget Qtr 2 £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Covid Impact	Normal Service Overspend / (Savings)	Total Variation £m
Health and Care					
Public Health & Prevention	0.263	0.263	0.000	0.000	0.000
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	40.800	40.698	0.240	(0.102)	0.138
Care Commissioning	185.606	184.696	4.127	(0.910)	3.217
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	(0.263)	(0.263)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Health and Care Total	**226.406**	**225.394**	**4.367**	**(1.012)**	**3.355**
Families and Communities					
Children's Services	118.197	119.854	7.766	1.657	9.423
Children's Public Health	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Education Services	33.018	32.754	0.417	(0.264)	0.153
Culture and Communities	5.438	5.417	0.135	(0.021)	0.114
Rural	2.356	2.264	0.092	(0.092)	0.000
Community Safety	8.323	8.268	0.000	(0.055)	(0.055)
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Families and Communities Total	**167.332**	**168.557**	**8.410**	**1.225**	**9.635**
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills					
Business & Enterprise	2.194	2.194	0.000	0.000	0.000
Infrastructure & Highways	29.687	29.687	0.310	0.000	0.310
Transport, Connectivity & Waste	39.880	39.603	1.723	(0.277)	1.446
Skills	2.435	2.345	0.000	(0.090)	(0.090)
EI&S Business Support	1.097	1.097	0.000	0.000	0.000
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Covid related capital project costs	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	**75.293**	**74.926**	**2.033**	**(0.367)**	**1.666**
Corporate Services	33.528	32.938	0.486	(0.590)	(0.104)
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Exit and Transition Fund	0.000	(0.310)	0.000	(0.310)	(0.310)
Corporate Services Total	**33.528**	**32.628**	**0.486**	**(0.900)**	**(0.414)**
Traded Services	**(0.622)**	**(0.622)**	**0.000**	**0.000**	**0.000**
TOTAL PORTFOLIO BUDGETS	**501.937**	**500.883**	**15.296**	**(1.054)**	**14.242**
Centrally Controlled Items					
Interest on Balances & Debt Charges	34.669	34.669	0.000	0.000	0.000
Pooled Buildings and Insurances	27.647	27.493	0.124	(0.154)	(0.030)
Investment Fund	0.798	0.798	0.000	0.000	0.000
Covid 19 Grant	0.000	0.000	(16.204)	0.000	(16.204)
TOTAL FORECAST OVERSPEND	**565.051**	**563.843**	**(0.784)**	**(1.208)**	**(1.992)**

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22

	1st Quarter Budget	Enhancements to Programme	2nd Quarter Budget
	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care			
Care and Independence	6.926	(5.583)	1.343
Health and Care Total	**6.926**	**(5.583)**	**1.343**
Families and Communities			
Maintained Schools	33.742	10.565	44.307
Rural County (Countryside)	0.790	(0.072)	0.718
Vulnerable Children's Projects	0.084	0.000	0.084
Tourism and Culture	0.013	0.000	0.013
Families and Communities Total	**34.629**	**10.493**	**45.122**
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Economic Planning & Future Prosperity	11.968	(0.770)	11.198
Highways Schemes	59.017	(1.199)	57.818
Connectivity	1.430	0.000	1.430
Waste & Sustainability Projects	0.379	0.000	0.379
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	**72.794**	**(1.969)**	**70.825**
Trading Services - County Fleet Care	0.507	0.000	0.507
Finance, Resources & ICT	0.754	(0.065)	0.689
Property	11.050	0.000	11.050
Corporate Leased Equipment	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total	**126.660**	**2.876**	**129.536**

Financial Health Indicators 2021/22

Indicator	Current Performance
<u>Debtors</u> Level of outstanding general debtors more than 6 months old does not exceed £14.7m (Current Performance – £19.8m)	🔴 R
<u>Payments to suppliers</u> • At least 90% of invoices have been paid within 30 days of us receiving them during the last quarter (Current Performance – 98.0%) This reflects early payments to suppliers to help them with cashflow during the pandemic.	🟢 G
<u>Monitoring</u> Quarterly financial monitoring reports have been issued to Cabinet during the last 12 months	🟢 G
The council's most recent revenue outturn forecast did not vary by more than +/-2% when compared to the overall revenue budget	🟢 G
Quarterly monitoring reports of progress against MTFS savings have been produced for the Senior Leadership Team during the last 12 months	🟢 G
🔴 R Indicator not met	🟠 A Indicator not met by small margin	🟢 G Indicator met

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Nexxus Trading Services Limited – Annual Report 2020/21

Cllr Mark Deaville, Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters said,

"Our care providers offer services to Staffordshire people who need them. However, independent companies nationally are facing challenges with rising demand, increased costs and difficulties recruiting and retaining staff.

The Council has struggled in some areas of the county to find care providers who offer good quality services at an affordable price. Nexxus Care was established to provide care for people when no other provider is available. Nexxus Care has also supported the Covid pandemic response by providing a lateral flow device testing service. This report details the performance of Nexxus over the past year."

Report Summary:

In Staffordshire the majority of care for older people is provided by independent companies. The Council offers a range of support to help them remain sustainable.

Nexxus Care (trading name of Nexxus Trading Services Limited) was established as a Council owned Local Authority Trading Company to provide care for people when no other provider is available in the market. The company is also available to support the Council where it needs to respond rapidly to specific incidents such as failure of a care provider, and the Covid pandemic.

Nexxus Care has now been fully operational for over three years. This annual report provides an update to Cabinet on the activities and performance of the company during 2020/2021.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Note the Nexxus Care Annual Report

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Nexxus Trading Services Limited – Annual Report 2020/21

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Note the Nexxus Care Annual Report

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. In Staffordshire the majority of care for older people is provided by independent companies. The Council offers a range of support to help them remain sustainable.

2. Nationally, independent care providers of care are facing challenges from rising demand, increasing costs and difficulty in recruiting staff. This has been exacerbated by the Covid pandemic. In some parts of the county the Council has struggled to find care providers who can offer good quality services at a price that taxpayers can afford.

3. Nexxus Care (trading name of Nexxus Trading Services Limited) was established as a Council owned Local Authority Trading Company to provide care for people when no other provider is available in the market. The company is also available to support the Council where it needs to respond rapidly to specific incidents such as failure of a care provider, and the Covid pandemic.

Nexxus Care

4. Nexxus Trading Services Limited was incorporated in 2011 as a Council owned company. The Articles of Association of the company enables the provision of a wide variety of services, and in 2017 the Council decided to develop it as a provider of social care, trading as Nexxus Care to address:

a. the need for additional reablement capacity to support the urgent care pathway and reduce delayed transfers of care;

b. the need for a contingency during the procurement of home care services in case insufficient independent care providers were available; and

c. the Council's duties to ensure and sustain the market under the Care Act 2014 and the need for a "provider of last resort".

5. Nexxus Care was mobilised in January 2018 to provide reablement services. In December 2018 it took on a home care contract following the national collapse of Allied Healthcare. In 2019 and 2020 it took on Extra Care contracts when providers withdrew from the market. In November 2020 it also took on the contract to provide the lateral flow device testing service across the County.

6. The Council trades with Nexxus Care under the "Teckal" exemption (now Regulation 12 (1) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015. This allows a local authority to place contracts with a legal person without contracts being subject to competitive procurement processes as long as the following conditions are met:

a. The legal person carries out the principal part of its activities (more than 80%) on behalf of the local authority;

b. The local authority exercises the same kind of control over the legal person as it does its own departments; and

c. There is no direct private capital participation in the service provider nor any intention that there should be any.

7. Nexxus Care has a Board of Directors comprising Council Members and Officers and the Chief Operating Officer, who collectively set the vision and strategy for the business and oversee operational delivery.

Annual Report

8. The Nexxus Care annual report attached at Appendix 1 describes the vision and strategy of the company and gives an overview of services including:

a. Commissioned activity
b. Quality
c. Finance
d. Recruitment and Retention
e. Growth; and

f. Nexxus Care's role in cost reduction for the Council.

9. Nexxus Care achieved good performance and rapid growth during 2020/21. The company now has 414 staff and in 2020/21 had an annual turnover of £6.238m, £2.344m (60%) greater than the previous year. Key achievements include:

   a. maintenance of care services during the Covid pandemic;

   b. establishment of a lateral flow device testing service within a very short timescale, which has now completed over 107,000 tests; and

   c. digital transformation across the business.

Legal Implications

10. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

11. The financial position of Nexxus Care is set out in the Annual Report. The company made a small operating loss in 2020/21 of £19,835. This was after the repayment of the annual market continuity payment of £0.150m to the Council, which is provided to the company to ensure capacity is available to respond to immediate issues in the care market e.g. provider failure at short notice, was not taken during 2020/21. The small operating loss will be met from company reserves.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Annual Report
Appendix 2 – Structure Chart
Appendix 3 – Customer Survey
Appendix 4 – Annual Accounts 2020/21

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Nexxus Care

Annual Report

2020/21

Contents

Background to Nexxus Care

1. Nexxus Care was established in 2011 as a local authority trading company (LATC) and is 100% owned by Staffordshire County Council. The company began trading in 2018 and is registered with Company's house, company number 0748276.

2. In 2017 the Council decided to develop it as a provider of care in the face of:
    a) the need for additional reablement capacity to support the urgent care pathway and reduce delayed transfers of care;
    b) the need for a contingency during the procurement of home care services in case insufficient independent care providers were available; and
    c) the Council's duties to ensure and sustain the market under the Care Act 2014 and the need for a "provider of last resort".

3. Nexxus Care was mobilised in January 2018 to provide reablement services. In December 2018 it took on a home care contract following the national collapse of Allied Healthcare. In 2019 and 2020 it took on Extra Care contracts when providers withdrew from the market. In the face of the Covid pandemic and the requirement for asymptomatic testing, in November 2020 Nexxus Care took on the contract to provide the lateral flow device testing service across the county.

4. Nexxus Care now has 244 care staff and 170 staff engaged in lateral flow device testing. Nexxus Care had an annual turnover in 2020/21 of £6.238m, £2.344m (60%) greater than the previous year.

The Board

5. Nexxus Care has a Board of Directors comprising of Staffordshire County Council Members and Officers, and the Chief Operating Officer, who collectively set the vision and strategy for the business and oversee operational delivery.

6. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for the appointment of Directors. All directors present and past are registered with Company's house.

7. Nexxus Care Directors at 01 April 2021 are:
   - Simon Ablewhite (Finance Director)
   - Cllr Mark Deaville
   - Dr Richard Harling
   - Clair Muldowney (Chief Operating Officer)
   - Helen Riley
   - Cllr Mark Winnington

8. All of the above have confirmed that they comply with the responsibilities of Directors as set out by Company's House and can be found by the following link:

   https://companieshouse.blog.gov.uk/2019/02/21/7-duties-of-a-company-director/

9. The Board meet monthly and the Chief Operating Officer provides an update on all operational areas in a set format covering key aspects of the business. All meetings are minuted and actions recorded/tracked.

10. An organisational structure for Nexxus Care is included in Appendix A.

Vision, values and strategy

11.   The Nexxus Care vision is:

> *To provide quality, cost effective and innovative care through a highly motivated and professional team enabling citizens to enjoy healthier, more fulfilled lives*

12.   Nexxus Care vision has adopted the following values:
- We are ambitious, courageous and empowering.
- We support and enable our staff to make things better.
- We are open to doing things differently.
- We are bold and willing to take difficult decisions in a commercial operating context.

13.   Nexxus Care's strategy is:
- The focus of operations is to intervene in the care market on behalf of the Council.
- We will be available to offer a 'provider of last resort' in the event that market is unable to provide care.
- We will grow business with the Council by agreement with commissioners.
- We will operate to same 'rules' as other providers in the independent sector.
- We will seek to offer services to self-funders within the conditions of the 'Teckal' exemption
- We will operate with Staffordshire and on the borders of the county.
- Our risk appetite is "*moderate*".

Overview of services

Reablement

14.   The aim of reablement is to maximise people's level of independence, often after a period of illness or stay in hospital. The service works with people to set and achieve their goals. A successful outcome is to achieve these goals, prevent hospital readmission and minimise reliance on ongoing care and support, with a target of no more than 50% requiring ongoing care and support.

15.   The reablement service has a CQC registered manager and receives referrals from hospitals in East Staffordshire, Tamworth and Lichfield. The service completes the necessary risk assessments and support plans prior to care commencing. It assesses within the first 72 hours whether the client is able to complete a reablement period of up to 6 weeks, and then monitors their progress throughout. Should the individual have ongoing needs the service completes a Care Act assessment to determine their eligibility for Council funded care and support and those that are eligible are referred to the brokerage team to source it.

Home care

16.   The home care service provides care and support to clients with assessed eligible needs. Home care consists of two operational branches based in Cannock and Stafford. Each branch has a CQC registered manager and teams including care co-ordinators, field care supervisors and administrators. Clients include Council funded, NHS funded, and privately funded individuals.

17.   The service is on the Council's standard home care contract and works to the same terms and conditions as all other contracted providers. The branches access the Council's online portal to identify and accept new clients in the same way as other contracted providers.

Extra Care

18.   The Extra Care service provides care and support at three schemes: Mill Rise, Brunel Court and School Court. People live in their own flats within the schemes and receive care and support in their own homes. The service works jointly with the housing provider.

19. Each scheme has a CQC registered care manager and team leaders. There service maintains a presence 24 hours to meet needs during day and night. Should a flat become available the service works with the housing provider to place a new resident that requires care and support.

Lateral Flow Device Testing

20. In the face of the Covid pandemic and the requirement for asymptomatic testing, in November 2020 Nexxus Care established a lateral flow device testing service across the county.

21. The service offers testing at a range of sites including businesses, schools, and local community centres, alongside partnership working with leisure centres and libraries. Additionally, mobile testing was developed to offer the service in specific communities and rural areas. Staff were recruited rapidly and at the peak of testing there was 170 staff providing testing.

22. At the end of March 2021, 107,000 tests had been completed, 849 of which were positive (0.7%) from individuals that had no symptoms. Nexxus Care assisted the Covid response with surge testing in areas with high case rates and in response to new variants of concern.

Annual objectives and performance

23. For 2020/21 Nexxus Care set the following objectives:
    a) Provide commissioned activity
    b) Maintain and improve quality
    c) Balance the books
    d) Keep the staff happy
    e) Grow the business
    f) Help the Council to reduce costs

Provide commissioned activity

Reablement

24. In 2020/21 Nexxus Care was commissioned to provide 660 hours of reablement per week on a block amount. Activity above the block hours is paid at an hourly rate as per the contract. A reconciliation is completed at the end of the year to ensure that an appropriate payment has been made. Nexxus Care over delivered on the block contract averaging 870 hours of reablement per week. The service has 46 support workers.

25. 2020/21 Reablement Summary:
    - 360 people started the reablement service..
    - Average duration of service was 25 days, against a target of <28 days
    - 62% successfully completed reablement and required no ongoing care and support, against a target of >50%
    - 38% were transferred to ongoing care and support (Target <50%)
    - Other reasons for the service being terminated were due to either deceased, readmission to hospital or an initial failed discharge.

Home care

26. During 2020/21 the Cannock branch provided an average of 2,200 hours per week and the Stafford branch 400 hours per week to a total of 307 clients. This is approximately 6% of all Council commissioned home care capacity. The service has 163 care workers.

Extra care

27. As of April 2021, the service was providing around 730 hours of care weekly at the three schemes to a total of 60 clients. There are 35 care workers in total.

Maintain and improve quality

28. Reablement and the Stafford home care branch have a dual CQC inspection. The most recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) rated Stafford reablement and home care as 'Good'. The CQC report is available here https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-4314896520

29. Cannock home care branch has not been inspected by CQC since it was transferred from Allied Healthcare to Nexxus Care. The branch currently holds an overall rating of 'Good' and is rated 'Good' in all domains. As with reablement and the Stafford home care branch, policy, processes and systems introduced recently have improved quality - for example regular internal audits, robust recruitment practices, and digital scheduling of visits.

30. The Covid pandemic has had an impact on reablement and home care services, reducing the number of care and support workers due to isolation, as well as affecting recruitment and retention. Agency staff have been used in order to maintain services, which may a concern to the CQC on inspection.

31. The Extra Care schemes have not been inspected by CQC since they transferred to Nexxus Care. Brunel Court currently holds an overall rating of 'Good' and is rated 'Good' in all domains. School Court currently holds an overall rating of 'Good' and is rated 'Good' in all domains except for 'Well Led', which is rated as 'Requires Improvement'. Mill Rise was also rated 'Good' in all areas on transfer. There are no concerns about future CQC inspections.

32. The results of the 2020/21 client and employee survey are included in Appendix B. The response rate for clients was 37% with the majority of feedback positive. The response rate for employees was 39%: 85% of these would recommend Nexxus Care as a place to work, and 90% enjoy working for the company.

33. All events are logged on to a dedicated system, monitored by the operations team for key themes and trends, and discussed with branch managers monthly. Events cannot be closed until a senior manager approves that all relevant steps have been taken and they are fully resolved. A summary of events is shared at monthly Board meetings.

Balance the books

34. Annual accounts for the year 2020/21 have recently been audited by an external auditor. No concerns have been raised. These are included at the Appendix C.

Keep the staff happy

35. One of the biggest challenges in reablement and home care is recruitment and retention of staff. Home care is not a preferred career choice for several reasons including long and unsociable hours, travelling, and the level of responsibility against rates of pay. Challenges with recruitment and retention have been exacerbated by Covid, and additional measures were put in to place to maintain recruitment and training throughout the pandemic.

36. In home care Nexxus Care staff turnover during 2020/21 was 38% compared to a sector average of 40%.

37. Nexxus Care continues to work hard to attract new staff and retain existing staff to try and increase our workforce. Some of the methods we have introduced during 2020/21 include:

- Improved terms and conditions – for example block pay, where staff are paid in shifts rather than task and time.
- A digital system to optimise scheduling and reduce travelling times.
- Perks such as discounts at hundreds of attractions and high street stores.
- Reduced monthly cost for any car issues.
- Digital technology allowing more time caring and reducing paperwork.
- Improved communication methods such as online platforms.
- Increased engagement with leadership and management team.
- Pay evaluation method completed for back office functions in order to ensure level of pay is in line with market average.
- Investment into policy management system which allows all colleagues access to all policies via an app.
- Mobile phones for all staff.
- EarlyPay – allowing staff to access funds before they have been paid.
- Welcome and retention bonuses.
- Welcome packs with gifts including travel mugs and trolley tokens.

38. An apprentice has been employed and is currently working towards Business and Administration level 3. Following completion a marketing role will be developed to focus on recruitment and retention of staff alongside building the brand to attract new clients and grow the business.

Grow the business

39. Nexxus Care has seen significant growth in 2020/21 with additional services:
    - Extra Care - activity and staff transfer from Green Square Accord at the Mill Rise scheme, Newcastle Under Lyme .
    - Lateral flow device testing service.

40. Nexxus Care continues to recruit in reablement and home care in order to offer greater capacity.

Help the Council to reduce costs

41. 137 people (62%) completed reablement with no further need of ongoing care and support, potentially averting cost of around £3.5m had all of these required an ongoing home care service (based on 28 hours per week).

42. In home care Nexxus Care follows the Trusted Assessor model which allows clients' care and support to be flexed up and down depending on their needs. Any requirements for increases in hours and opportunities for decreases in hours are pursued as part of routine management of the service.

43. Nexxus Care assists the Council to reduce non-contracted home care by taking on these clients wherever possible. This allows proper quality assurance, gives a guarantee of continuity of care, and often reduces costs. Opportunities for this during the Covid pandemic have been limited due to the need to prioritise existing clients.

Annual accounts

44. The turnover of the business in 20/21 was £6.238m, an increase of 60% over the previous financial year. £1.684m of the increased turnover related to the LFT service which was established during the year as part of the SCC response to Covid 19. The LFT service was provided to SCC at cost.

45. A small in year trading loss was reported of £19,835, which will be funded from company reserves. This was after the company repaid to the County Council the market continuity payment it receives of £150,000 p.a. to provide resilience in the care market and to step in at short notice as a result of market failure, and take over the provision of care. Given the strong in-year trading position, this payment was not required. The company also made early repayment during the year of the outstanding loan (£120,482), it received from the Council when it first started trading to support business cashflow.

46. More detail is included in Appendix D.

Key achievements in 2020/21 and ongoing issues

Achievements

47. Nexxus Care made some key achievements during 2020/21. These include:
    - Maintaining good quality services during the Covid.
    - Increased capacity and improved performance in reablement.
    - Successful transfer of Extra Care services during the pandemic.
    - Establishment of a lateral flow device testing service within a very short timescale.
    - Design and implementation of a fast-track training programme to provide the Council with trained volunteers to augment care and support in the event the market could not meet the demand.

Ongoing issues

48. **Staff recruitment and retention** remains a key challenge. Nexxus Care continues to explore innovative ways to recruit and retain, informed by feedback from staff themselves. Pay is a big factor but there are other issues that are important to staff such as how they are treated and how their individual circumstances can be accommodated by working patterns.

49. **Covid** presents an ongoing risk of increased demand, rising costs and staff absence. Services will need to get used to enhanced infection control measures, including the need for Personal Protective Equipment to be worn, and this may compound challenges with staff recruitment and retention.

50. **Stability in the market** will also remain a challenge for Nexxus Care. As a 'Provider of Last Resort' the company is expected to be able to respond quickly if other providers fail. To date the transfer of services has been managed successfully.

Developments for 2021/22

51. Nexxus Care is exploring further expansion of the business including:

    - Increasing reablement activity further and potentially developing 'Step-Up Reablement' in addition to the current hospital discharge reablement service in line with the Council requirements

    - Expansion of home care into Newcastle-under-Lyme after further conversations with the Council about demand and confirmation from the housing provider that their property can be used.

    - Residential care homes.

    - Investing in engagement activity, with marketing initiatives to improve recruitment and retention of staff alongside building the brand to attract new clients and grow the business.

52. Nexxus Care will continue to review and improve processes and ways of working and invest in systems that will allow the company to reach a CQC 'Outstanding' rating and establish it as an employer of choice across Staffordshire.

1 x
Chief Operating Officer

1 x
Operations Director

LFT Response Team

1 x Head of Training and Recruitment

4 x Branch Manager

1 x Ops Support Residential (temp)

2 x Regional Recruiter

2 x Regional Trainer

4X Deputy Manager

1 x OT

2 x Home manager Residential

1 X Rec/Training Apprentice

10 x care team leaders

1 x OT Assistant

119 x Residential Workers

1 X Admin

6 Care Co-ordinators

3 x administrators

202 Community Care Workers

49 Support Workers

1 x Accounts Admin

Q1 I am completing this survey as

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
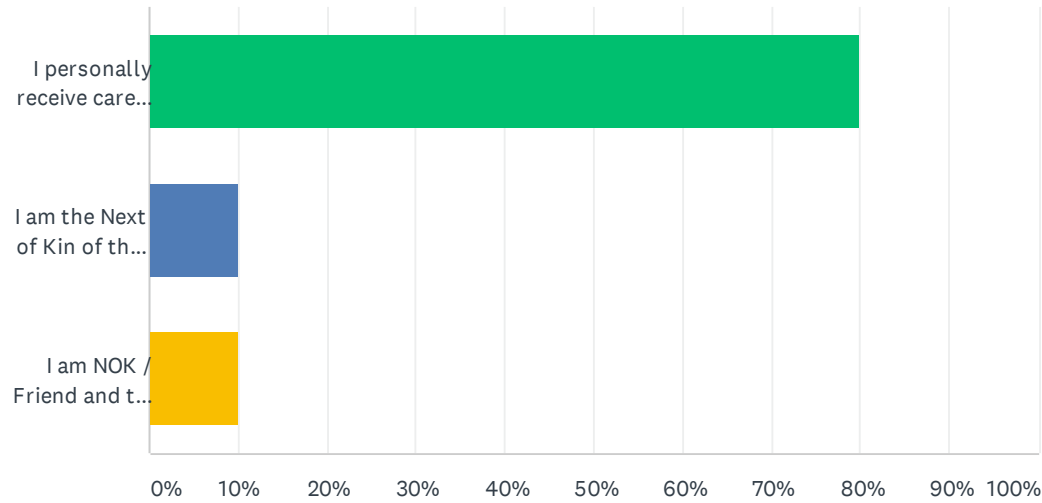
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I personally receive care from Nexxus Care	80.00%	8
I am the Next of Kin of the person receiving care from Nexxus Care and I am completing this on their behalf	10.00%	1
I am NOK / Friend and this is my opinion/answers	10.00%	1
TOTAL		10

Q2 I am satisfied with the care I receive from Nexxus Care

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
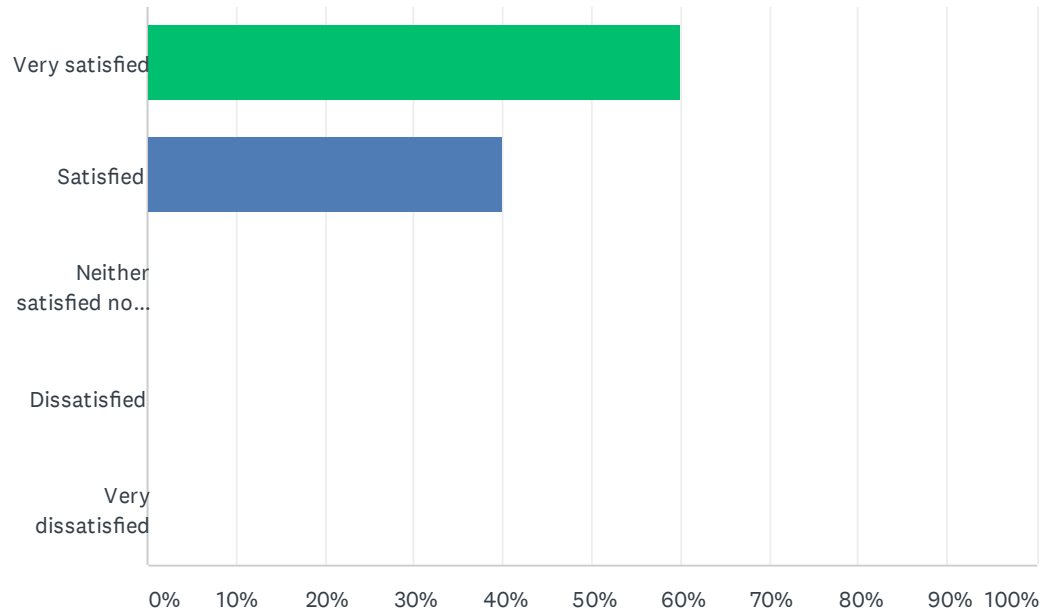
Page 280

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	60.00%	6
Satisfied	40.00%	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 10		

Q3 How long have you been a customer of Nexxus Care

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
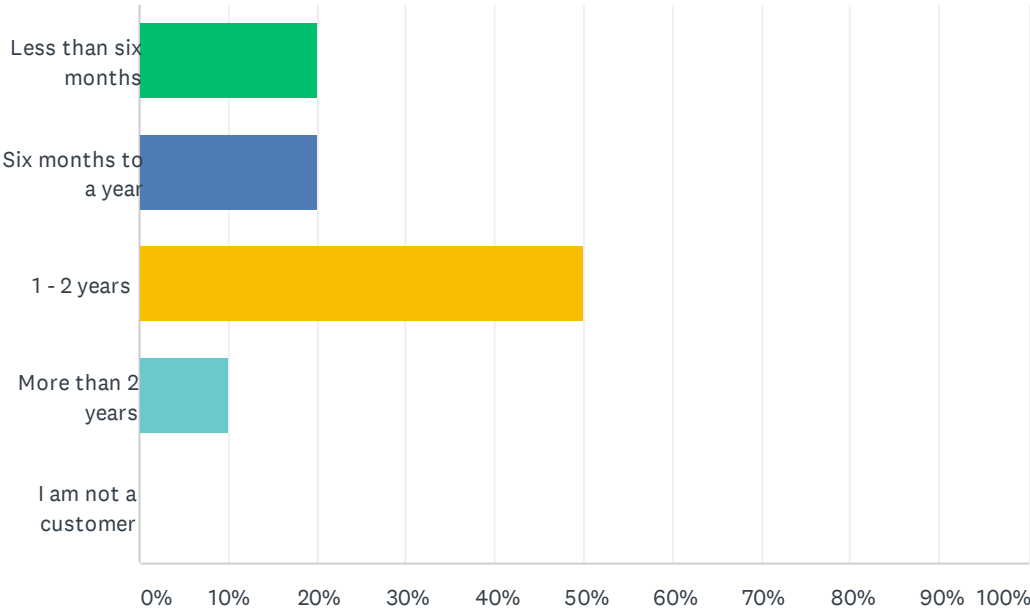
Page 281

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than six months	20.00%	2
Six months to a year	20.00%	2
1 - 2 years	50.00%	5
More than 2 years	10.00%	1
I am not a customer	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q4 My care staff treat me with dignity and respect

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
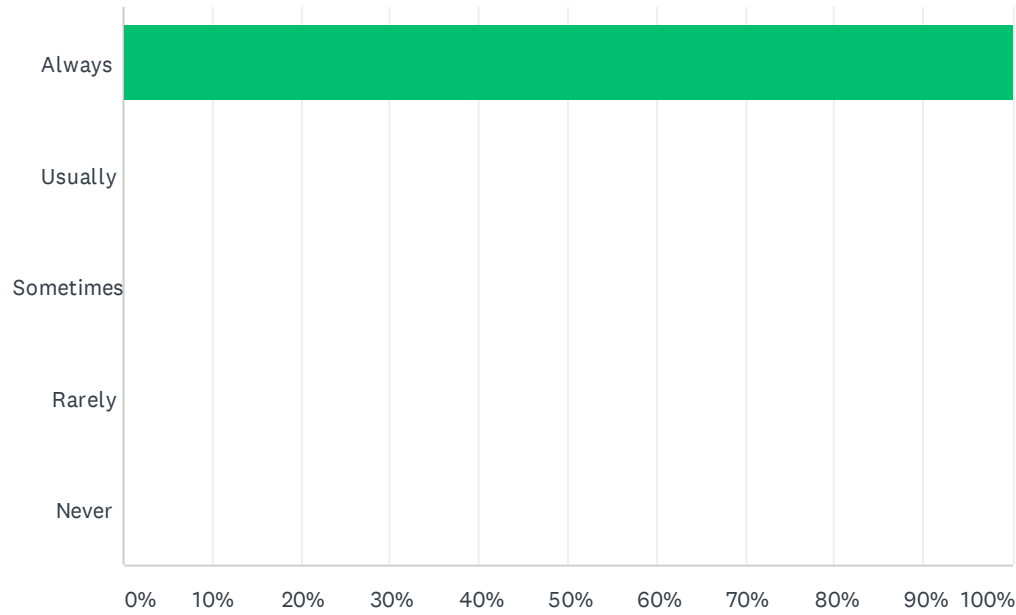
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	100.00%	10
Usually	0.00%	0
Sometimes	0.00%	0
Rarely	0.00%	0
Never	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q5 How well does our services meet your needs

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
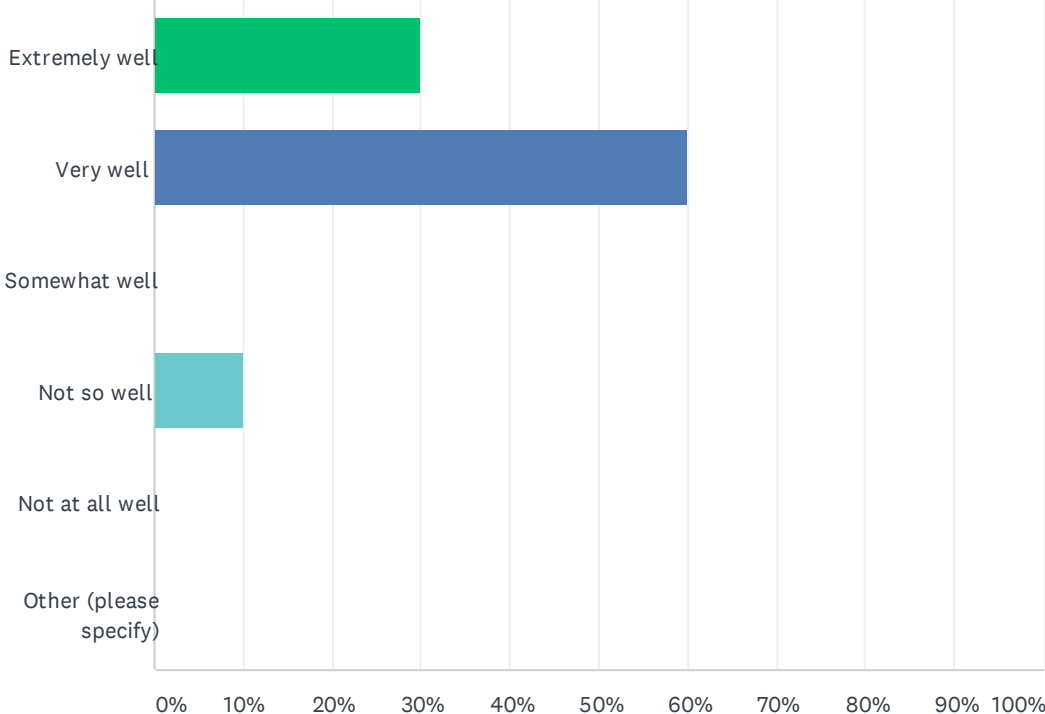
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely well	30.00%	3
Very well	60.00%	6
Somewhat well	0.00%	0
Not so well	10.00%	1
Not at all well	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

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Q6 How would you rate the quality of our care services provided?

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
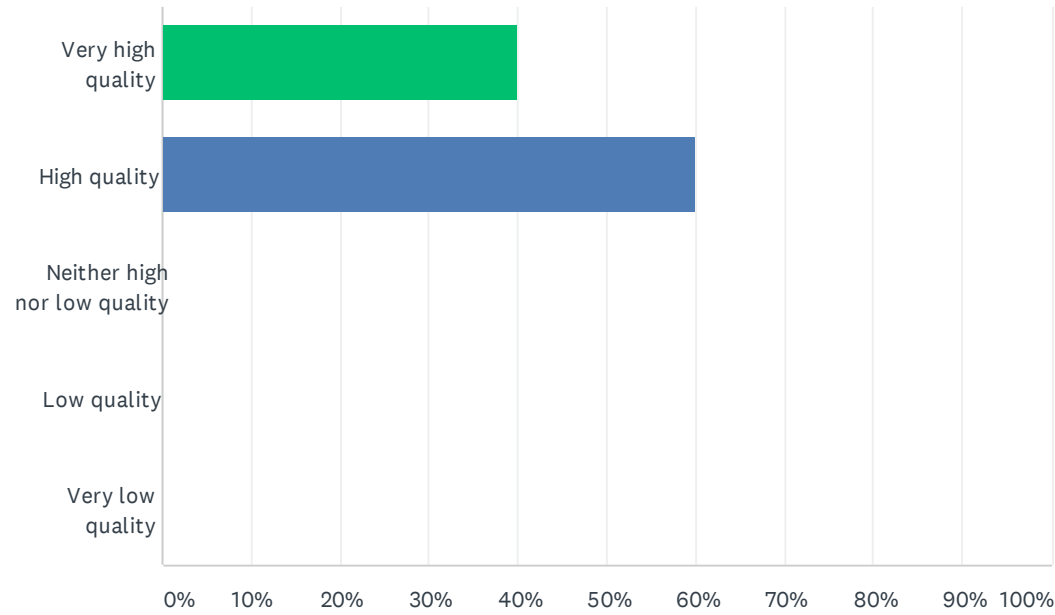
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very high quality	40.00%	4
High quality	60.00%	6
Neither high nor low quality	0.00%	0
Low quality	0.00%	0
Very low quality	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

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Q7 If you have contacted the office, was your call dealt with efficiently

Answered: 9   Skipped: 1
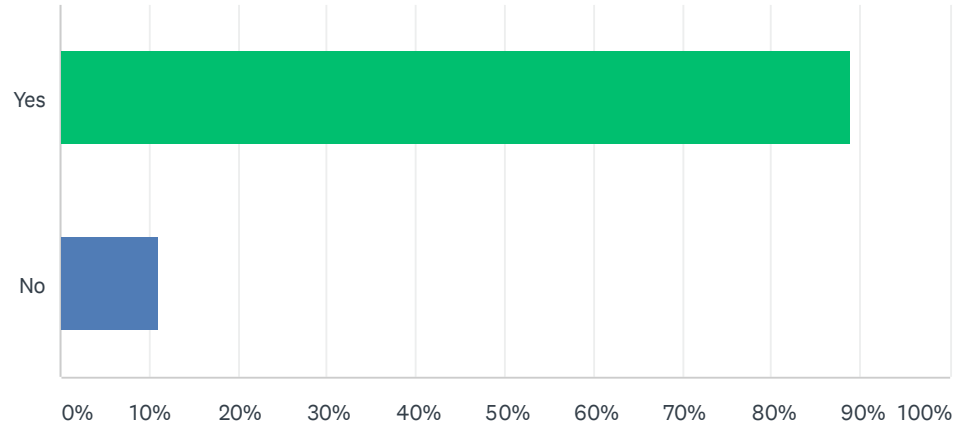
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.89%	8
No	11.11%	1
TOTAL		9

Q8 How responsive have we been to your questions or concerns

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0

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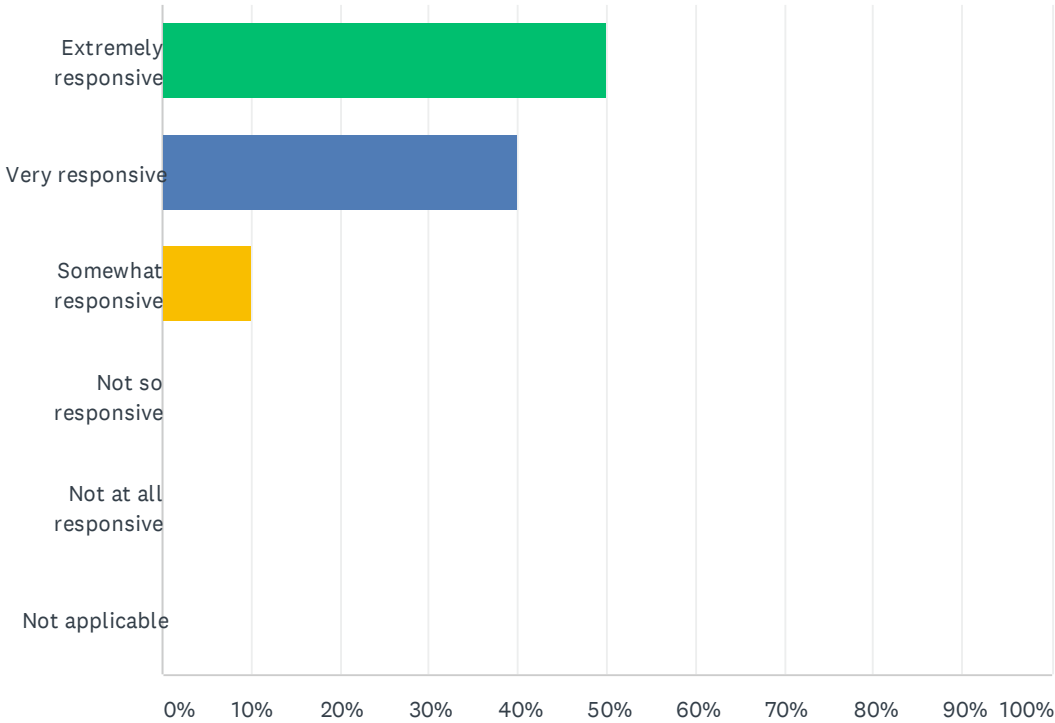
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely responsive	50.00%	5
Very responsive	40.00%	4
Somewhat responsive	10.00%	1
Not so responsive	0.00%	0
Not at all responsive	0.00%	0
Not applicable	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

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Q9 I would know how to raise a complaint or compliment

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
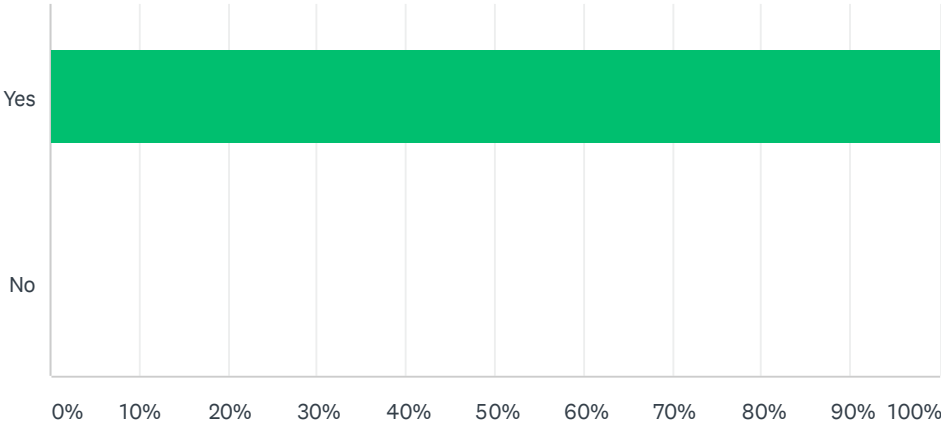
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	10
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q10 I am satisfied with the on call services that are available out of office hours

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
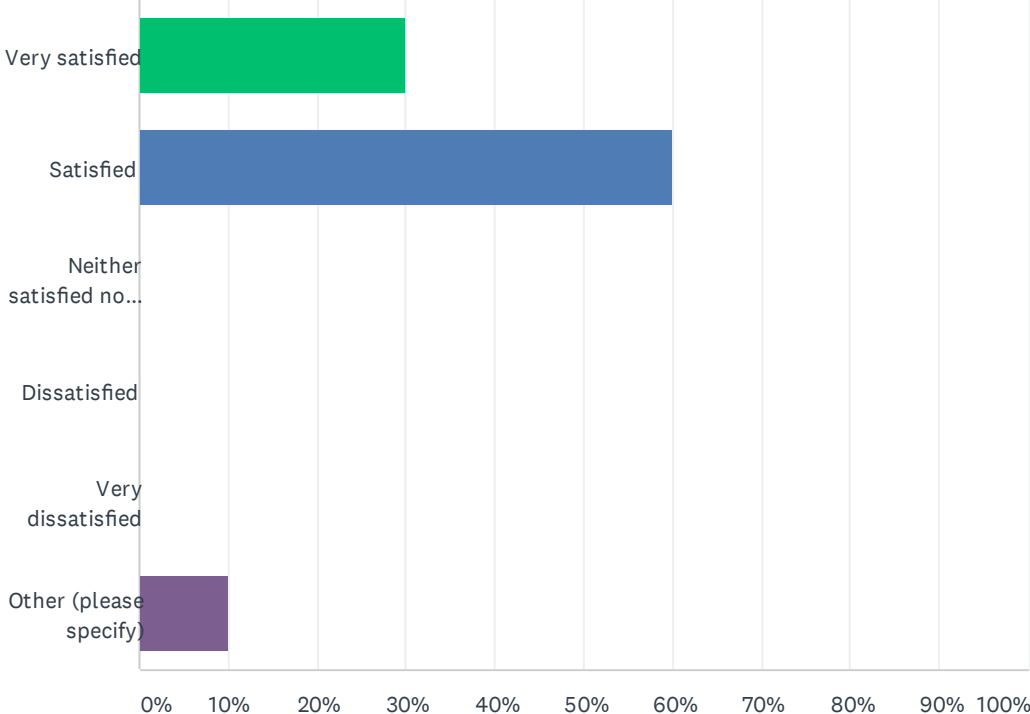
Page 290

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	30.00%	3
Satisfied	60.00%	6
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	10.00%	1
TOTAL		10

Q11 My care team arrive on time

Answered: 9   Skipped: 1
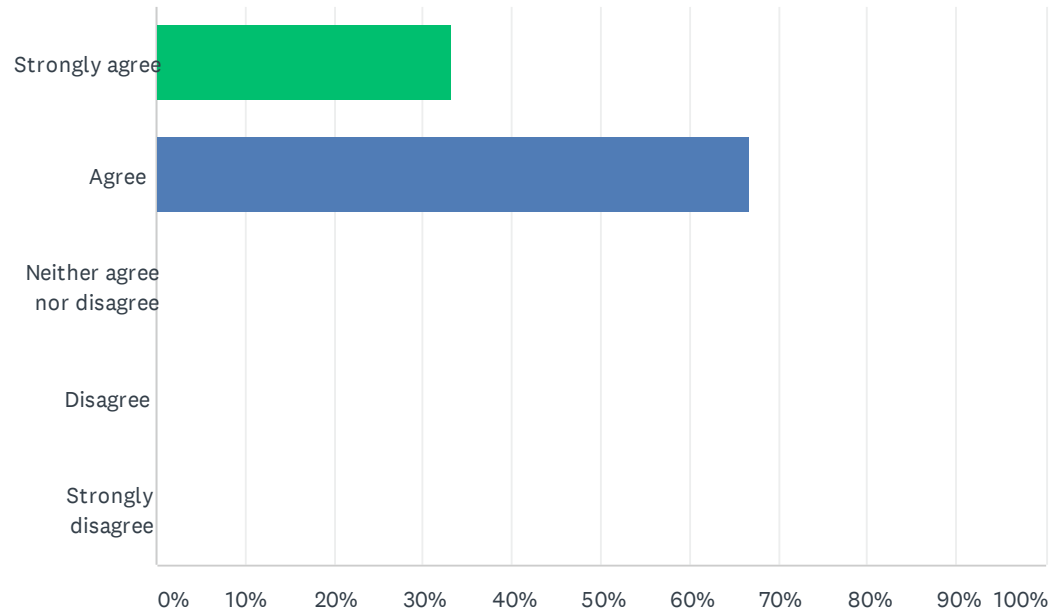
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	33.33%	3
Agree	66.67%	6
Neither agree nor disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		9

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Q12 How satisfied are you with our overall services

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
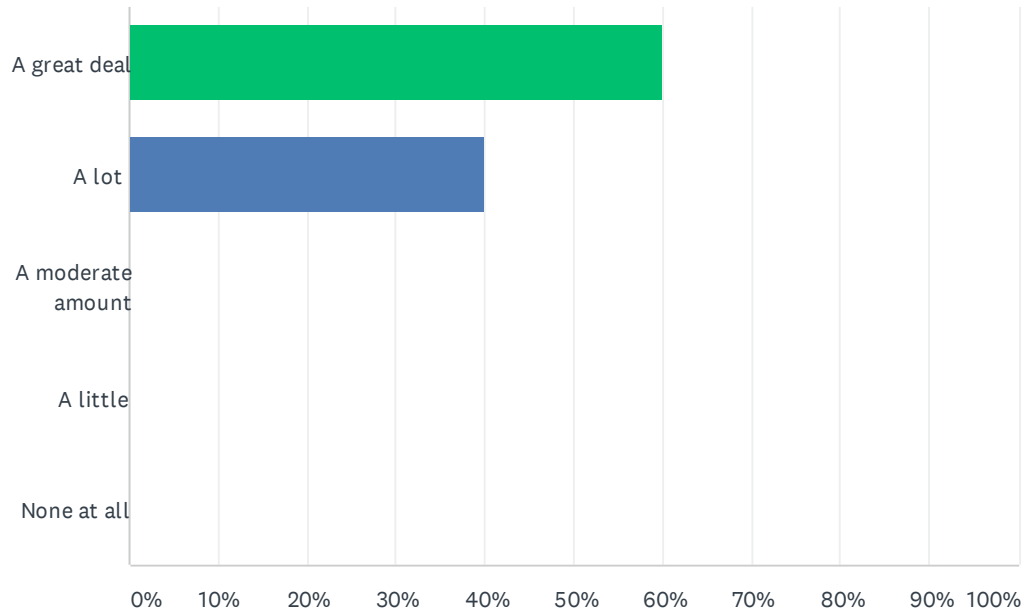
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A great deal	60.00%	6
A lot	40.00%	4
A moderate amount	0.00%	0
A little	0.00%	0
None at all	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q13 I would recommend Nexxus care to my family and friends

Answered: 10   Skipped: 0
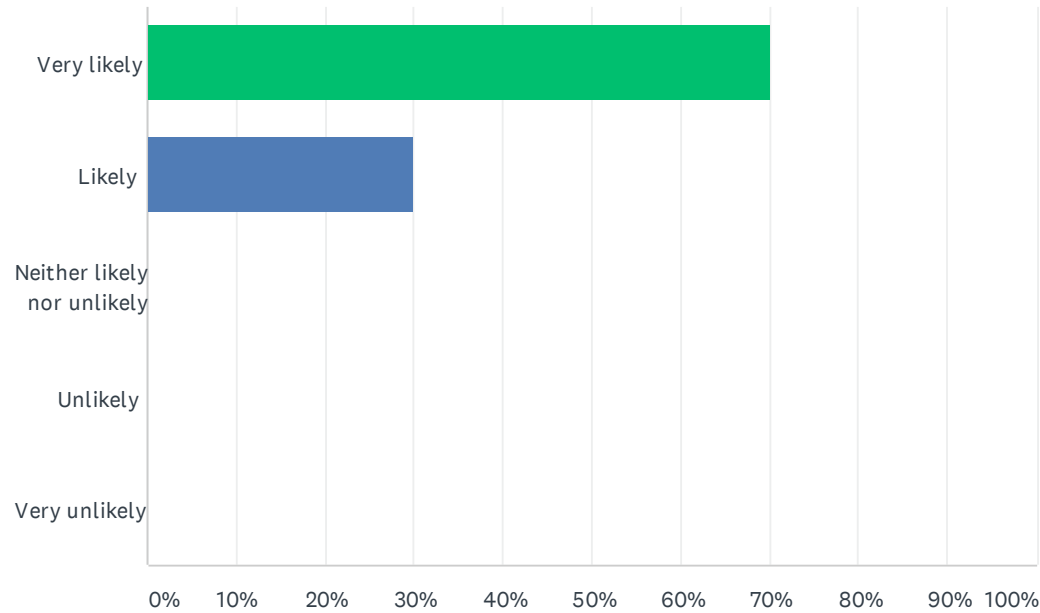
Page 294

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very likely	70.00%	7
Likely	30.00%	3
Neither likely nor unlikely	0.00%	0
Unlikely	0.00%	0
Very unlikely	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q14 Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns

Answered: 4   Skipped: 6

Q15 I wish to add my name in order for Nexxus Care to follow up with me any concerns raised or i wish to remain anonymous.

Answered: 3   Skipped: 7

Q1 I am completing this survey as

Answered: 102   Skipped: 1
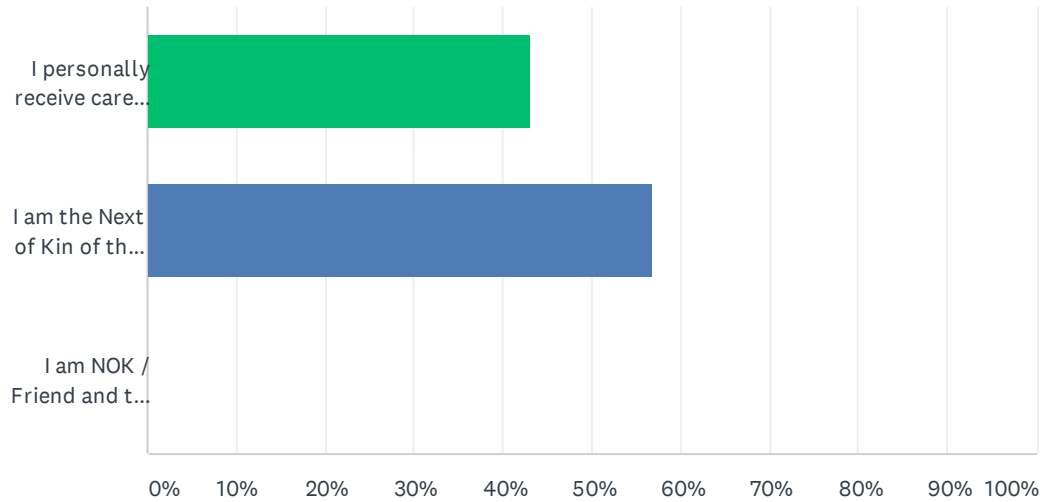
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I personally receive care from Nexxus Care	43.14%	44
I am the Next of Kin of the person receiving care from Nexxus Care and I am completing this on their behalf	56.86%	58
I am NOK / Friend and this is my opinion/answers	0.00%	0
TOTAL		102

Q2 I am satisfied with the care I receive from Nexxus Care

Answered: 103   Skipped: 0
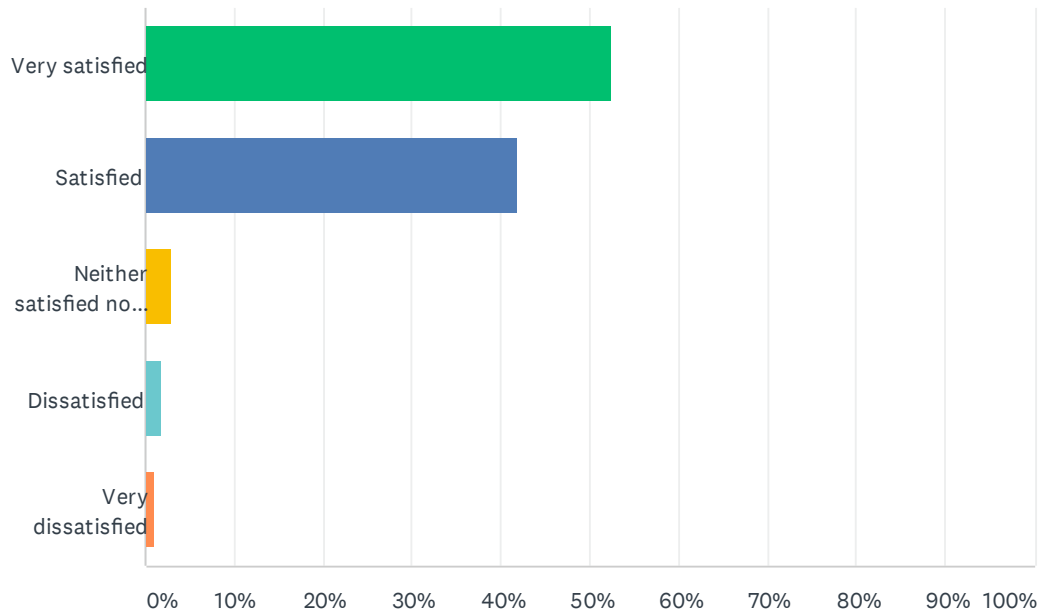
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	52.43%	54
Satisfied	41.75%	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	2.91%	3
Dissatisfied	1.94%	2
Very dissatisfied	0.97%	1
Total Respondents: 103		

Q3 How long have you been a customer of Nexxus Care
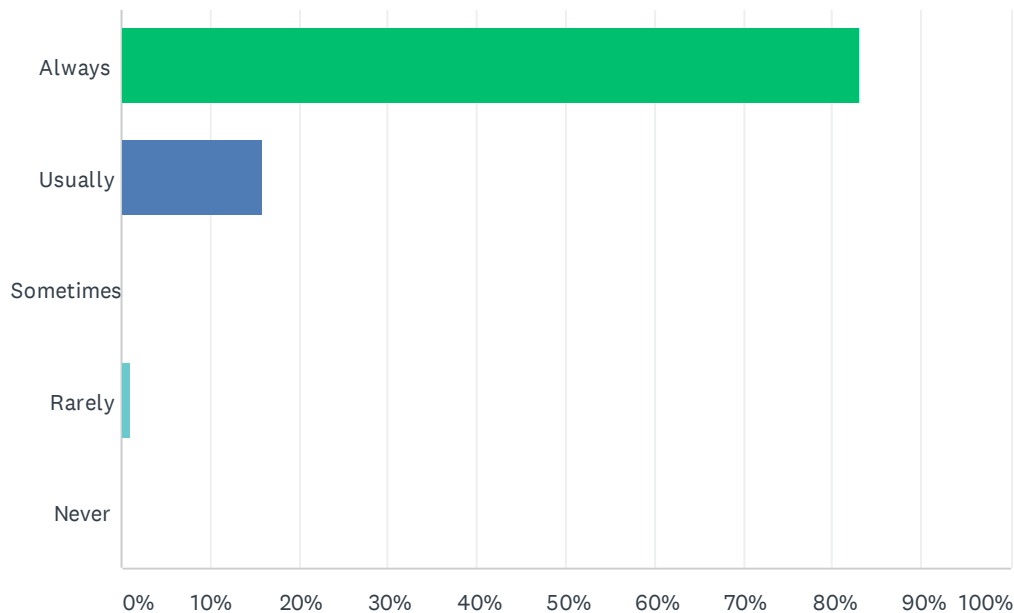
Answered: 103   Skipped: 0
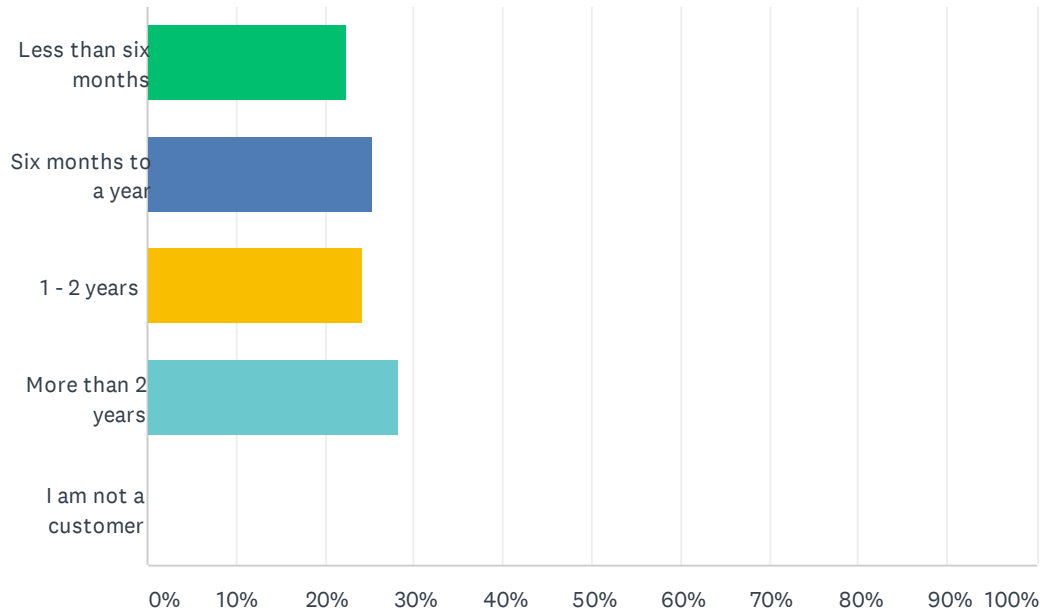
Page 299

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than six months	22.33%	23
Six months to a year	25.24%	26
1 - 2 years	24.27%	25
More than 2 years	28.16%	29
I am not a customer	0.00%	0
TOTAL		103

Q4 My care staff treat me with dignity and respect

Answered: 100   Skipped: 3

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	83.00%	83
Usually	16.00%	16
Sometimes	0.00%	0
Rarely	1.00%	1
Never	0.00%	0
TOTAL		100

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Q5 How well does our services meet your needs

Answered: 99   Skipped: 4
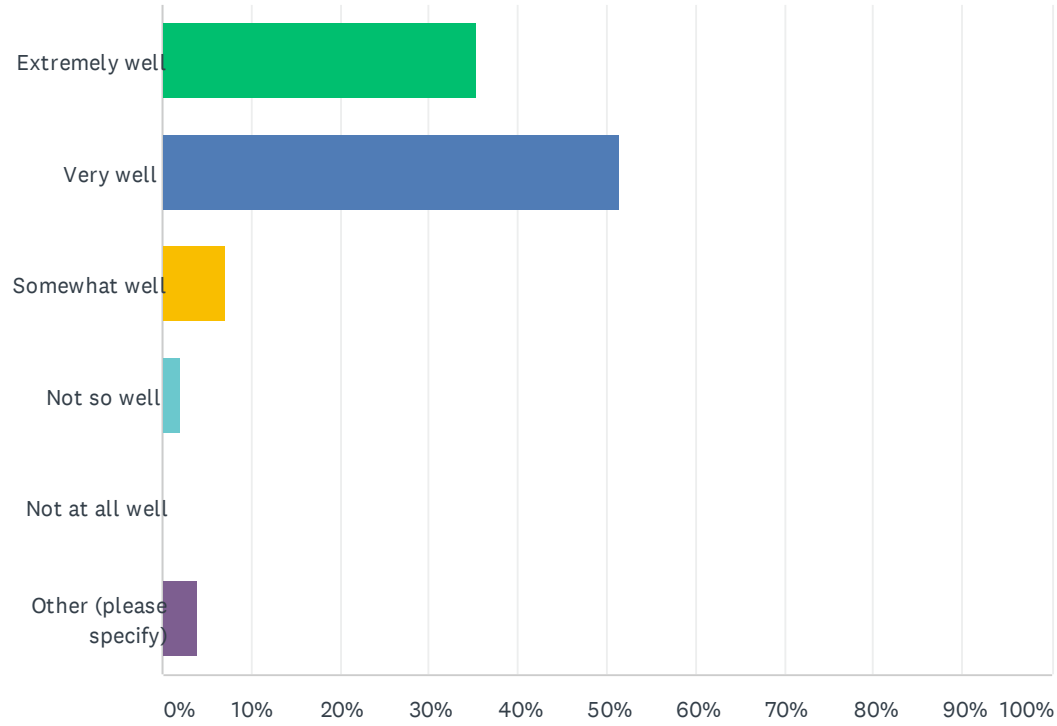
Page 301

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely well	35.35%	35
Very well	51.52%	51
Somewhat well	7.07%	7
Not so well	2.02%	2
Not at all well	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	4.04%	4
TOTAL		99

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Q6 How would you rate the quality of our care services provided?

Answered: 98   Skipped: 5
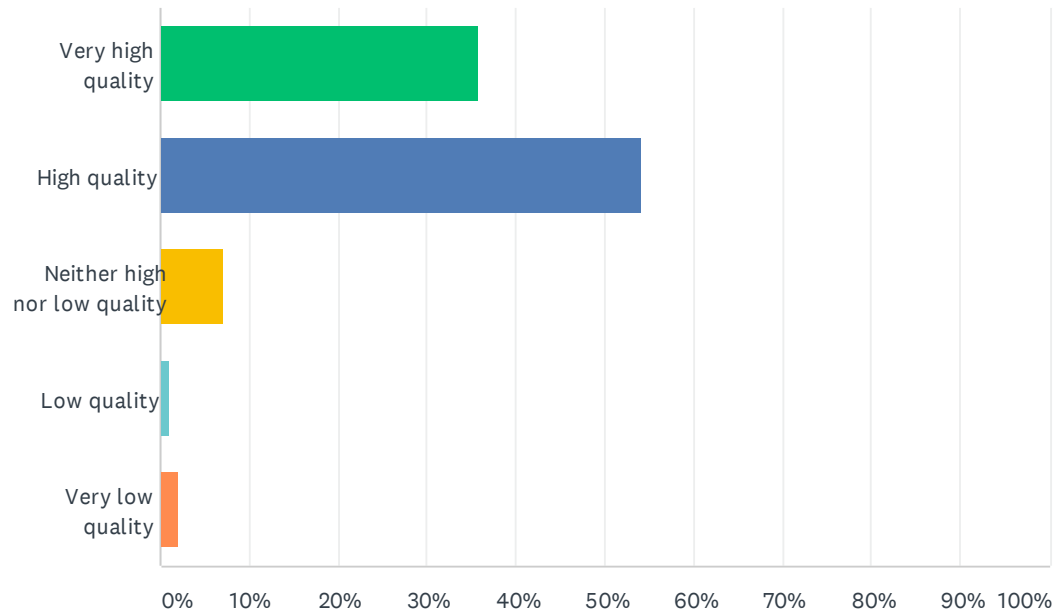
Page 303

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very high quality	35.71%	35
High quality	54.08%	53
Neither high nor low quality	7.14%	7
Low quality	1.02%	1
Very low quality	2.04%	2
TOTAL		98

Q7 If you have contacted the office, was your call dealt with efficiently
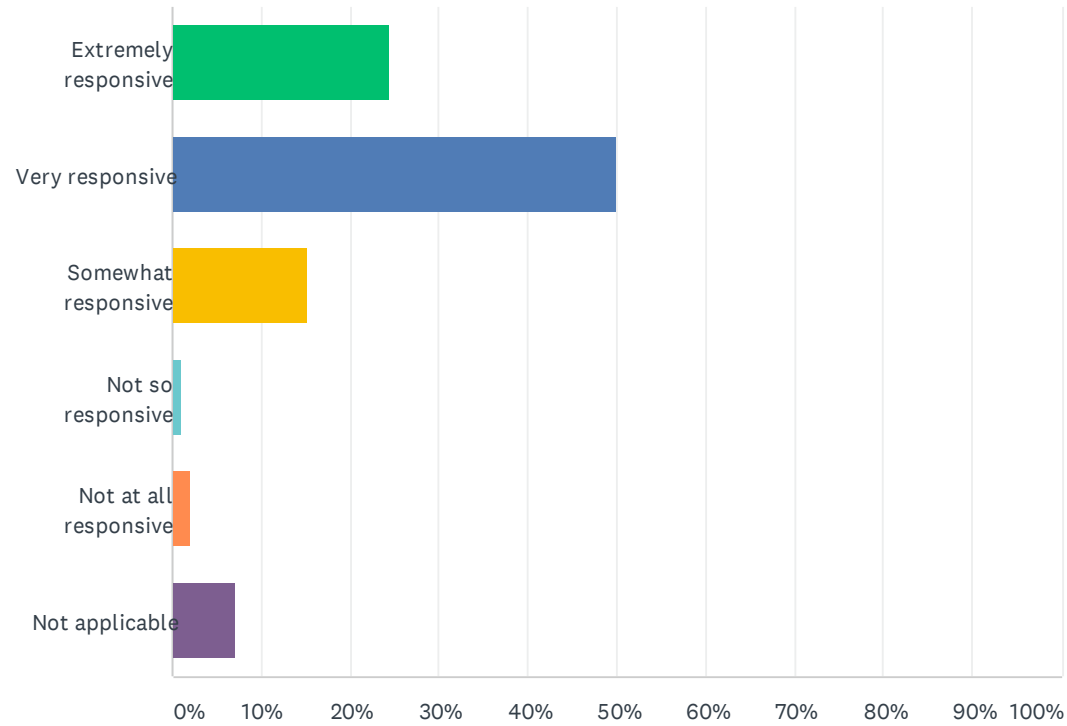
Answered: 97   Skipped: 6
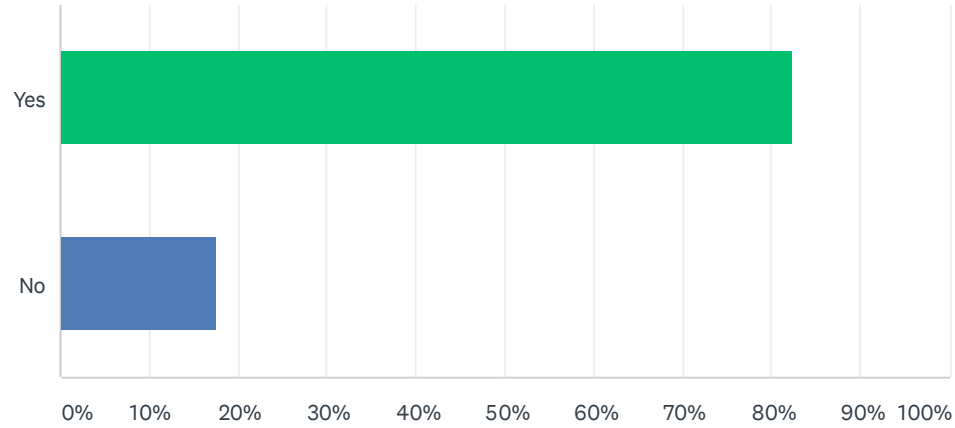
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.47%	80
No	17.53%	17
TOTAL		97

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Q8 How responsive have we been to your questions or concerns

Answered: 98   Skipped: 5

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely responsive	24.49%	24
Very responsive	50.00%	49
Somewhat responsive	15.31%	15
Not so responsive	1.02%	1
Not at all responsive	2.04%	2
Not applicable	7.14%	7
TOTAL		98

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Q9 I would know how to raise a complaint or compliment

Answered: 101   Skipped: 2
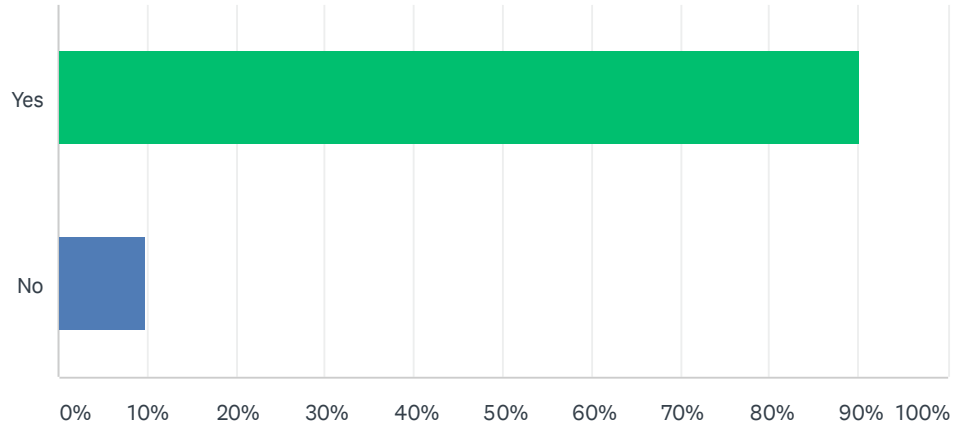
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.10%	91
No	9.90%	10
TOTAL		101

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Q10 I am satisfied with the on call services that are available out of office hours

Answered: 100   Skipped: 3
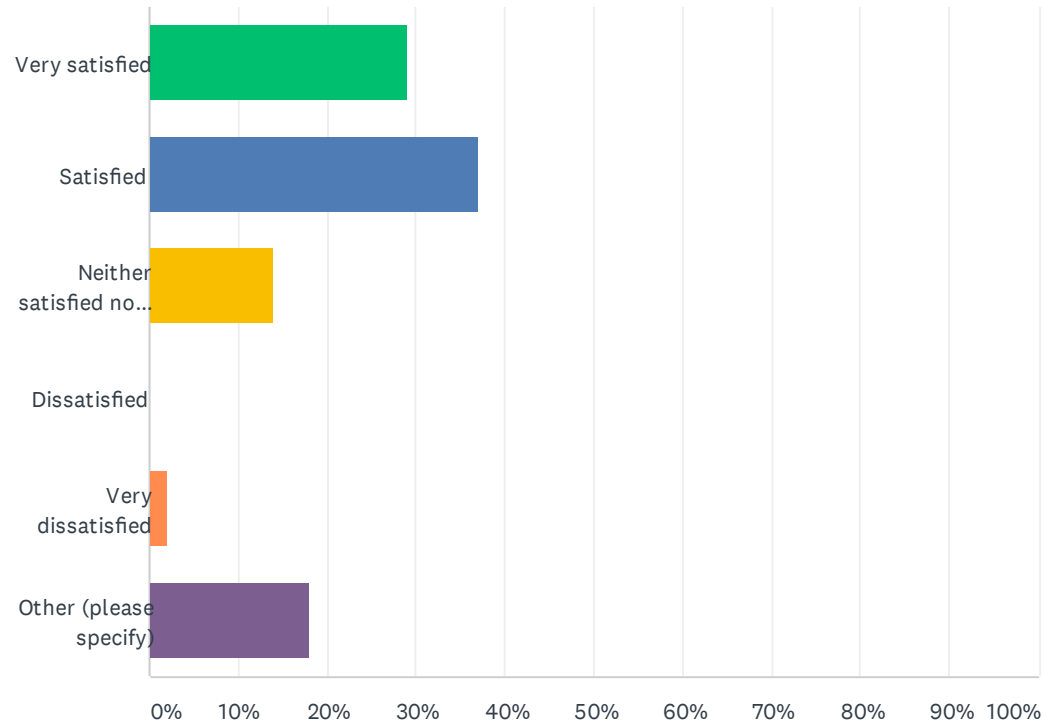
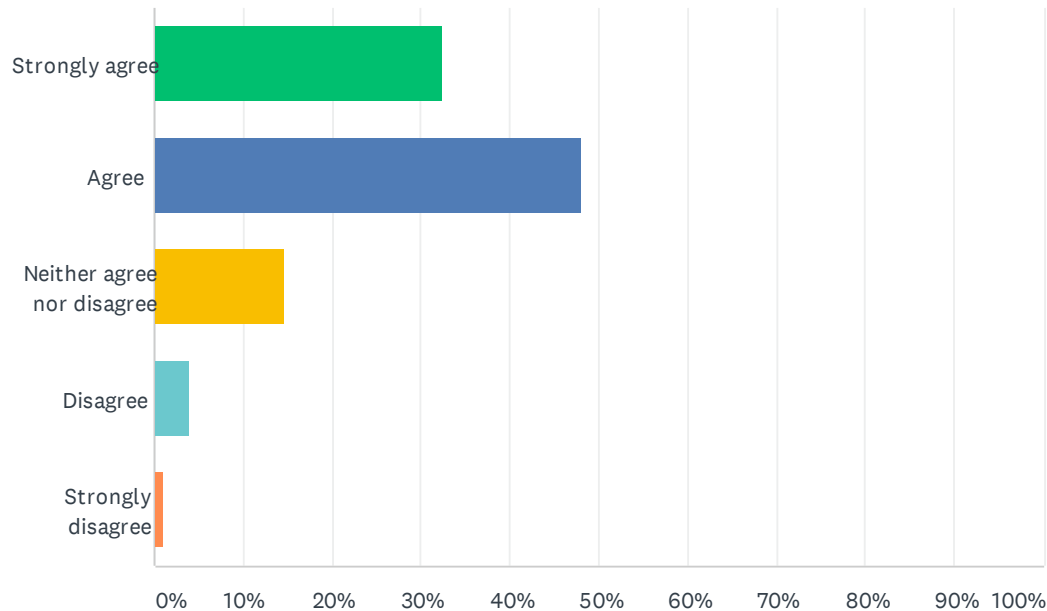| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	29.00%	29
Satisfied	37.00%	37
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14.00%	14
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Very dissatisfied	2.00%	2
Other (please specify)	18.00%	18
TOTAL		100

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Q11 My care team arrive on time

Answered: 102   Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	32.35%	33
Agree	48.04%	49
Neither agree nor disagree	14.71%	15
Disagree	3.92%	4
Strongly disagree	0.98%	1
TOTAL		102

Q12 How satisfied are you with our overall services

Answered: 100   Skipped: 3
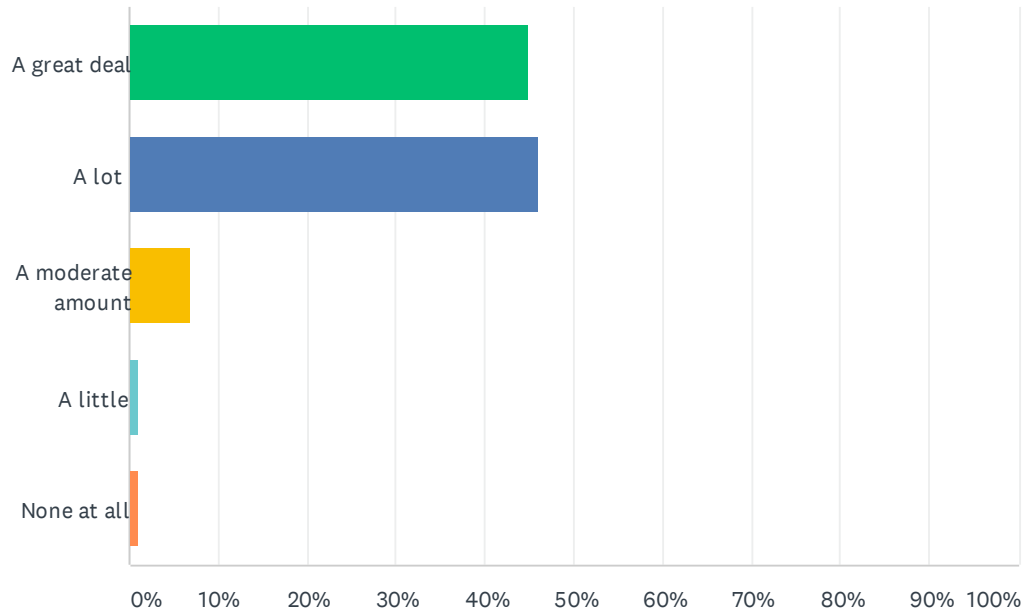
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A great deal	45.00%	45
A lot	46.00%	46
A moderate amount	7.00%	7
A little	1.00%	1
None at all	1.00%	1
TOTAL		100

Q13 I would recommend Nexxus care to my family and friends

Answered: 100   Skipped: 3
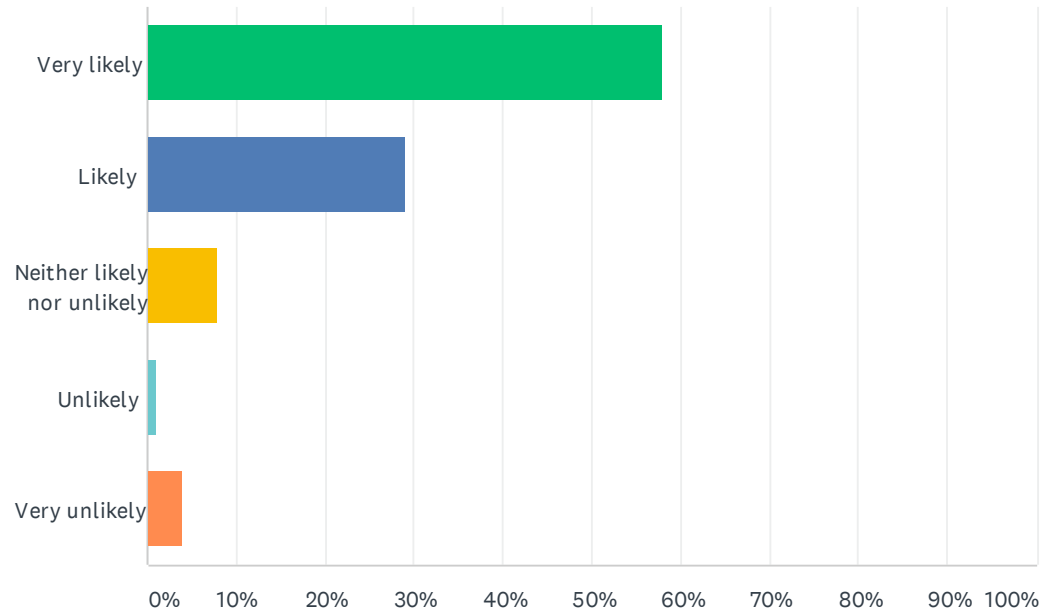
Page 312

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very likely	58.00%	58
Likely	29.00%	29
Neither likely nor unlikely	8.00%	8
Unlikely	1.00%	1
Very unlikely	4.00%	4
TOTAL		100

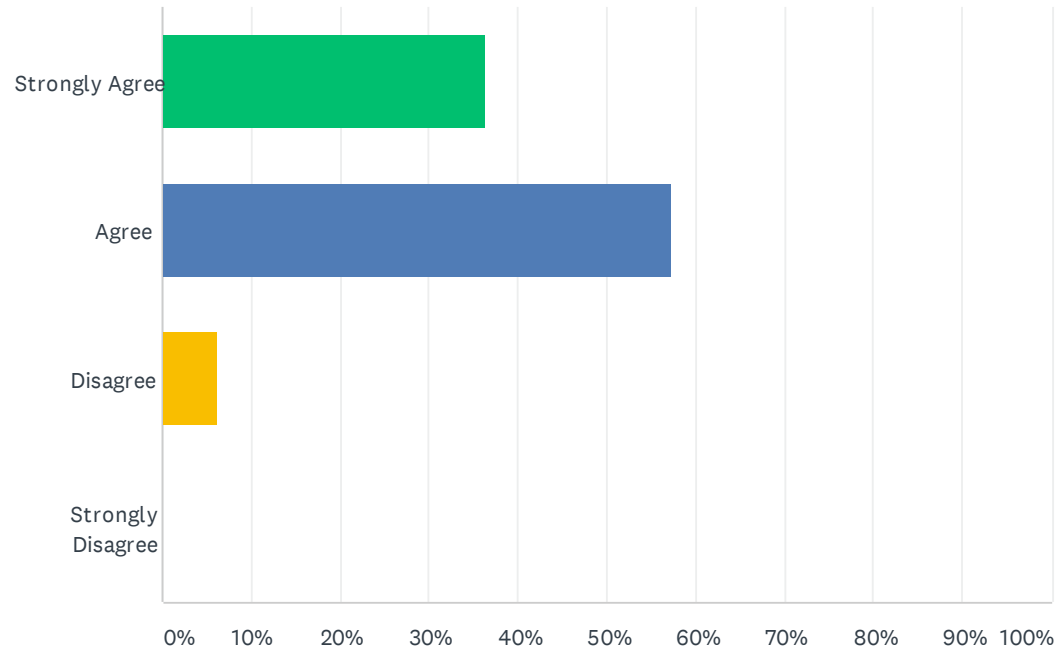# Q14 Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns

Answered: 53   Skipped: 50

Q15 I wish to add my name in order for Nexxus Care to follow up with me any concerns raised or i wish to remain anonymous.

Answered: 35   Skipped: 68

Q1 I enjoy working for Nexxus Care

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	36.46%	35
Agree	57.29%	55
Disagree	6.25%	6
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		96

Q2 I will still be working with Nexxus in 6 months time

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
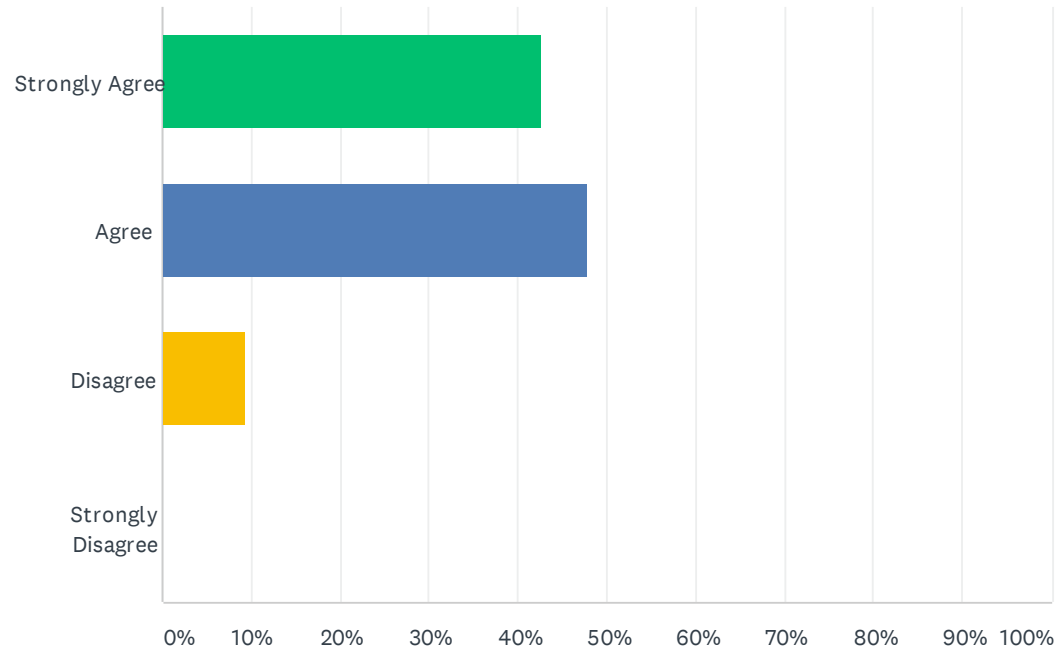
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	42.71%	41
Agree	47.92%	46
Disagree	9.38%	9
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		96

Q3 I have a good working relationship with the branch team

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
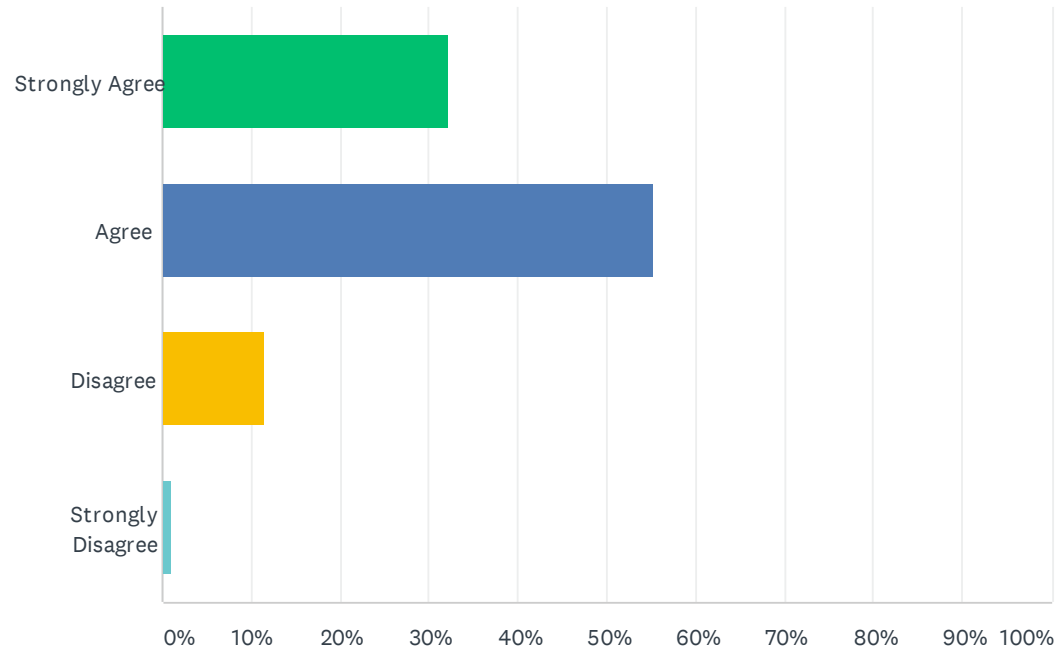
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	32.29%	31
Agree	55.21%	53
Disagree	11.46%	11
Strongly Disagree	1.04%	1
TOTAL		96

Q4 I have regular supervision with the branch, and I am able to ask for extra support if needed

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
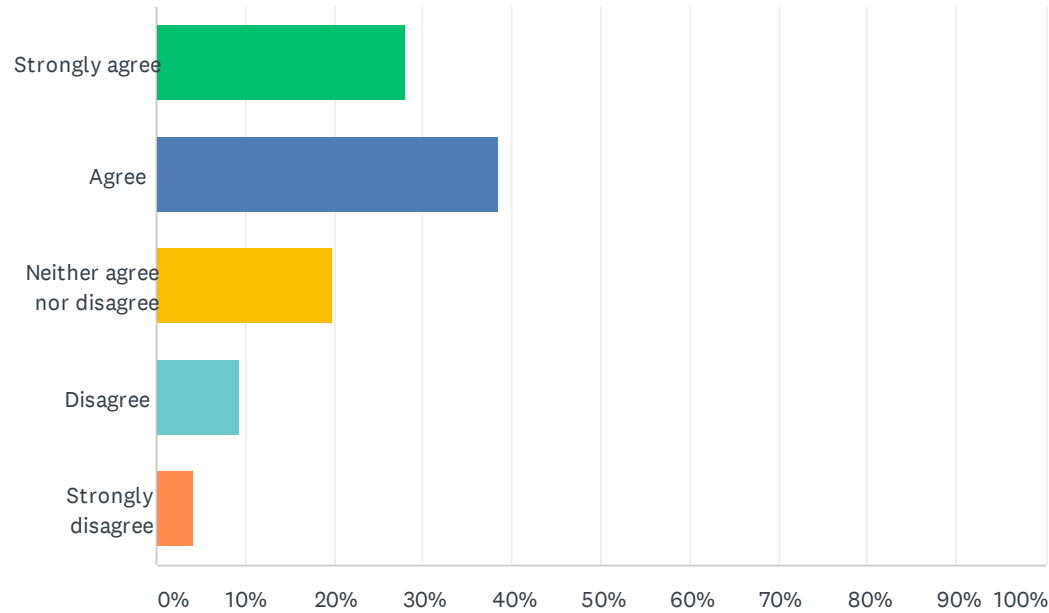
Page 318

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	28.13%	27
Agree	38.54%	37
Neither agree nor disagree	19.79%	19
Disagree	9.38%	9
Strongly disagree	4.17%	4
TOTAL		96

Q5 I was happy with the training provided when joining Nexxus

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
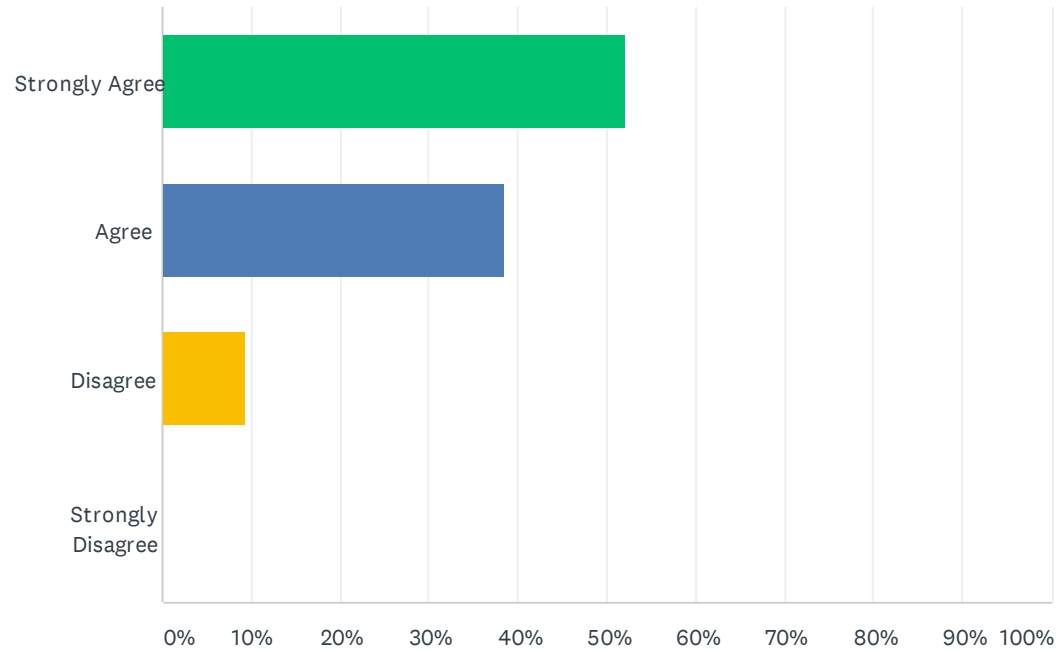
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	52.08%	50
Agree	38.54%	37
Disagree	9.38%	9
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		96

Q6 I am able to have a work life balance with Nexxus

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
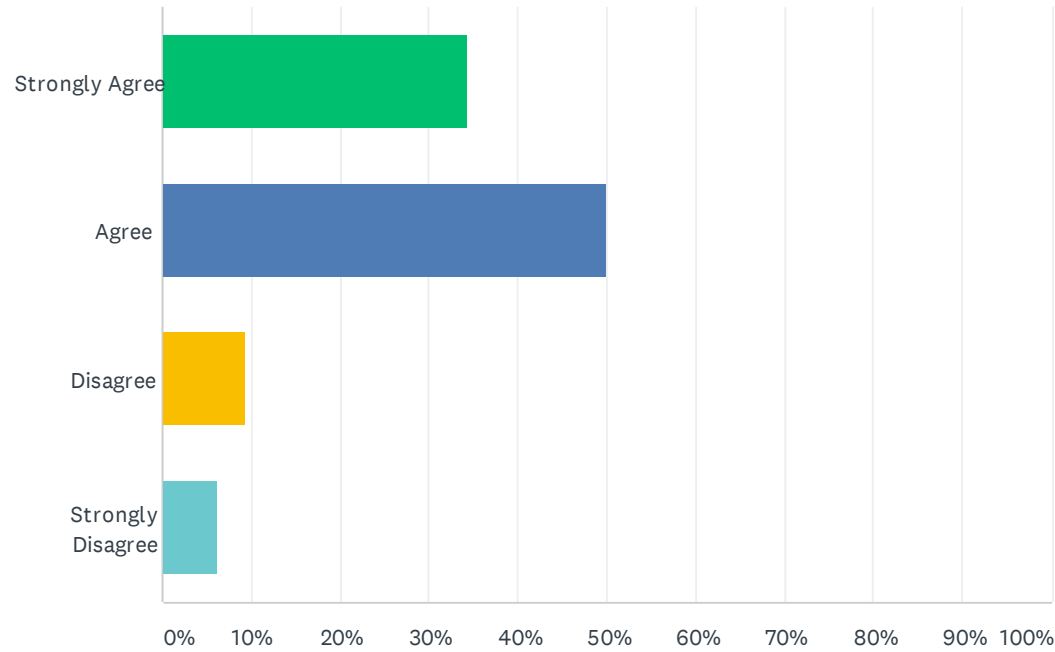
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	34.38%	33
Agree	50.00%	48
Disagree	9.38%	9
Strongly Disagree	6.25%	6
TOTAL		96

Q7 I believe issues raised are dealt with efficiently by the branch team

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
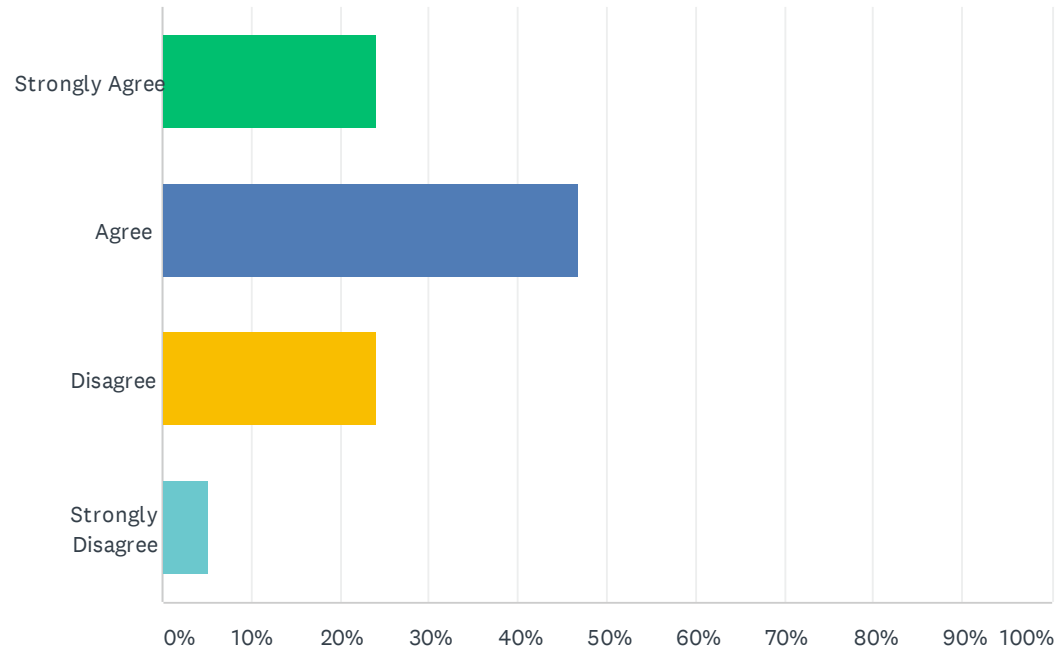
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	23.96%	23
Agree	46.88%	45
Disagree	23.96%	23
Strongly Disagree	5.21%	5
TOTAL		96

Q8 I would recommend Nexxus care as a place to work to family and or friends

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
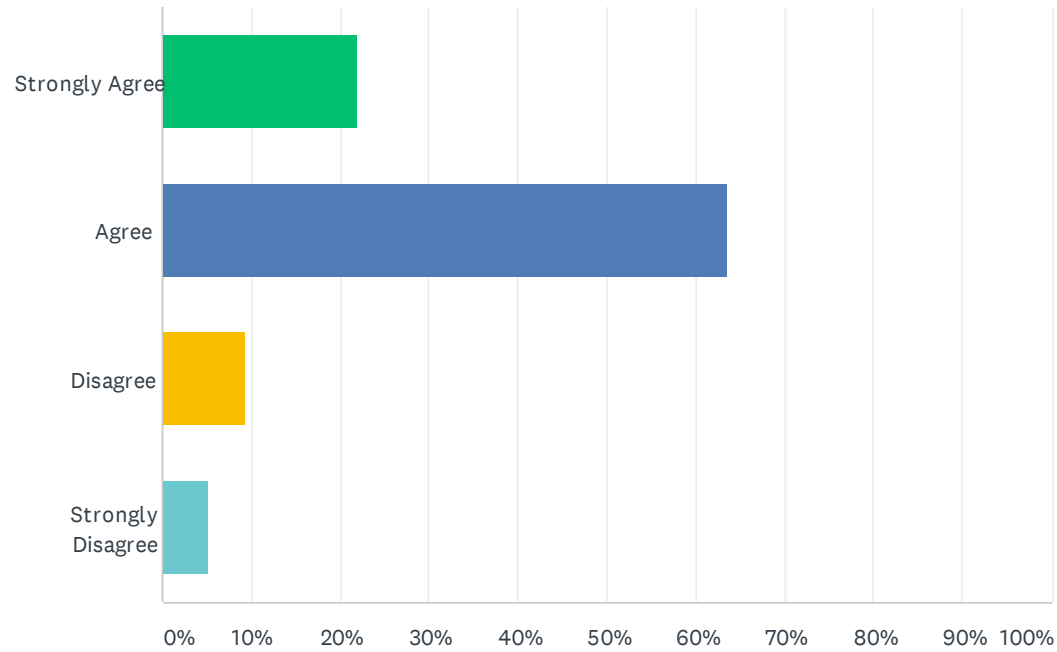
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Agree	21.88%	21
Agree	63.54%	61
Disagree	9.38%	9
Strongly Disagree	5.21%	5
TOTAL		96

Q9 I feel supported and valued within my role

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
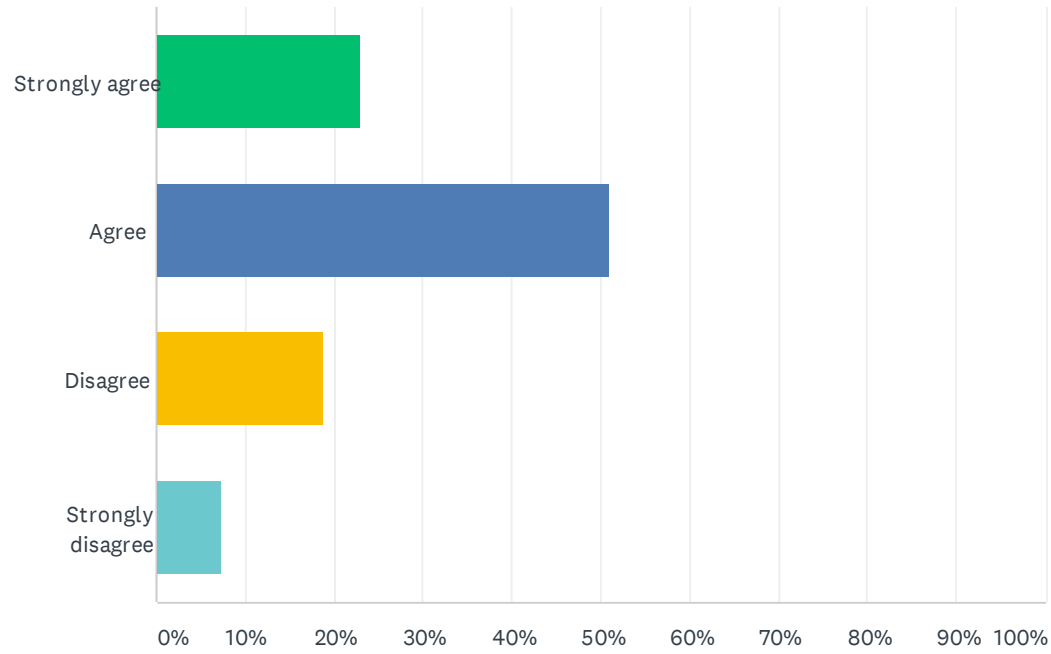
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	22.92%	22
Agree	51.04%	49
Disagree	18.75%	18
Strongly disagree	7.29%	7
TOTAL		96

Q10 If there were 3 things you could change about Nexxus, what would they be

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0

Q11 Which branch of Nexxus do you work for?

Answered: 96   Skipped: 0
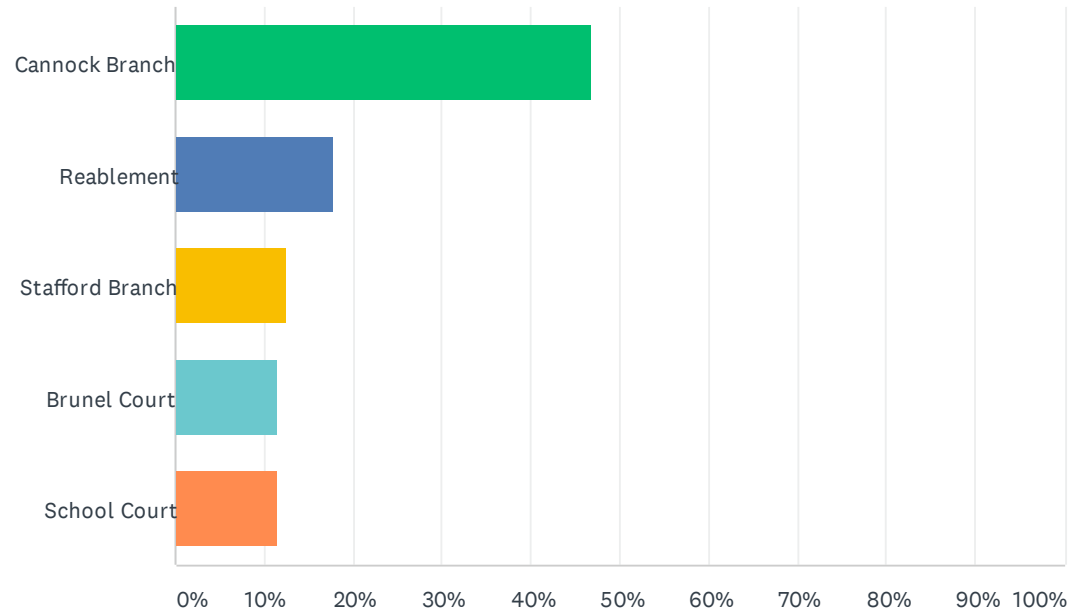
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cannock Branch	46.88%	45
Reablement	17.71%	17
Stafford Branch	12.50%	12
Brunel Court	11.46%	11
School Court	11.46%	11
TOTAL		96

Q1 I am completing this survey as

Answered: 16   Skipped: 1
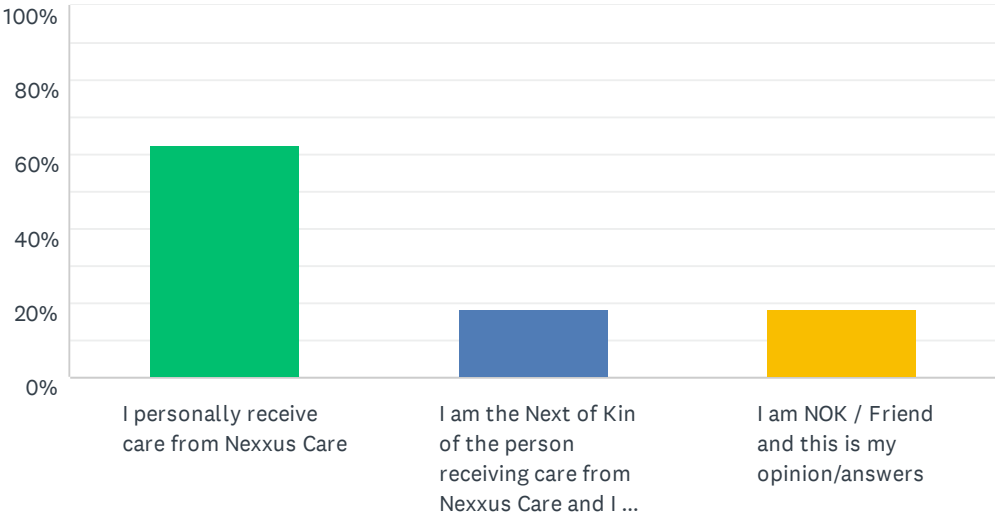
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I personally receive care from Nexxus Care	62.50%	10
I am the Next of Kin of the person receiving care from Nexxus Care and I am completing this on their behalf	18.75%	3
I am NOK / Friend and this is my opinion/answers	18.75%	3
TOTAL		16

Q2 I am satisfied with the care I receive from Nexxus Care

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
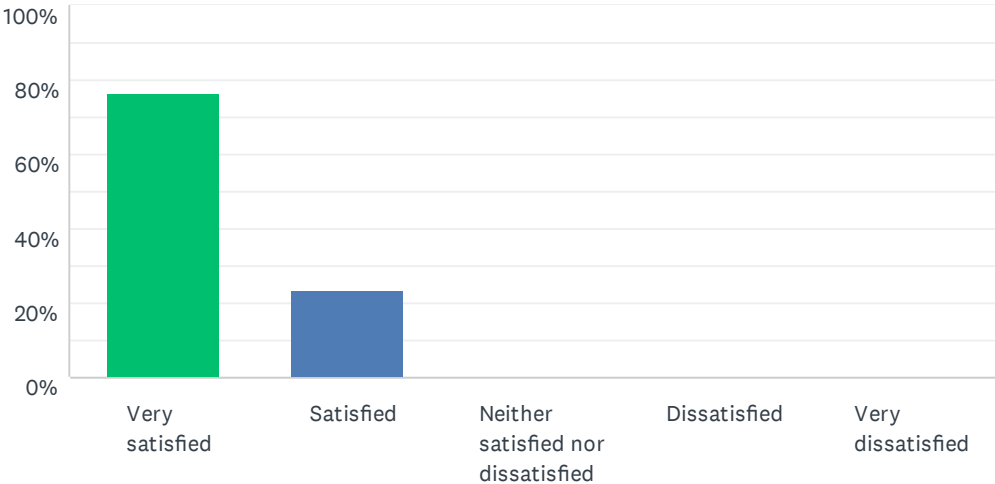
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	76.47%	13
Satisfied	23.53%	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 17		

Q3 How long have you been a customer of Nexxus Care

Answered: 16   Skipped: 1
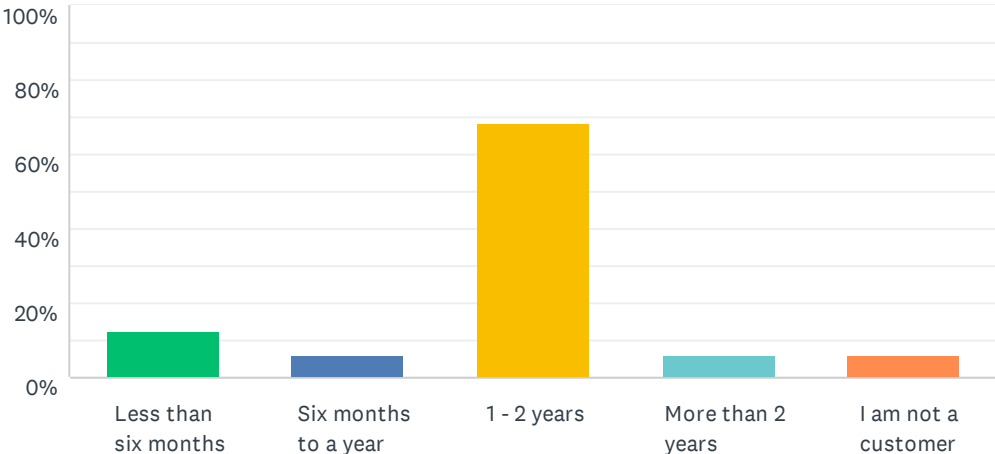
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than six months	12.50%	2
Six months to a year	6.25%	1
1 - 2 years	68.75%	11
More than 2 years	6.25%	1
I am not a customer	6.25%	1
TOTAL		16

Q4 My care staff treat me with dignity and respect

Answered: 16   Skipped: 1
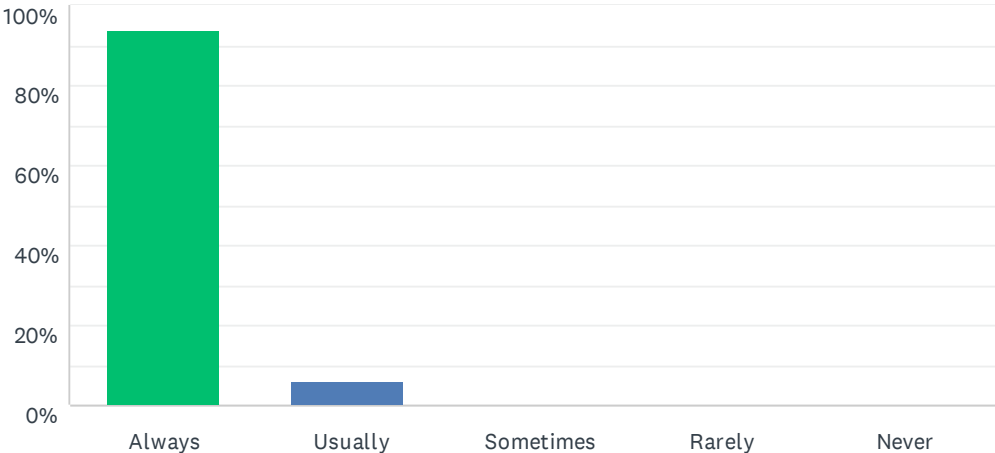
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	93.75%	15
Usually	6.25%	1
Sometimes	0.00%	0
Rarely	0.00%	0
Never	0.00%	0
TOTAL		16

Q5 How well does our services meet your needs

Answered: 16   Skipped: 1
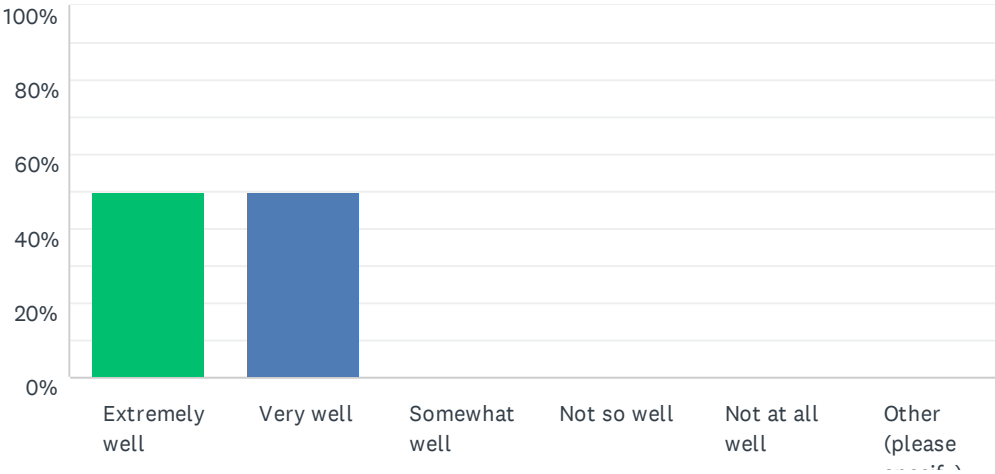
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely well	50.00%	8
Very well	50.00%	8
Somewhat well	0.00%	0
Not so well	0.00%	0
Not at all well	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		16

Q6 How would you rate the quality of our care services provided?

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
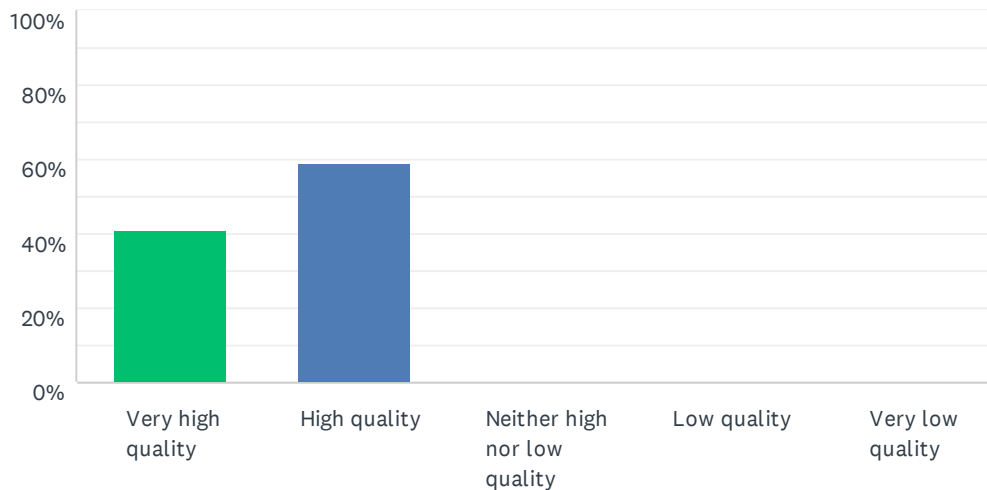
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very high quality	41.18%	7
High quality	58.82%	10
Neither high nor low quality	0.00%	0
Low quality	0.00%	0
Very low quality	0.00%	0
TOTAL		17

6 / 15

Q7 If you have contacted the office, was your call dealt with efficiently

Answered: 16   Skipped: 1
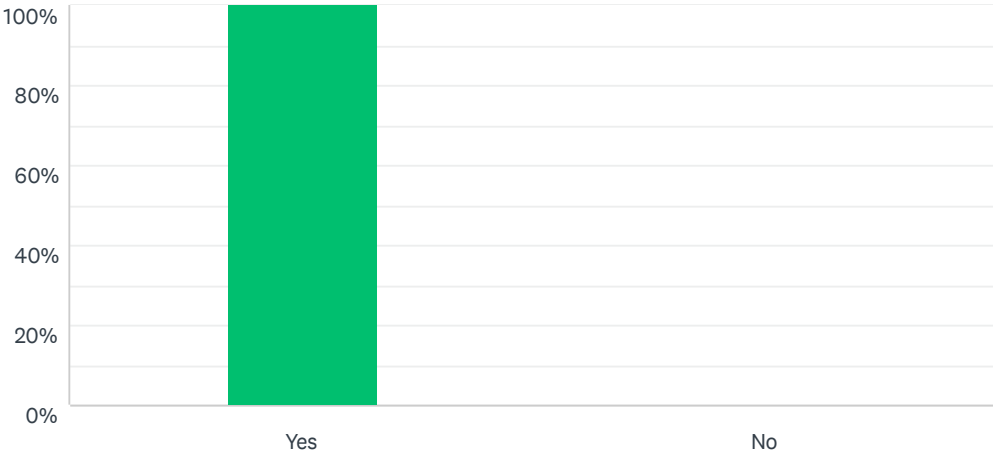
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	16
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		16

Q8 How responsive have we been to your questions or concerns

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
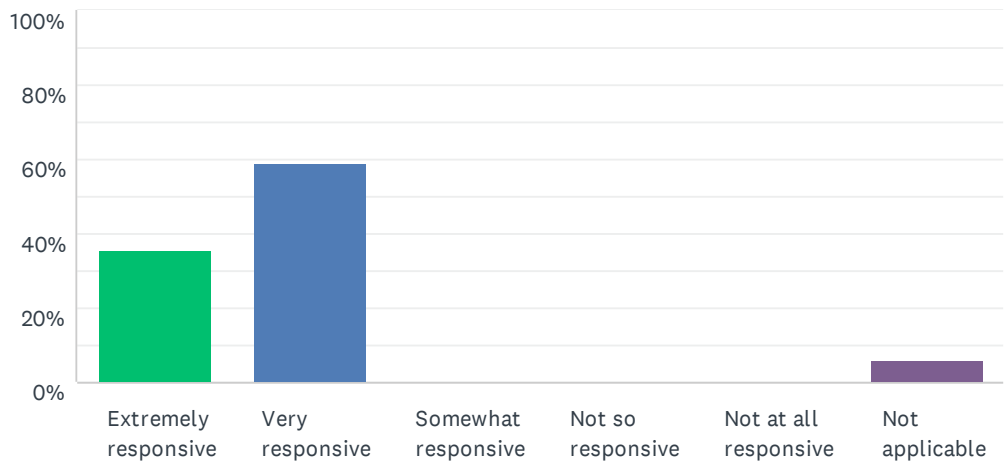
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely responsive	35.29%	6
Very responsive	58.82%	10
Somewhat responsive	0.00%	0
Not so responsive	0.00%	0
Not at all responsive	0.00%	0
Not applicable	5.88%	1
TOTAL		17

Q9 I would know how to raise a complaint or compliment

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
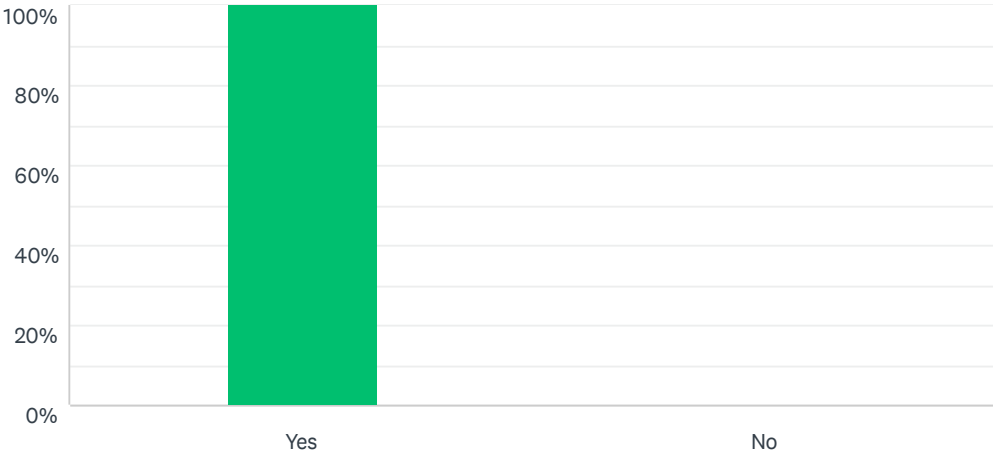
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	17
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		17

Q10 I am satisfied with the on call services that are available out of office hours

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
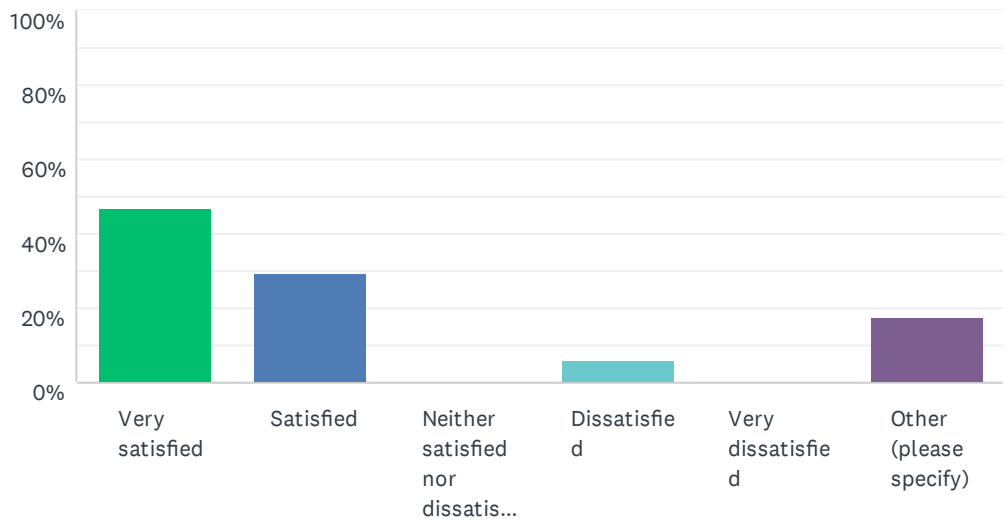
Page 335

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	47.06%	8
Satisfied	29.41%	5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Dissatisfied	5.88%	1
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	17.65%	3
TOTAL		17

Q11 My care team arrive on time

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
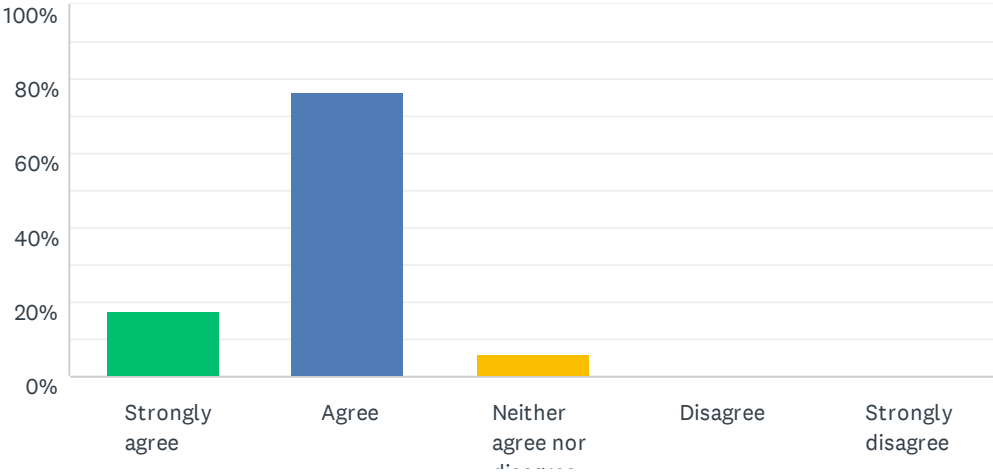
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	17.65%	3
Agree	76.47%	13
Neither agree nor disagree	5.88%	1
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		17

Q12 How satisfied are you with our overall services

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
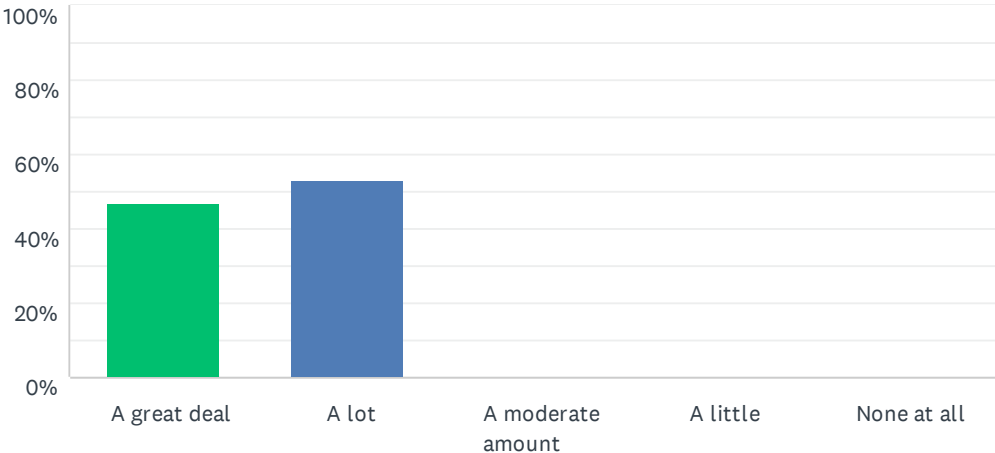
Page 337

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A great deal	47.06%	8
A lot	52.94%	9
A moderate amount	0.00%	0
A little	0.00%	0
None at all	0.00%	0
TOTAL		17

Q13 I would recommend Nexxus care to my family and friends

Answered: 17   Skipped: 0
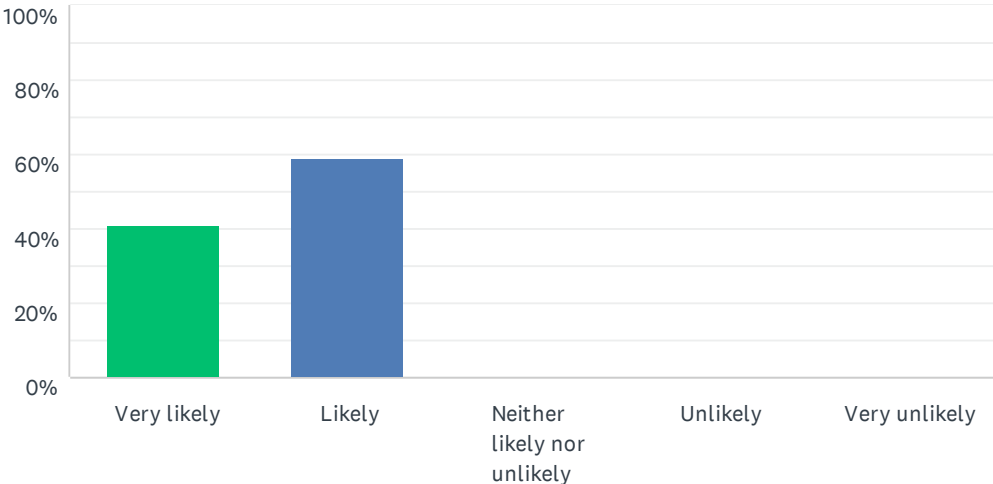
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very likely	41.18%	7
Likely	58.82%	10
Neither likely nor unlikely	0.00%	0
Unlikely	0.00%	0
Very unlikely	0.00%	0
TOTAL		17

Q14 Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns

Answered: 10   Skipped: 7

Q15 I wish to add my name in order for Nexxus Care to follow up with me any concerns raised or i wish to remain anonymous.

Answered: 6   Skipped: 11

Q1 I am completing this survey as

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
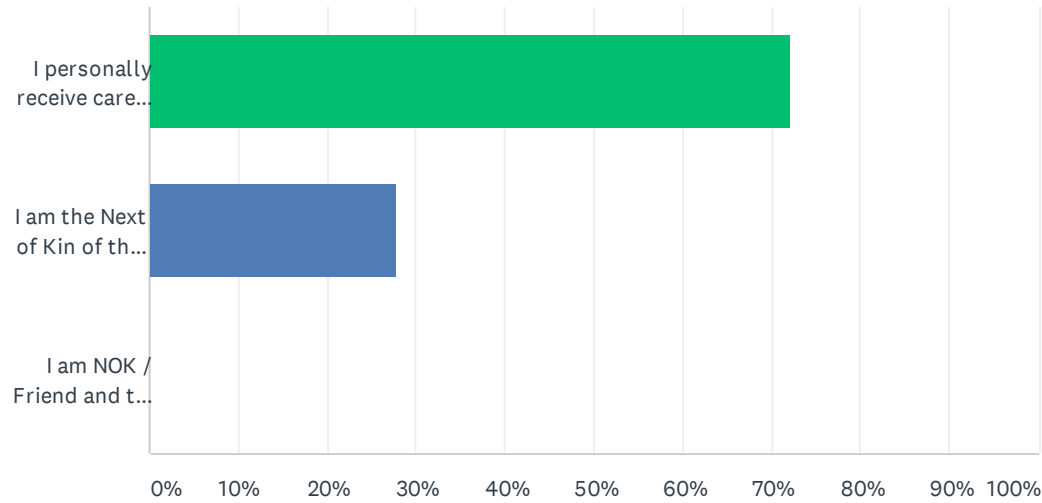
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I personally receive care from Nexxus Care	72.22%	13
I am the Next of Kin of the person receiving care from Nexxus Care and I am completing this on their behalf	27.78%	5
I am NOK / Friend and this is my opinion/answers	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

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Q2 I am satisfied with the care I receive from Nexxus Care

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
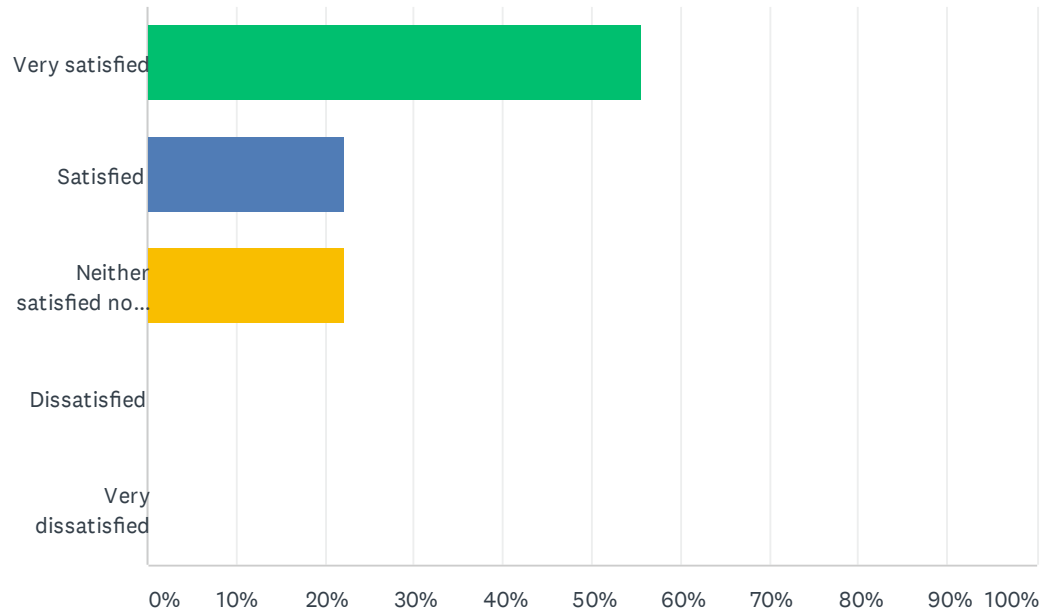
Page 342

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	55.56%	10
Satisfied	22.22%	4
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22.22%	4
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 18		

Q3 How long have you been a customer of Nexxus Care
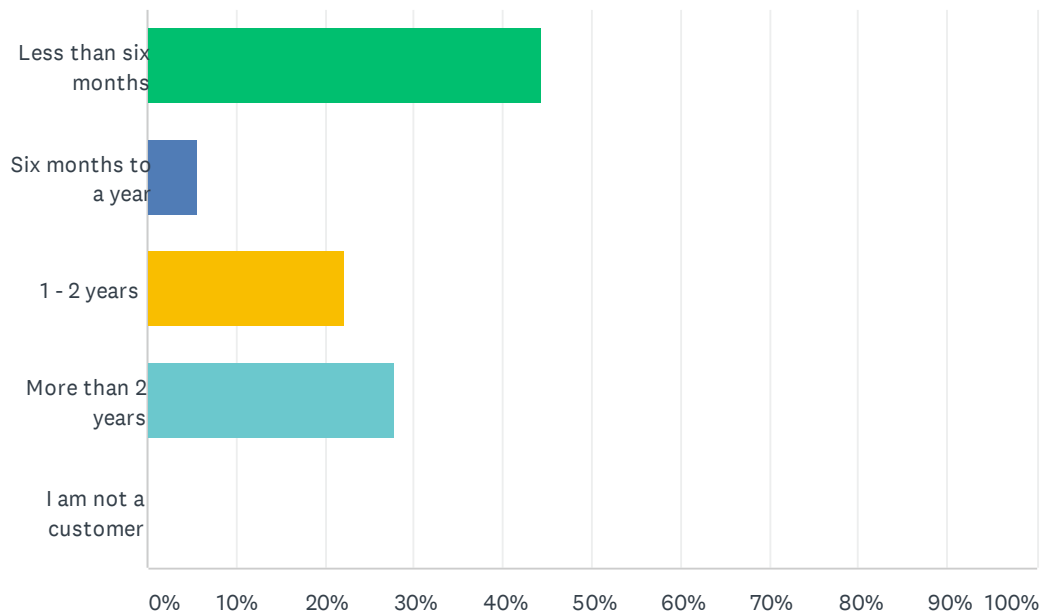
Answered: 18   Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than six months	44.44%	8
Six months to a year	5.56%	1
1 - 2 years	22.22%	4
More than 2 years	27.78%	5
I am not a customer	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

Q4 My care staff treat me with dignity and respect

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
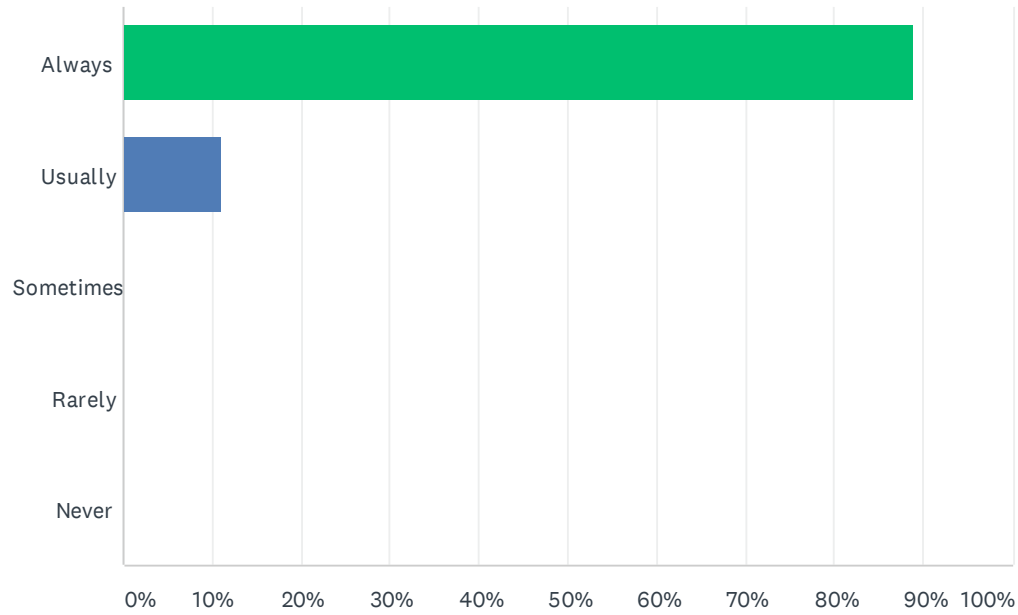
Page 344

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	88.89%	16
Usually	11.11%	2
Sometimes	0.00%	0
Rarely	0.00%	0
Never	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

Q5 How well does our services meet your needs

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
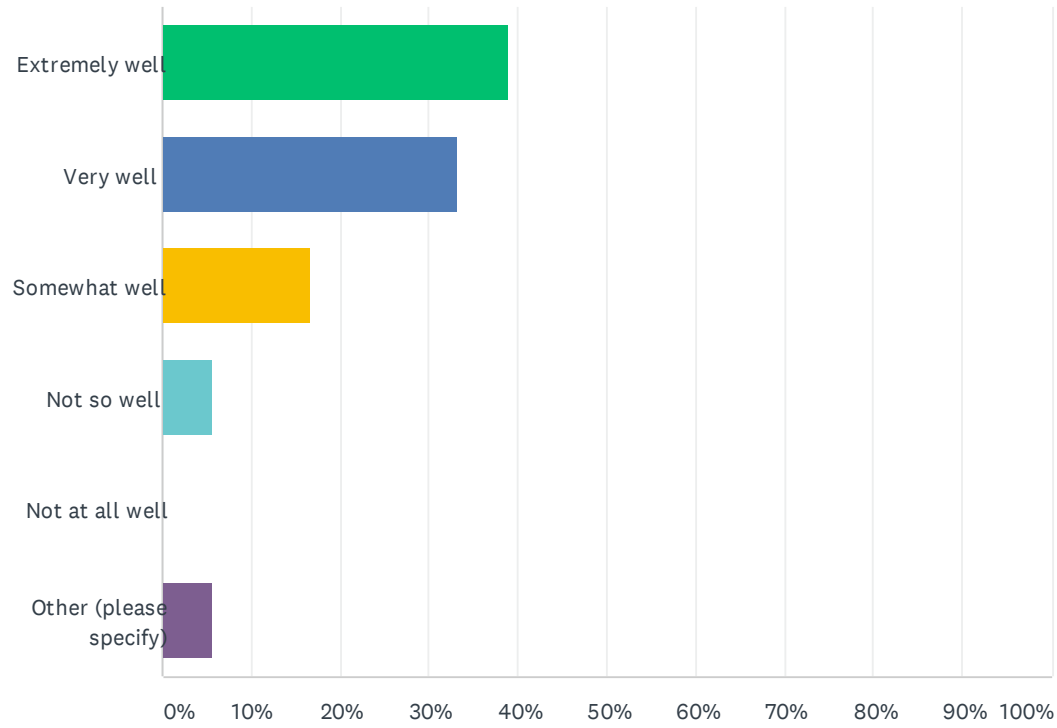
Page 345

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely well	38.89%	7
Very well	33.33%	6
Somewhat well	16.67%	3
Not so well	5.56%	1
Not at all well	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	5.56%	1
TOTAL		18

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Q6 How would you rate the quality of our care services provided?

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
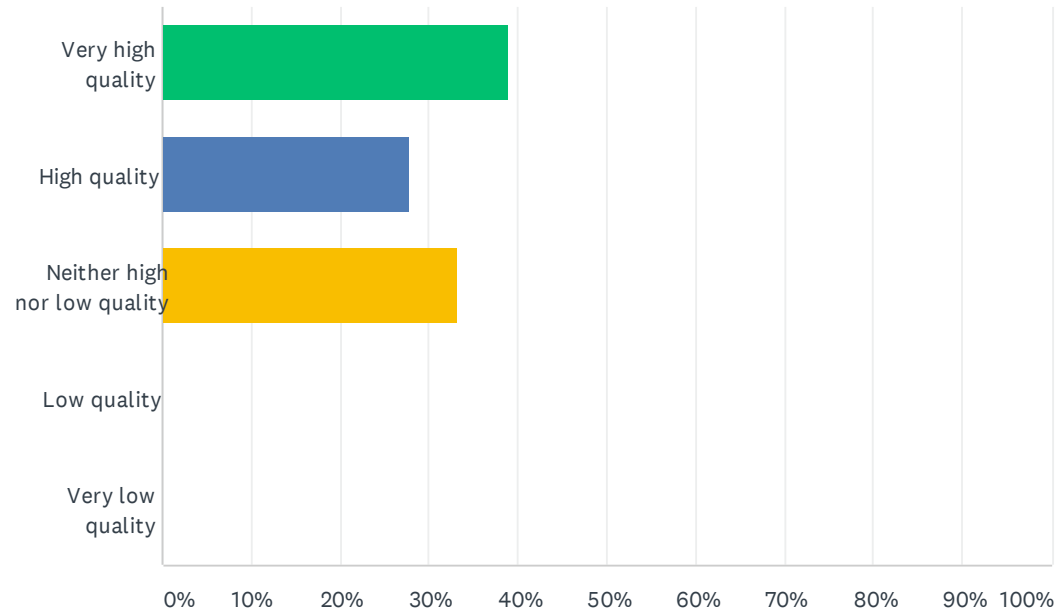
Page 347

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very high quality	38.89%	7
High quality	27.78%	5
Neither high nor low quality	33.33%	6
Low quality	0.00%	0
Very low quality	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

Q7 If you have contacted the office, was your call dealt with efficiently

Answered: 17   Skipped: 1
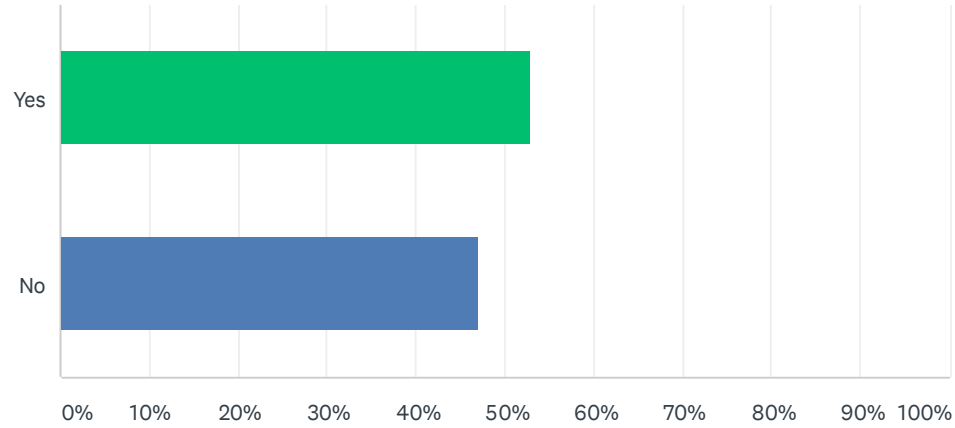
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	52.94%	9
No	47.06%	8
TOTAL		17

Q8 How responsive have we been to your questions or concerns

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
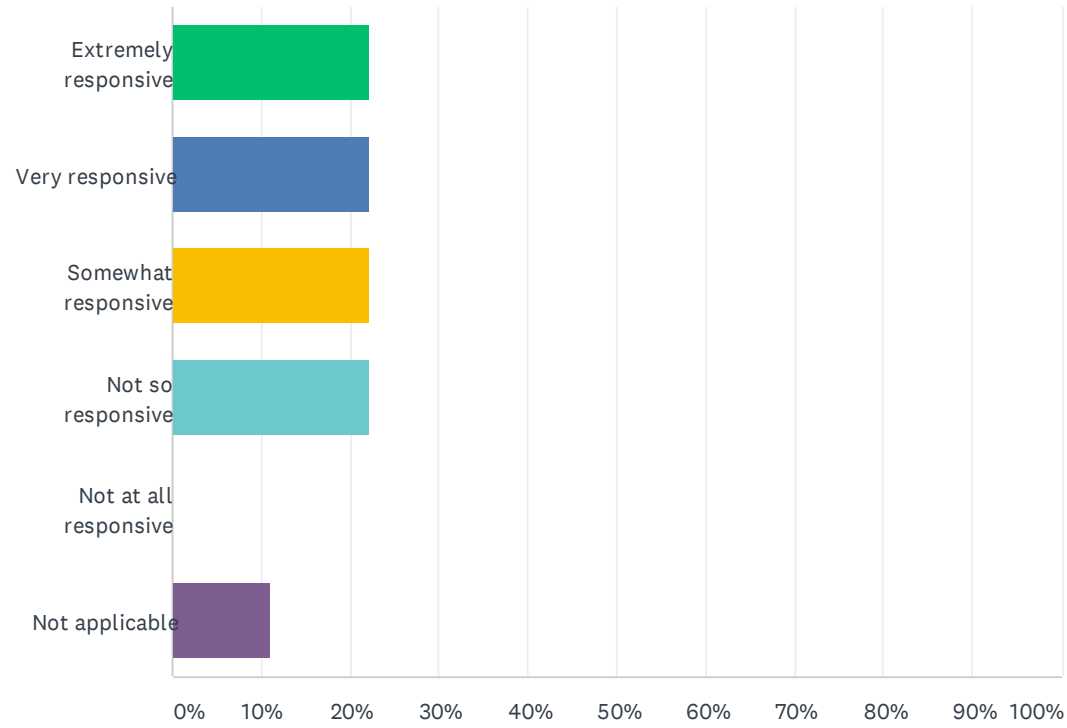
Page 349

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely responsive	22.22%	4
Very responsive	22.22%	4
Somewhat responsive	22.22%	4
Not so responsive	22.22%	4
Not at all responsive	0.00%	0
Not applicable	11.11%	2
TOTAL		18

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Q9 I would know how to raise a complaint or compliment

Answered: 17   Skipped: 1
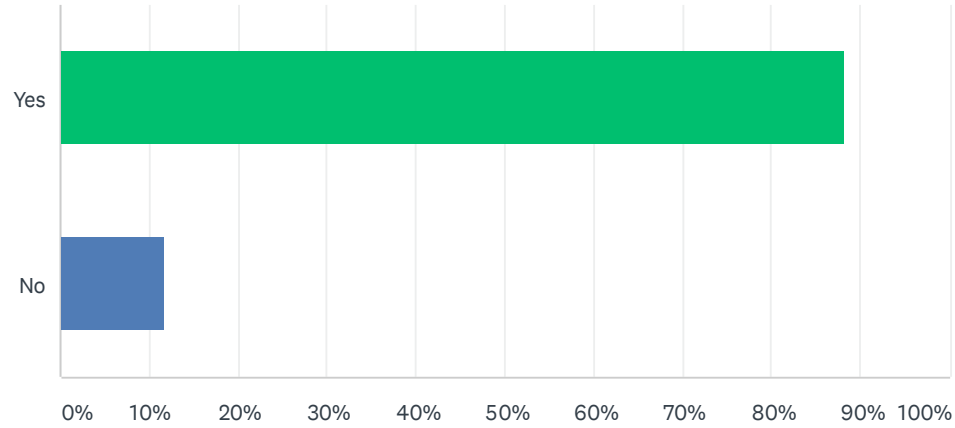
Page 351

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.24%	15
No	11.76%	2
TOTAL		17

Q10 I am satisfied with the on call services that are available out of office hours

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
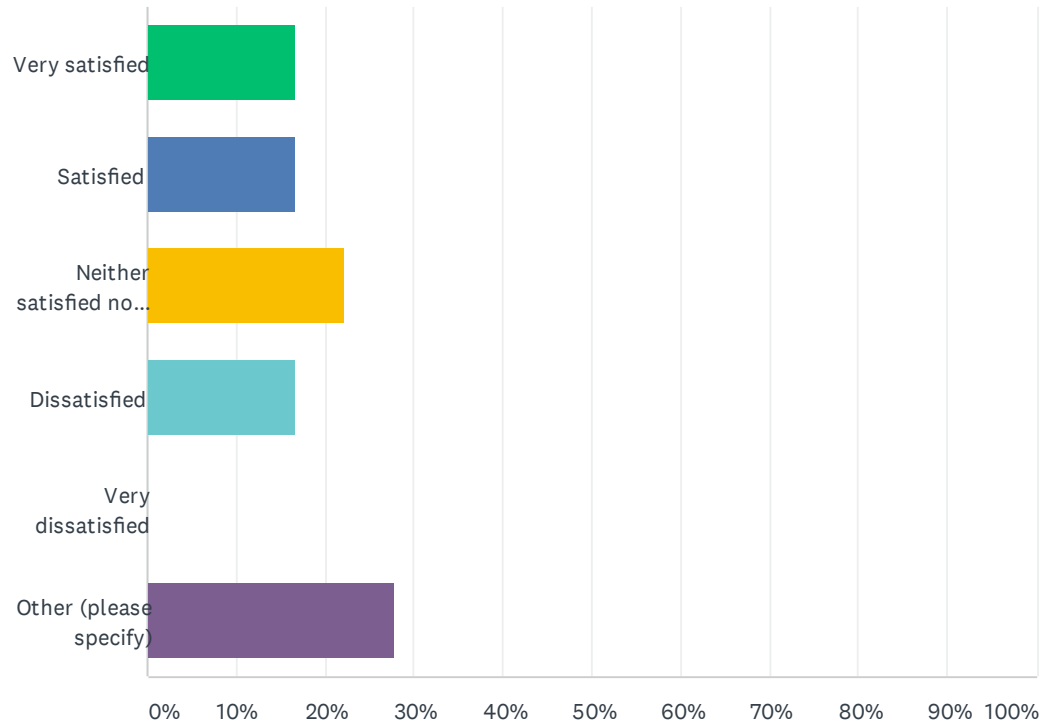
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very satisfied	16.67%	3
Satisfied	16.67%	3
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22.22%	4
Dissatisfied	16.67%	3
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	27.78%	5
TOTAL		18

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Q11 My care team arrive on time

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
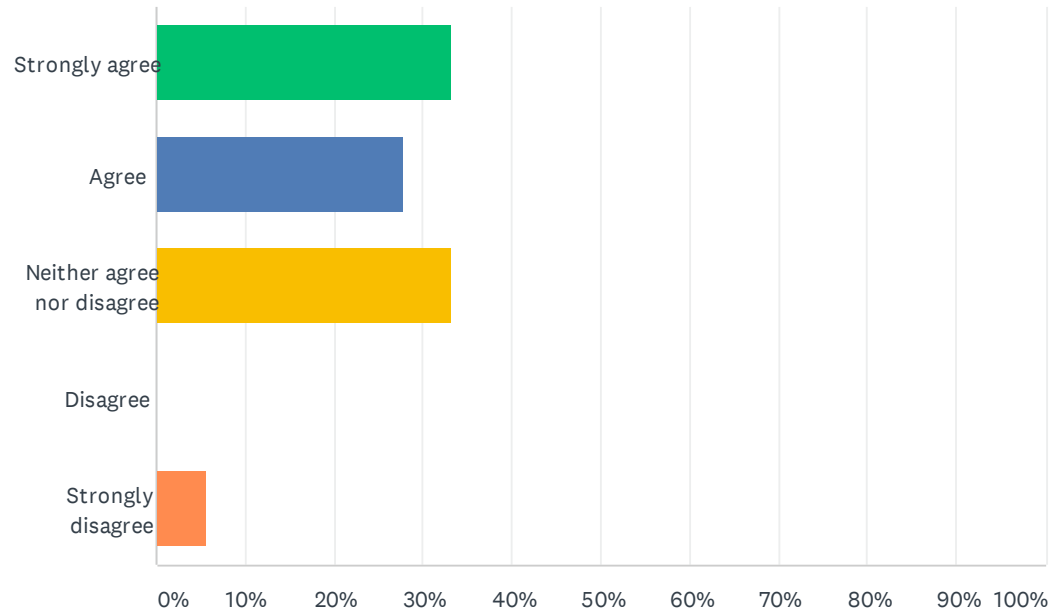
Page 354

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	33.33%	6
Agree	27.78%	5
Neither agree nor disagree	33.33%	6
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	5.56%	1
TOTAL		18

Q12 How satisfied are you with our overall services

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
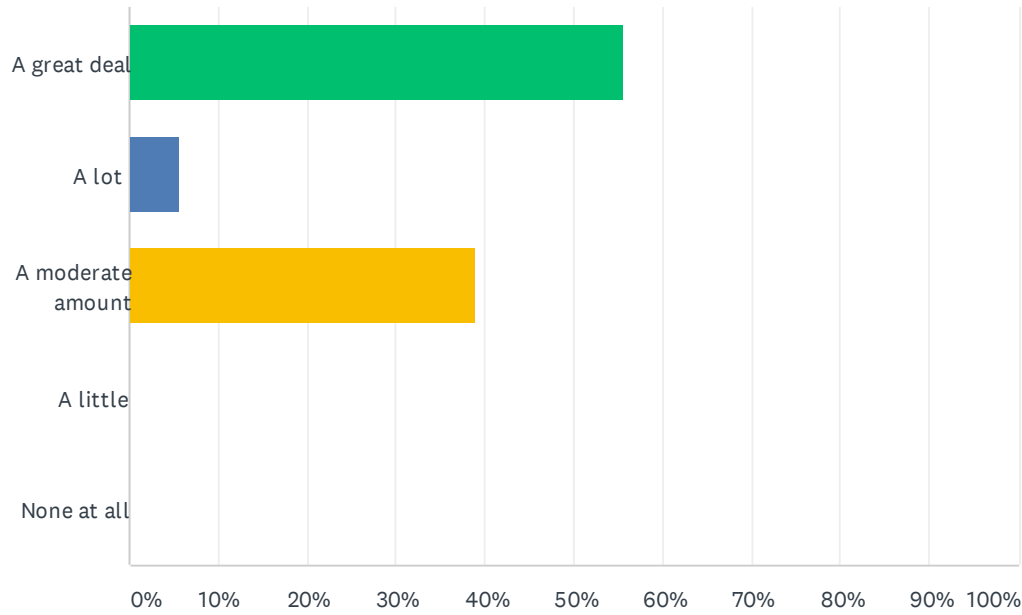
Page 355

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A great deal	55.56%	10
A lot	5.56%	1
A moderate amount	38.89%	7
A little	0.00%	0
None at all	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

Q13 I would recommend Nexxus care to my family and friends

Answered: 18   Skipped: 0
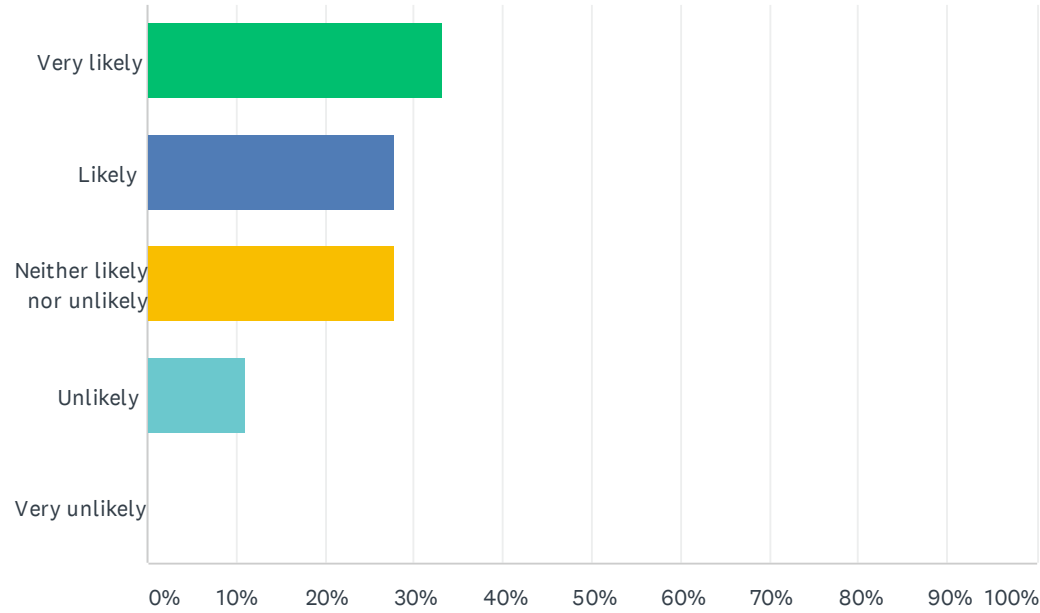
Page 356

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very likely	33.33%	6
Likely	27.78%	5
Neither likely nor unlikely	27.78%	5
Unlikely	11.11%	2
Very unlikely	0.00%	0
TOTAL		18

Q14 Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns

Answered: 9   Skipped: 9

Q15 I wish to add my name in order for Nexxus Care to follow up with me any concerns raised or i wish to remain anonymous.

Answered: 9   Skipped: 9

Annual Report 2020/21

Appendix D :   Annual Accounts 2020/21

Summary
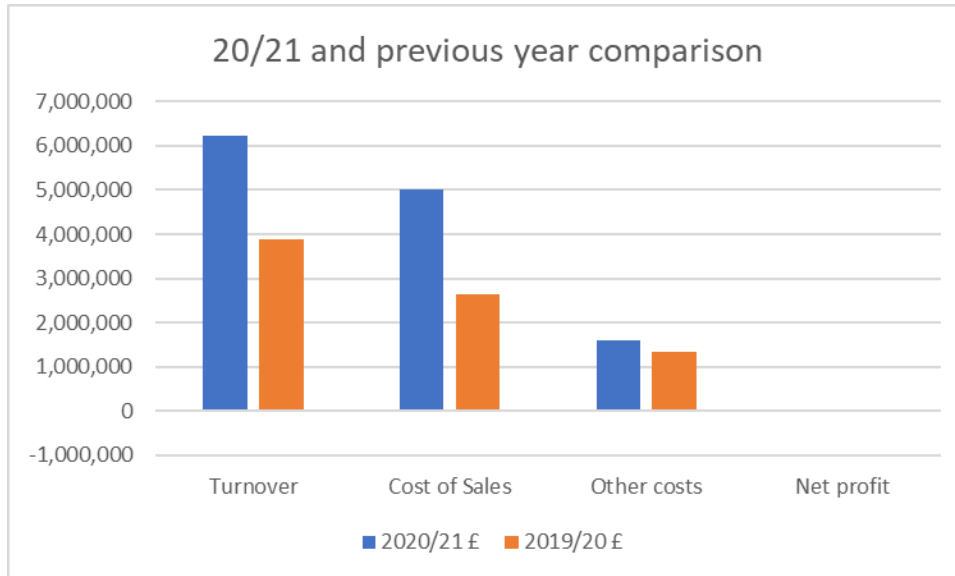
Profit / Loss summary
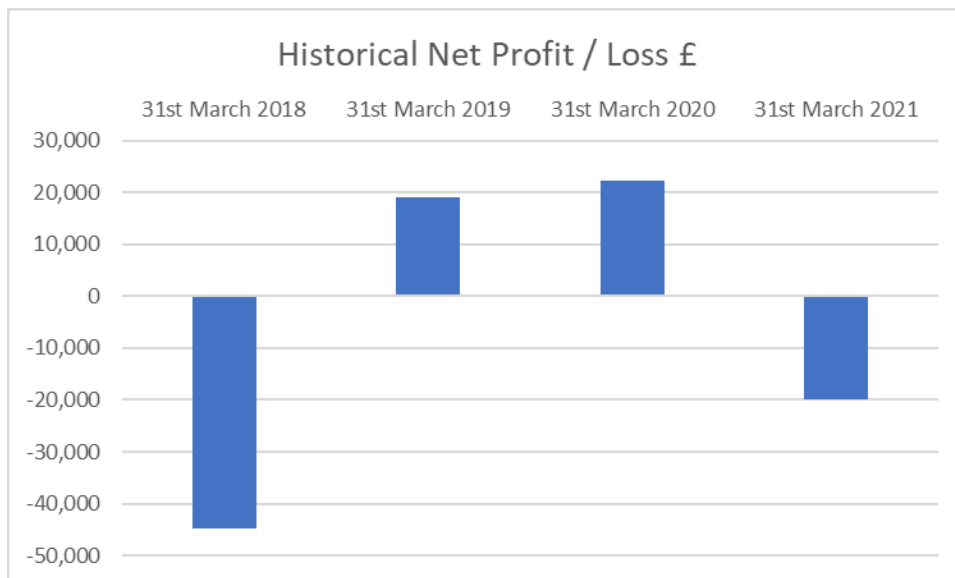
Analysis of Profit / (Loss) over service areas	
	£
Domiciliary Care	(176,254)
Reablement	154,135
Extra Care	2,284
	(19,835)

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Supplementary Capital Programme for Schools 2021/2022

Cllr Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) said,

"It is essential that children and young people in the county have access to a good, local school.

"Our capital programme for the next year is designed to ensure we make the most of the funding we have, and work with schools to improve school infrastructure. This way, we can ensure the county's children are learning in the best environment possible.

"Added to this, the extra funding from government means we can really make an impact in terms of making schools more sustainable and contribute to the reduction in our carbon footprint."

Report Summary:

Approval of the Capital Programme for Schools Phase 2 for 2021/22. Central government recently confirmed an extra £300m national investment for maintaining and improving the school estate. This additional funding combined with a new methodology for calculating School Condition Allocations (SCA) has resulted in an increased amount of funding for the upkeep of SCC maintained schools.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Considers the report and approves the Schools Capital Programme Phase 2 2021/22 investment proposal set out in the supporting appendices.

b. Agrees that the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets monitors progress and makes any necessary in-year alterations in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND).

Staffordshire County Council

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Supplementary Capital Programme for Schools 2021/2022

Recommendations of Cllr Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Considers the report and approves the Schools Capital Programme Phase 2 2021/22 investment proposal set out in the supporting appendices.

b. Agrees that the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets monitors progress and makes any necessary in-year alterations in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND).

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. Staffordshire is a great place to live, work and invest where most people enjoy a good quality of life. There are over 400 schools and academies providing education for around 120,000 primary, middle, and secondary pupils. Every Staffordshire child deserves the best possible education and to leave school or college with the learning and skills that they need to succeed in further education or the workplace. A strong economy relies on a high performing education system to produce the workforce of the future, and young people with the right skills, attitude, and ambition to meet the needs of our employers or to start a business of their own.

2. It is widely recognised that the quality of school buildings can help or hinder learning and teaching. Well-designed buildings and pleasant surroundings can lead to better attendance and concentration as well as motivation and self-esteem - factors which can improve performance. Staffordshire's Schools Asset Management Plan (AMP) and Statement of Priorities (StOP) ensure that capital spending is clearly aligned to corporate priorities and delivers value for money.

Summary

3. School condition funding is for maintaining and improving the condition of the school estate and includes allocations for individual institutions through Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) awarded directly to the schools; and allocations to the bodies responsible for managing capital funding through direct School Condition Allocations (SCA).

4. The DfE have committed £1.8 billion (an increase of £300 million) in 2021-22 for maintaining and improving the school estate. Using data from their Condition Data Collection (2017-2019) and more up-to-date pupil numbers from the spring 2020 census the DfE have introduced a new system that they believe more accurately reflects condition need and is simpler and easier to understand.

5. Bodies that are responsible for prioritising, distributing, and assuring the use of School Condition Allocations are referred to as "responsible bodies". At the time of the allocation, Staffordshire County Council is the responsible body for 128 maintained schools.

6. As a result of increased government investment and a revised allocation system, SCC have received SCA of £9,586,242 which is the highest allocation since 2015-16 when we were responsible for c300 maintained schools.

7. This is a one-year allocation but given that it's the first year of the new methodology it's hopeful that future funding will be calculated the same way. The DfE has started on its Condition Data Collection 2 (CDC2) which is a 5-year programme running from 2021 until 2026 and will refresh the condition data held. Data from CDC2 will directly inform future investment in the condition of school buildings and will provide an evidence base to support the successful delivery and development of education capital policy.

8. Given the delay in the funding announcement (without warning of the increased funding), the Schools Capital Programme 2021-22 was formulated and subsequently approved by Cabinet (17 March 2021) using an estimated SCA of £3.9 million. Clearly this significantly higher SCA presents us with the opportunity to further address our condition priorities in schools. Whilst maintaining the ethos of "today's money for today's children" it is important to note that we're not under pressure to spend all the funding this financial year, giving us time to ensure that the investment is put to best use. This will also allow us to review the situation with scarcity of building materials and the escalating prices due to COVID and Brexit.

Planned Replacement Programme

9. Condition surveys of schools are conducted on a 3-year rolling programme to assess the condition of the buildings. This information is held in a database which identifies the most urgent categories of need. Every school has been provided with an Asset Management Plan (AMP) on which local decisions on capital projects can be made.

10. The Planned Maintenance approach enables a co-ordinated programme of repairs and allows resources to be targeted where they are most needed to reduce the effects of unsatisfactory premises on pupils' education. As part of the due diligence process Academy sponsors will wish to ensure that the buildings are in a good state of repair. The Maintenance Programme forms the basis for ensuring that buildings can be transferred in a safe and satisfactory condition.

Climate Change Programme

11. Tackling climate change is one of the key principles underpinning everything we're committed to do in our Strategic plan. The Climate Change Act was passed in 2008 and established a framework to develop an economically credible emissions reduction path. As a council, SCC are determined to do our bit to reach carbon net zero by 2050. Failure to comply with the legislation carries significant financial penalties. The County Council is committed to helping save energy and reduce carbon emissions and energy saving features are incorporated into building projects wherever possible. Our carbon baseline is around 50,000 tonnes (tCO_2e). This figure would have been significantly higher if not for innovative solutions we've already put in place to reduce our impact on the environment. Around half of Staffordshire's CO_2 emissions are due to buildings and some 80% of the property assets are schools. The challenge is now to remove the remaining 50,000 tonnes of carbon emissions and the school estate has a vital role to play in meeting increasing CO_2 reduction targets. It's expected that schools will make a financial contribution to any projects carried out to achieve this.

12. It is essential that capital funding is made available for programmes to replace inefficient electric heating systems with 'wet' systems; upgrade old pipework; install new energy controls that monitor usage; improve insulation and installing new LED lighting. Prioritisation methodology targets schools where modernising plant or equipment provides best value returns on investment. In addition to direct financial savings, the investment provides a better learning environment for staff and students through improved heating & lighting.

13. It is important to note that in addition to the targeted sustainability projects, many of our other investments improve our carbon footprint with the schools becoming more energy efficient.

Priority Capital Projects Programme

14. Staffordshire recognises the importance that the school environment has in educational attainment and that capital investment is essential to support projects that are not driven by condition. The Priority Capital Projects Portfolio encourages schools to use some of their Devolved Formula Capital (DFC), variable dependant on the size of the project/school circumstances to contribute to the works enabling the funding to stretch further.

15. Development Officers identify priority projects in their areas and liaise with the schools about making contributions. All projects are assessed, weighted, and ranked so that a 'cut-off' point can be established as to which projects the capital funding can support. If savings are achieved, then the next project on the list is added to the portfolio.

Toilet Refurbishment

16. Historically, the design of school toilets has generally not been good for a complex set of reasons. Typically, children are reluctant to use them; when they are used, they are often the centre of behaviour and discipline problems. Prominent amongst the consequences are health problems and dehydration problems. Dehydrated children work less well.

17. There is considerable evidence highlighting the current issues with school toilets and the effects these have on pupils. An effective layout, high quality fittings and finishes, efficient cleaning, and maintenance, together with good access policies, are all essential to ensure that school facilities are valued. Overcoming common problems – such as the negative effects on short and long-term health caused by pupils avoiding drinking enough water or visiting the toilet – can have a positive influence on pupils' welfare, willingness, and ability to learn, their behaviour, morale, and attendance levels.

Proposed Phase 2 Investment 2021/22

18. Table 1 provides the balance of funding available and profile of the proposed areas of investment in the Capital Programme for Schools Phase 2 2021/22. A breakdown of the individual projects can be seen in Appendices 1 to 4.

Table 1: Funding and Proposed Investment

School Condition Allocation	9,586,242
Cabinet Approved Programme 17.03.21	3,900,000
Available Funding (SCA)	**5,686,242**

Planned Maintenance	2,118,842
Planned Maintenance (Sustainability)	1,122,688
Climate Change	331,797
Priority Projects	1,106,161
Toilet Refurbishment	878,599
Health & Safety	128,155
TOTAL Phase 2 for Cabinet Approval	**5,686,242**

* See appendices for list of individual projects

Strategic Priorities

19. In the current economic climate, where there is a considerable degree of uncertainty around the provision of capital funding to support schools and education, it is imperative that the County Council has a pre-determined set of priorities already in place so that it has the flexibility and responsiveness it will need to act on those capital funding streams as soon as they become available.

20. There will continue to be more demand for capital investment than there will be resources available to meet that demand. In turn this will mean that choices, sometimes very difficult choices, will have to be made. The County Council is committed to ensuring that the process of determining priorities for capital investment is open and transparent. Key features of this approach include:

    a. Consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) and the County Commissioner for Access to Learning to determine local priorities.

b. Published criteria for the assessment of priorities in the Asset Management Plan, and open access to the information held within it on all schools (Planned Maintenance Programme).

c. Consultation with all relevant partners, including schools and the three Dioceses, both directly and through the Local Management of Schools Consultative Committee (LMSCC).

d. Consultation with the Assistant Director for Education, Strategy, and Improvement.

21. In accordance with these principles and approaches, the following strategic priorities have been identified for capital investment in schools:

a. Improving educational standards by addressing highest priority condition issues ensuring schools are safe, warm, and dry through the Planned Maintenance Programme.

b. Meeting climate change and sustainability targets.

c. Delivering projects that make a difference to the school environment that are not condition driven but will have a significant impact through the Priority Capital Projects Portfolio.

d. Refurbishment of toilet facilities that are designed and fitted out to a standard that discourages anti-social behaviour and vandalism.

Programme Management

22. Approval is sought for the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets to continue with the practice of monitoring progress and making any necessary in-year alterations in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND).

Procurement of Works

23. Construction Projects – in line with Staffordshire County Councils ('Council') own Procurement Regulations, it is a requirement to utilise a 3rd party contract vehicle where available. Whilst the Council has previously procured its own traditional-build construction projects framework in the absence of any ideal option at the time, there is now a credible opportunity to procure Council construction projects from the recently let Construction West Midlands ('CWM') Framework Agreement (an arrangement procured and led by Birmingham City Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council). Commencing October 2020 for a period of 4 years (with the

option for an extra 2), this arrangement has been procured compliantly, will see project values of up to £2b, mimics the ethos and operation of the typical construction Framework which the Council would wish to procure, and allows access to a governance team that is driving developments in framework best practice at a regional and national level. The Council do also recognise the competence and professional delivery of the providers recently appointed to this arrangement with many already working with the Council and its partner on current projects.

24. Maintenance Works – will continue to be procured in line with the Councils Procurement Regulations, turning to our own Framework arrangements where applicable.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Community Impact Assessment - Summary Document

Appendix 1 - Planned Replacement Programme Phase 2 2021/22
Appendix 2 - Climate Change Programme Phase 2 2021/22
Appendix 3 - Priority Capital Projects Phase 2 2021/22
Appendix 4 - Toilet Refurbishment Programme Phase 2 2021/22

Contact Details

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Appendix 1.

2021-22 Phase 2 List of Planned Maintenance Projects across all Districts

Rationale	DFE No	School	District	Work Element
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	2177	Bridgtown Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Roof Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	2180	Five Ways Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Doors	2360	The John Bamford Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Internal Door Replacements
Healthy Pupil	2360	The John Bamford Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Playground Resurfacing
Healthy Pupil	2386	Gorsemoor Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Playground Resurfacing
Grounds Maintenance	2424	Moorhill Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Car Park Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Other	2424	Moorhill Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Asbestos Removal
Healthy Pupil	3040	Chadsmoor CofE (VC) Junior School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Playground Resurfacing
Grounds Maintenance	3040	Chadsmoor CofE (VC) Junior School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Car Park Resurfacing
Grounds Maintenance	3492	St Lukes CofE Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Hardstanding Resurfacing
Grounds Maintenance	3494	Chase View Community Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Hardstanding Resurfacing
Healthy Pupil	3494	Chase View Community Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Playground Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Other	4066	Norton Canes High School	1. Cannock Chase	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	4066	Norton Canes High School	1. Cannock Chase	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Windows	2153	The Croft Primary School	2. Lichfield	Windows - Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Windows	2309	Whittington Primary School	2. Lichfield	Windows - Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	2411	Chase Terrace Primary School	2. Lichfield	Roof Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	2415	Highfields Primary School	2. Lichfield	Electrical - Lighting & Heating Installation
Healthy Pupil	2415	Highfields Primary School	2. Lichfield	External - Playground Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Electrical	2418	Ridgeway Primary School	2. Lichfield	Electrical - Distribution Boards
Safe Warm Dry - Other	3025	All Saints CofE (C) Primary School	2. Lichfield	Internal - Drainage
PMP - Climate Change	4087	King Edward VI School - Lichfield	2. Lichfield	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Other	2000	The Richard Heathcote Community Primary School	3. Newcastle	Mechanical - Pipework
Safe Warm Dry - Doors	2157	Ravensmead Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Door Replacements
Safe Warm Dry - Windows	2158	Wood Lane Primary School	3. Newcastle	Windows - Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Doors	2158	Wood Lane Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Door Replacements
Grounds Maintenance	2218	Dove Bank Primary School	3. Newcastle	External - Car Park Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Other	2226	Springhead Primary School	3. Newcastle	External - Walls
Safe Warm Dry - Fire Safety	2226	Springhead Primary School	3. Newcastle	Fire Safety - Fire Alarm
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	2251	Hassell Primary School	3. Newcastle	Roof Repair/Replace
Grounds Maintenance	2256	May Bank Infants' School	3. Newcastle	External - Hardstanding Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	2263	Westlands Primary School	3. Newcastle	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Windows	3026	Hugo Meynell CofE (VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Windows - Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	3026	Hugo Meynell CofE (VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	3069	St John's CofE (C) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Windows	3069	St John's CofE (C) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Windows - Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Other	3094	St Margaret's CofE (VC) Junior School	3. Newcastle	External - Boundary
Healthy Pupil	3094	St Margaret's CofE (VC) Junior School	3. Newcastle	External - Playground Resurfacing

2021-22 Phase 2 List of Planned Maintenance Projects across all Districts

Rationale	DFE No	School	District	Work Element
Safe Warm Dry - Electrical	3136	Sir John Offley CofE (VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Electrical - Distribution Boards
Safe Warm Dry - Other	3137	Baldwins Gate CofE(VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Structural Repairs
Safe Warm Dry - Fire Safety	2164	Moor First School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Fire Safety - Fire Alarm
Safe Warm Dry - Doors	2191	Cheadle Primary School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Internal Door Replacements
Safe Warm Dry - Electrical	2321	Endon Hall Primary School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Electrical - Wiring
Grounds Maintenance	2321	Endon Hall Primary School	4. Staffs Moorlands	External - Car Park Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Fire Safety	3497	The William Amory Primary School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Fire Safety - Fire Alarm
Safe Warm Dry - Fire Safety	4067	Blythe Bridge High School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Fire Safety - Fire Doors
H&S & Healthy Pupil	2240	Green Lea First School	5. Stafford	External - Playground Resurfacing
H&S & Healthy Pupil	2293	Oakridge Primary	5. Stafford	External - Playground Resurfacing
PMP - Climate Change	2344	Springcroft Primary School	5. Stafford	Electrical - Lighting LEDs
PMP - Climate Change	2404	Doxey Primary	5. Stafford	Meachanical - Heating Controls
Grounds Maintenance	3027	Barlaston First School	5. Stafford	External - Car Park Resurfacing
PMP - Climate Change	3112	St. Michael's First School	5. Stafford	Mechanical - Boilers
H&S & Healthy Pupil	3149	St. Paul's Stafford	5. Stafford	External - Playground Resurfacing
PMP - Climate Change	4181	King Edward VI High - Stafford	5. Stafford	Windows - Repair/Replace
H&S & Healthy Pupil	2306	Bhylls Acre Primary	6. South Staffs	External - Playground Resurfacing
PMP - Climate Change	2342	Glenthorne Primary	6. South Staffs	Mechanical - Boilers
PMP - Climate Change	2368	Lane Green First School	6. South Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	2372	Perton First School	6. South Staffs	Windows - Repair/Replace
Grounds Maintenance	2394	Landywood Primary	6. South Staffs	External - Car Park Resurfacing
Healthy Pupil	2395	Moat Hall Primary	6. South Staffs	External - Playground Resurfacing
PMP - Climate Change	2397	Westfield Primary	6. South Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	3098	St. Chad's, Pattingham	6. South Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Electrical	3116	St. John's, Swindon	6. South Staffs	Electrical - Distribution Boards
PMP - Climate Change	4075	Codsall High	6. South Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	4170	Perton Middle	6. South Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Other	2132	Victoria Community School (and Orchard Annexe) - nursery York street	7. East Staffs	Security Alarm
Safe Warm Dry - Other	2132	Victoria Community School (and Orchard Annexe)	7. East Staffs	Internal - Flooring
PMP - Climate Change	2132	Victoria Community School (and Orchard Annexe)	7. East Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	2140	Tower View Primary School	7. East Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Electrical	2140	Tower View Primary School	7. East Staffs	Electrical - Distribution Boards
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	2222	Talbot First School Uttoxeter	7. East Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
H&S & Healthy Pupil	3084	St Peters CE(VC) First School, Marchington	7. East Staffs	External - Playground Resurfacing
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	3084	St Peters CE(VC) First School, Marchington	7. East Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - Fire Safety	3500	Riverview Primary School	7. East Staffs	Fire Safety - Fire Alarm
PMP - Climate Change	3500	Riverview Primary School	7. East Staffs	Electrical - Lighting LEDs
PMP - Climate Change	4055	Paget High School	7. East Staffs	Roof Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	4500	Abbot Beyne School	7. East Staffs	Windows - Repair/Replace

2021-22 Phase 2 List of Planned Maintenance Projects across all Districts

Rationale	DFE No	School	District	Work Element
Safe Warm Dry - Roofs	3051	Mary Howard Primary	8. Tamworth	Roof Repair/Replace
PMP - Climate Change	7003	Horton Lodge Community Special School	County Wide Facility	Roof Repair/Replace
Safe Warm Dry - External Boundary	7003	Horton Lodge Community Special School	County Wide Facility	External - Boundary
PMP - Climate Change	7023	Hednesford Valley High School	County Wide Facility	Mechanical - Boilers
PMP - Climate Change	7023	Hednesford Valley High School	County Wide Facility	Mechanical - Boilers
H&S & Healthy Pupil	7032	Sherbrook Primary School	County Wide Facility	External - Playground Resurfacing

DFE No	School	District	Work Element
	Appendix 2.		
	2021-22 Phase 2 List of Climate Change Projects across all Districts		
2177	Bridgtown Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Roofing - Insulation
2327	Hayes Meadow Primary School	2. Lichfield	Lighting LEDs
1028	Oaklands Nursery School	3. Newcastle	Mechanical - Heating
2400	Tillington Manor	5. Stafford	Mechanical - Heating
2396	Blakeley Heath Primary	6. South Staffs	Electrical Heating
4075	Codsall High	6. South Staffs	Mechanical - Heating
1111	Burton PRU	7. East Staffs	Lighting LEDs
2132	Victoria Community School (and Orchard Annexe)	7. East Staffs	Mechanical - Heating
3500	Riverview Primary School	7. East Staffs	Mechanical - Pipework
4500	Abbot Beyne School	7. East Staffs	Mechanical - Heating
2332	Florendine Primary school	8. Tamworth	Mechanical - Heating

	Appendix 3.		
	2021-22 Phase 2 List of Priority Projects across all Districts		
DFE No	**School**	**District**	**Work Element**
1022	Hednesford Nursery School	1. Cannock Chase	External - Refurbishment/Remodelling
2360	The John Bamford Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2424	Moorhill Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3139	Hob Hill CE/Methodist (VC) Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2216	Thomas Barnes Primary School	2. Lichfield	External - Refurbishment/Remodelling
2413	Fulfen Primary School	2. Lichfield	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3079	St Michael's CofE (C) Primary School	2. Lichfield	External - Refurbishment/Remodelling
2157	Ravensmead Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2158	Wood Lane Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal - Fire Doors
2263	Westlands Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3026	Hugo Meynell CofE (VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Safeguarding - Internal Doors
3026	Hugo Meynell CofE (VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3069	St John's CofE (C) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3093	St Luke's CofE (C) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3094	St Margaret's CofE (VC) Junior School	3. Newcastle	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2164	Moor First School	4. Staffordshire Moorlands	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2164	Moor First School	4. Staffordshire Moorlands	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2166	Squirrel Hayes First School	4. Staffordshire Moorlands	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3000	Forsbrook CofE Controlled Primary School	4. Staffordshire Moorlands	Safeguarding - Internal Doors
2345	Pirehill First School	5. Stafford	External - Fencing Safeguarding
3112	St. Michael's First School	5. Stafford	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3117	Tittensor First School	5. Stafford	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
4181	King Edward VI High - Stafford	5. Stafford	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling

	2021-22 Phase 2 List of Priority Projects across all Districts		
DFE No	School	District	Work Element
2306	Bhylls Acre Primary	6. South Staffordshire	External - Fencing Safeguarding
2368	Lane Green First School	6. South Staffordshire	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2397	Westfield Primary School	6. South Staffordshire	External - Refurbishment/Remodelling
2132	Victoria Community School (and Orchard Annexe)	7. East Staffordshire	Window Replacements
2198	Manor Primary	7. East Staffordshire	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
2198	Manor Primary	7. East Staffordshire	External - Fencing Safeguarding
2348	Oakhill Primary School	8. Tamworth	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3043	St Andrews Clifton Campville	8. Tamworth	Extension
3051	Mary Howard Primary	8. Tamworth	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling
3051	Mary Howard Primary	8. Tamworth	External - Refurbishment/Remodelling
1105	Bridge Short Stay School	County Wide Facility	External - Refurbishment/Remodelling
7003	Horton Lodge Community Special School	County Wide Facility	Internal Refurbishment/Remodelling

	Appendix 4.		
2021-22 Phase 2 List of Toilet Refurbishment Projects across all Districts			
DFE No	School	District	Work Element
2355	Chancel Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Toilet Replacement
3492	St Lukes CofE Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Toilet Replacement
3494	Chase View Community Primary School	1. Cannock Chase	Toilet Replacement
2153	The Croft Primary School	2. Lichfield	Toilet Replacement
3025	All Saints CofE (C) Primary School	2. Lichfield	Toilet Replacement
3080	St Chad's CofE (VC) Primary School	2. Lichfield	Toilet Replacement
3137	Baldwins Gate CofE(VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Toilet Replacement
3137	Baldwins Gate CofE(VC) Primary School	3. Newcastle	Toilet Replacement
3497	The William Amory Primary School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Toilet Replacement
4067	Blythe Bridge High School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Toilet Replacement
4067	Blythe Bridge High School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Toilet Replacement
4067	Blythe Bridge High School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Toilet Replacement
4067	Blythe Bridge High School	4. Staffs Moorlands	Toilet Replacement
2406	Burton Manor Primary	5. Stafford	Toilet Replacement
2409	Flash Ley Primary	5. Stafford	Toilet Replacement
3028	Berkswich Primary	5. Stafford	Toilet Replacement
2393	Cheslyn Hay Primary	6. South Staffs	Toilet Replacement
2394	Landywood Primary	6. South Staffs	Toilet Replacement
2395	Moat Hall Primary	6. South Staffs	Toilet Replacement
3098	St. Chad's, Pattingham	6. South Staffs	Toilet Replacement
3116	St. John's, Swindon	6. South Staffs	Toilet Replacement
2140	Tower View Primary School	7. East Staffs	Toilet Replacement
2326	Thomas Russell Junior School	7. East Staffs	Toilet Replacement

2021-22 Phase 2 List of Toilet Refurbishment Projects across all Districts			
DFE No	School	District	Work Element
3500	Riverview Primary School	7. East Staffs	Toilet Replacement
2346	Hanbury's Farm Community Primary School	8. Tamworth	Toilet Replacement
3051	Mary Howard Primary	8. Tamworth	Toilet Replacement

Community Impact Assessment Checklist and Executive Summary

Name of Proposal:

Schools Capital Programme Phase 2 2021/22

Project Sponsor:

Councillor Jonathan Price

Project Manager:

Stuart Lane, Head of Schools Asset Strategy

Date Completed:

10/09/21

Final Checklist

Prior to submitting your Community Impact Assessment (CIA), please ensure that the actions on the checklist below have been completed, to reassure yourself / SLT / Cabinet that the CIA process has been undertaken appropriately.

Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
The project supports the Council's Business Plan, priorities and MTFS.		The Schools Capital Programme (SCP) priorities are determined by the outcomes of the Schools Asset Management Plan (AMP). The SCP is funded by 2 central government grants: School Condition Allocation (SCA) and Basic Need. Additional capital funding for schools comes from other government bid grants, income from capital receipts, contributions from schools, developers and other stakeholders.
It is clear what the decision is or what decision is being requested.		Approval of the 2021/22 Schools Capital Programme Phase 2 is required.
For decisions going to Cabinet, the CIA findings are reflected in the Cabinet Report and **potential impacts are clearly identified and mitigated for** (where possible).		A full CIA has been completed and the Executive Summary is included in the Cabinet report
The **aims, objectives and outcomes** of the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.		The aim of the SCP is to deliver the Staffordshire School Asset Management Plan (AMP) and Statement of Priorities (StOP). The justification for each maintenance scheme is provided by the AMP condition survey.
The **groups** who will be affected by the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.		The groups affected are summarized in the CIA
The **communities** that are likely to be more adversely impacted than others have been clearly identified.		Schools maintenance and expansions are considered as having a positive impact on local communities
Engagement / consultation has been undertaken and is representative of the residents most likely to be affected.		Initial engagement has been taken with local councillors. Further consultation on individual schemes will take place at the detailed design stage.

Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
A range of people with the appropriate knowledge and expertise have contributed to the CIA.		Colleagues from SCC Strategic Property provided knowledge and expertise to inform the CIA.
Appropriate evidence has been provided and used to inform the development and design of the policy, service or project. This includes data, research, engagement/consultation, case studies and local knowledge.		AMP condition data which is maintained and refreshed on a regular basis has been used to prioritize the programme of works.
The CIA **evidences** how the Council has considered its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and how it has considered the impacts of any change on people with protected characteristics.		The Equalities Act 2010 compliance will be achieved during the implementation of the individual schemes.
The next steps to deliver the project have been identified.		The programmes will be delivered using the County Council's framework contractors and various key stakeholders.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is intended to be a collation of the key issues and findings from the CIA and other research undertaken. This should be completed after the CIA and research has been completed. Please structure the summary using the headings on the left that relate to the sections in the CIA template. Where no major impacts have been identified, please state N/A.

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
PSED What are the impacts on residents with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010? Highlight any concerns that have emerged as a result of the equality analysis on any of the protected groups and how these will be mitigated. It is important that Elected Members are fully aware of the equality duties so that they can make an informed decision, and this can be supported with robust evidence.	There are identified benefits from the proposed programme that can be associated to the population as a whole.	The Schools Capital Programme will be compliant and will address any related Equality Act 2010 requirements as required by each individual scheme.	Risks will be addressed at the scheme design and delivery stage. A significant part of the selection process is to ensure that all Framework designers and contractors are compliant with Equality and other legislations.	N/A
Health and Care How will the proposal impact on residents' health? How will the proposal impact on demand for or access to social care or health services?	Positive impact on mental wellbeing and healthy lifestyles for pupils and the wider community across Staffordshire's maintained schools.	The provision of improved school facilities has the potential (depending on the scheme) to improve mental wellbeing and increase physical activity.	Risks including compliance with current Covid-19 requirements will be addressed at the scheme design and delivery stages.	

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Economy How will the proposal impact on the economy of Staffordshire or impact on the income of Staffordshire's residents?	Increase in employment (teaching and school support roles). During construction and continued future maintenance opportunities for local suppliers and contractors.	Employment opportunities and capital investment.	Risks including compliance with current Covid-19 requirements will be addressed at the scheme design and delivery stages.	N/A
Environment How will the proposal impact on the physical environment of Staffordshire? Does this proposal have any Climate Change implications?	Positive impact on the physical environment with improvements to school buildings.	New and expanding schools reduce the need to travel for pupils and provides the opportunity to walk to school improving the health and wellbeing in the community.	Risks including compliance with current Covid-19 requirements will be addressed at the scheme design and delivery stages.	N/A
Localities / Communities How will the proposal impact on Staffordshire's communities?	A positive impact on the local communities with school improvements providing access to education for the whole community.	The provision of improvements within Staffordshire schools will provide better facilities that have the potential to be used by the wider community.	Risks including compliance with current Covid-19 requirements will be addressed at the scheme design and delivery stages.	N/A

Staffordshire County Council

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Branston Locks Primary - Proposed 2FE and Associated S106 Contributions (Wave School)

Cllr Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) said,

"Staffordshire's school building programme has successfully secured new school places for thousands of school children over the past few years and ensured our school landscape can cope with the increased demand for places brought about by new housing developments.

"This latest primary school at Branston Road will be built on behalf of the Department for Education and will eventually be able to accommodate more than 400 pupils. This will ensure there are plenty of school places to cope with increasing demand in the years to come, and parents will still have the opportunity to send their child to a good, local school."

Report Summary:

To approve the acquisition of land and the development of a 2-form entry primary school at Branston Road, Burton on Trent to be known as Branston Locks Primary School under the Department for Education's wave programme.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Approves the completion of a Transfer of the school land at Branston Locks to Staffordshire County Council in accordance with the terms of the section 106 agreement dated the 14th April 2015 between Nurton Developments (Quintus) Limited (1) Staffordshire County Council (2) East Staffordshire Borough Council (3) Lloyds Bank PLC (4) ('the Section 106 Agreement');

b. Approves the completion of a Capital Contribution Letter with the Secretary of State for Education or such other party as they shall so direct for the payment of £6,400,000 of the primary school contribution

received by Staffordshire County Council under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement;

c. Approves the completion of an Agreement for Lease and Lease with the Secretary of State for Education or such other party as they shall so direct to enable the construction of the 2 form entry primary school and thereafter the use of the primary school for up to 125 years; and

d. Delegates permission to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets to agree the final terms of the Transfer, Capital Contribution Letter, Agreement for Lease and Heads of Terms.

Local Members Interest
Julia Jessel (East Staffordshire – Needwood Forest)

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Branston Locks Primary - Proposed 2FE and Associated S106 Contributions (Wave School)

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Approves the completion of a Transfer of the school land at Branston Locks to Staffordshire County Council in accordance with the terms of the section 106 agreement dated the 14th April 2015 between Nurton Developments (Quintus) Limited (1) Staffordshire County Council (2) East Staffordshire Borough Council (3) Lloyds Bank PLC (4) ('the Section 106 Agreement');

b. Approves the completion of a Capital Contribution Letter with the Secretary of State for Education or such other party as they shall so direct for the payment of £6,400,000 of the primary school contribution received by Staffordshire County Council under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement;

c. Approves the completion of an Agreement for Lease and Lease with the Secretary of State for Education or such other party as they shall so direct to enable the construction of a 2 form entry primary school and thereafter the use of the primary school for up to 125 years; and

d. Delegates permission to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets to agree the final terms of the Transfer, Capital Contribution Letter, Agreement for Lease and Heads of Terms.

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations:

2. To ensure the delivery of the 2-form entry primary school for September 2023 in accordance with the Department for Education wave programme.

Background:

3. On the 13th April 2016 officers reported to informal cabinet on the Department for Educations approach to the funding of new schools. This recommended the wave approach for the primary and secondary schools required in Burton on Trent.

4. There has been a delay in the delivery of the primary school in Burton on Trent and this is now scheduled to open in September 2023 rather than September 2017 as originally anticipated.

5. The Department for Education have now approved the development under their wave programme of a 2-form entry primary school at Branston Road, Burton on Trent to be known as Branston Locks Primary School, as shown edged in red on the plan annexed hereto at the Appendix ('the School Site').

6. Under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement dated the 14th April 2015 between Nurton Developments (Quintus) Limited ("the Developer") (1) Staffordshire County Council (2) East Staffordshire Borough Council (3) Lloyds Bank PLC (4) ('the Section 106 Agreement') Nurton Developments (Quintus) Limited ('the Developer') are required to transfer to Staffordshire County Council the School Site for the provision of a new primary school of at least 2 forms of entry (420 places).

7. The Section 106 Agreement also secures staged payments of £8,000,000 by the Developer ('the Section 106 Contribution') to mitigate the impact of the development of 2500 dwellings as a contribution to be paid towards the provision of at least (but not limited to) 420 primary school places and up to 105 places of additional offsite primary school provision. This is the equivalent to 2.5 form entry.

8. The approval under the wave process only permits the construction of a 2 form entry primary school so Staffordshire County Council propose to retain £1,600,000 of the Section 106 Contribution for the 105 places of additional offsite primary school provisions with the balance of £6,400,000 for the 2 form entry being paid to the Secretary of State or such other party as they shall nominate on receipt from the Developer in accordance with the terms of a Capital Contribution Letter to be agreed between the parties.

9. The Secretary of State will need to obtain planning permission for the construction of the primary school, and it is therefore intended for an Agreement for Lease to be granted conditional on the grant of planning permission. Following the grant of planning permission, the standard form wave school 125-year lease will be granted to the Secretary of State or such other party as they shall nominate permitting the construction and the use of the school.

10. At this stage, it is anticipated that the John Taylor MAT will be granted the Lease of the School Site, but this is still subject to the John Taylor MAT entering into funding agreements with the Department for Education.

Legal Implications

11. Staffordshire County Council have covenanted in the Section 106 Agreement to, inter alia, deliver the school and to repay the Section 106 Contributions or any part thereof if the school is not delivered or if the Section 106 Contributions are not fully utilised.

12. With the school intended to be delivered through the wave programme Staffordshire County Council are not in control of compliance with these covenants. Accordingly, the Secretary of State has agreed in principal to provide mutual covenants to Staffordshire County Council to mirror the requirements in the Section 106 Agreement and to reimburse Staffordshire County Council for all reasonable and proper costs incurred for any failure by the Secretary of State to comply with these covenants.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

13. Before the Department for Education elected to deliver the Branston Locks Primary School through the wave programme Staffordshire County Council had incurred costs in preparing for the delivery of up to a 3-form entry primary school. Approval has been obtained for Staffordshire County Council to deduct these costs and any further legal costs incurred from the basic need allocation.

14. The Department for Education will contribute any capital over and above the £6,400,000 Section 106 Contribution for the construction of the new school.

15. If Staffordshire County Council were to deliver the 2 form entry primary school then Staffordshire Council would have been liable for the additional costs above the £6,400,000 Section 106 Contribution which would be estimated to be greater than the costs incurred as referred to in 12 above.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – School Site Plan
Summary CIA
Full CIA – Background Document

Contact Details

Director: John Tradewell, Director for Corporate Services

Report Author: Stuart Lane
Job Title: Head of School Assets and Strategy Property
Telephone No.:   01785 278839
E-Mail Address: stuart.lane@staffordshire.gov.uk

School Boundary
Area=28691m^2

E 421897.343m
N 322091.982m

E 421881.997m
N 322079.600m

E 421950.066m
N 322027.931m

E 421823.154m
N 322035.467m

E 421928.455m
N 322004.785m

E 421767.062m
N 321996.520m

E 421906.845m
N 321981.639m

E 421735.841m
N 321974.190m

E 421892.098m
N 321963.994m

E 421879.374m
N 321944.839m

E 421703.286m
N 321950.555m

E 421708.208m
N 321943.482m

E 421703.087m
N 321939.918m

E 421866.871m
N 321923.568m

E 421854.368m
N 321902.297m

E 421848.219m
N 321892.974m

E 421738.315m
N 321889.302m

E 421841.141m
N 321884.336m

E 421836.591m
N 321879.335m

E 421824.518m
N 321867.118m

E 421811.479m
N 321855.938m

E 421793.044m
N 321844.115m

E 421773.543m
N 321838.687m

School boundary

Future road embankment

Community Impact Assessment Checklist and Executive Summary

Name of Proposal:

Title: Branston Locks New 2FE Primary school

Project Sponsor:

Name and Job Title: Cllr. Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

Project Manager:

Name and Job Title: Tim Moss, Assistant Director for Education Strategy and

Improvement

Date Completed:

02/09/21

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Final Checklist

Prior to submitting your Community Impact Assessment (CIA), please ensure that the actions on the checklist below have been completed, to reassure yourself / SLT / Cabinet that the CIA process has been undertaken appropriately.

Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
The project supports the Council's Business Plan, priorities and MTFS.	Yes	
It is clear what the decision is or what decision is being requested.	Yes	
For decisions going to Cabinet, the CIA findings are reflected in the Cabinet Report and **potential impacts are clearly identified and mitigated for** (where possible).	Yes	
The **aims, objectives and outcomes** of the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.	Yes	
The **groups** who will be affected by the policy, service or project have been clearly identified.	Yes	
The **communities** that are likely to be more adversely impacted than others have been clearly identified.	Yes	
Engagement / consultation has been undertaken and is representative of the residents most likely to be affected.	Yes	
A range of people with the appropriate knowledge and expertise have contributed to the CIA.	Yes	
Appropriate evidence has been provided and used to inform the development and design of the policy, service or project. This includes data, research, engagement/consultation, case studies and local knowledge.	Yes	
The CIA **evidences** how the Council has considered its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and how it	Yes	

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| Checklist	Action Completed	Comments/Actions
has considered the impacts of any change on people with protected characteristics.		
The next steps to deliver the project have been identified.	Yes	

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Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is intended to be a collation of the key issues and findings from the CIA and other research undertaken. This should be completed after the CIA and research has been completed. Please structure the summary using the headings on the left that relate to the sections in the CIA template. Where no major impacts have been identified, please state N/A.

	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
PSED What are the impacts on residents with a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010? Highlight any concerns that have emerged as a result of the equality analysis on any of the protected groups and how these will be mitigated. It is important that Elected Members are fully aware of the equality duties so that they can make an informed decision, and this can be supported with robust evidence.	Disability	Increase of places in the local area	N/a	The DfE will ensure that the new school will comply fully with the Equality Act 2010.
Health and Care How will the proposal impact on residents' health? How will the proposal impact on demand for or access to	Parents of Young people (aged 4-11)	Ability to gain a local school place and the ability to walk to a school located on the housing site that they live in.	N/a	The new 2FE Primary school is to be located within a large housing development of up to 2500 dwellings to ensure that the children living in the development can get access to a local school place. The developers have designed the housing

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
social care or health services?				development to encourage sustainable means of transport. It will be the responsibility of the Academy to produce a school travel plan which will encourage safe, healthy, and sustainable travel options.
Economy How will the proposal impact on the economy of Staffordshire or impact on the income of Staffordshire's residents?	Primary school staff	New facilities that adhere to the latest specification/guidance. More school staff will be required at the new school from 2024 and will grow year on year as the number of pupils at the school increases. More school staff will be required at the new school from 2024 and will grow year on year as the number of pupils at the school increases.	N/a	It will be the responsibility of the Academy to recruit all new personnel required for the increase of school places.
Environment How will the proposal impact on the physical environment of Staffordshire? Does this proposal have any Climate Change implications?	Young People (aged 4-11), parents/guardians and local residents	Encourage sustainable travel options to and from the school.	N/a	It will be the responsibility of the Academy to produce a school travel plan which will encourage safe, healthy, and sustainable travel options.
Localities / Communities How will the proposal impact on Staffordshire's communities?	Young people (aged 4-11) and their parents/guardians	Additional Primary school places provided due to the increase in homes in the locality.	N/a	N/a

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	Which groups will be affected?	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		Community cohesion will be increased due to children attending a local school.		
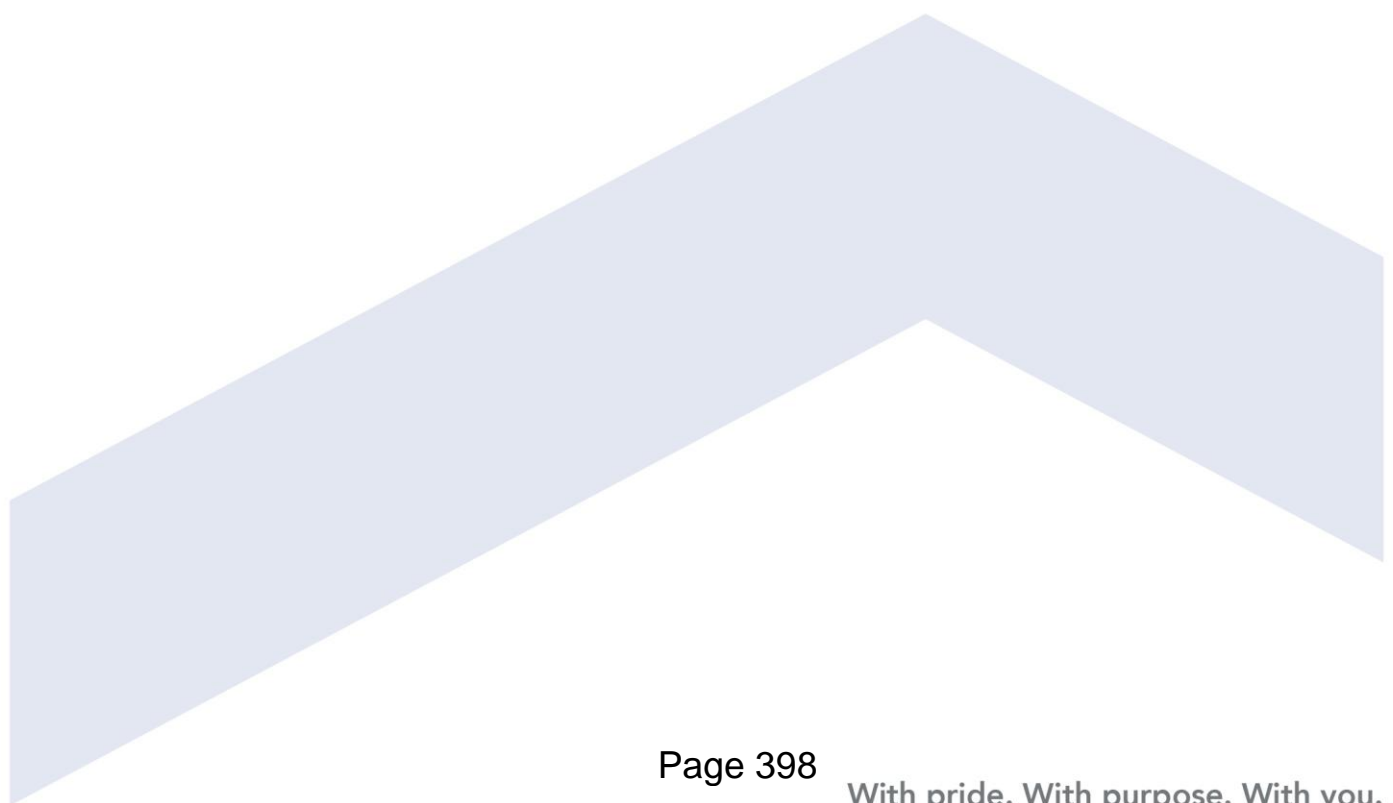
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Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 20 October 2021

Staffordshire Bus Strategy – Bus Service Improvement Plan

Cllr David Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport said,

"This is an opportunity to bid for funding over a fixed period to support local bus operators in making their services more attractive.

Working with operators, and listening to bus users, this is an opportunity to modernise bus fleets, improve stops and incorporate real-time information, as well as using technology to make tickets and payment so much easier.

A reliable, comfortable bus service can support town centres, give students more choice and help people get to work."

Report Summary:

Department for Transport (DfT) published the National Bus Strategy (NBS) outlining its ambition to improve bus services in England earlier this year. The County Council, as the Local Transport Authority (LTA), needed to consider whether it wished to form an Enhanced Partnership or Franchise model by end of June 2021.

The Council agreed to commit to developing an Enhanced Partnership at the Cabinet meeting held on the 16 June 2021. As a consequence of this, the Council is required to submit a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to DfT by the 31 October 2021.

This report seeks approval of the key elements of the Staffordshire BSIP which has been developed in partnership with the public bus providers operating in Staffordshire. The BSIP is ambitious and represents an ask of government of some £113m to deliver outcomes which have been shaped by a recent public engagement exercise and comments from the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on the 16 September 2021.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Note the comments and suggestions of the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee when they reviewed the emerging priorities of the BSIP at their meeting held on the 16 September 2021.

b. Note the key issues highlighted by the BSIP public engagement exercise.

c. Approve the key asks of Staffordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) as outlined in this report and to authorise Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to finalise the required documentation and make any final minor changes prior to the 31 October 2021 deadline.

d. Authorise the Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to submit the final BSIP to the Department of Transport by the deadline of the 31 October 2021.

Staffordshire County Council

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 October 2021

Staffordshire Bus Strategy – Bus Service Improvement Plan

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

I recommend that Cabinet:

a. Note the comments and suggestions of the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee when they reviewed the emerging priorities of the BSIP at their meeting held on the 16 September 2021.

b. Note the key issues highlighted by the BSIP public engagement exercise.

c. Approve the key asks of Staffordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) as outlined in this report and to authorise Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to finalise the required documentation and make any final minor changes prior to the 31 October 2021 deadline.

d. Authorise the Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to submit the final BSIP to the Department of Transport by the deadline of the 31 October 2021.

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

1. On 15th March 2021, the government published its National Bus Strategy for England "Bus Back Better", announcing £3b transformational funding for those authorities that engage in the strategy.

2. "Bus Back Better" sets out a significant step change in the government's approach to funding and delivering the bus network. Whilst the market remains deregulated, it suggests that a more co-ordinated partnership approach between operators and local authorities is now required. The Strategy makes clear that there is a commitment to long term increased funding for bus services, both for local authorities and bus operators alike. However, access to funding streams is contingent on the Council having a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and entering into either

an Enhanced Partnership (EP) or franchising arrangement to deliver the objectives set out in the BSIP.

3. At the Council's Cabinet meeting held on the 16 June 2021 it was agreed that the Council would commit to an Enhanced Partnership (EP). An EP is a formal agreement between the local authority and bus operators setting out what is expected of each party, and the standards that will be met. The basis for an EP is set out in the Bus Services Act 2017 and associated guidance. Cabinet agreed that a franchising model was not necessary for Staffordshire as it would have been resource intensive and it was felt that the required improvement could be delivered by adopting the EP model which retains the ability for our local bus operators to innovate without the significant market intervention that franchising entails.

4. Having committed to an EP there is now a requirement to submit a BSIP by the 31 October 2021 to the Department for Transport (DfT).

5. The emerging themes of the BSIP were discussed by the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 16 September 2021.

6. In line with DfT requirements and guidance, a survey exercise has been undertaken to seek Staffordshire residents' views on the current bus network in Staffordshire and highlight potential priorities for the future. The survey opened on the 19 August 2021 and ran until 17 September 2021 (four weeks).

Feedback from Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7. The Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members received a report on the National Bus Strategy on the 16 September 2021.

8. Members were given details of the current challenging conditions of the Staffordshire bus market together with the intended approach to the development of the BSIP. Members asked that the following considerations should be given for potential inclusion in the BSIP or in any partnership working that is to follow:

   a. Improvements be made to Roadside Information and Infrastructure, including bus shelters, bus stops, timetable information and real time passenger information, to provide consistent and accurate information at all locations.
   b. Improvements to the timing and reliability of local bus services.
   c. Linkage should be made to other strategic agendas and policy areas, including climate change and access to education.

d. Continued engagement with bus users and local communities as the BSIP and EP are developed, particularly in the most rural areas of the county.

e. Encourage more people to use local bus services to increase the financial viability and sustainability of services.

f. Acknowledgement that a Staffordshire BSIP will focus on supporting commercial bus operators to maintain and build on existing services, that will remain financially sustainable in the longer term.

Key Issues from the Public BSIP Survey

9. The four-week engagement exercise resulted in 1,900 responses being received by the close of survey on 17 September 2021. Full analysis of the survey results is presented in Appendix 1. 65% of respondents were current bus users and 35% were not. Bus usage was higher amongst younger age groups, those without a car and concessionary bus pass holders.

10. The key themes highlighted by the members of the public, that responded to the survey, that should be considered in a BSIP are:

a. The most frequent reasons for travelling by bus were shopping (55%), socialising (54%), travel to work (37%), health/medical appointments (34%), leisure (19%) and education (17%). This indicates the importance of bus services to our town centres, economy, access to employment, independent living and access to education.

b. Both current and non bus users placed importance on availability of real time information, improved reliability, better connections, better waiting facilities and easier access to service information. (note that our bus operators have identified priorities around bus stop infrastructure and service information).

c. Fare initiatives were supported by both current and non-bus users, in particular lowering fares to encourage use. This is consistent with the emphasis placed by DfT in addressing fare structures. (note that our bus operators have also identified a young persons' concessionary scheme as being a priority item for the BSIP). In turn this links to the importance of bus services for younger age groups.

d. Both current and non-bus users placed importance on screens at bus stops/stations and being able to track the location of buses.

e. The open questions allowing free text responses attracted detailed and constructive feedback. These mostly related to service provision and network coverage, both also emphasised as key considerations for a BSIP. The most common themes were:

i. Requests for services to run earlier/later in the day, with some respondents citing that lack of these prevented access to employment and services.

ii. Requests for more frequent services, which in turn would facilitate better connections.
iii. More routes – to create new links and to cover specific areas.
iv. Improved reliability
v. Non-bus users overwhelmingly cited no bus service in their area, generally relating to villages around the County. Additionally, some non-users cited frequency and earlier / later / Sunday services as being barriers to use.

11. 85% of non-bus users and 83% of bus users said they would use the bus or use the bus more if the improvements listed in the survey were introduced.

Development of BSIP

12. Following the comments provided by Members of the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee and analysis of the results from the four-week engagement exercise, discussions have taken place with the Staffordshire bus operators on the development of the BSIP.

13. Using external support, funded by DfT, the required DfT documentation is currently being finalised. The financial ask of the BSIP is some £106m which will be delivered over 3 years and a further £7m to cover lifetime costs.

14. The key items of note in the BSIP together with the funding ask are as follows:

a. Financial support for the introduction of zero emission buses in Staffordshire on core routes (with willing operators) combined with a strategy to increase frequencies to make the services more attractive – c£33m.

b. Financial support for implementation of bus priority measures to improve journey time reliability -c£7.5m.

c. Financial support for improving and maintaining on-street bus infrastructure including passenger information – c£21m.

d. Financial support for improvements at key bus station hubs across Staffordshire – c£23m.

e. Financial support for the introduction of a discounted fare structure for younger people leading to a long term new commercial product for younger bus users – c£11m.

f. Financial Support to help the Staffordshire bus industry and community transport sector recover from the global covid 19 pandemic and assistance in shaping the new urban and rural Staffordshire bus network to ensure it is fit for the future. This will include targeted pump priming new evening and weekend services that are expected to become self-sustaining (commercial) - £16.5m.

g. Financial support to development skills in the sector ensure delivery of aspirations of the Staffordshire BSIP and provide a coordinated approach to marketing and ticketing -£1m.

15. It should be recognised that the submission of the BSIP at the end of October to DfT will be the start of the journey to improve the bus network in Staffordshire working in partnership with the bus companies and community transport providers operating in our area.

Legal Implications

16. The following legal implications are relevant to the submission of the BSIP:

a. Development of Enhanced Partnerships are governed by Bus Services Act 2017, which amended the Transport Act 2000. Under an EP, the Council is legally obliged to deliver those measures it commits to.

b. Multi Operator Ticketing Schemes are governed by the Competition Act 1998 (Public Transport Ticketing Schemes Block Exemption) Order 2001 (as amended) and the Transport Act 2000.

c. DfT intend to review the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) 2000, by the end of 2023 (this will have a bearing on our Vacant Seat Policy in home to school transport).

d. Traffic Management Act 2004 - Statutory traffic management guidance will be updated to "expect enhanced bus reliability as an integral part of the highway authorities' Network Management Duty".

Resource and Value for Money Implications

17. The government has committed significant funding (£3b) to the development and delivery of BSIP's across England in an effort to improve bus public transport recognising that a strong, successful, low emission bus network will help support the decarbonization of the transport sector, support the economy and minimise traffic congestion.

18. The exact allocation of DfT funds from government to support Staffordshire's BSIP is not certain at this time since the BSIP is a competitive process. It is anticipated that funding awards will be made in Spring 2022 once DfT have had the opportunity to review all the submissions from the Local Transport Authorities.

19. Staffing resource will be required across a number of key teams to support the development and implementation of our BSIP / EP. The DfT has provided us with £100,000 towards the development costs of the BSIP and a further £ 438,538 has been provided for capacity funding following the Council's commitment to an Enhanced Partnership earlier this year.

Risks Identified

20. The development of a Bus Service Improvement Plan does bring some risks. However, these can be managed and mitigated with the right approach.

21. The key risks and mitigating measures that have been identified at this stage include:

    a. Team capacity – our current teams do not have sufficient capacity to develop and implement a BSIP / EP. In the short term this can be mitigated by utilising external support. However, beyond this additional capacity will be needed to ensure effective delivery. With the award of the capacity funding additional resources are currently being recruited.

    b. Loss of funding – if the Council is successful in the BSIP submission it is likely that significant funds could be available to improve the bus network in Staffordshire. At the present time it is unclear what funding will be available after May 2024 and therefore careful consideration has been given to ensuring that our BSIP recognises the risk of funding being withdrawn within two years.

Conclusion

22. The Staffordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan offers a great opportunity for Staffordshire. Improving the bus network could play an important role in delivering our key priorities including access to employment and key services, town centre regeneration and contributing towards achieving net carbon zero.

Community Impact Assessment

Full CIA – Following the recent completion of a public engagement exercise and consultation with all Staffordshire Bus Operators, a full CIA will be developed and published once the BSIP funding allocations are known. The publication of the CIA will be linked to the approval of the Enhanced Partnership (EP) documentation and will set out the community impact implications of the BSIP once funding is known.

(Note - The BSIP is a high level aspirational document, and implementation of any schemes is reliant on funding being made available and will be agreed through the enhanced partnership due to be established by March 2022.)

List of Background Documents:

- Bus Back Better – National Bus Strategy for England" - [Bus back better - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)
- "The Bus Services Act 2017: Enhanced Partnerships Guidance" - [Bus Services Act 2017: Enhanced Partnership creation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)
- Greener Journeys – A Roadmap to Growth - [greener-journeys-a-roadmap-to-growth.pdf (cpt-uk.org)](#)
- Cross Sector Benefits of Backing the Bus - [The cross-sector benefits of backing the bus | URBAN TRANSPORT GROUP](#)
- Local Government Association – Decarbonising Transport – The Role of Buses [Decarbonising transport - The role of buses | Local Government Association](#)
- Staffordshire County Council – Connected Staffordshire Strategic Plan 2018-2022: Update [Strategic-Plan-2018-to-2022-full-Updated.pdf (staffordshire.gov.uk)](#)

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Staffordshire County Council – Bus Service Improvement Plan Survey Results

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Clive Thomson, Assistant Director for Connectivity and Sustainability

Report Author: Louise Clayton
Job Title: Head of Transport Operations and Future Connectivity
Telephone No.: 07855 336910
E-Mail Address: Louise.clayton@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire County Council – Bus Service Improvement Plan Survey Results

September 2021

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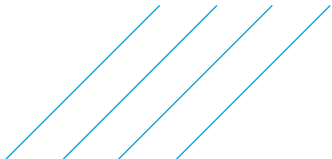
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ATKINS

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

Context of the report

Context of the report

Following the announcement of the Government's National Bus Strategy, £3 billion has been earmarked for improving bus services throughout England.

Staffordshire County Council is working closely with bus operators to develop a **Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for Staffordshire** aimed at **encouraging more people to travel by bus.**

As part of this, Staffordshire County Council ran a **passenger engagement survey** between 19 Aug 2021 and 17 September 2021, to gather views from its Staffordshire residents. The survey aimed to **understand feelings towards local bus services** and highlight **priorities for the future**.

Respondents were asked different questions based on whether they were a current bus user or non-user.

Staffordshire County Council

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Bus usage

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Bus usage
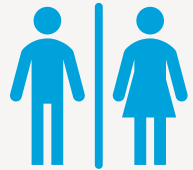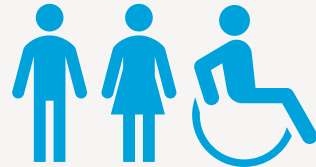
Nearly two-thirds of respondents were current bus users, with usage higher amongst concessionary bus pass holders, those without a car and younger respondents.

No, 35%

Yes, 65%
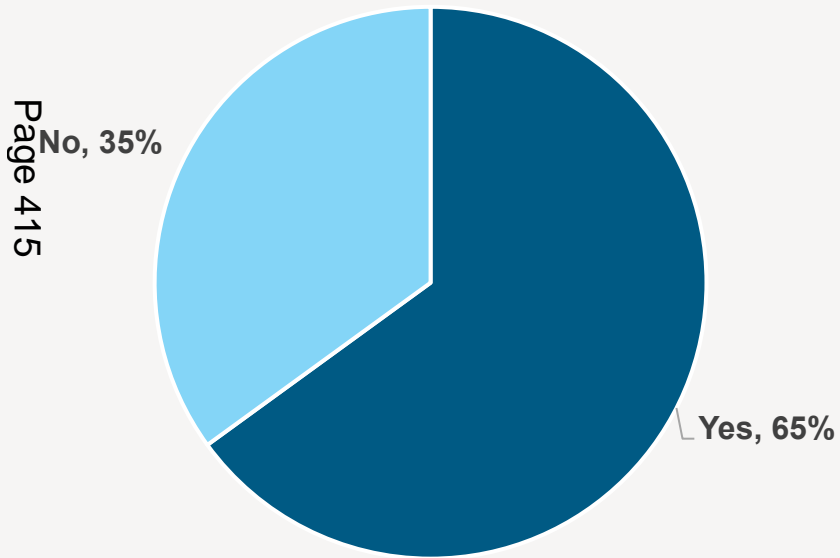
Q1. Do you use the bus?
Base = 1,900 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

1,235 respondents (65%) said they currently travel by bus, compared to 665 respondents that do not (35%).

TRENDS BY LOCATION

Analysis by location found that Burton on Trent had the highest proportion of respondents that travel by bus, along with Lichfield and Cannock. Areas to the south and east of Stoke on Trent (Blythe Bridge, Eccleshall, Alton, Stone, Kidsgrove) had the lowest proportion of respondents that use the bus.

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Bus usage – trends by respondent profile
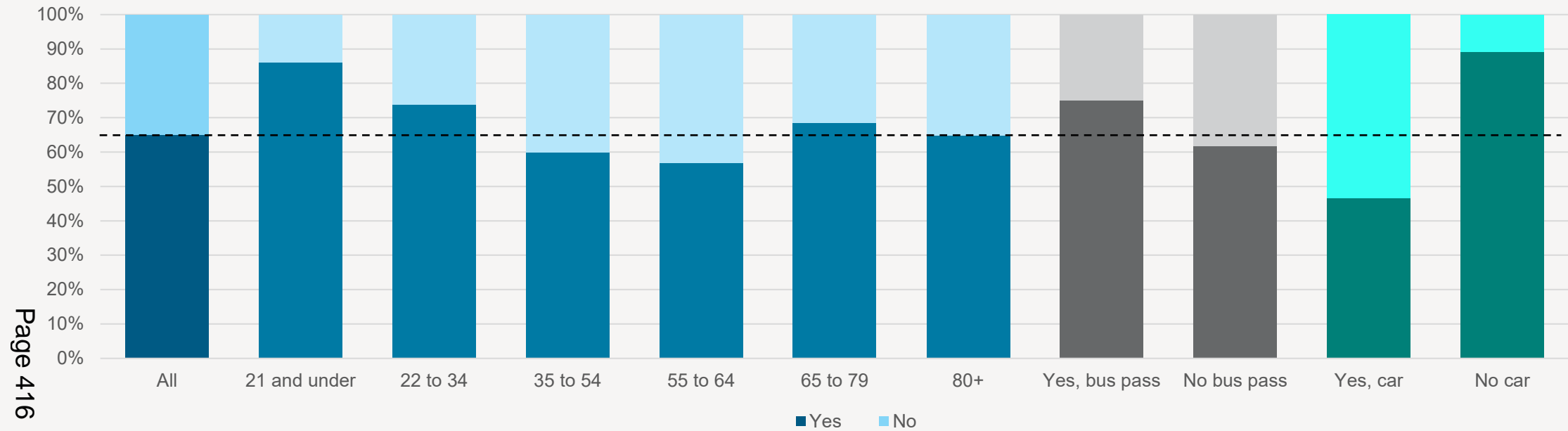
TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

Bus usage was higher amongst younger respondents; 86% of respondents aged 21 and under use the bus, compared to 57% of the 55 to 64 age group, and 65% of respondents aged 80+.

Bus usage was higher amongst respondents who have a concessionary bus pass (75% vs 62%). A higher proportion of respondents without regular access to a car use the bus (89%) compared to those without a car (47%).

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Bus usage – frequency [Current users]

Most respondents that use the bus are frequent users; 76% travel at least once a week.

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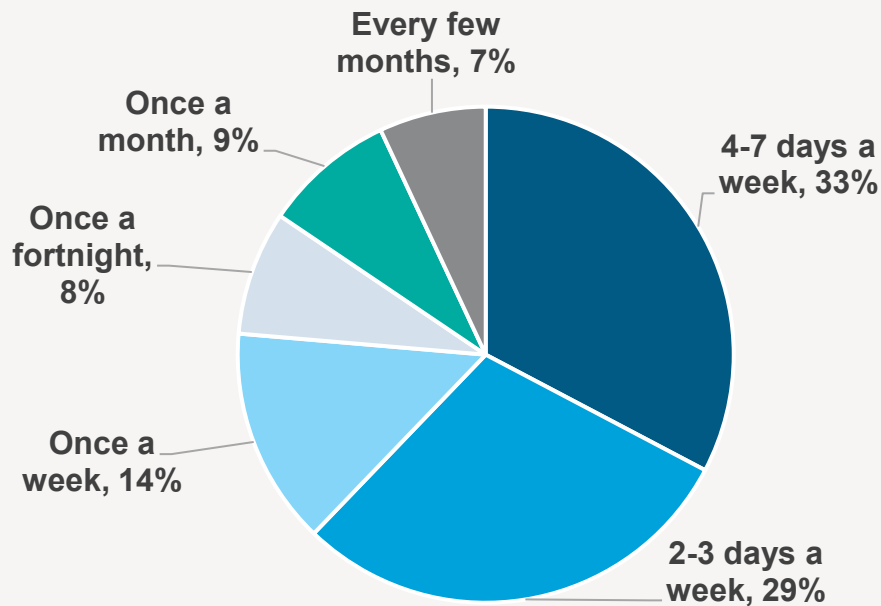
Y1. How often do you take the bus?
Base = 1,235 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

404 respondents (33%) travel on the bus 4-7 times a week, whilst a further 364 (29%) travel 2-3 days a week. 16% are less frequent users (travelling once a month or less frequently).

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

55% of respondents aged 21 and under use the bus 4-7 days a week (the highest proportion of all age groups), while 92% of this age group travel at least once a week.

The proportion travelling frequently decreases slightly with age, however 70% of 65+ respondents still travel at least once a week by bus.

A slightly higher proportion of respondents without a bus pass travelled 4-7 days a week compared to those with a bus pass (36% vs. 23%)

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9

Bus usage – time of day [Current users]

Respondents said they travel on the bus throughout the day, with the middle of the day being the most common time to travel.

Early Morning (before 7:30am) — 20%
Morning (7:30 - 9:30am) — 44%
Middle of the day (9:30am - 3:00pm) — 61%
Afternoon (3:00pm - 6:00pm) — 49%
Early Evening (6:00pm - 8:00pm) — 29%
Late Evening (8:00pm onward) — 16%
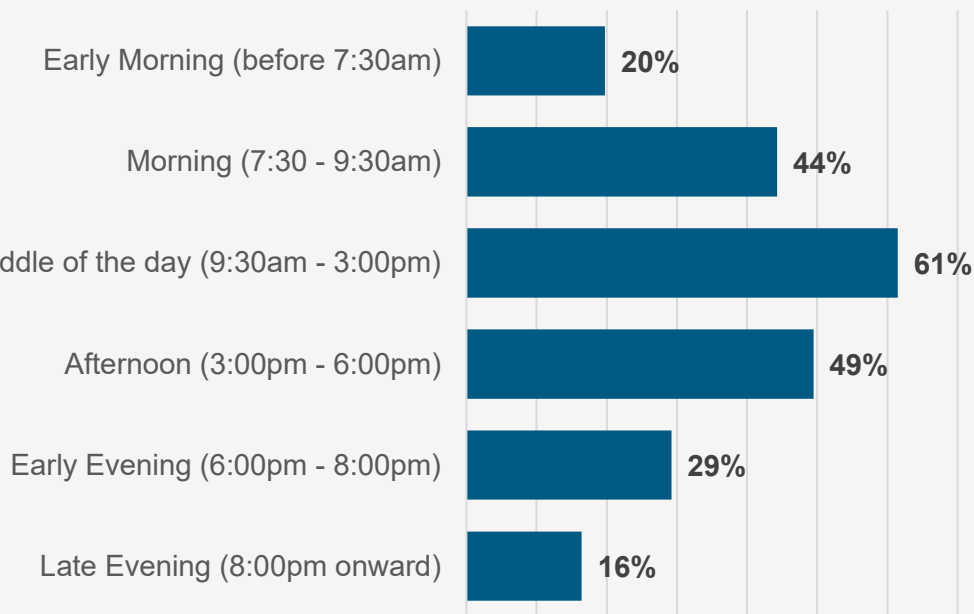
Y2. When do you normally take the bus? (select all that apply)
Base = 1,235 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

61% of respondents travel in the middle of the day (between 09:30 and 15:00). Although making up a lower proportion of respondents, a fifth travel early morning (before 07:30) and 16% travel late evening.

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

There were varied responses by age. Respondents aged 65+ were most likely to use the bus in the middle of the day. Whilst younger respondents (21 and under / 22 to 34) were more likely to travel in the morning and afternoon.

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Bus usage – journey purpose

The most frequent reasons for travelling by local bus are to go shopping and/or for social reasons (meetings friends/relatives).

Shopping (55%)

Social, including to meet friends/ relatives (54%)

Travel to and from work (37%)

Exercise or leisure (19%)

Health or medical appointments (34%)

Education (including taking children to school) (17%)

Business travel (7%)
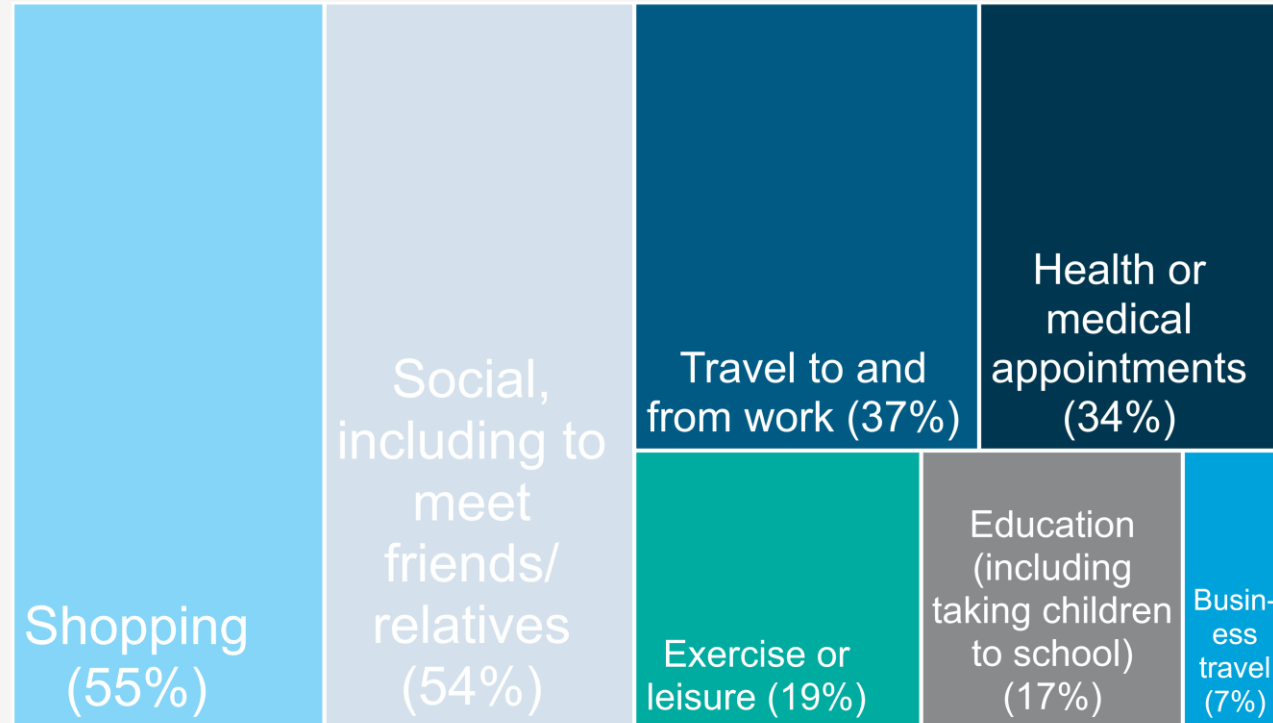
Y3. What are your usual/most frequent reason(s) for travelling by local bus? (select all that apply)
Base = 1,235 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

Shopping and social visits were the most frequent reasons for travelling by bus (55% and 54% respectively). However, 37% respondents also frequently travel by bus to and from work and for health/medical appointments (34%).

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

Responses also varied by age of respondent. For those aged 21 and under, education was the most frequent reason for travel. For 22-54 year old respondents, it was travel to work and social reasons. For respondents aged 55+, shopping was the most frequent reason for travelling by local bus.

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Current bus users

The following questions were only asked to respondents who answered 'yes' to Q1 (Do you currently use the bus?)

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Feelings towards the bus service [Current users]

Feelings towards the bus are generally positive; feelings of safety score higher than affordability/reliability and accessibility.
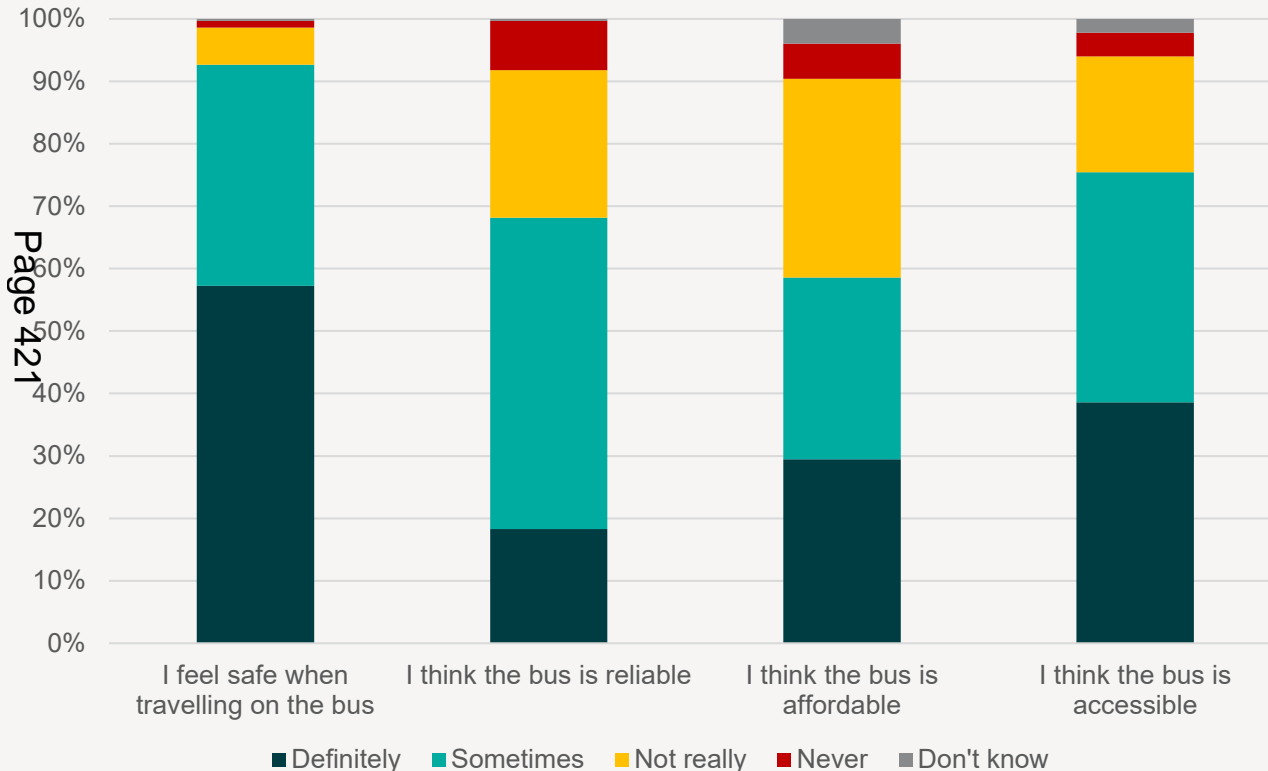
Y4. How do you currently feel about the bus service?
Base = 1,235 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

57% respondents said they 'definitely' feel safe when travelling on the bus, whilst a further 35% 'sometimes' felt safe.

'*I think the bus is affordable*' had the highest proportion of respondents that answered 'not really' or 'never' (37%).

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

Older respondents scored more positively than younger respondents, with a greater proportion scoring these aspects as 'definitely'. The most notable difference was the *affordability of the bus*.

A higher proportion of male respondents 'definitely' felt safe on the bus compared to females (64% compared to 53%). Bus pass holders also scored more positively for all aspects. 49% of respondents with a bus pass 'definitely' think the bus is affordable compared to 21% of those without a bus pass.

Feelings towards the bus service – trends by location
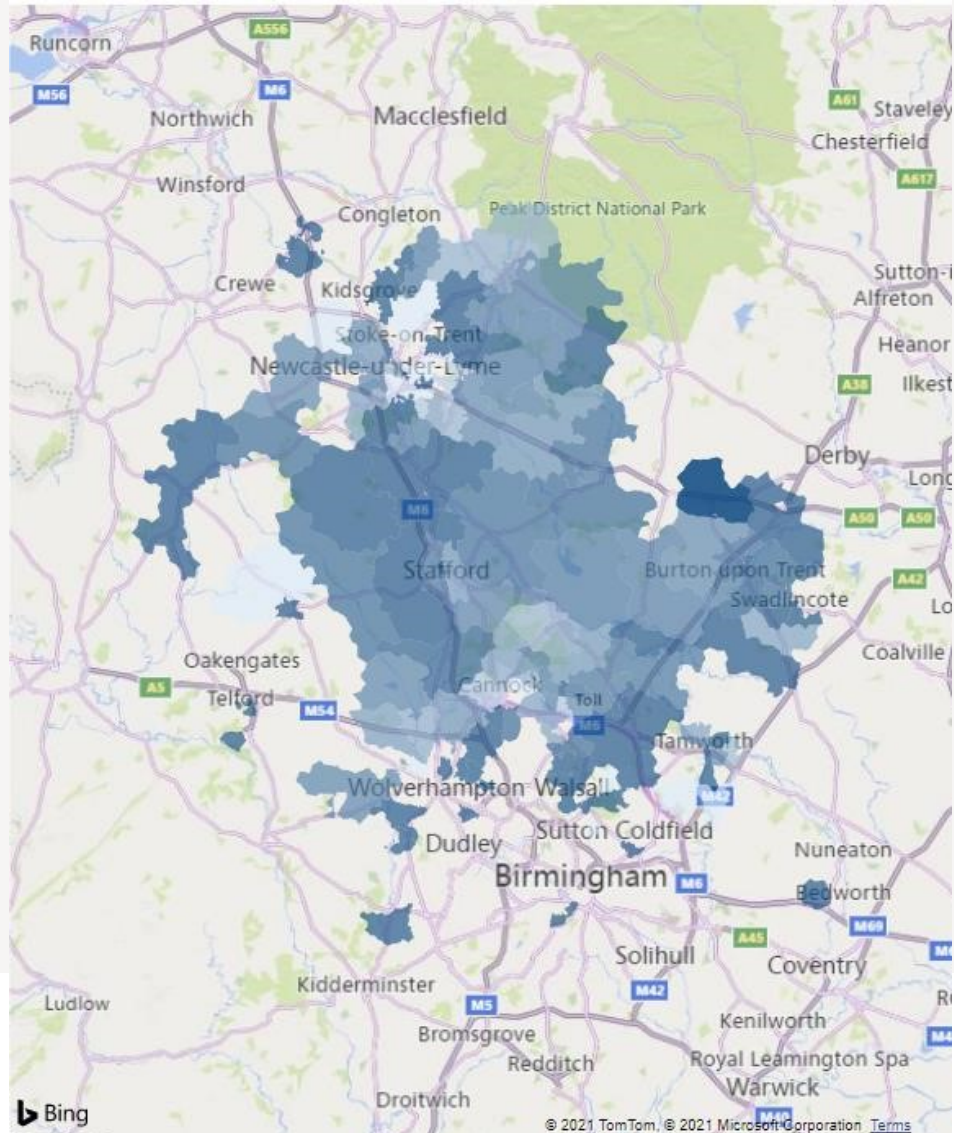
TRENDS BY LOCATION

With reliability having the lowest proportion of respondents selecting 'definitely', further analysis was conducted by location. Responses were analysed by location to show areas where respondents felt the most positive towards the bus service (in terms of reliability).

Burton upon Trent and surrounding areas contained the highest proportion of respondents that think the bus is 'definitely' or 'sometimes' reliable. Conversely, areas of Codsall, Cannock and Stoke-on-Trent contained the highest proportion of respondents that answered 'not really' or never'.

In terms of safety, Burton upon Trent also contained the greatest proportion of respondents that said the bus was 'definitely' safe.

Y4. How do you currently feel about the bus service? [I feel safe] – Proportion of 'definitely' and 'sometimes' responses

How could bus usage be increased? [Current users]

Real time information at bus stops, improved reliability and better connections were most likely to increase bus usage amongst current users.

Real time information at stops and interchanges
Improved reliability/less delays
Better connections with other buses/rail services
Better waiting facilities at stops and interchanges
Information on services made easier to obtain
Journey times on services made quicker
CCTV on every bus
Better interior cleanliness
Better customer service from drivers
Services operated more modern vehicles
Better availability of seating
Services operated electric/zero emission vehicles
Better disabled access
Better availability of WiFi on buses
Better cycle storage on buses

Legend: To some extent | Very much | Not much | Not at all

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OVERALL SUMMARY

Most likely to increase bus usage amongst current bus users is *real time information at stops/interchanges* (1,127 respondents). Respondents also chose *improved reliability*, *better connections, better waiting facilities at stops* and *easier access to information* as improvements that would personally make them use local buses more.

Least likely to increase usage was *better cycle storage*, *better availability of Wi-Fi* and *services operated by electric vehicles*.

Y6. To what extent, if at all, would the following make you personally use local buses more?
Base = 1,235 respondents

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How could bus usage be increased - Fares? [Current users]

In terms of fares, 'lower fares' were most likely to encourage current users to travel by bus more.

Flat rate fares — 19%

More fare offers — 29%

Simpler to understand fares — 29%

Contactless payments — 32%

Use of tickets on other modes — 41%

Availability of multi-operator tickets — 44%

Lower fares — 57%

Y7. Thinking about fares, to what extent, if at all would the following make you use local buses more? (select up to 5)
Base = 1,235 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

Respondents were permitted to choose up to five fare-related initiatives that would encourage them to travel by bus more. The most popular response was *lower fares*, chosen by 57% respondents. This was followed by *availability of multi-operator tickets* (44%) and *use of tickets on other modes of travel e.g. trains* (41%).

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

There were slight differences in response by age. The proportion of respondents that chose *lower fares* was highest amongst those aged under 65. For instance, 74% of those aged 21 and under chose this improvement. For 65+, the most frequently chosen aspect was *tickets than can be used on other transport (i.e. trains)*.

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How could bus usage be increased - Technology? [Current users]

In terms of technology, 'screens at bus stops/stations showing arrival information' and being able to 'track the location of your bus' were most likely to encourage current users to travel by bus more.

Category	Percentage
Better availability of USB charging	21%
On demand services, booked via apps	25%
Information made easier to obtain	42%
Better on-bus information	59%
Track the location of your bus	72%
Screens showing arrival info	73%

Y8. Thinking about technology, to what extent, if at all would the following make you use local buses more? (select up to 5)
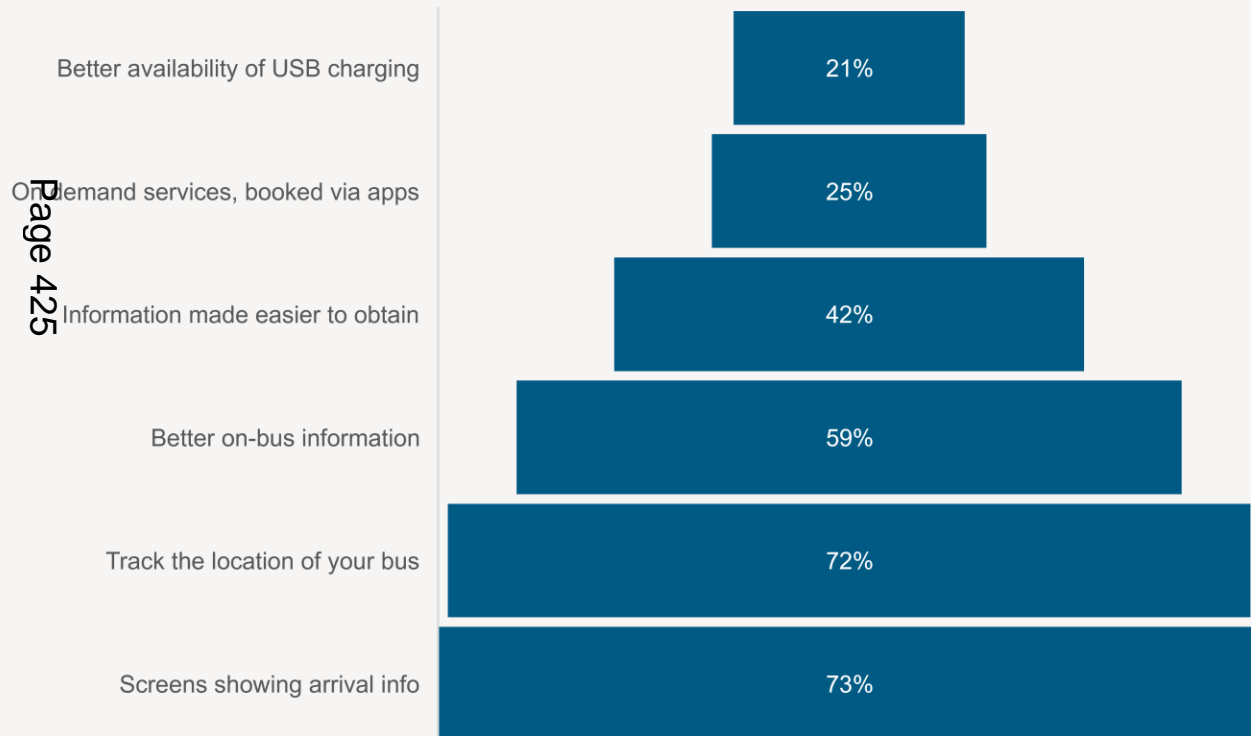*Base = 1,235 respondents*

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Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

OVERALL SUMMARY

Respondents were permitted to choose up to five technology-related initiatives that would encourage them to travel by bus more. The most popular responses were *screens at bus stops/stations showing arrival information* chosen by 73% respondents and *being able to track the location of your bus* (72%). 59% also answered that *better on-bus information such as next stop displays* would encourage them to use local buses more.

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

There were some slight differences in response by age. Whilst all respondents appeared to value information on bus location/arrival information, a greater proportion of younger respondents chose *'track the location of your bus'*, whilst older respondents favoured *'screens that show arrival info'*.

How could bus usage be increased? [Current users]

Respondents were if anything would encourage them to use local buses more frequently (open question). Responses appear to focus mostly on bus timings – including a more frequent service and/or services that run earlier/later in the day / on a Sunday.

TIMINGS (EARLIER/LATER/SUNDAY SERVICE)

137 comments related to requests for bus services to run earlier and later in the day. Some felt that this prevented them from being able to access services/employment etc.

> *Later services, no longer able to get back from work after 18.00, let alone 21.00!*

TIMINGS (MORE FREQUENT SERVICE)

A further **135** comments were also on the theme of timing, with requests for more frequent services throughout the day.

> *By having a service that ran at least every hour during the working day and the linked with other transport.*

MORE ROUTES / ROUTES TO X, Y, Z

66 respondents commented that they would like to see services increased to other local areas. Some specifically asked for routes to cover particular areas.

> *Need more services to Oakamoor, Alton, etc. - ridiculous that we're in such a tourism hotspot on the Churnet Valley and next door to the UK's number 1 theme park but no busses! Entire of Staffs would benefit from evening and weekend services.*

IMPROVED RELIABILITY

54 respondents commented that they would like to see reliability of current services improved which in turn, would encourage them to use the bus more.

> *Buses to turn up...lately a few haven't…two on the same day which caused a delay for me getting to my appointment*

Y9. What else, if anything would encourage you personally to use local bus services more? Please use the space below.
Base = 537 respondents

Would these improvements increase the amount you travelled?

Most respondents that currently use the bus said they would use the bus more if the previous improvements were introduced

No, I would travel the same (13%)

Don't know (3%)

Yes, I would use the bus more (83%)
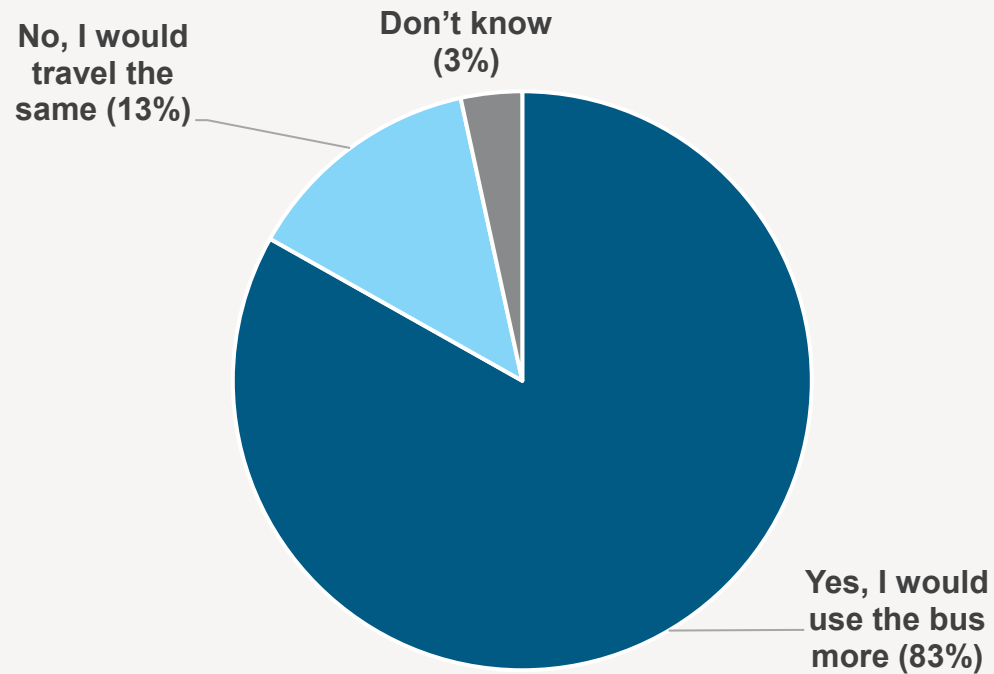
OVERALL SUMMARY

83% of current bus users said they would travel by bus more if the previous improvements were introduced. However, 13% answered '*no, I would travel the same*'. A small proportion (3%) responded '*don't know*'.

Y10. Would any of the above improvements affect the way you travelled? (select the most appropriate)
Base = 1,229 respondents

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Non-bus users

The following questions were only asked to respondents who answered 'no' to Q1 (Do you currently use the bus?)

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Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

Reasons for not using the bus [Non-users]

The main reason for not using the bus is a lack of service to planned destination. Timing of bus services is also a factor in not using the bus.

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Reason	%
There is no bus to my destination	58%
Buses don't run early or late enough for my needs	36%
The buses are too expensive	24%
It is too difficult to find information on times and fares	22%
The buses are unreliable	21%
There is a bus I could use but it is too slow	11%
I don't feel safe when using the bus	5%
I find the bus physically difficult to use	3%

(X-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%)
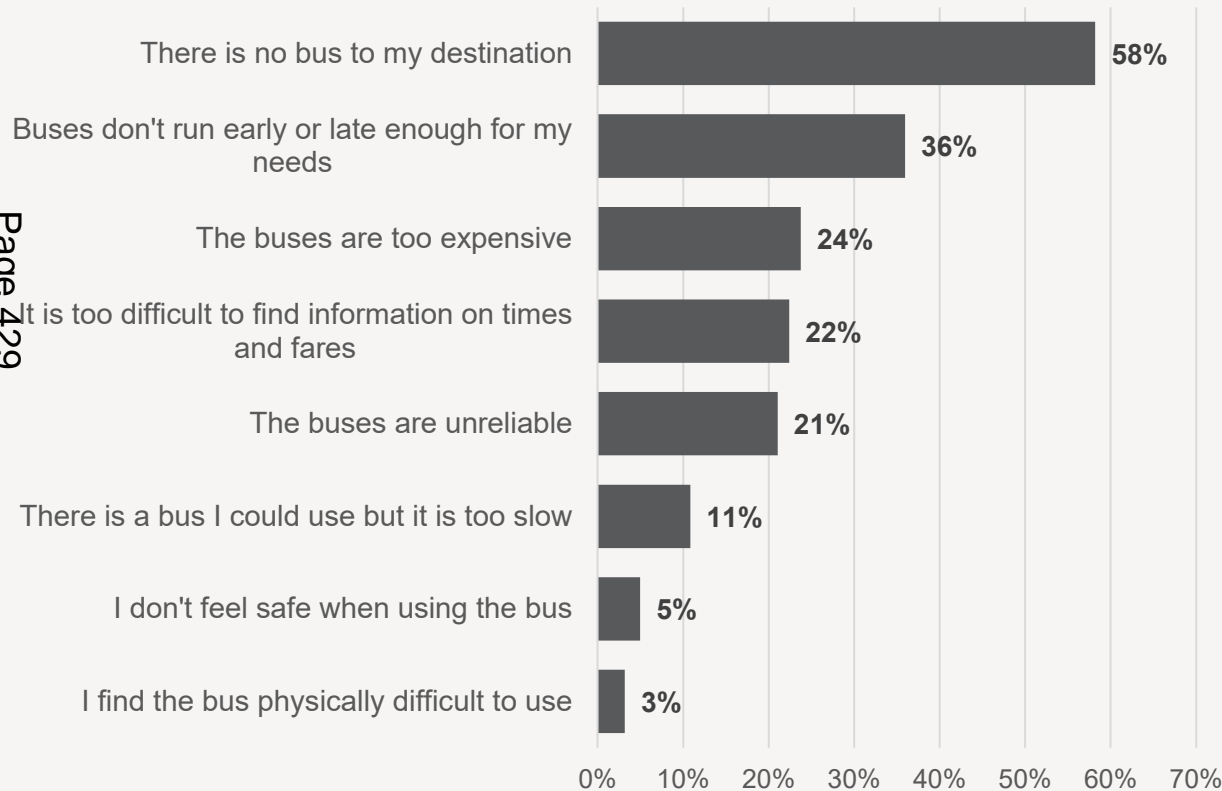
OVERALL SUMMARY

58% of non-bus users said the reason they don't travel by bus is due to there being no bus to their destination. *Buses not running early or late enough* was also a reason for not travelling by bus. These reasons reflect the open responses given on the following slide.

24% non-bus users felt the *bus was too expensive*, whilst 22% struggled to find *information on times/fares*. *Unreliable buses* were also a factor for 21% of non-bus users.

N1. Why don't you currently use the bus service? (select all that apply)
Base = 665 respondents

Feelings towards the bus service [Non-users]

Respondents were invited to add anything about how they felt towards the bus service. The most frequent reason was due to not having a local service in the first place. Similarly to current users, some respondents commented about the timing of bus services.

NO BUS SERVICE IN MY AREA

The majority of open comments (**241**) were from respondents who said they did not use the bus because there was not a local service to them.

Although several locations/destinations were mentioned, the key ones noted were:

- Hill Ridware
- Alton
- Perton to Codsall
- Drayton Bassett
- To Stafford

" All public transport vehicles have ceased to run in my area. this makes it impossible for me to get to work using bus services and my children can no longer get to school using bus services. "

" There is no longer a bus from my area meaning I need to use a car to access facilities. "

TIMINGS (MORE FREQUENT SERVICE)

52 commented that the bus service was not frequent enough for their needs.

" There is considerable unhappiness about the routes available , frequency and reliability of the bus service. Many do not use it due to these problems. "

TIMINGS (EARLIER/LATER/SUNDAY SERVICE)

40 respondents noted that bus services did not start early enough / run late enough / run on a Sunday, which meant they were unable to use the service.

" It is completely unacceptable to not have an evening and Sunday bus service which adversely affects young people and those without access to own car travel. "

N2. If you would like to add anything else on how you currently feel about the bus service, please tell us here or move on to the next question.
Base = 429 respondents

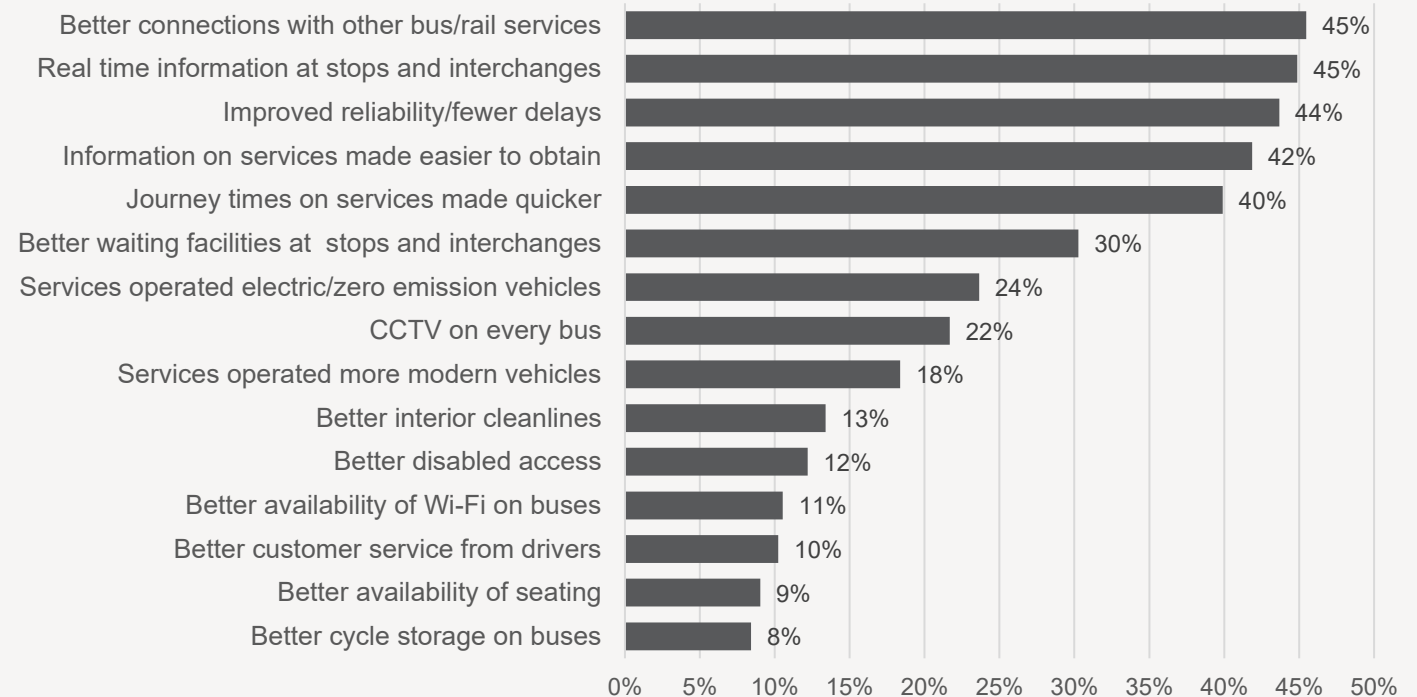# How could bus usage be increased? [Non-users]

As with current users, real time information at bus stops, improved reliability and better connections were most likely to increase bus use. However, making information easier to obtain was also key.

OVERALL SUMMARY

Most likely to increase bus usage amongst non-bus users are b*etter connections with other bus/rail services, real time information at stops/interchanges, improved reliability, easier access to information,* and *quicker journey times*.

These findings are very similar to those from current users.

Improvement	%
Better connections with other bus/rail services	45%
Real time information at stops and interchanges	45%
Improved reliability/fewer delays	44%
Information on services made easier to obtain	42%
Journey times on services made quicker	40%
Better waiting facilities at stops and interchanges	30%
Services operated electric/zero emission vehicles	24%
CCTV on every bus	22%
Services operated more modern vehicles	18%
Better interior cleanlines	13%
Better disabled access	12%
Better availability of Wi-Fi on buses	11%
Better customer service from drivers	10%
Better availability of seating	9%
Better cycle storage on buses	8%

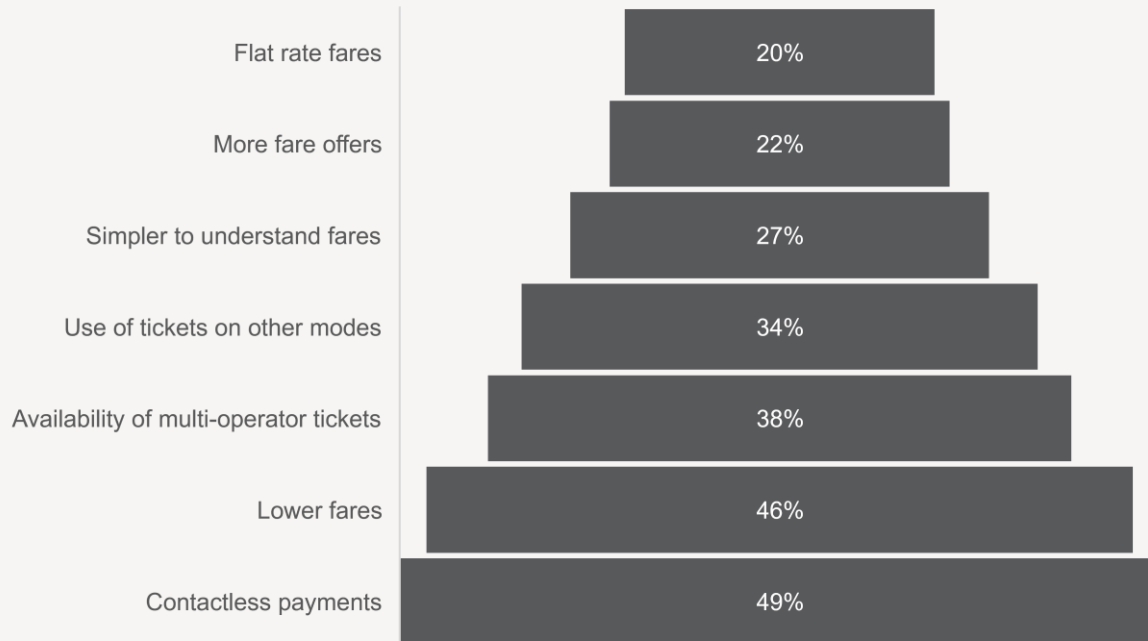**N3**. What improvements to the bus service might encourage you to use it. (select up to 5)
Base = 665 respondents

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23

How could bus usage be increased - Fares? [Non-users]

In terms of fares, 'contactless payments' were most likely to encourage non-users to travel by bus more, along with 'lower fares'.

Category	%
Flat rate fares	20%
More fare offers	22%
Simpler to understand fares	27%
Use of tickets on other modes	34%
Availability of multi-operator tickets	38%
Lower fares	46%
Contactless payments	49%

N4. Thinking about fares, to what extent, if at all would the following make you use local buses more? (select up to 5)
Base = 665 respondents

OVERALL SUMMARY

Respondents were permitted to choose up to five fare-related initiatives that would encourage them to travel by bus. The most popular response was '*contactless payments'*, chosen by 49% respondents. This was followed by '*lower fares'* (46%) and '*availability of multi-operator tickets'* (38%).

These results were slightly different to those chosen by current users. 32% of current users wanted to see *contactless payments* vs. 49% of current users.

TRENDS BY RESPONDENT PROFILE

As with current bus users, there were slight differences in response by age. The proportion of respondents that chose 'lower fares' was highest amongst younger respondents.
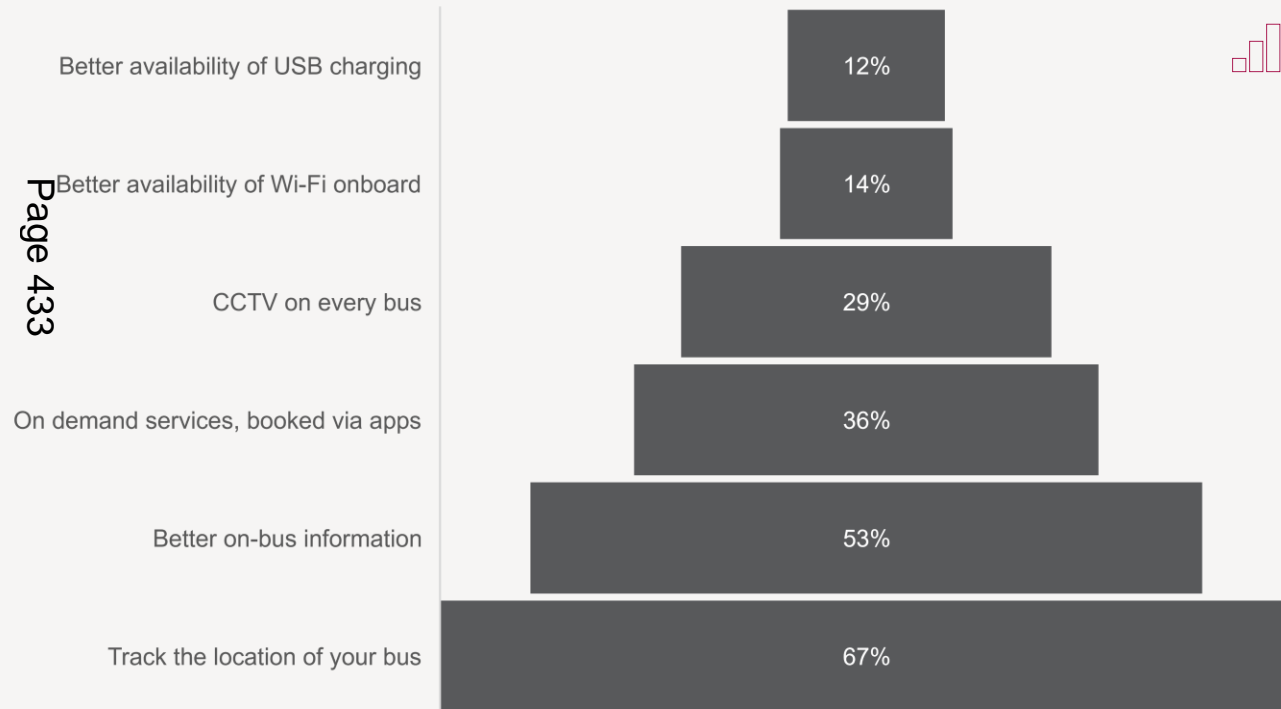
ATKINS
Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

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How could bus usage be increased - Technology? [Non-users]

In terms of technology, 'screens at bus stops/stations showing arrival information' and being able to 'track the location of your bus' were most likely to encourage current users to travel by bus more.

Better availability of USB charging — 12%

Better availability of Wi-Fi onboard — 14%

CCTV on every bus — 29%

On demand services, booked via apps — 36%

Better on-bus information — 53%

Track the location of your bus — 67%

OVERALL SUMMARY

Respondents were permitted to choose up to five technology-related initiatives that would encourage them to travel by bus more. The most popular responses were *'being able to track the location of your bus'* chosen by 67% respondents and *'better on-bus information'* (53%). 36% also answered that *'on demand services, booked via an app'* would also encourage them to use local buses more. Answer categories were slightly different for current/non-users, but a high proportion of both respondent types chose being able to *'track the location of your bus'* as something that would encourage bus use.

N5. Thinking about technology, to what extent, if at all would the following make you use local buses more? (select up to 5)
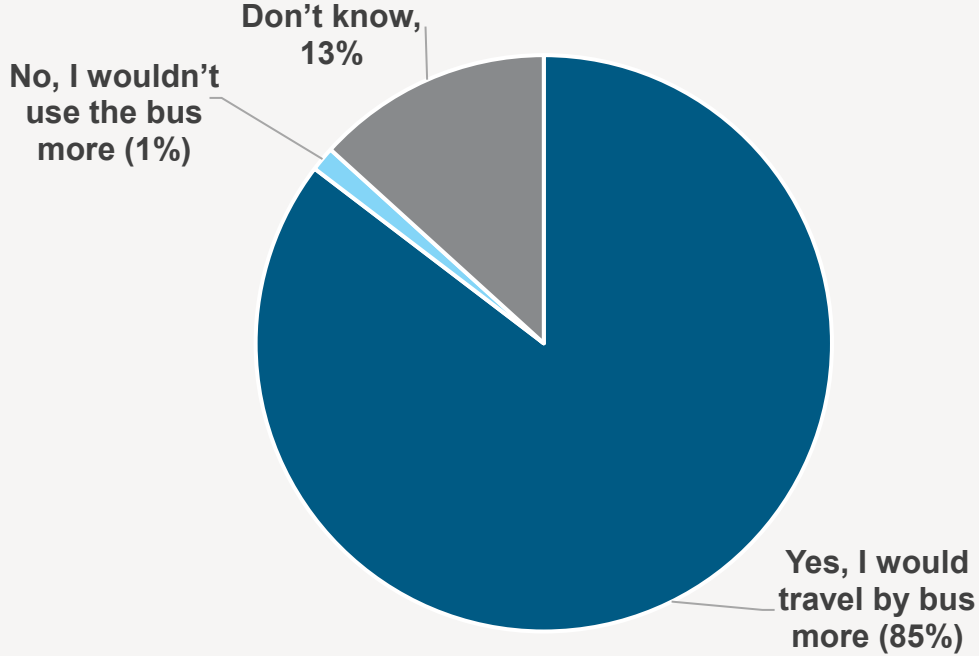*Base = 665 respondents*

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Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

Would these improvements affect the way you travelled?

Most respondents that do not currently travel by bus said they would if the previous improvements were introduced.

Don't know, 13%

No, I wouldn't use the bus more (1%)

Yes, I would travel by bus more (85%)

OVERALL SUMMARY

85% of non-bus users said they would travel by bus more if the previous improvements were introduced. These results align with the responses from current bus users, however a larger proportion of non-bus users answered, '*don't know*'.

N7. Would any of the above improvements affect the way you travelled? (select the most appropriate)
Base = 655 respondents

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Key take outs

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Summary

- During August/September 2021, Staffordshire County Council conducted a passenger engagement survey to understand current views and experiences of bus services. **1,900** people responded to the survey, covering a range of demographics and current bus usage.

- Nearly **two-thirds of respondents currently use the bus.**

- Most respondents who use the bus are frequent users – **76% travel at least once a week.**

- The most frequent reasons for travelling by local bus are to go **shopping** and/or for **social** reasons (meetings friends/relatives), but reason does differ by age.

- Current users generally feel **positive** towards the bus service, but fewer feel the bus is reliable or affordable compared to the proportion that feel safe on the bus.

- For both current and non-bus users, **real time information** at stops/interchanges was most likely to encourage bus travel. Other improvements included improved **reliability**, better **connections**, better **waiting facilities** at stops and easier **access to information**.

- In terms of fare initiatives, both non-bus users and current users felt that 'lower fares' would encourage use. A high proportion of non-bus users also chose **contactless payments**.

- In terms of technology initiatives, both non-bus users and current users wanted to see 'screens at bus stops/stations showing **arrival information**' and 'being able to **track the location** of your bus'.

- The survey's open questions also garnered detailed feedback. For both types of users, a **lack of bus service** in their local area was a key issue. Several respondents specifically mentioned that a previous route had been removed and not reinstated. Many also said they would use the bus more if services were more **frequent**, and a key issue was also services running **early/late** enough and on **Sundays**.

- 85% of non-bus users and 83% of current bus users said they would use the bus/use the bus more if the improvements listed in the survey were introduced.

Cabinet – 20 October 2021

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Decisions Taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers

Recommendation of the Leader of the Council

1. That the decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated powers, as detailed in paragraph 3 below, be noted.

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations

2. To inform Cabinet of recent decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated powers.

Background

3. Cabinet are requested to note the following decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated powers:

Cabinet Member	Decision
Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture	In approving a variation to the agreement to manage and deliver Shenstone Community Managed Library, replacing the existing contracting term (5-year with an option to extend for a 5-year period) with a 10-year term commencing in March 2022

Report author:
Author's Name: Mike Bradbury
Telephone No: (01785) 276133

List of Background Papers - Cabinet Members Delegated Decision No. 531.

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Period: 17 November 2021 - 16 March 2022

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions is prepared on a monthly basis and published at least 28 days before the start of the period covered.

"Key Decisions" are defined as those Executive decisions which are likely:

(a) to result in the County Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the County's area.

The Forward Plan will contain **ALL** matters which the Leader of the Council has reason to believe will be the subject of a Key Decision to be taken by the Cabinet. It may also include decisions that are not key decisions but are intended to be determined by the Cabinet. Part of the Cabinet meetings listed in this Forward Plan may be held in private where a report for the meeting contains exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. If you would like to make representations about any particular decision to be conducted in private then please email: michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk. Such representations must be received in advance 6 clear working days before the date on which the decision is scheduled to be taken.

The Membership of the Cabinet consists of:

Leader of the County Council – Alan White
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills – Philip White
Cabinet Member for Health and Care– Julia Jessel
Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change – Simon Tagg
Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters – Mark Deaville
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport – David Williams
Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources – Ian Parry
Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture – Victoria Wilson
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Mark Sutton
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) – Jonathan Price

A copy of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions may be inspected, free of charge, at the Member and Democratic Services office, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford, during normal office hours Monday to Friday. A copy of the notice will also be available on Staffordshire County Council's Website at www.staffordshire.gov.uk.

Documents submitted for decision will be a formal report which will be available on the County Council's website at least 5 clear working days before the date the decision is to be made, unless that report is subject to any prohibition or restriction on its disclosure. Other relevant background documents used in compiling the report will also be made available in the same way unless they are subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure.

Minutes of Cabinet meetings will be published within three working days and will be subject to call-in. The call-in period lasts for three working days. If the decision is not called-in it will be implemented on the fourth working day. Special urgency items are exempt from call-in.

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services

Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Period: 17 November 2021 - 16 March 2022

NOTE:

(1) The Forward Plan of Key Decisions sets out all Key Decisions intended to be made by Cabinet during the above period.

(2) The Cabinet date can be provisional and items may move/roll forward to another meeting date but this will be monitored.

(3) Items should remain on the Notice until a decision is made by Cabinet or is formally removed.

(4) Where there is an intention to make a decision in private the exemption paragraph relied upon will be included within this notice

Anticipated Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Background Documents	Consultation	Contact Officer
November 2021	Public	**Treasury Management Half Yearly Report 2021/22 (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry))** Report detailing the treasury management activity of Staffordshire County Council for the first half of 2021/22.		N/A	Rob Salmon (Tel: (01785) 27 6354) **Service Area**: Finance
November 2021	Public	**The Future of Replacement Care Services (Learning Disabilities) (Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel))** Recommendation for the future delivery of replacement services for adults with learning disabilities in Staffordshire following an options appraisal and six week period of public engagement.		Six weeks public engagement a) Carers, b) Professionals: Assessment & Care Teams, c) Providers: Independent, Third Sector and Voluntary Services	Andrew Jepps (Tel: 01785 278557) **Service Area**: Health and Care
November 2021	Private	**Grant Award Expenditure - Green Homes Grant (Sustainable Warmth Competition (Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel))** To consider approval of Council Grant Award Expenditure and appropriate spend for the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme (GHG-LADS) Sustainable Warmth Competition		To be undertaken	Dr Richard Harling MBE (Tel: 01785 278700) **Service Area**: Health & Care (Public Health)

Anticipated Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Background Documents	Consultation	Contact Officer
December 2021	Public	**Burton Town Deal - River Trent Cycle / Footbridge Update (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport)** To report the key findings of the public consultation on the potential new cycle / footbridge over the River Trent. To seek Cabinet's approval to the submission of the associated Business Case.		General Public, Landowners, Environment Agency	Wayne Mortiboys (Tel: 01785 27 6578) **Service Area**: Corporate Services
December 2021	Public	**VCSE Capacity Building Recommission (Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture (Victoria Wilson))** This report will set out detail on proposals to recommission VCSE capacity building support, with a view to going out to market in January 2022.		VCSE, Commissioners and Members	Kerry Dove () **Service Area**: Corporate Services
December 2021	Public	**Integrated Service Model for In-House Day Opportunities and Respite (Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel))** Since February 2021, Provider Services have been designing a new service model for day opportunities and respite. This work has been undertaken in partnership with staff from across the services and parents and carers of service users. Using the principles of co-design, the group have designed an integrated service model which is flexible, customer-centric and financially sustainable. This report will provide the details of the proposed service model for Cabinet's approval. This report will compliment the respite options appraisal also being submitted to Cabinet by Commissioning.		Staff from day services, respite, parents, carers of service users	Kelly Gray () **Service Area**: Provider Services

Anticipated Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Background Documents	Consultation	Contact Officer
December 2021	Public	**IA2609 Framework for Responsive Property Maintenance and Day Works (Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters (Mark Deaville))** The objective of the report is to establish approval for the contract award to a framework for low value reactive property maintenance works/services for Staffordshire County Council buildings. For the period 01 June 2022 until 31st May 2025 with a 12 month extension to 31st May 2026 following a open tendering process. The reactive agreement shall both support and dovetail into the existing Planned Maintenance / Minor Works framework agreement (ref IA1750) which tends to operate at project values greater than £5,000. There is a constant need to deploy much smaller organisations to attend to the most basic of property maintenance for values of work much less than £5,000.		N/A	Ian Turner (Tel: 01785 277228) **Service Area**: Finance and Resources
December 2021	Public	**Burton Town Deal - Proposed Library Move (Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture (Victoria Wilson))** To report the key findings of the public consultation on the potential relocation of Burton Library to the Market Hall. To seek Cabinet's approval to the submission of the associated Business Case.		General Public	Wayne Mortiboys (Tel: 01785 27 6578) **Service Area**: Families & Communities
December 2021	Public	**Diversity and Inclusion - Principles, Objectives and Action Plan (Leader of the Council (Alan White))**		TBC	Kerry Dove, Sarah Getley (Tel: 01785 854265)

Anticipated Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Background Documents	Consultation	Contact Officer
		This paper will propose the adoption of a set of corporate Diversity and Inclusion Principles and Objectives, alongside a supporting Action Plan.			**Service Area**: Corporate Services
December 2021	Public	**Proposed Relocation and Expansion of St Leonard's Primary School, Stafford (Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) (Jonathan Price))** To provide a summary of the statutory stakeholder consultation and to consider whether to publish a statutory proposal/notice.		None at this stage	Tim Moss (Tel: 01785 277963) **Service Area**: School Organisation
December 2021	Private	**Chatterley Valley West - Project Update (Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills (Philip White))** To update Cabinet on the development of the Chatterley Valley West employment site and funding position.		N/A	Anthony Hodge (Tel: 01785 277204) **Service Area**: Business and Enterprise - Economy, Infrastructure and Skills
January 2022	Public	**Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022 - 2027 (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry))** To update Cabinet with progress on the Strategic Plan and MTFS.		Any specific consultation, if appropriate, will be determined by the nature of any issues raised in the Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Rachel Spain (Tel: 01785 854455) **Service Area**: Finance
January 2022	Public	**Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022 - 2027 (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry))**		Any specific consultation, if appropriate, will be	Rachel Spain (Tel: 01785 854455)

Anticipated Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Background Documents	Consultation	Contact Officer
		To present the Strategic Plan and MTFS to Cabinet, including the draft budget for 2022/23.		determined by the nature of any issues raised in the Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy	**Service Area**: Finance
February 2022	Public	**Business Case for Care Home Developments (Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel))** The Council previously presented to Cabinet the recommendation to build Council owned care homes with a commissioned provider to deliver the care. The purpose of the care homes was to increase affordable nursing care capacity for older people in our communities who can no longer live independently at home. This cabinet item is to re-visit these recommendations following the impact of the pandemic on the Staffordshire care home market. The item will evaluate the initial recommendations and conclude with a recommendation on whether to or not proceed with the build of Council owned care homes.		N/A	Helen Trousdale (Tel: 01785 277008) **Service Area**: Health and Care
February 2022	Public	**Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3 2021/22 (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry), Leader of the Council (Alan White))** The quarterly Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council's progress, performance and financial position in delivering against our Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan.		N/A	Kerry Dove, Rob Salmon (Tel: (01785) 27 6354) **Service Area**: Corporate Services

Anticipated Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Background Documents	Consultation	Contact Officer
February 2022	Private	**Entrust Service Delivery Agreement (Leader of the Council (Alan White))** To consider changes to the Entrust Service Delivery Agreement.		N/A	Ian Turner (Tel: 01785 277228) **Service Area**: Education Support Services

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