

Cabinet

Wednesday 15 February 2023

10:00

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

The meeting will be webcast live which can be viewed at any time here:

<https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell

Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services

7 February 2023

Agenda

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16**
- 3. Decision notice of the meetings held on 18 and 25 January 2023** (Pages 1 - 12)
- 4. Leader's Update**
Oral report of the Leader of the Council
- 5. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 1 February 2023** (Pages 13 - 16)
- 6. Staffordshire Means Back to Business - Oral Update**
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills
- 7. Diversity and Inclusion - Progress Update** (Pages 17 - 58)
Leader of the Council
- 8. Empowering our Communities** (Pages 59 - 104)
Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture

9. Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2022/23 (Pages 105 - 160)

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

10. Decisions taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers (Pages 161 - 162)

11. Forward Plan of Key Decisions (Pages 163 - 166)

12. 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)

| Membership | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Alan White (Chair) | Jonathan Price |
| Philip White | Mark Sutton |
| Mark Deaville | Simon Tagg |
| Julia Jessel | David Williams |
| Paul Northcott | Victoria Wilson |
| Ian Parry | |

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

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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.

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 18 January 2023

| Attendance | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Mark Deaville | Simon Tagg |
| Julia Jessel | Alan White (Chair) |
| Ian Parry | Philip White |
| Jonathan Price | David Williams |
| Mark Sutton | Victoria Wilson |

Apologies: Paul Northcott

PART ONE

87. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

88. Decision notice of the meeting held on 14 December 2022

Decision – That the notes of the meeting held on 14 December 2022 be approved.

89. Leader's Update

Decision – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including the Staffordshire residents who were recognised in the King's New Year's Honours list; the importance of getting vaccinated against Covid and Flu, if eligible, to protect yourself and ease demand on the NHS; the support available for those hit hard by the cost of living, including through the Council's Here to Help campaign; the commencement of resurfacing works on the A34 near Stone, and the ongoing work to repair potholes; investment in the Staffordshire economy including the £3.5m investment at Chatterley Valley West in Newcastle; the official opening of Fradley Primary School in Lichfield; and the news that the Council's Chief Executive, John Henderson, will be stepping down later this year; be noted.

90. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee:

Decision – That the minutes of the meetings of the Property Sub-Committee held on 7 December 2022 and 4 January 2023 be received.

91. 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:

- The Council's commitment to support Staffordshire's local business community and to continue to make representations through our MPs to encourage government to seek a fair and growth-based approach to business rates to support jobs and investment.
- The claimant count, which saw a further increase of 335 claimants over the last month, with the total number of claimants in the county now standing at 14,640. The main contribution to the overall increase in claimants this month came from those aged 25-49 years of age with this group seeing an increase of 225 claimants.
- How the Council was continuing to play a key role in the delivery of local plans across Staffordshire. These plans were vital in supporting sustainable economic growth in Staffordshire, not least through allocating land that will ultimately lead to the creation of new homes and jobs.
- The economic growth programme through which the Council, working with partners, continued to support and directly deliver sites such as the Chatterley Valley enterprise zone, Redhill and i54.
- The Council's intention to contribute to a piece of work to further consider the need and potential location for large scale strategic employment sites across the West Midlands region.
- Innovation activity within the county had increased substantially in recent years and particularly within our universities. Work was already ongoing on a number of further innovation projects within the county, including as part of the Hydrogen Technologies Valley proposal. Working with our district and borough partners through the Leaders Board, the Council was also beginning to consider further projects that could drive innovation activity across the county.

92. Health and Care Winter Update

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|  | <p>"The NHS has been under extraordinary pressure this winter due to people unwell with respiratory virus infections and staffing issues.</p> <p>The Council has worked hard to ensure that the number of people in hospital waiting for social care remains low.</p> <p>We will continue to work with the NHS to facilitate timely hospital discharges and to support those residents who need adult social care."</p> <p>Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care</p> |
|---|---|

Reasons for the Decision – To receive an update on pressures facing the NHS this winter and the additional and ongoing services commissioned by the Council to facilitate timely hospital discharges and support those residents who need adult social care.

Decision – (a) That the pressures facing the NHS this winter be noted.

(b) That the additional services commissioned by the Council to facilitate timely hospital discharges and support those residents who need social care be noted.

93. Future Social Care Workforce Strategy

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>"People working across Staffordshire in both children and adults social care, do an amazing job protecting and supporting the most vulnerable people in the county and we are committed to working hard not only to attract the best staff, but to keep the best staff.</p> <p>We recognise that nationally we have seen unprecedented challenges in recruitment and our mission is to develop a more resilient care sector that enables more effective recruitment and retention of care staff.</p> <p>In developing this new strategy, we have worked together with partners including the NHS and the independent sector and staff themselves, to look at</p> |
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| | |
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| | <p>what matters most to them and how all employers can do their very best to recruit, retain and develop their own workforce.</p> <p>This includes encouraging more training and career progression opportunities as well as offering work placements and apprenticeships to attract more people starting out on their work life into the profession.”</p> <p>Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care</p> |
|--|--|

Reasons for the Decision – To receive an update on the development of the partnership Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy, timescales for publication and the approach being taken to implement the key activities to achieve the outcomes.

Decision – (a) That the Staffordshire Social Care Workforce Strategy be endorsed.

(b) That the timescales for publication and launch, and arrangements for implementation, be noted.

94. Staffordshire County Council's Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy



“The UK is already embarking on the transition towards electric vehicle use which is good news in terms of our combined efforts to reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.

As national legislation draws nearer it’s important that we take steps to enable the right infrastructure is in place across the county. We have an important role to play, working with our district and borough colleagues, to determine what this will look like based on the evidence gathered.

David Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

“Our strategy helps us to identify where the most appropriate places for charging points could be and how we will work with the private sector to facilitate successful delivery. We can work with businesses to encourage workplace charging and

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|  | <p>residents to support off-street charging, in addition to people and organisations making planning applications.</p> <p>We understand that electricity may not be the only type of alternative power for vehicles in future years, but this strategy needs to focus on national policy. We anticipate funding will shortly become available from the Government to support our work to put the strategy in place."</p> <p>Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change</p> |
|---|---|

Reasons for the Decision – To seek approval for the adoption of a Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy developed by Staffordshire County Council working with the Staffordshire District and Borough Councils.

Decision – (a) That the adoption of a Staffordshire County Council Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (attached as Appendix 1 to the report) be approved subject to the amendments proposed by the Leader of the Council as to: (i) the deletion of the words "from the Council" in the second line of the second paragraph on page 60 of the Strategy; and (ii) to replace the words "A socially equitable public" with the words "An accessible" in the first line of the fourth paragraph on page 60 of the Strategy.

(b) That it be noted that additional guidance on EV strategies may be issued by the DfT in connection with Local Transport Plans and that it be agreed that any minor required text changes to the Strategy be delegated to the Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change to implement.

95. Staffordshire Sustainability Board Communications Plan 2023

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>"We are on a mission to make Staffordshire sustainable. Engaging with our people about climate change is key to reducing the county's carbon emissions and reaching our net zero target.</p> <p>As a local authority we are only responsible for a small proportion of carbon emissions in the county, but our position allows us to set an example, raise awareness and inspire people to make more sustainable choices.</p> |
|---|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>This joint communications plan will help us to share clear, consistent messages with our residents, businesses and communities about the climate change challenge and how they can make an impact.</p> <p>We achieve much more by working together. Working closely with our local authority colleagues and collaboratively with our residents, communities, and businesses, we can really make a big difference.”</p> <p>Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change</p> |
|--|--|

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the joint Staffordshire Sustainability Board Communications Plan 2023 which has been developed with the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in conjunction with all district and borough councils to help residents to reduce their carbon emissions.

Decision – (a) That the progress of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in developing a unified 2023 programme of activity across the county and eight district and borough councils, to tackle climate change and work towards our net zero targets, be noted.

(b) That the Staffordshire Sustainability Board joint communications plan (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), which sets out our 12-month programme of climate change awareness-raising and behaviour change activity, be approved.

96. 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 Communities and Culture | In approving the transfer of an item (Petrol Locomotive 0-6-0, No.800) from the Staffordshire County Museum collection. |
| Cabinet Member for Health and Care | In approving the expenditure of the County Council's allocation of the Adult Social Care Discharge Grant. |

97. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 15 February to 21 June 2023, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

| Subject Matter | Contact |
|---|---|
| Diversity and Inclusion – Progress Update | Name: Kerry Dove Tel: 07855 679112 |
| Empowering our Communities | Name: Catherine Mann Tel: (01785) 278320 |
| Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2022/23 | Name: Kerry Dove Tel: 07855 679112 |
| Our People Strategy 2023 and Beyond | Name: Sarah Getley Tel: (01785) 854265 |
| Capital Programme for Schools 2023/ 2024 | Name: Ian Tuner Tel: (01785) 277228 |
| Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2023/24 | Name: James Bailey Tel: (01785) 276591 |
| Staffordshire County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy | Name: James Bailey Tel: (01785) 276591 |
| Mental Health and Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028 | Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557 |
| Joint Coroners Service - Legal Framework and Financial Protocol | Name: Catherine Mann Tel: (01785) 278320 |

98. 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

99. Sale of Surplus Property at Scotch Orchard Lichfield (Exemption paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To agree the sale of surplus land and property at Scotch Orchard, Lichfield following an informal tender process.

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

100. Decision Making for Looked After Children/Use of Unregulated Placements – Update
(Exemption paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To provide Cabinet with an update in relation to the use of unregulated placements in extenuating circumstances.

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

**Alan White
Leader of the Council**

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 25 January 2023

| Attendance | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Mark Deaville | Alan White (Chair) |
| Julia Jessel | Philip White |
| Ian Parry | David Williams |
| Jonathan Price | Victoria Wilson |
| Simon Tagg | |

Cabinet Support Member in Attendance – Paul Northcott.

Also in attendance – Colin Greatorex

Apologies: Mark Sutton

PART ONE

101. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

102. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 - 2028



"We are proposing spending more money than ever before on supporting residents, while still investing heavily in the long-term future of our communities.

Millions of pounds are earmarked for schools, roads and backing businesses large and small, so residents can take advantage of good well paid jobs in Staffordshire."

Alan White, Leader of the Council



"Despite the recent pressures brought by unexpected inflation and the rising cost of fuel and energy, this authority remains financially stable and able to put forward a balanced budget for the coming year which supports people, communities and businesses.

We will work closely with partners to make the most of how we spend our money and to provide the best services for our residents in the most

cost-effective way".

Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2023 - 2028 and the draft budget for 2023/24.

Decision – (a) That the updates to the financial plans, as set out in the report, be noted.

(b) That the comments of the Director of Finance on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of the budget be noted and that the County Council be asked to take note of these comments when considering the budget and council tax.

(c) That the comments and recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Executive's response thereto, be noted.

(d) That it be recommended to the County Council on 9th February 2023 that they consider and approve the following:

- (i) a net revenue budget of £649.663m for 2023/24;
- (ii) planning forecasts for 2024/25 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendix 11 to the report;
- (iii) a contingency provision of £15.000m for 2023/24;
- (iv) a net contribution from reserves of £2.108m for 2023/24;
- (v) a budget requirement of £647.555m for 2023/24;
- (vi) a council tax requirement of £432.196m for 2023/24;
- (vii) a council tax at Band D of £1,471.23 for 2023/24 which is an increase of 4.99% when compared with 2022/23;
- (viii) This results in council tax for each category of dwelling as set out in the table below:

| Category of dwelling | Council Tax rate £ |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Band A | 980.82 |
| Band B | 1,144.29 |
| Band C | 1,307.76 |
| Band D | 1,471.23 |
| Band E | 1,798.17 |
| Band F | 2,125.11 |
| Band G | 2,452.05 |
| Band H | 2,942.46 |

- (ix) that the Director of Finance be authorised to sign precept notices on the billing authorities respectively liable for the total precept payable and that each notice states the total precept payable and the council tax in relation to each category of dwelling as calculated in accordance with statutory requirements;
- (x) the Financial Health Indicators set out in Appendix 10 to the report.

(e) That it be recommended to the County Council on 9th February 2023 that they consider and approve the following recommendations which are included within the Capital and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2023/24, the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 and the Commercial Investment Strategy 2023/24 (Appendices 9a to 9c of the report):

- (i) Approve the Minimum Revenue Policy for 2023/24 as contained within the Capital and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2023/24 in Appendix 9a to the report;
- (ii) Approve the Prudential Indicators as set out within the Capital and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2023/24 at Appendix 9a to the report;
- (iii) Approve the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy, based on the 2021 CIPFA Codes (Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code), and 2018 MHCLG (now DLUHC) Guidance (on Local Government Investments and on Minimum Revenue Provision);
- (iv) Adopt the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) 2023/24 detailed in paragraphs 63 to 109 and Annex A and Annex B of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report);
- (v) Approve the policies on reviewing the strategy, the use of external advisors, investment management training and the use of financial derivatives as described in paragraphs 110 to 120 of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report);
- (vi) Approve the proposed borrowing strategy for the 2023/24 financial year detailed in paragraphs 41 to 62 of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report);
- (vii) The Treasury Management Strategy recommendations will operate within the prudential limits set out in Annex C of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report) and will be reported to the Cabinet Member for Finance, with respect to decisions made for raising new long-term loans, early loan repayments and loan rescheduling;
- (viii) Approve the Commercial Investment Strategy for 2023/24 (Appendix 9c to the report) and note the circumstances under which commercial investments can be made;
- (ix) Approve the governance arrangements that are in place for proposing and approving commercial investments;

- (x) Approve a maximum quantum for commercial investments of a further £20 million in 2023/24;
- (xi) Approve a maximum limit for an individual service investment loan of £10 million in 2023/24;
- (xii) Any upwards change in the amounts of the limits specified in recommendations (x) and (xi) be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.

(f) That the Director of Finance be authorised to adjust the contingency provision to reflect any grant and local taxation changes announced in the final 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement.

(g) That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Director of Finance be authorised to challenge Cabinet, the Senior Leadership Team and services to manage and deliver the current five-year plans and to identify further cost reductions and income generation opportunities, as appropriate.

Alan White
Leader of the Council

Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee Meeting held on 1 February 2023

Present: Alan White (Chair)

Attendance

Mark Deaville
Jonathan Price

Philip White (Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Ian Parry

Part one

49. Apologies

50. Declarations of Interest

Resolved - There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

51. Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 4th January 2023

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

52. School site, Stafford North Primary - near Marston Lane, Stafford, Staffordshire

Details were submitted for the final acquisition by the County Council and subsequent lease of the site of Stafford North Primary to the Creative Learning Partnership Trust. – near Marston Lane, Stafford, Staffordshire.

Resolved – That approval be given for the completion of the transfer of the site to Staffordshire County Council, and the grant of an Agreement for a 125 year lease of the site following the construction of the primary school on the site by Staffordshire County Council to The Creative Learning Partnership Trust; the final details of the transactions to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets.

THE CHAIRMAN AGREED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEM BEING DEALT WITH AS URGENT.

- a) Blythe Bridge High School - Statutory Transfer of Site

Proposals were submitted to transfer the freehold interest of Blythe Bridge High School to the Blythe Bridge High School Music Trust ("the Foundation Trust") in accordance for the requirements of the Schools Standard and Framework Act 1998.

Resolved – That approval be given for the Transfer of the freehold interest in the Site shown edged red on the submitted report as required by the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 ("the Act") to Blythe Bridge High School Music Trust ("the Foundation Trust"); the final details of the transactions to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets.

53. Exclusion of the Public

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

54. Lease of IC5 office & workshop space Keele Science & Innovation Park (exemption paragraph 3)

Details were submitted for the proposed lease of office & workshop space at IC5 at Keele Science and Innovation Park to Charles River Discovery Research Services UK Ltd.

Members stressed the importance of protecting the Council's interests following any change of lease holder.

Resolved –

- (a) That approval be given for leasing of the Ground Floor, 1st Floor and 2nd Floor of Block A and of Ground Floor Block B, IC5 to Charles River Discovery Research Services UK Ltd. The lease would be for a period of 5 years, with Part II Rights Landlord & Tenant Act 1954 (Security of Tenure) excluded.
- (b) That the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets be authorised to agree the lease with the new business owner, following consultation with the Assistant Director for Business and Enterprise.

55. Sale of Plot D i54 South Staffordshire (exemption paragraph 3)

Details were submitted of the proposed sale of Plot D i54, South Staffordshire.

Resolved – That approval be given for the sale of Plot D i54 South Staffordshire as set out in the report as submitted, the Head of Regeneration

& Strategic Projects be authorised to carry out all actions and decisions to enable completion of this transaction.

56. Sale of Former Lichfield Library (exemption Paragraph 3)

Members received an update on the proposed sale of the Former Lichfield Library site for residential purposes and were informed of negotiations continuing with the proposed purchaser and of the options available to the Council.

Resolved – That approval be given to renegotiate terms with the proposed purchaser in line with option 3 set out in the report, with the addition of the requirement for the building to be handed back in the same condition that it was handed over should the sale not proceed; all actions regarding a sale contract variation to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets.

Chairman

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 15 February 2023

Diversity and Inclusion – Progress Update



Councillor Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

"Working to ensure everyone in Staffordshire has the best opportunity they can to do well, to thrive and be happy is at the core of the values of this council.

"That's why it is so important that we continue to strive to achieve great equality and diversity not only within our own workforce, but across the wider county.

"A great deal of work was undertaken in 2021 to review our own approach and this Cabinet agreed to adopt a new set of equality, diversity and inclusion principles to build on the good work already being delivered."

Report Summary:

This report and the attached Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Delivery Plan reviews our progress in 2022 and provides proposed areas of focus for 2023/24 to further strengthen our approach to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion both within the organisation and across Staffordshire.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Note the progress of the Council's work to further strengthen its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, including delivery of the delivery plan.
- b. Note the Council's Gender Pay Gap report and Workforce profile as reported in April 2022.
- c. Provide comments and feedback on the emerging priorities for 2023/24 as part of the Council's continued commitment to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Cabinet – Wednesday 15 February 2023

Diversity and Inclusion – Progress Update

Recommendation of the Leader of the Council

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Note the progress of the Council's work to further strengthen its approach to equality, diversity and inclusion, including delivery of the delivery plan.
- b. Note the Council's Gender Pay Gap report and Workforce profile as reported in April 2022.
- c. Provide comments and feedback on the emerging priorities for 2023/24 as part of the Council's continued commitment to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

Local Member Interest: N/A

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

1. Everyone having the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy, is at the core of the County Council's vision. The Council's ongoing work to deliver against its agreed equality, diversity and inclusion principles and objectives continues to further strengthen the Council's approach to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion within both the organisation and across Staffordshire.
2. The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to show that they are advancing the equalities agenda under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Specific requirements on Councils include publishing at least one Equality Objective every four years, as well as key information through the annual Gender Pay Gap report and Workforce Profile on 1st April each year, to demonstrate how they will eliminate discrimination and advance equality.
3. A great deal of work was undertaken during 2021 to review the Council's approach to delivering against the Public Sector Equality Duty. It was recognised that equality considerations are embedded across the organisation with a strong corporate focus on responding to, and

addressing the Gender Pay Gap, together with improving collection and analysis of the workforce profile data. Key information through the Gender Pay Gap report and Workforce Profile is published annually on 1st April. A range of other activities and initiatives were also identified as having a significant impact on tackling inequalities both within the County Council and wider communities across Staffordshire.

4. It was however acknowledged that more could be done to strengthen the Council's approach. Therefore, in December 2021 Cabinet agreed to adopt a new set of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles and objectives, along with an associated delivery plan.
5. A draft of this EDI progress report has also been discussed with Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 December 2022. The Committee noted both the progress made to deliver against the Council's EDI principles, objectives and delivery plan and the Council's Gender Pay Gap and Workforce Profile report.
6. The Committee requested further information on the formation of the EDI Steering Group and the impact and use of the Apprenticeship levy on diversity which has been provided. It was also agreed that the EDI delivery plan should be revised to include more comprehensive review dates for the strategies in place. This feedback from the Committee has helped further shape the EDI delivery plan (as set out in Appendix 1).

Principles and Objectives 2021-2023

7. Principles:

- a. Staffordshire is a place where there is equality of opportunity for all, regardless of circumstances.
- b. Staffordshire County Council is an inclusive and diverse employer, where our people feel they have the opportunity to succeed and progress.
- c. Staffordshire County Council develops and delivers services that are inclusive and accessible to all.

8. Objectives:

- a. Review and strengthen our recruitment and retention processes and practices.
- b. Review and strengthen our diversity and inclusion training offer to employees.
- c. Strengthen our approach to engaging and collaborating with our workforce and communities on diversity and inclusion issues.
- d. Raise awareness of and celebrate diversity.

9. Following Cabinet's adoption of these, it was agreed that Audit also undertake an advisory review of the EDI delivery plan. The key findings from the audit report included: ensuring there is an appropriate delivery plan, informed by data, for equalities, diversity and inclusion; that governance structures are in place for reporting progress against the plan and that risks are identified and reviewed; methods for measuring the effectiveness of the plan are identified; and communicating expectations to staff for equality, diversity and inclusion.
10. In response to this, the delivery plan was further refined to reflect the recommendations made by the audit review. The agreed delivery plan can be viewed at Appendix 1.

Year 1 Review 2022/2023

11. During the last twelve months we have continued to engage and collaborate with stakeholders, including staff, Elected Members, Trade Unions in delivering against the principles, objectives and delivery plan. This section summaries our in year key highlights and achievements across the organisation.
 - a. A new **Gender Pay Gap and Workforce Profile** report was published on 1st April 2022, detailing our data and the steps we are taking to develop a more diverse and inclusive workforce, and in turn, improving our gender pay gap. The latest report can be viewed at Appendix 2 and will be refreshed on 1st April 2023.
 - b. A new **Translation and Interpretation** contract was launched in November 2022, based on a one-stop shop delivery model, that enables officers to access telephone, video, face-to-face interpretation and written translation services. The service enables our communities to receive information in different languages or suitable formats ensuring we are accessible to all.
 - c. The Council's **Community Impact Assessment** (CIA) policy was reviewed and strengthened in early 2022. The refreshed policy sets out a clear, consistent approach to how we assess the impact of potential service changes, commissioning and/or decision making on our most vulnerable residents. This included strengthening the consideration of impacts on the protected characteristic groups, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, to ensure consideration of how inequalities could arise between the different groups is taken into account. This is fully embedded in the Council's governance arrangements and promoted through internal communications channels.

- d. Launched an **inclusive and representative employer brand** in 2021, which is now supporting the development of the Council's employee value proposition. Recent recruitment campaigns are promoting the Council as an attractive and inclusive employer with the aim of reaching more diverse candidates.
- e. Implemented a **new applicant tracking system**, WeRecruit, in October 2022. This is providing opportunities to increase accessibility and improve the candidate experience, as well as promoting the Council as an inclusive employer. The system also captures key equality information about prospective and new employees, including declarations for criminal convictions and care leavers.
- f. Implemented an **Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy** in September 2022, promoting a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and discrimination in the workplace. As this is fully embedded across the organisation, work will take place to assess its impact.
- g. A range of **communications activities**, promoting key dates and events, has taken place throughout the year to celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion. Activities aligned to this include signposting colleagues to further information and opportunities to get involved. A review is due to take place in early 2023, in consultation with employee groups and the wider workforce.
- h. A new **EDI mandatory e-learning module** for our staff has been commissioned, alongside an e-product to support hiring managers to deliver inclusive and accessible recruitment. These will launch in early 2023 and deliver an improved learner experience, supported with the latest information and guidance for all staff. During the past 12 months 795 members of staff have completed the current e-learning and following the launch of the new product, future training numbers will be monitored and communications targeted as appropriate.
- i. Guidance to **support employee groups** to form is being developed drawing on best practice and the experience of the established Black Workers Forum, together with wider consultees from across the Council.
- j. **Supported job seekers facing barriers to employment** to secure work experience placements enabling progression into paid work through the Council's Open Door Staffordshire employability programme. Since its launch in 2010, 1,500 candidates with significant challenges to employment have been supported to ensure a successful placement. Strong relationships have also been built with businesses

and communities across Staffordshire, such as prison establishments, Staffordshire Police and the Department for Work and Pensions to enable a diverse range of candidates to be supported.

Looking Ahead to 2023/24

12. Reflecting on work undertaken during 2022/23, there is opportunity to build on existing work to date, in order to further strengthen the Council's approach to the delivery of EDI.
13. Set out below are a number of proposed areas of focus for 2023/24:
 - a. Continue to meet the Public Sector Equalities Duty by further improving current reporting on the Council's Gender Pay Gap and Workforce Profile, enabling the targeted recruitment and improvement of employment policies that will enhance the diversity of its workforce and reduce the gender pay gap.
 - b. EDI will continue to be a prominent thread throughout the new internal People Strategy 2023-27 and will be an integral consideration to the design and delivery of people and culture related activities. During the roll-out of the new strategy in 2023, People Services will encourage everyone to play a role in its delivery, promoting inclusion across the organisation.
 - c. Further development of recruitment and employment policies, demonstrating a strong organisational commitment to EDI, will provide the Council with a significant competitive advantage in an increasingly challenging talent market.
 - d. Embed the new EDI mandatory e-learning module across the organisation, including a campaign to increase completion of the mandatory training following its launch.
 - e. Engage and collaborate with a range of staff groups to inform the development of a new workforce led communications approach and set of activities for 2023, promoting key dates and events that celebrate diversity.
 - f. Continued work to ensure apprenticeships provide nationally recognised work-based qualifications to people from diverse and under-represented backgrounds.
 - g. Further strengthen our training offer to the Council's workforce, including development of a reciprocal mentorship scheme that enable colleagues from different backgrounds and levels to share and learn

together. In addition, a range of learning resources will be developed that enable individual colleagues and groups to develop their leadership understanding and practice.

Delivery and Governance

14. An officer EDI Steering Group has been established within Corporate Services, which brings together lead senior officers, to co-ordinate, collaborate and monitor progress against the equality, diversity and inclusion delivery plan.
15. The EDI delivery plan is overseen by the Leader of the Council and the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Corporate Services.
16. This area of work also features as a key deliverable within the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan, with progress routinely reported on a quarterly basis through the Integrated Performance Management process. In addition, Cabinet and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is provided with an annual monitoring report that evidences progress against the delivery plan and wider equalities work for further oversight and scrutiny.

Legal Implications

17. Paragraph 3 of this report outlines the Council's legal requirements. The progress of the EDI delivery plan set out in this report, and the adoption of the proposed Principles and Objectives will contribute towards meeting our legal requirements.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

18. The refresh of EDI e-learning has a cost of c.£20k and on this occasion this investment is being met by the corporate Learning and Development budget. Should any further budget be required to support EDI activities this will be sourced from local service budgets or a business case will be prepared to request further investment.

Climate Change Implications

19. None.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Delivery Plan 2022/2023
- Appendix 2 – Gender Pay Gap and Workforce Profile Report March 2022

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Sarah Getley, Assistant Director for People

Report Author: Wendy Tompson

Job Title: Head of Policy and Insight

Telephone No.: (01785) 854267 / 07976 191040

E-Mail Address: wendy.tompson@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Delivery Plan (2022/2023)

| People Strategy: Keeping and Attracting Talented People Objective: Review and strengthen our recruitment and retention processes and practices | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| EDI Objectives 2022/23 | Key Actions | By when | Measures of Success |
| 1.1 Measure and assess the impact of our new employer brand to ensure it represents the Council as an inclusive employer, that values diversity and provides equality of opportunity for all | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out the Employer Brand proposition • Embed employer brand through a range of communications activity that promotes the county council as a diverse employer • EDI Steering Group representative on the Applicant Tracking System project stakeholder group • Monitor diversity of workforce via the annual workforce profile report | Launch of Applicant Tracking System November 2022 Embed employer brand, including communications activity from November 2022 Annual workforce profile published - April 2023 | Launched the employer brand and Applicant Tracking System by November 2022 - delivered Successfully delivered communications Recruited a more diverse range of candidates, evidenced by annual workforce profile trends - Review end of December 2023 |
| 1.2 Maximise the use of diverse channels to advertise and promote our employment opportunities, to ensure they reach a wide variety of audiences, including those from under-represented and minority groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of wider diverse employment promotion opportunities • Pilot and embed any new recruitment channels in our recruitment process • Monitor diversity of workforce via the annual workforce profile report | Review - end of Quarter 1 and Quarter 3 2023 | New promotion opportunities identified and embedded in the Council's recruitment approaches |
| 1.3 Ensure our recruitment processes and procedures provide an equitable, inclusive, and accessible experience for all candidates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear processes and procedures, as part of the Applicant Tracking System project, with diversity and inclusion built in at every stage of candidate journey • Ensure a robust and consistent process is in place to capture new hires onboarding experiences | Develop clear processes and procedures - March 2023 Process to capture new hires onboarding experiences designed and implemented - March 2023 | At least 80% of candidates considered the recruitment process to be Good or Excellent - end of 2023/24 At least 80% of new hires 'Agree' that they have had a positive onboarding experience by end of 2023/24 |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>1.4 Embed a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and discrimination and provide a policy framework to enable inclusive practice</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy, as part of the Big 5 Policies project Launch and promote new policy across the organisation, through a range of internal communication activities Develop clear approach to measure its impact, including identifying any relevant benchmarks | <p>Refreshed policy approved - Completed October 2022</p> <p>Launch and communicate policy - Completed October 2022</p> <p>Approach and impact measures developed - March 2023</p> | <p>Policy launched and timely communications delivered</p> <p>Bullying and discrimination incidences and issues reduced - Review end of 2023/24</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

People Strategy: Promoting a Positive Working Environment

Objective: Strengthen our approach to engaging and collaborating with our workforce and communities on diversity, including raising awareness of and celebrating diversity

| EDI Objectives 2022/23 | Key Actions | By when | Measures of Success |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>2.1 Deliver a range of communications and staff engagement activities that highlight and celebrate our diversity and signpost important dates and events</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver a range of communications during 2023 that celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion Engage key workforce groups to shape the development of future activities that promote key dates and events and encourage self-led activities by the workforce Consider the potential delivery of an EDI campaign | <p>Communications ongoing throughout 2023</p> <p>Plan for engagement with workforce - end of March 2023</p> <p>Possible campaign in Summer / Autumn 2023, dependent on engagement findings</p> | <p>Effective delivery of key communications, aligned with key dates</p> <p>Future communications informed by key workforce</p> |
| <p>2.2 Develop high quality EDI intranet pages to highlight our work and achievements in this area and provide colleagues with repository of stories, information, contacts, and toolkits to enable self-directed learning</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh of current EDI web pages to strengthen and update content Continue to evolve EDI intranet pages utilising best practice and engaging with key workforce groups to create a jointly developed suite of up to date and relevant EDI pages | <p>Initial refresh of EDI pages - Completed in 2022</p> <p>Best practice research undertaken - February 2023</p> <p>Launch evolved EDI web pages - April 2023</p> | <p>Increase in number accessing EDI intranet pages</p> <p>Positive feedback on impact of supporting guidance and materials</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and evaluate impact of new EDI intranet pages | | |
| 2.3 Develop a blueprint and toolkit to enable colleagues to set up and manage staff forum groups in a consistent way | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of good practice to inform toolkit development Produce first draft toolkit, for feedback from the EDI Steering Group and consultees Launch and communicate final toolkit on EDI StaffSpace Ongoing provision of corporate advice and support in the establishment of new staff forums, as required | <p>Development and consultation of initial draft toolkit - February / March 2023</p> <p>Access to guidance and toolkit promoted - May 2023</p> <p>Officer feedback on use - October/November 2023</p> | Staff forum groups are active and positively contributing to the Council's plans |
| 2.5 Review and produce community engagement guidance and toolkit, using learning and working alongside the Public Health Community Champions programme to help shape our services to meet diverse needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review national and local examples of community engagement good practice and approaches, including working with Public Health to use the learning of Community Champions Develop draft toolkit, guidance and supporting materials informed by learning and engagement of key stakeholders Test and shape first draft with key stakeholders Refine and secure sign off through appropriate governance channels Launch and embed across the organisation | <p>Review of guidance goes live - April 2023</p> <p>Access to guidance and toolkit promoted - May 2023</p> <p>Officer feedback on use - October/November 2023</p> | <p>Principles and guidance successfully tested and developed with key staff and relevant partners</p> <p>Guidance on delivering effective engagement and how to access support is available and accessible for all staff.</p> <p>Unique visits to web pages and positive feedback on use of guidance and toolkit in engagement activities - review September 2023</p> |
| 2.6 Improve the completion of protected characteristic data by staff, to better understand the profile of our workforce | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce plan of activity to improve completion of data Promotion of data input pages on MyHR - new tile and banner on landing page | <p>Plan complete - August 2022</p> <p>MyHR promotion - September 2022 and ongoing throughout 2023</p> | <p>Increase in staff protected characteristic data is held within MyHR</p> <p>Reduced number of opt outs</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted emails to leaders reinforcing the importance of employee self completion • Explore opportunity to gather and migrate this data at application stage, via the Applicant Tracking System project • Explore option to opt-out of declaring sensitive information | <p>Leadership comms - September 2022</p> <p>Review Applicant Tracking System opportunities - April 2023</p> | |
|--|--|---|--|

People Strategy: Developing Skills for Now and the Future

Objective: Review and strengthen our diversity and inclusion training offer to employees

| EDI Objectives 2022/23 | Key Actions | By when | Measures of Success |
|--|--|---|---|
| 3.1 Provide meaningful work experience opportunities to people from diverse / under-represented groups Page 28 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure demographics of Open-Door candidates is captured and monitored • Early Careers programme opportunities are expanded to reach diverse and under-represented groups (e.g. Enterprise Adviser volunteers, Jobs and Careers newsletters and internet) • Ensure Open Door and wider Employment Brokerage scheme pathways are accessible and inclusive for both applicants and successful candidates (e.g. Open Door website, relationship with external organisations etc) | Ongoing, aligned with existing programme timescales- The established Open Door programme will continue throughout 2023/24 | Aligned with existing programme measures |
| 3.2 Use apprenticeships to provide nationally recognised work-based qualifications to people from diverse / under-represented backgrounds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Apprenticeship Strategy, ensuring nationally recognised work-based qualifications are available to people from diverse and under-represented backgrounds | <p>Apprenticeship Strategy approved - end of March 2023</p> <p>Launch and communicate approach both internally</p> | Increase in number of diverse and under-represented groups participating in nationally recognised work-based qualifications |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of the Strategy by working with the Stakeholder Consultation Group to provide clear guidance on EDI related goals and measures (e.g. capturing details of the characteristics and diversity profile of applicants) | and externally - April 2023 onwards | |
| 3.3 Publish an ED&I development offer that includes a range of products to suit different learning styles, audiences and situations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the specification for a new EDI mandatory training module and a module for hiring managers on providing accessible and inclusive recruitment Continue to develop internal and external resources, to support self-directed and team led learning Build in a feedback channel to understand the impact of the development offer Respond to and complete the EDI Training Audit action Commission a new product(s) to support recruiters, and review impact following launch | <p>Invitation to tender posted - Completed October 2022</p> <p>Provider identified and contracted - November 2022</p> <p>Products launched - March 2023</p> <p>Campaign to complete mandatory module for all staff and recruitment module for hiring managers - April and September 2023</p> | <p>New product commissioned and fully implemented</p> <p>Number of mandatory EDI learning module completions</p> <p>Positive feedback on impact of supporting guidance and materials e.g. on candidate experience of the recruitment process</p> |

People Strategy: Developing Leaders for Now and the Future

Objective: Review and strengthen our diversity and inclusion training offer to employees

| EDI Objectives 2022/23 | Key Actions | By when | Measures of Success |
|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| 4.1 Provide a reciprocal mentorship scheme to enable colleagues from different backgrounds, grades, and levels of experience to share, learn and grow together | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore linkages with the System Wide EDI Forum mentoring programme, to ensure the Council can put forward candidates for the initial programme Promote the scheme internally | End of September 2023 | <p>Introduction of new scheme</p> <p>Participation of staff</p> |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| 4.2 Ensure the Council has a profile in system level / regional EDI forums and networks to ensure we are linked into the latest thinking and approaches | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council's EDI Steering Group and possible Black Workers Forum representation on system level EDI forums Develop and ensure a regular communication mechanism is in place between the EDI Steering Group and system level EDI forums | <p>Regular communications with existing forums established from September</p> <p>EDI Lead is now a member of PPMA Shires EDI group - first meeting January 2023</p> | Outputs and learning informing future EDI goals and approach for 2023-24 onwards |
|--|--|---|--|

Respond to Audit Actions

| EDI Objectives 2022/23 | Key Actions | By when | Measures of Success |
|--|--|---|--|
| EDI item added to organisation risk register | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share draft with EDI Steering Group for consideration Ensure final suggested risk wording, shaped by the EDI Steering Group, is passed back for entry into the new risk system | In progress - expected completion February 2023 | <p>EDI risks included in the Risk Register</p> <p>Regular monitoring of the EDI risks</p> |
| Review and expand the EDI plan to provide more detail and ensure objectives are SMART, meaningful and include interdependencies (and also develop measures / KPIs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree format of EDI delivery plan Identify leads, interdependencies, inputs, outcomes and success measures for each action Monitor progress and written progress update report to Cabinet in December 2022 | <p>EDI delivery plan - completed in September 2022</p> <p>Annual reporting - in progress:</p> <p>Corporate Overview and Scrutiny - December 2022</p> <p>Cabinet - February 2023</p> | <p>EDI delivery plan developed and approved by the EDI Steering Group</p> <p>Regular monitoring of the EDI delivery plan</p> <p>Consider key issues and future development opportunities</p> |
| Undertake light touch assessment against EFLG | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess EDI delivery plan against LGA EFLG Review Delivery Plan | March 2023 | To follow 'Review and expansion of EDI delivery plan' |
| Develop and agree Terms of Reference for EDI steering group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek comment from EDI Steering Group members Sign-off Terms of Reference | Completed in May 2022 | Terms of reference developed and adopted by the EDI Steering Group |

| | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Reference the Council's values and behaviours in Code of Conduct | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDI Steering Group to consider options as part of the development of the 2023/24 plan. | End of March 2023 | |
| Ensure CIAs consider intersectional protected characteristics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing CIA guidance and supporting materials to understand any gaps Refine and publish tweaked CIA guidance and supporting materials | Completed in May 2022 | CIA guidance updated to incorporate this in April 2022 |
| Develop measures and KPIs for the objectives in the EDI delivery plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversations with delivery leads identify key measures of success Alignment of key measures with any existing plans | Completed in September 2022 | Success measures developed and monitored by the EDI Steering Group |



Appendix 2 - Equality Duty & Gender Pay Gap Report

March 2022



Equality Duty

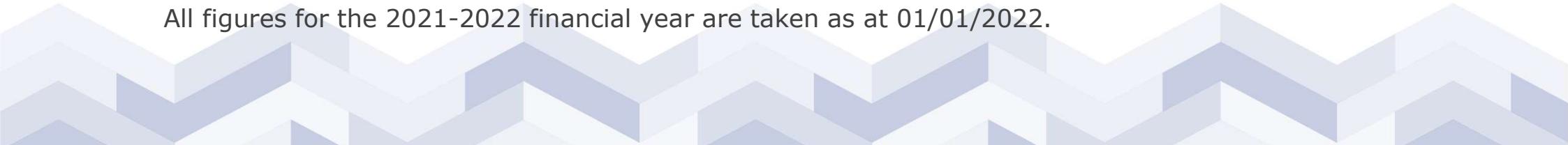
Introduction

Staffordshire County Council is a diverse county, and recognises the importance of equality and inclusion in improving public services for everyone. The Council has a legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people. As part of this Act, the public sector equality duty requires the Council to show how it is meeting its responsibilities as an employer, including a requirement to publish information on its workforce, broken down by protected characteristics, which are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

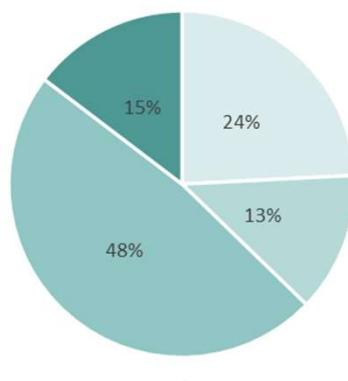
This report forms part of the Council's response to that duty, and provides workforce data which will help us to understand the effectiveness of our own employment policies and processes in promoting equality.

All figures for the 2021-2022 financial year are taken as at 01/01/2022.



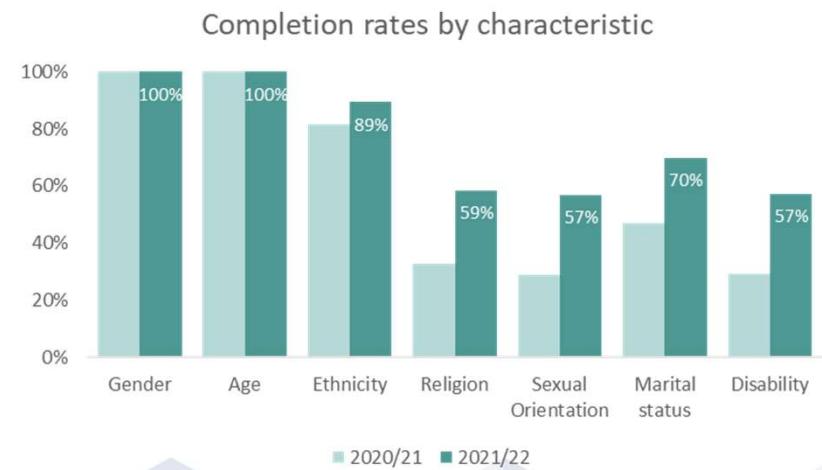
Overview

- As at the 1st January 2022, SCC employed people in 3891 contracts across 4 directorates, *Economy, Infrastructure and Skills* being the smallest (accounting for 13% of the headcount), and *Families and Communities* being the largest (48% of the headcount).



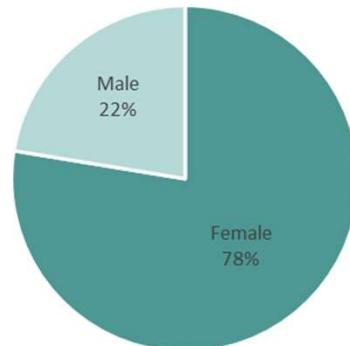
Legend:
■ Corporate Services
■ Economy Infrastructure and Skills
■ Families and Communities
■ Health and Care

- Significant progress has been made over the last year in improving the completeness of our equalities data, particularly for Religion, Sexual Orientation and Disability.

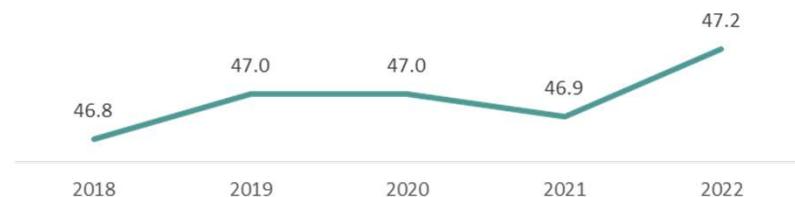


Protected characteristics – Age and Sex

- Staffordshire County Council has a predominantly female workforce; as at January 2022, 78% of the workforce was female.
- The distribution of workers by age group has been consistent year-on-year, but does vary between genders; there are higher proportions of females in the 30-59 age groups, whereas the male workforce has higher proportions of staff in the 60+ age range

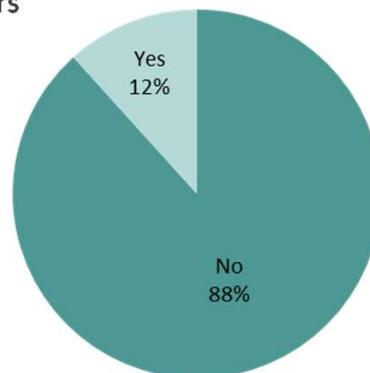


- The County Council's age profile has remained stable since 2009, and currently 27% of staff are aged 39 or under, 26% are aged 40-49, 33% are aged 50-59, and the remaining 14% are aged 60 or over
- The average age of the workforce is 47.2 years, with the male workforce consistently averaging 2-3 years older than the female workforce

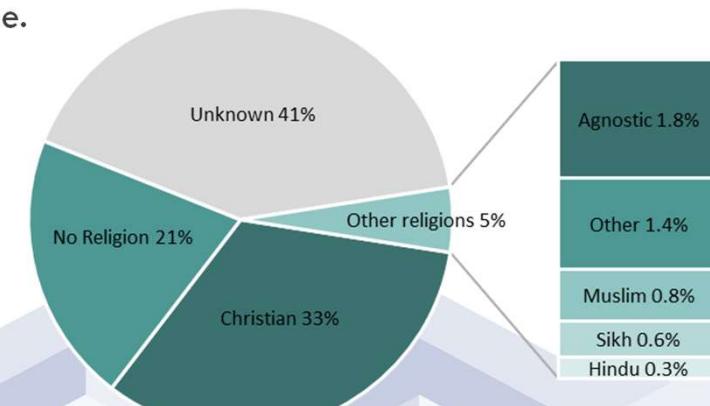


Protected characteristics – Disability and Religion

- Disability information is now held for 57% of staff – 2230 people. This represents a 97% increase on the figures reported in previous years
- 261 people indicated that they have a disability, equivalent to 12% of the ‘known’ workforce and 7% of the workforce as a whole

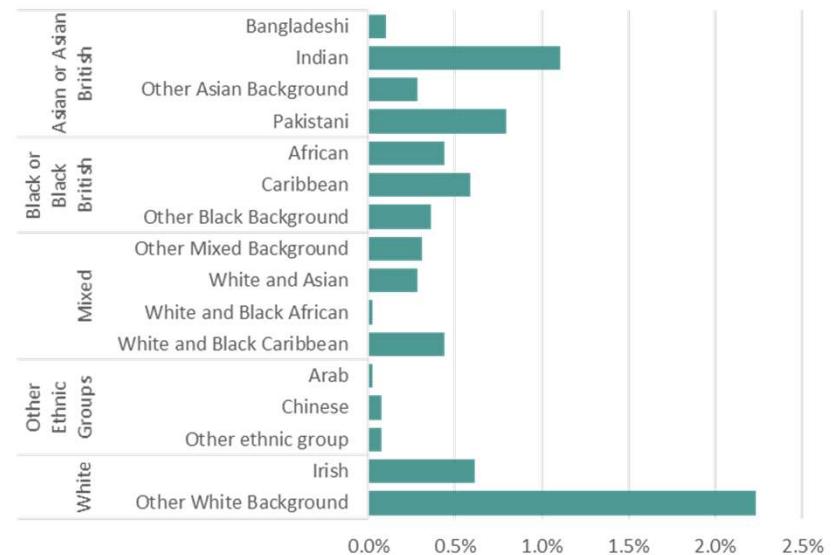
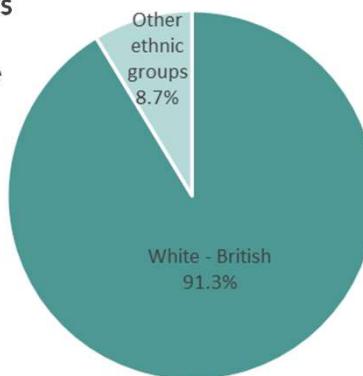


- Information on religion or belief is now held for 59% of staff – 2230 people - which represents a 78% increase on the figures reported in previous years
- Christianity is the most commonly cited religion, accounting for 56% of the ‘known’ workforce and 33% of the workforce as a whole.
- Staff citing ‘no religion’ account for a further 35% of the ‘known’ workforce and 21% of the workforce as a whole.



Protected characteristics – Ethnicity

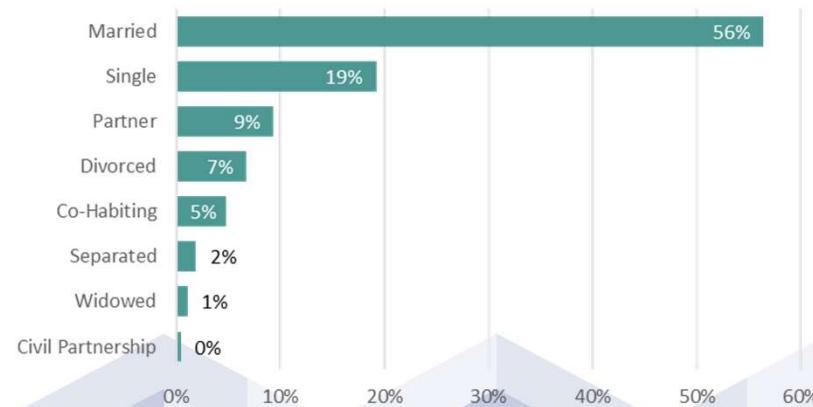
- Ethnicity information is now held for 89% of staff – 3478 people. This represents a 9% increase on the figures reported in previous years
- 8.7% of the known workforce are from ethnic backgrounds other than White – British, which is an increase on previous years (previously 7.2%)



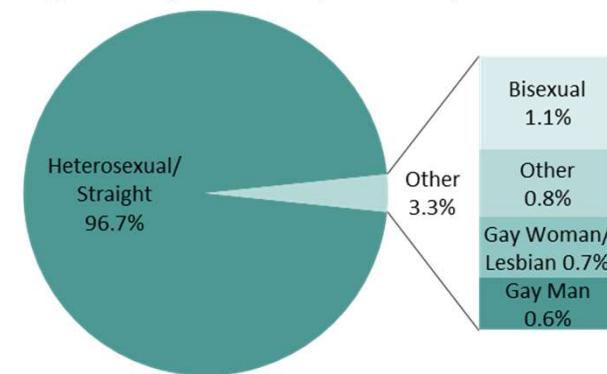
- Previous analysis against data from the 2011 Census has shown that our workforce is broadly representative of the wider Staffordshire population, and this will be refreshed once the 2021 data is published

Protected characteristics – Marital Status & Sexual Orientation

- Information on marriage and civil partnerships is now held for 70% of staff – 2720 people. This represents a 49% increase on the figures reported in previous years
- The current figures remain broadly in line with those from previous years, although the proportion of staff recorded as *Married* has fallen slightly, while those for *Single* and *Co-Habiting* have both increased



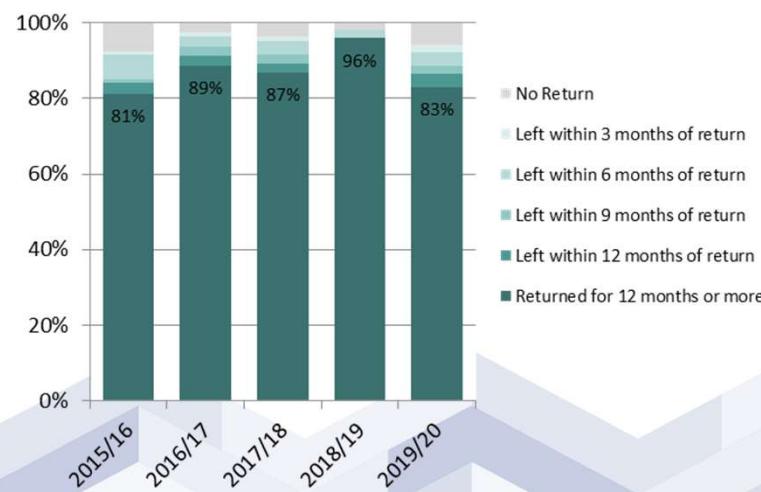
- Information on sexual orientation is now held for 57% of staff – 2215 people - which represents a 98% increase on the figures reported in previous years



- The current figures are in line with those from previous years, but are lower than we might expect to see based on estimates for the UK population as a whole

Protected characteristics – Pregnancy & Gender Reassignment

- Page 41
- The proportion of staff returning from maternity leave for 12 months or more averages 87% across the last five years.
 - This proportion fell last year, but any issues underlying this are currently unclear and will require further investigation



- The Council does not currently hold sufficient data on gender re-assignment to be able to publish meaningful figures at this time.
- There is also no reliable national estimate at the current time regarding the number of people identified as transgender, although a 2009 Home Office-funded study estimated the number to be between 200,000 and 500,000, which would suggest 10 to 25 transgender employees in an organisation the size of SCC.

Gender Pay Gap

Snapshot Date 31 March 2021

Introduction

Staffordshire County Council, as a public sector employer of more than 250 employees, is required to report on its gender pay gap in line with 'The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017' for workers in scope.

The gender pay gap differs from equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women undertaking the same or similar jobs considered equal value. It is unlawful to pay people differently who perform the same (or similar) duties because they are male or female. The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between men and women's average earnings; it allows organisations to be transparent about gender pay differences and to take action to address them.

As stipulated in the legislation we are required to publish the following gender pay data:

- ✓ Gender pay gap (mean and median values)
- ✓ Gender bonus gap (mean and median values)
- ✓ Proportion of men and women receiving bonuses
- ✓ Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the organisation's pay structure.

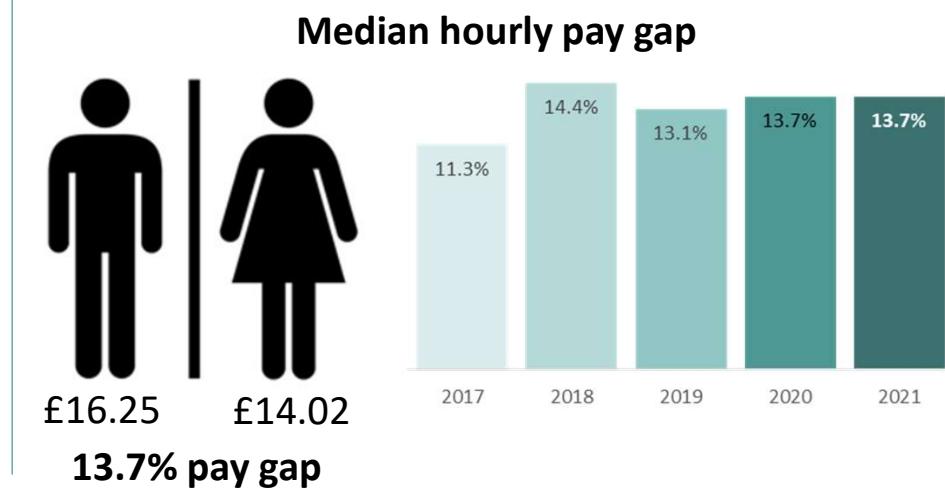
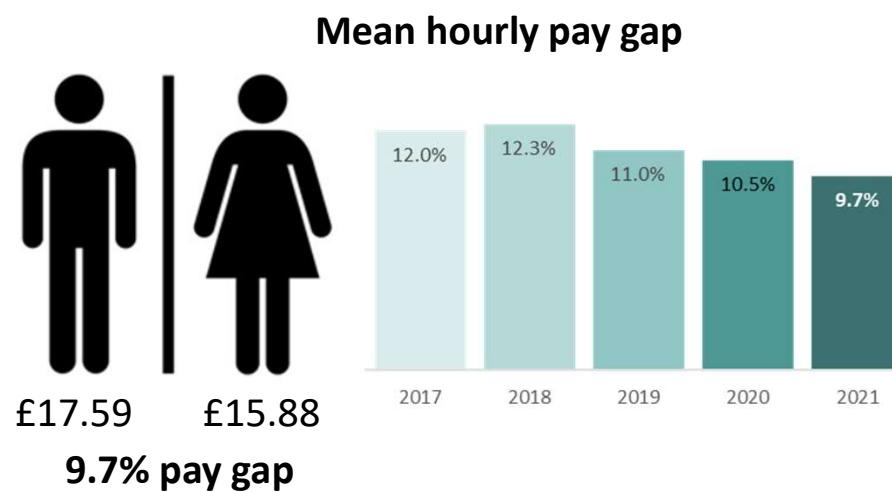
The deadline for this years Gender Pay Gap Report publication is 30th March 2022, and salary data will be based on the snapshot date of 31st March 2021. Bonus data will include all bonus payments made in the 12 months up to and including the snapshot date of 31st March 2021. Full pay employees and casual workers in post at the snapshot date are included in the figures.



Gender Pay Gap – Average Hourly Rates

- Our mean gender pay gap has continued to reduce and now stands at 9.7 %, while the median gender pay gap remains consistent at 13.7%. Both measures remain significantly lower than national and public sector benchmarks*

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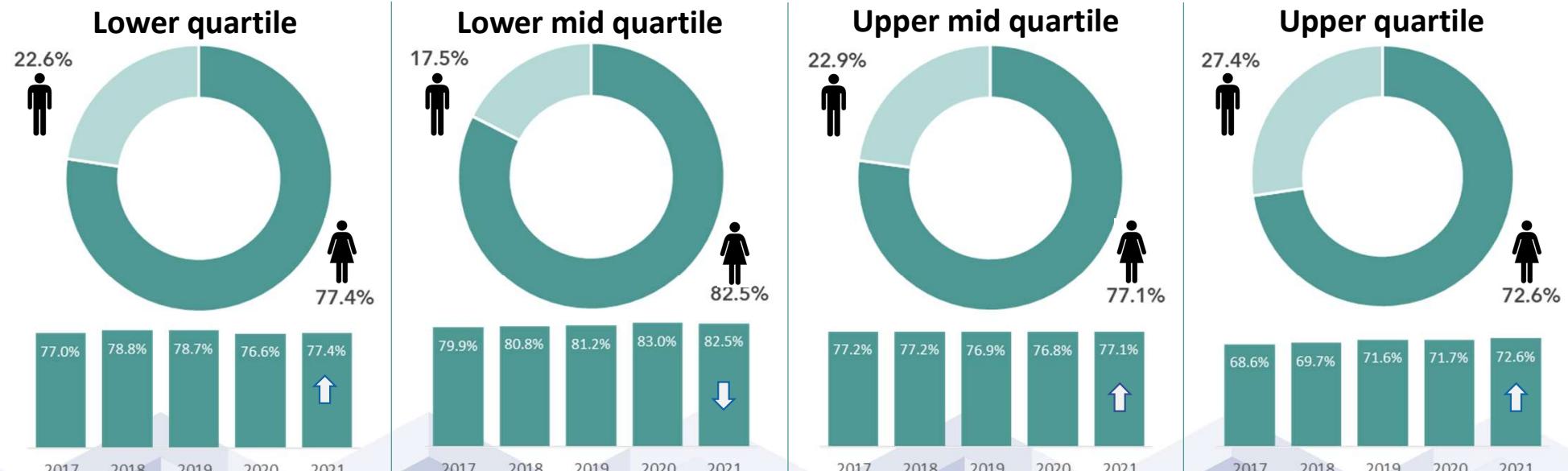
- Our bonus pay gap remains at 100%, with just one person receiving a bonus in the form of performance related pay

*Figures from ONS (ASHE 2021) Overall 14.9% mean/15.4% median, Public sector 14.8% mean/18% median, Private sector 17.8% mean/19.6% median

Gender pay gap – workforce quartiles

- 77.4% of our workforce are female, but their distribution throughout the pay quartiles does vary. The number of female staff in the lower mid quartile is disproportionately high, whereas the number in the upper quartile is disproportionately low but continues to increase year-on-year and is a key driver in reducing our pay gap.

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Understanding Our Pay Gap

Since the first gender pay gap publication in March 2018, we have undertaken significant analysis to understand the reasons for our pay gap and have identified the following:

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- Our pay gap fluctuates during the year and is susceptible to change.
- The make-up of our workforce, including the types of jobs that we have, impacts on reducing our pay gap.
- There is a greater proportion of women than men in part time lower paid jobs.
- We have very few part time employees within managerial roles and within the upper pay quartile.
- There are gender imbalances across the organisation by job category.
- There are historical societal factors which we can not control, and which may take some years to see change.



Our equality, diversity and gender pay gap commitments

Senior managers and political leaders within the Council are committed to taking steps to achieve greater equality, diversity & inclusion and in turn, reduce our gender pay gap. Actions include:

- ✓ Embedding our People Strategy to support a more diverse workforce and to create a positive working environment which embodies our values and ensures we provide an inclusive and accessible working environment.
- ✓ Improving our workforce data collection and creating a diversity workforce profile to; identify trends, drive improvements and monitor our progress.
- ✓ Developing and implementing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and action plan.
- ✓ Facilitating the set up of employee forums to enable colleagues from different backgrounds to share their experiences of working at SCC and to help us make positive improvements to our working environment.
- ✓ Continuing to develop our Smart Working and Digital agenda, to increase the opportunities for employees to work flexibly where possible, increase the choice of working environment and help balance busy work and home lives.
- ✓ Making pay and reward processes more transparent using our job evaluation framework.
- ✓ Reviewing all of our People Policies with the principle that they will be inclusive, supportive and consider employee wellbeing.
- ✓ Reviewing our recruitment practices and technology to ensure they are truly inclusive which will ensure we attract and retain diverse talent and become an employer of choice.
- ✓ Participating in ongoing local initiatives such as Women in Leadership, Menopause at Work and the New Parent Mentoring Scheme.
- ✓ Ensuring that managers have the skills to lead, inspire and develop their teams ensuring everyone has the opportunity to grow through our management and leadership development programme.
- ✓ Developing our apprenticeship strategy and considering how we can increase underrepresented groups within particular jobs.

Community Impact Assessment

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Progress Update

Author: Wendy Tompson, Head of Policy and Insight

Date: 15 February 2023

➤ Equality Assessment

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 5</p> <p>Cross-cutting – Impacts that affect all or multiple protected characteristics</p> | <p>Strengthening the Council's approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion will have positive impacts on people with protected characteristics, both within the organisation and across Staffordshire. This includes work that the County Council undertakes to deliver against its Equalities duties, together with a range of initiatives and activities that are set out within the Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) delivery plan, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthening our employment promotion and recruitment processes to enable a more diverse workforce - strengthening our approach to engaging and collaborating with | <p>Delivery of the EDI delivery plan within agreed timescales, to positively impact on all or multiple protected characteristics could be impacted by resource challenges</p> | <p>Delivery and governance processes, along with key resource, have been agreed to ensure monitoring of progress against the EDI delivery plan is undertaken. In addition, EDI progress is routinely reported through the Council's Corporate Integrated Performance Management process quarterly, and through Cabinet and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee annually.</p> |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|---|--|--|
| | our workforce and communities on diversity to raise awareness and enable shared shaping of policies and services, and - strengthening our training offer to employees. | | |
| Age - older and younger people | See cross-cutting benefits identified in first row above. | | |
| Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities. | | See cross-cutting risks identified in first row above. | See cross-cutting mitigations / recommendations identified in first row above. |
| Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another | | | |
| Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work | | | |
| Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers | | | |
| Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins | | | |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|---|---|
| Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered | | | |
| Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes | | | |
| Sex - men or women | <p>In addition to the cross-cutting benefits identified above, the County Council is undertaking significant analysis to understand and reduce its gender pay gap.</p> <p>There is no difference between the pay of men and women employed in the same or equivalent roles due to our job evaluation mechanism which ensures equal pay, however, there is a difference between the average hourly pay of men and women across our entire workforce and steps are being taken to reduce this.</p> | <p>See cross-cutting risks identified in first row above.</p> | <p>See cross-cutting mitigations / recommendations identified in first row above.</p> |

➤ Workforce Assessment

| Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|
| All protected characteristics | Further strengthening the Council's approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion will have positive impacts on our workforce. This includes work that the County Council undertakes to deliver against its Equalities duties, together with a range of initiatives and activities that are set out within the EDI delivery plan. With further detail in the EDI delivery plan, these include, providing the workforce with toolkits, information, advice and guidance and training, together with comms to celebrate diversity, all of which are and will continue to have a positive impact | In addition to risks identified in the first row above in the Equalities Assessment, there is a risk that if staff are not informed and fully engaged, it may result in a lack of awareness and further engagement in EDI activities/initiatives. | In addition to the mitigations / recommendations identified in the first row above in the Equalities Assessment, a range of communication activities and campaigns are to be undertaken as part of the EDI delivery plan, to maximise awareness raising and engagement. |

| Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|---|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| | on tackling inequalities and promoting diversity and inclusion within the organisation. | | |

➤ **Health, Well-being and Social Care Assessment**

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|--|---|---|
| Work to strengthen the Council's approach to EDI includes broad cross-cutting actions/activity relating to health and well-being. | Further strengthening the EDI approach, and helping to promote diversity and inclusion with a view to also reducing inequalities across Staffordshire has potential to have a positive impact upon people's health and well-being. For example, the shared shaping of policies and services with communities will link with wider work, such as ensuring that all people have full and | See cross-cutting risks identified in first row above of the Equalities Assessment. | See cross-cutting mitigations / recommendations identified in first row above of the Equalities Assessment. |

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--------------------|--|-------|-------------------------------|
| | <p>equal access to opportunities that enable them to lead healthy lives, limiting avoidable health inequalities and disparities.</p> | | |

page 55

Communities Assessment

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Work to strengthen the Council's approach to EDI includes broad cross-cutting actions/activity that will reduce inequalities and engage and empower communities to ensure everyone has the opportunity to prosper and be healthy and happy. | <p>Strengthening the Council's approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion will have positive impacts on our communities. This includes work that the County Council undertakes to deliver against its Equalities duties, together with a range of initiatives and activities that are set out within the EDI delivery plan. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhancing our employment promotion and recruitment processes to | See cross-cutting risks identified in first row above of the Equalities Assessment. | See cross-cutting mitigations / recommendations identified in first row above of the Equalities Assessment. |

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|-------------------|---|-------|-------------------------------|
| | <p>achieve more diverse candidates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improving quality and reach of engagement activity and - expanding the reach of our work experience/apprenticeship opportunities. | | |

Economic Assessment

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Work to strengthen the Council's approach to EDI includes broad cross-cutting actions/activity that will improve the diversity of the workforce and enable Staffordshire residents to improve their skills and qualifications</p> | <p>Further strengthening our recruitment and retention processes to promote diversity and inclusion will benefit both the organisation, its workforce and people across Staffordshire by promoting the County Council as a 'go to' inclusive employer, bringing different perspectives and experiences to the organisation and providing opportunities for the</p> | <p>See cross-cutting risks identified in first row above of the Equalities Assessment.</p> | <p>See cross-cutting mitigations / recommendations identified in first row above of the Equalities Assessment.</p> |

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|-------------------|--|-------|-------------------------------|
| | workforce and Staffordshire residents to improve their skills. | | |

➤ **Climate Change Assessment**

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|----------|-------|-------------------------------|
| No climate change impacts have been identified | | | |

➤ **Environment Assessment**

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|----------|-------|-------------------------------|
| No environmental impacts have been identified | | | |

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 15 February 2023

Empowering our Communities



Councillor Victoria Wilson, Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture said,

"Our amazing communities across Staffordshire really are at the heart of what makes this county such a fantastic place to live.

"Friends helping friends, neighbours helping neighbours and people stretching out a helping hand to those most in need, is what makes a difference to the quality of so many people's lives.

"As a county council, we are committed to empowering our communities and in the last year this approach, with the support of our voluntary, community and public sector partners, helped more than 1,200 families improve their lives, supported just under 110,000 people through our community-based public health drives and distributed more than £200,000 worth of grants to help communities recover from the pandemic.

"But we know together we can do even more, and in 2023 we aim to do just that by empowering our wonderful communities here in Staffordshire."

Report Summary:

What makes Staffordshire great is its people and its communities, and we have seen the amazing things communities can do when they come together. Staffordshire County Council has achieved a significant amount working with our public sector partners and the voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector to empower our communities in recent years. We continue to be ambitious, and we know we can do much more.

This report and the attached Communities Position Statement reviews our progress in 2021/22, provides a clear and detailed delivery plan for 2023, and sets out our intention to develop a long-term, innovative, and aspirational Communities Strategy for Staffordshire.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Consider and approve the attached Communities Position Statement, including a review of the progress made with partners and communities in 2021/22.
- b. Approve the Communities Delivery Plan for 2023.
- c. Approve a proposal to engage with partners and communities to develop a long-term, innovative, and ambitious Communities Strategy for Staffordshire.

Cabinet – Wednesday 15 February 2023

Empowering our Communities

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Consider and approve the attached Communities Position Statement, including a review of the progress made with partners and communities in 2021/22.
- b. Approve the Communities Delivery Plan for 2023.
- c. Approve a proposal to engage with partners and communities to develop a long-term, innovative, and ambitious Communities Strategy for Staffordshire.

Local Member Interest: N/A

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Background

1. Our communities and residents are at the very heart of what makes Staffordshire a strong and thriving county. Empowering our communities to help themselves and each other is a core part of our Strategic Plan 2022-25. As one of the four 'How We Work' statements in our Strategic Plan, working with communities needs to be at the heart of everything we do as a Council.
2. Recognising the importance of our work with communities, a **Communities Position Statement** has been developed and attached to this report. The purpose of this document is to **review progress made in 2021/22**, clearly articulate our **plans for the next 12 months**, and set out **our longer-term aspirations**.
3. The Communities Position Statement has been developed by the Communities Leadership Group to communicate to Councillors, staff, and partners about what we have achieved working with communities over the past 18 months and what we plan to do moving forward. Ahead of engaging with our communities in the summer, we also intend to develop a short, public facing document to communicate these messages in an appropriate way for residents.

4. The Council's Communities Leadership Group (CLG) includes senior officers from across the County Council and our VCSE Capacity Building Framework partners Support Staffordshire and the Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS). The group ensure co-ordination, collaboration, and performance monitoring of our communities-related work.
5. The Communities Position Statement has also been discussed with Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12th December. The feedback of the Committee helped shape the final Communities Position Statement and inform the attached Communities Delivery Plan 2023. This feedback included the need to engage with communities alongside our partners, as well as ensuring that the measures and targets in the delivery plan were SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic / relevant, and time-bound).

Communities Position Statement - Overview

6. The Communities Position Statement provides a **review of 2021/22**. This includes a summary of the work taking place across the entire organisation and alongside our communities, the local VCSE sector, and our public sector partners. Highlights include:
 - a. Working with partners and our VCSE sector to review and agree our new Early Help Strategy 2022-27, supporting families to access the right help, in the right place and at the right time.
 - b. Supporting 1,238 families facing multiple challenges to improve their lives between April 2021 and March 2022 through the Supporting Families Programme, working alongside community groups across the County.
 - c. Supporting just under 110,000 people to find help through Supportive Communities, our community-based public health programme that helps residents be healthier and more independent for longer.
 - d. Distributing £200,000 worth of grants to support VCSE groups to recover post Covid-19 and address rising costs for the VCSE sector.
 - e. Schools, community groups, and parish councils securing £76,000 from the Climate Change Action Fund 2021/22 for local initiatives that help reduce Staffordshire's contribution to climate change.
 - f. Awarding 156 community groups £114,000 of small grants through our Member-Led Community Fund in 2021/22 to deliver a huge range of local activities.

- g. Committing £1.5m investment over the next three years to continue supporting the local VCSE sector by commissioning a new VCSE Capacity Building Framework contract.
 - h. Launching the 'Here to Help' campaign in early October to make sure people are aware of the support and advice available, including areas such as money and bills, food, staying warm and helping others. To date there have been 19,800 visitors to web pages, 38,000 page views and 18,000 leaflets distributed to vulnerable residents.
7. The Communities Position Statement also details **our Communities Delivery Plan for 2023**. It sets out three strategic objectives and key deliverables for working with partners to empower Staffordshire's communities. A summary of the plan includes:
- a. **Embedding community-led prevention and early help** by developing Family Hubs, delivering our Supportive Communities public health programme, distributing round 3 of the Climate Change Action Fund, and delivering our Community Managed Libraries offer. We will also encourage and inspire Parish and Town Councils to take an even greater leadership role in addressing strategic issues locally.
 - b. **Promoting community action and building community capacity**, including delivering next year's Members Fund, further #DoingOurBit communications campaigns, and supporting the VCSE sector through our new VCSE Capacity Building Framework.
 - c. **Supporting our organisation and others to have a communities mindset** by encouraging innovation when commissioning/delivering services, exploring opportunities for partnership working, and reviewing our internal policies.
8. A full version of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 is included at Appendix 2 of this report. This document includes a clear and detailed set of deliverables, alongside associated metrics, and milestones for monitoring our progress and understanding the impact our work is having out in communities.
9. Progress monitoring of the plan will be shared on a quarterly basis with the CLG and reported as part of the Council's Integrated Performance Management process.
10. In order to continue being ambitious for our communities, the Communities Position Statement sets out our intention to work with our partners and communities to develop a **long-term, aspirational, and innovative Communities Strategy for Staffordshire**.

11. We have a proven track-record of working with our public sector partners and vibrant voluntary sector organisations to find creative, community-based solutions to local issues. We want to build on this success to collaborate further in unlocking greater creativity and innovative solutions in the future.
12. An ambitious Communities Strategy that is shaped with our communities and our partners will help provide us with a platform for taking our work with communities even further.
13. To do this well, it is recommended that the Council engages with our communities and partners over the coming months. This activity will focus on what matters to our communities, where we should concentrate our efforts, and how we can work together in new and innovative ways to support the people of Staffordshire to prosper, be healthy and happy.

Timescales

14. Following discussion at Cabinet, work on the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 will continue to build on the success of our work with partners and the local VCSE sector in 2021/22.
15. If Cabinet approves the recommendation to develop a long-term, innovative, and aspirational Communities Strategy, engagement work will take place over the Summer of 2023, with a view to working with partners to develop a strategy by the end of the year.

Legal Implications

16. There are no specific legal implications for the Communities Delivery Plan 2023. Any commissioning work or changes to community assets undertaken as part of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 will follow the standard legal requirements of our commissioning, procurement, and property management processes.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

17. It is vital that we continue to invest in communities, especially following the financial impact of Covid-19 and the increasing cost of living.
18. Included within the attached Communities Delivery Plan 2023 are details on the costs of delivery, where available and possible to quantify. The estimated total cost of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 is circa £4m.

Climate Change Implications

19. Staffordshire County Council declared a climate change emergency in July 2019 and committed to also achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Communities have a key role to play in achieving net zero carbon emissions and delivering the Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025.
20. The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 includes several climate change related activities, including the #DoingOurBit to Make Staffordshire Sustainable campaign, supporting community groups through the Climate Change Action Fund, and working with businesses to raise awareness of their carbon footprint.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Communities Position Statement
Appendix 2 – Draft Communities Delivery Plan 2023
Appendix 3 – Communities Impact Assessment

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Catherine Mann, Interim Assistant Director for Culture, Rural and Safer Communities.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Report Author: | Wendy Tompson |
| Job Title: | Head of Policy and Insight |
| Telephone No.: | 01785 8542673 |
| E-Mail Address: | wendy.tompson@staffordshire.gov.uk |
| Report Author: | Adam Rooney |
| Job Title: | Senior Policy Officer |
| Telephone No.: | 07850059101 |
| E-Mail Address: | adam.rooney@staffordshire.gov.uk |

Empowering Our Communities

Communities Position Statement 2023



Empowering Our Communities

Communities Position Statement 2023

Foreword



Cllr Victoria Wilson,
Cabinet Member for
Communities and Culture

Our communities and residents are at the very heart of what makes Staffordshire a strong and thriving county.

We have seen what Staffordshire's communities can achieve when they come together. The power of our community was critical to Staffordshire's response to Covid-19, with people all over the county doing their bit and going above and beyond to support each other and their local neighbourhoods. Over recent years we have had a proven track-record of working with our residents and community groups to find new ways of addressing local issues. With people struggling with the rising cost of living and challenging times for public finances, there continues to be a real need for creativity and collaboration.

We know that together we can do even more, and in 2023 we aim to do just that by continuing to empower the wonderful communities of Staffordshire.

Helping our residents to live in thriving and sustainable communities is a key priority in our Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026. We have created this Communities Position Statement to clearly set out for our Councillors, our staff, and our partners how our work with communities will help to achieve this priority, including what we have achieved so far and the actions we are taking moving forward.

This includes our Communities Delivery Plan 2023, which details the range of activities taking place across the Council over the next 12 months with our partners to help empower our communities. This plan is actively supported by our Cabinet and focuses on:

- **Embedding community-led prevention and early help to make sure our residents can access the support they need to be healthy, independent, and live in sustainable communities.**
- **Promoting community action and building community capacity, working with Staffordshire's vibrant voluntary and community groups and helping our residents to get involved in what matters to them.**
- **Supporting our organisation and others to have a communities mindset by challenging our approach to commissioning, exploring opportunities for partnership working, and reviewing our internal policies.**

We will put in place strong oversight of this plan to ensure that we are delivering and we understand the difference we are making.

Finally, it is important to recognise that everything we set out in this document will be delivered with, or by, our communities and partners, including the local voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. With this in mind, we are setting ourselves an ambitious target of co-designing an aspirational, long-term Communities Strategy for Staffordshire with our communities over the coming year."

Context

The national evidence base on the wide-reaching benefits of empowering communities is well established and growing. This evidence comes from a variety of sources, from the 2010 Marmot Review¹ through to research from Government² and think-tanks such as Onward³, Centre for Social Justice⁴ and New Local⁵.

Closer working with our communities can improve outcomes for residents in a range of ways, from helping individuals to improve their health and wellbeing, all the way through to enhancing participation in the democratic process. There is also evidence that empowering communities builds community and individual resilience and improves community cohesion.

In order to continue helping our residents and communities thrive and support each other, the public sector has to find a way to balance our challenging financial outlook with early help to prevent needs from escalating. We must work alongside residents, communities, and our vibrant VCSE sector to draw on all the existing strengths and assets in a community and embed new and innovative approaches to prevention and early help in public services.

A strong and sustainable VCSE sector is critical to achieving this. Local infrastructure organisation Support Staffordshire estimated in their 'State of the VCSE Sector 2021' report⁶ that the local VCSE sector has a turnover of more than £112m, employs almost 8,000 people, and engages over 50,000 volunteers worth another £90m.

This includes a strong youth sector, with the Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS) reporting that 35,641 young people accessed VCSE provided positive activities in 2021/22⁷.

This shows the strength of the VCSE sector in Staffordshire and the fundamental part it has to play in supporting our communities to be healthy, resilient, and proud of the place they live.

Empowering communities has been a key priority for Staffordshire County Council for a number of years. What makes Staffordshire great, is its people and communities. We want to create the conditions for all of our communities to thrive and be places where people can contribute, help themselves and each other. Since 2015 we have achieved a huge amount by working in partnership and being innovative where possible. We continue to be ambitious and we know we can do much more.

Working with our communities is central to our Strategic Plan 2022-26, and as such it is a "How we Work" statement. This reflects the importance of our communities and partners in delivering against all our priorities. For example, tackling climate change is a priority within our Strategic Plan, and we can only achieve this by working with our communities to tackle carbon emissions across the county.

1. The Marmot Review. (2010). Fair Society, Healthy Lives: Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010.

2. HM Government (2022). Rapid evidence review of community initiatives.

3. Onward (2020). The Policies of Belonging.

4. Centre for Social Justice (2021). Pillars of Community: Why Communities matter and what matters to them.

5. New Local (2021). Community Power: The Evidence.

6. Support Staffordshire (2021). The State of the VCSE sector 2021.

7. SCVYS (2022). Children and Young People Voluntary Sector Census Report 2022.

2021/22 Review

This section summarises the key highlights and achievements of the work we have done with our communities, the local VCSE sector, and public sector partners in 2021/22.

Offer every Staffordshire child and young people the best start in life:

1,238



families facing multiple challenges were supported to improve their lives between April 2021 and March 2022 through our Supporting Families Programme, working alongside community groups across the County



Working with partners and our VCSE sector to review and agree our new Early Help Strategy 2022-27, established eight Virtual Family Hubs, and agreed a new Family Hub Model with Cabinet to change the way we deliver services for families



Administered over
£12 million

in the last 12 months to assist people facing financial hardship through the Household Support Fund and other grants made available to the council

Saving families in need

£46,000

with established Library Uniform Hubs, working with partners and local community groups to gift free school uniforms in 2021/22



1,400



families in Newcastle-under-Lyme offered slow cookers, in a cost of living pilot scheme

This will be rolled out across the county in Spring 2023



Encourage good health and wellbeing:

Engaged with partners and communities into causes of obesity as part of the Better Health Staffordshire programme



4,650 
community groups have been registered on Staffordshire Connects

our online directory of community-based support. The Staffordshire Connects website averages approximately **27,000** unique hits per month



We have continued to deliver our Community Managed Libraries and our Libraries Community Offer

Had conversations with **5 local communities**,

supporting the Community Champions to develop **£50,000** worth of local projects addressing health inequalities



Distributed

£200,000

worth of grants to support VCSE groups to recover post Covid-19 and address to rising costs for the VCSE sector

Supported just under

110,000

people to find help through Supportive Communities

our community-based public health programme that helps residents be healthier and more independent for longer. This has taken place through different routes, including our Community Help Points in libraries and community buildings across the county

As of January 2023,

870
Ukrainians



have been accommodated in Staffordshire since March 2022, with **630** still being hosted by local sponsors

We have worked with **193**

Community Champions in Burton, Knutton, and Cross Heath to champion local health initiatives

As trusted community voices, the Champions also co-design and share information and guidance with specific groups

Worked with Support Staffordshire to deliver Supportive Communities training sessions to just under

1,000

participants

Tackle climate change, enhance our environment:

£76,000

secured by Schools, community groups, and parish councils from the Climate Change Action Fund 2021/22 for local initiatives to help reduce Staffordshire's contribution to climate change



reductions in air pollution outside schools up to

as part of Air Aware Staffordshire, whilst delivering targeted campaigns on the benefits of walking and cycling

Cross Cutting:

156



were awarded £114,000 of small grants through our Member-Led Community Fund in 2021/22 to deliver a huge range of local activities

We have committed a **£1.5m investment**

over the next three years to continue supporting the voluntary sector by commissioning a new VCSE Capacity Building Framework contract

over

250



received and recycled through the The Donate-It ICT scheme, to share with residents at risk of digital exclusion



VCSE groups supported to secure
£6.3million
of additional funding

The final year of our VCSE Strategic Capacity Building Partnership saw community groups supported with access to funding. In addition, 206 individuals were supported to access local volunteering opportunities in their area, and 230 free training places were accessed by VCSE representatives

We have delivered **3** successful #DoingOurBit local communications campaigns

focussing on loneliness, mental health, and climate change, reaching thousands of Staffordshire residents



Empowering Staffordshire's Communities

The Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26 sets out our vision for Staffordshire to be an innovative, ambitious, and sustainable county where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy. An important part of this vision is that everyone in Staffordshire lives in thriving and sustainable communities.

Empowering our communities is a key part of our Strategic Plan 2022-26. It is one of our 'How We Work Statements' - **"encourage our communities to help themselves and each other"** because it is central to delivering against all our Strategic Plan priorities, and a cross-organisation way of working.

The county council has a key role to play in helping our communities achieve their aspirations. This includes:

- Creating the right conditions to allow communities to support themselves and flourish
- Championing and connecting our communities so that we always think about the strengths of our communities, listen to what they say, and promote the good work that is happening

- Trusting communities to get more involved and take more control over what matters to them, and
- Targeted community-led prevention and early help so that people stay healthy, well, and independent for longer. Working to make sure it is the right help, at the right time, in the right place.

To do this, we have identified three strategic objectives to focus our work over the next 12 months:

- Embed community-led prevention and early help
- Promote community action and build community capacity
- Support our organisation and others to have a communities mindset



Embed community-led prevention and early help

As outlined earlier in this document community-led prevention and early help is key to improving outcomes for the people of Staffordshire. Research tells us that when people need help or support, it is often most effective when it comes from their family, friends or from within their communities. Working with our partners to ensure that local, community-led and strengths-based support is available and accessible is a key objective. Accessibility includes ensuring that people have the information and help to navigate to the right support.

In 2023 we will:

- Improve access to early help for our families and children by developing the Family Hub model, bringing together all the support families may need from pregnancy through to young people turning 18 (25 if they have a disability).
- Deliver the **Supportive Communities** programme and embedding the approach to ensure adult social care works with the strengths of our communities. This includes further developing our Community Help Points, building on our recent 'citizen enquiry' conversations with communities and growing our networks of local Community Champions.
- Deliver round 3 of the **Climate Change Action Fund** to help local communities to reduce their contribution to climate change and working with Members and partners to establish a new **Communities Highways Offer**.
- Work with volunteers and community groups to continue delivering our **Community Managed Libraries & Libraries Community Offer**.



Promote community action and build community capacity

We have an important place leadership role, working with VCSE partners, residents, and communities to promote empower people to get involved and help themselves and each other. As such we will continue to promote opportunities for residents to get involved and connect with each other.

We understand that residents and businesses are busy, so alongside volunteering opportunities we will also encourage our residents to do “one small thing” that cumulatively could make a big difference in their communities.

A thriving VCSE sector is key to empowering our communities and achieving our ambitions for Staffordshire. Since 2016, the County Council has a Strategic Capacity Building Framework in place with local infrastructure organisations to help build capacity and sustainability. This relationship has been vital in not only supporting the sustainability of the VCSE sector but has also played a key role in helping us deliver priority programmes including Early Help for Children and Families, Supportive Communities, and Staffordshire’s Young People’s Offer. In 2022 we recommissioned this work to continue to provide vital support to the sector.

In 2023 we will:

- Deliver our newly commissioned VCSE Capacity Building Framework contract. This includes helping the VCSE sector to be sustainable post Covid-19 and working with community groups on Supportive Communities, Early Help, and our statutory youth offer.
- Review and expand our '#DoingOurBit' communication campaign to continue to inspire and empower people to help themselves, and each other, and the place they live.
- Continue with our successful Members Fund, providing vital funding to community projects across Staffordshire.



Support our organisation and others to have a communities mindset

We recognise there is more to be done to embed an empowering communities culture across the county council. We must continue to be creative and innovative, challenging how we do things and reviewing our policies and procedures. We need to continue to support our workforce to understand the power of our communities, build on the strengths of our communities, and how we can help communities to help themselves. We also recognise that we must continue to challenge ourselves to engage and work in partnership with our residents, communities, and other public sector partners.

In 2023 we will:

- Deliver an internal communications plan to promote the importance and progress of our communities work across the organisation.
- Challenge the organisation's approach to commissioning to ensure that community engagement and a communities mindset are at the heart of our thinking.
- Review our internal policies and procedures, to ensure that where possible we have the right mechanisms in place to support a communities approach.
- Explore opportunities for greater partnership working on all things communities so that joint approaches on this agenda through the Staffordshire Leaders Board, Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board and the Integrated Care System can be maximised.



Developing a Long-Term Strategy

We have very purposely described this document as a Position Statement as it sets out the progress we've made to date and what we plan to do in the immediate future.

However, over the next 12 months we want to go even further and work with our residents, communities, businesses, and partners to develop a long-term, innovative, and aspirational Communities Strategy.

Engaging with our communities on what they want, what is important to them, and how our

work is having an impact locally will be essential. With this in mind, we will start an open and honest conversation with our communities and partners on what more we can do to help, where we should focus, and how we can work better together to support the people of Staffordshire to prosper, be healthy and happy.

We would welcome the opportunity to develop a Communities Strategy in partnership with other public sector organisations who are also committed to this agenda.

Delivery and Governance

Empowering our communities is everyone's responsibility. It involves all areas of the Council, from members to front-line workers, as well as working closely with our partners. As such, our approach to delivery will co-ordinate this activity in an effective and collaborative way.

The Communities Delivery Plan for 2023 is attached and contains further detail on how we will achieve the objectives set out in this document. The Communities Delivery Plan is overseen by the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture and the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills. The Communities Delivery Plan is a corporate plan, as such all portfolio holders and directorates contribute to its delivery.

A Communities Leadership Group brings together senior officers from across the county council with our VCSE infrastructure partners, to co-ordinate, collaborate and monitor progress against the Communities Delivery Plan.

Cabinet and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be provided with an annual report that summarises progress against the Delivery Plan for oversight and scrutiny.

Measuring Success

Performance data and information is vital in understanding the impact our work. At a strategic level, by delivering the objectives set out in this Position Statement we aim to:

- Increase feelings of pride in our communities
- Increase the number of people who feel they can access support and help from within their communities
- Increase the amount of community support available in Staffordshire

In the next 12 months we will be exploring how we can establish metrics, methodologies, and baselines for the above. This will allow us to monitor strategic progress, as well as progress against the Delivery Plan.

We will regularly monitor progress and impact against each of our three objectives. Key measures of success have been defined for each deliverable included in the Communities Delivery Plan. Reporting of progress, performance highlights, and improvement areas will be shared on a quarterly basis with the Communities Leadership Group and aligned with the Council's Integrated Performance Management process. High-level, key performance measures for each objective are summarised below:

Objective: Embed community-led prevention and early help

- Number of successful family outcomes delivered as part of our Supporting Families Programme
- Number of positive activities available for young people and levels of participation in our youth offer
- Number of people who have accessed resources, either through the Council's digital offer or at community help points, to promote independent living and community support

- Number of schemes and level of funding through the Climate Action Fund
- Number of people accessing Staffordshire's Libraries Community Offer, either digitally or in person

Objective: Promote community action and build community capacity

- Number of Community Champions
- Number of schemes and level of funding provided to support community initiatives through the Members Community Fund
- Amount of external funding secured by VCSE organisations following support from the VCSE Capacity Building Framework
- Number of VCSE organisations provided with one-to-one development support through the VCSE Capacity Building Framework
- Number of individuals supported to access local volunteering opportunities

Objective: Support our organisation and others to have a communities mindset

- Staff engaging with communities related content delivered through our internal communications activities
- Progress on policy review areas in relation to our volunteering, social value, and community engagement approaches.

Data and information on our performance will also be used to feed into the future development of our longer-term Communities Strategy, helping us to understand what more we can do to empower our communities.

Resources

Empowering Communities is a cross-organisation way of working. Our vision is that every part of the county council, and Staffordshire's public sector challenges themselves to think differently about how we work and engage with communities. The estimated total cost of the Communities Delivery Plan is circa £4m.



Empowering Our Communities

Communities Position Statement 2023



Staffordshire
County Council

Doing
Our
Bit

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Communities Delivery Plan 2023

| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|--|--|--|--|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Embed community-led prevention and early help - Health and Care | Enhance and expand Community Help Points (CHP) | Continue awareness raising activity to signpost people to support available Increase the number and quality of Community Help Points | Targeted promotion Number and source of referrals Reported user satisfaction levels | Automation of referrals - April 2024 Increased number of Community Help Points based on need - September 2023 | Cllr Paul Northcott | Claire McIver |
| | Refresh Staffordshire Connects online directory | Consultation with key stakeholders to secure buy in Agree principles for refresh of existing pages and identify owners, including an approach to make them 'easy to read' Refresh of web pages, to include new navigation Development and implementation of new branding aligned with DoingOurBit | Staffordshire Connects unique hits to H&C landing page Staffordshire Connects unique hits to H&C prevention pages Increase the number of organisations supported to get their details on Staffs Connects | Refresh completed - April 2023 | Cllr Paul Northcott | Claire McIver Natasha Moody |
| | Further develop and expand Community Champions programme | Further develop Community Champions initiative by expanding in Newcastle and Tamworth Deliver Citizen Inquiries in the identified districts and utilise findings to align Community Champions support for local projects Deliver agreed projects, informed by Citizen Inquiry findings | Number of Community Champions Number, level of funding and outcomes of initiatives undertaken | Community Champion projects identified and delivery commenced - March 2023 | Cllr Paul Northcott | Claire McIver |
| | Undertake a Community Inquiry in an initial 5 districts to understand aspirations for and barriers to long term health and wellbeing | Collate insights and learning to understand the needs and wants of communities Through Support Staffordshire co-produce with Community Champions support for local projects to reduce health inequalities | Projects aligned to priorities identified in Citizen Inquiry | Community Champion projects identified - March 2023 | Cllr Paul Northcott | Claire McIver |
| | Promote Supportive Communities internally in order to influence culture change with staff | Scope and agree future Supportive Communities training sessions with Support Staffordshire, as part of the new VCSE capacity building framework contract Develop and deliver relevant internal messages, aligned to the implementation of the Supportive Communities Communications Plan | Campaigns completed Number of website visits to Staffordshire Connected and webpages (bespoke dependent on campaign) Number completed Supportive Communities training User satisfaction from staff attending the training | Ongoing, with dates aligned to the Communications Plan Monitored and measured monthly to identify usage and impact from communication activities | Cllr Paul Northcott | Claire McIver |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Embed community-led prevention and early help for children and families | Embed community offer into the Adult Social Care pathway and strengths based working (including pilot work in Staffordshire Moorlands) | Research voluntary sector provision of non-regulated tasks Develop and deliver the Staffordshire Moorlands pilot, ensuring staff continue to record how they utilise Community and Voluntary Sector assets Continue to facilitate wider networking of VCSE and Social Care staff | Number of ASC clients provided with IAG on voluntary sector assets Number of ASC clients utilising voluntary sector assets Number of Networking events Number and type of participation | Completed - July 2023 | Cllr Paul Northcott | Claire McIver Jo Cowcher |
| | Better Health Staffordshire working with partners to reduce obesity | Develop well-informed and structured partnerships, including the third sector, in each district or borough focusing on reducing obesity | Reduce the % of residents that are overweight or obese (including children & young people (reception year & Year 6) Established and effective partnerships in each district or borough Development of an action plan, based on best practice, reflecting local need in each area Each partnership will subsequently develop their own outcome based measures | Leadership of 3 pathfinder areas transition to local leadership - April 2023 Remaining 5 partnerships established with action plans - December 2023 | Cllr Paul Northcott Cllr Mark Sutton | Claire McIver Natasha Moody |
| | Work in partnership to improve our 'Local Offer' | Review of Staffordshire Connects web pages and continue to develop platform, utilising it to increase resilience and independence. | 10% increase in the number of people accessing the Local Offer Improved search functionality Improved feedback on the local offer | Review - March 2023 Further milestones to be established following review work. | Cllr Mark Sutton | Natasha Moody |
| | Improve children and families health and wellbeing, working with partners to tackle key priorities including mental health, infant mortality, and obesity | Infant Mortality steering group established to develop and deliver a partnership plan to reduce infant mortality Develop new CYP Mental Health Local Transformation Strategy and Plan Working with adult's Public Health on obesity through Better Health Staffordshire (see above deliverable for further information) | Reduce the infant mortality rate (rate per 1,000 live births) A Strategy and Plan for improving CYP mental health across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is developed and agreed with partners | Infant mortality partnership steering group established - April 2023 Infant mortality action plan developed - September 2023 CYP Mental Health Partnership Development Day - February 2023 Strategy and Plan developed and agreed to meet NHS England timescales - Autumn 2023 | Cllr Mark Sutton | Natasha Moody |
| | Improve access to early help by developing the Family Hub model | Consultation with partners to take place January 2023 Commence work on referral pathway with internal and external partners Co-work streamlining Corporate Website | % of people who participate in the consultation on the Family Hub Model % of population attending the centres and key services | Consultation with partners - February 2023 | Cllr Mark Sutton | Natasha Moody |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---------------------|--|---|--|--|---------------------|---------------|
| Page 83 | Deliver Supporting Families (aka BRFC) programme to maintain earned autonomy status | Roll out the new phase 3 criteria and outcome measures Build programme standards into core documents, such as the Early Help Assessment Increase the number of partners directly contributing to the performance outcomes Create updated information sharing agreement with Health partners to better understand a families needs and whether outcomes have been achieved Commence information sharing arrangements with Housing partners to better understand a families needs and whether outcomes have been achieved | Number of Families achieving successful outcomes having accessed Early Help % of families achieving outcomes as a proportion of the annual target set by DLUCH | Ongoing | Cllr Mark Sutton | Natasha Moody |
| | Review Early Years Offer to enable a comprehensive Best Start pathway to be put in place | Draft Best Start Pathway for Staffordshire's families. Interactive Best Start Pathway developed, published and evaluated. | Best Start pathway mapped Proposed delivery model and plan endorsed by Cabinet | Further milestones to be established following review work. | Cllr Mark Sutton | Natasha Moody |
| | Deliver community and early help elements of SEND Strategy Delivery Plan, included Accelerated Progress Plan | Continue to deliver, develop, and promote the SEND local offer through local SEND and Inclusion hubs and Staffordshire Connects digital resources, providing advice and signposting to local support Work with families, schools and VCSE sector to develop a Co-Production Charter and Toolkit to support professionals in line with the SEND Accelerated Progress Plan | Parents, carers, families and professionals have input into shaping Staffordshire's co-production approach Co-production charter and toolkit produced. Monitor the impact of the introduction of the charter on families experience of support services to develop and improve professional practice | Continue to review and develop work of SEND and Inclusion Hubs - Ongoing Final draft content of Charter agreed by all co-producers including children and young people - March 2023 One page Charter professionally designed ensuring full accessibility via Easy Read and use of Picture Exchange Communication – April 2023 Launch and signing event – April 2023 Monitor the impact of charter on families experience of support services to develop and improve professional practice. | Cllr Jonathan Price | Tim Moss |
| | Offer funding through the Climate Action Fund | Establish, manage and operate a successful Community Climate Action Fund in order to assist local communities to build resilience and reduce Staffordshire's contributions to climate change | Number and value of applications received Amount of funding awarded (23/24 scheme) Number of examples of successfully delivered projects | Award 22/23 funding - end of February 2023 Launch of new Climate Action Fund - June/July 2023 | Cllr Simon Tagg | Clive Thomson |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---------------------|--|--|--|--|----------------------|----------------|
| | Work with businesses, other Councils and communities in Staffordshire to produce a joined-up approach to tackling climate change that reaches beyond just the actions of the Authority | Sustainability Board to continue to work with partners and the local community to encourage the climate change agenda, and support any local improvements Deliver a range of Making Staffordshire Sustainable campaigns to raise awareness Give people the skills they need to drive the climate change agenda forward Encourage and support the transition of the Green Economy within Staffordshire | Level of engagement in the Plan Number and reach of campaigns delivered Attendance at events and pledges made Number of unique website visits and social media metrics | Ongoing, aligned with specific milestones in the joint climate change communications plan | Cllr Simon Tagg | Clive Thomson |
| | Ensure sufficient resources are available to support local businesses in identifying opportunities and understanding carbon impacts. | Identify the resources required to progress the climate change agenda across the council Liaise with Staffordshire businesses to identify opportunities to share expertise between organisations, including the Staffordshire Business Environment Network Economic Development team to develop business support offer that provides expertise and support to local businesses to develop ideas and deliver innovation | Number of businesses who have engaged with SCCs Carbon Tracker SBEN to roll out carbon calculator for businesses | Ongoing | Cllr Philip White | Anthony Hodge |
| | Establish, scope and understand new Community Highways Offer (dependant on additional funding) working with Members / three-tier partners to identify and deliver local community priorities | Establish scope of the Community Highways offer in terms of available resources and the resolution of liabilities, legal and procurement issues. Establish delivery mechanisms for Member identified priorities, community funded works and self-help initiatives. Work with Members, communities, local councils and the SPCA to refine and promote the offer. | Established initiatives in place Proactive engagement taking place Local community priorities being delivered | Pilot with three tier partners completed - end of March 2023 Engagement with Cabinet Members - February 2023 Further milestones to be established following scoping work | Cllr David Williams | James Bailey |
| | Renegotiate 5 further Community Managed Library (CML) contracts and leases (Great Wyrley, Knutton, Loggerheads, Wilnecote and Brereton) and secure suitable location at Great Wyrley | Continued engagement with potential partner to manage and deliver Loggerheads Library Re-contract with existing partner to manage and deliver Great Wyrley Library for another 5 years Engage with partners for Knutton, Wilnecote and Brereton Libraries | 5 contracts and leases renegotiated to promote a thriving and sustainable library offer within Loggerheads, Great Wyrley, Knutton, Loggerheads, Wilnecote and Brereton communities. Suitable location for Great Wyrley Library agreed with partners should the opportunity arise. | Remaining contracts renegotiated by: Brereton Library – April 2023 Knutton and Wilnecote Libraries - contracts signed March 2023 | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Catherine Mann |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|----------------|
| Embed community-led prevention and early help - Corporate | Work with residents, communities, businesses and partners to develop a long-term, aspirational Communities Strategy. | Work with partners to seek support for the development of a Staffordshire Communities Strategy, including engagement with the Staffordshire Leaders Board and ICB | Partners agree to the development of a Staffordshire Communities Strategy and have the opportunity to input on the process | Agreement with partners – April 2023 Engagement completed – Summer 2023 Draft Strategy developed and shared with key stakeholders for input – Autumn 2023 Strategy agreed by Cabinet – Winter 2023. Strategy goes live - Early 2024 | Cllr Alan White | Catherine Mann |
| | | Design and deliver a range of engagement activities to inform the development of a Communities Strategy, in collaboration with local communities and partners | Range of engagement sessions with residents, partners, and VCSE organisations take place in each district | | | |
| | Encourage and inspire Parish and Town Councils to take an even greater leadership role in addressing strategic issues locally. | Begin development of a Communities Strategy that sets out the longer term vision and priorities for Communities | The number and reach of residents and partners engaged on the strategy A Communities Strategy and associated delivery plans are produced and agreed with Cabinet | | Cllr Victoria Wilson Tilly Flanagan Pete Barker | |
| | | Ensure Parish Council receive tailored messaging in all relevant communications and DoingOurBit campaigns during 2022 and 2023 | Regular survey of Parish Councils through SPCA member bulletin and activity to understand the impact of key materials and messaging | Quarterly surveys - starting Spring 2023 | | |
| | | Work with interested Parish Councils across Staffordshire to develop local Parish plans and tools to support community led prevention and early intervention at a hyperlocal level | Local Parish plans developed and toolkit produced, with materials for Members to take this forward | Local plans developed - December 2023 Toolkit and Member materials produced for briefings - February 2023 | | |
| | | Establish additional capacity building support for Parish and Town Councils | Additional capacity building support for Parishes in place and performance measures agreed | Additional capacity building support in place - Spring 2023 | | |
| | | Work with District and Borough Councils to co-ordinate activity with Parishes at a local level | Opportunities for aligning working locally identified with an agreed approach for next 12 months | District and Borough Plan developed, including identifying engagement opportunities - February 2023 | | |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---------------------|---|---|---|---|-----------------|-------------------|
| | Link with Digital Inclusion Working Group, Digital Programme Board and Digital Infrastructure Steering Group to support community elements of Digital Inclusion Action Plan | <p>Key elements of action plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Accelerate delivery of gigabit capable technologies that maximise the benefits for local businesses and residents -Promote digital access, including signposting to digital resources and support, the Good Neighbour Schemes, sharing relevant information and guidance and delivery of the Donate It scheme to those most in need -Increase digital adoption, such as the Volunteer IT buddy scheme to support residents to get online, promotion of community digital skills courses and assistive technology campaigns -Enable rural and digitally isolated communities where market intervention has failed -Raise awareness and understanding of connectivity to tackle the digital skills gap | <p>Increase take up and awareness of Donate IT scheme to meet local need (detailed within Digital Inclusion Action Plan)</p> <p>Take-up of Superfast services at contract closure exceeds 75%</p> <p>61% premises with Gigabit capability (Current baseline is 55.15%)</p> <p>Work with 40 communities to develop community-based fibre projects accessing the Project Gigabit voucher and Staffordshire "top-up" funding</p> | <p>Ongoing, timescales for delivery can be found in the action plan, with progress reviewed on a quarterly basis</p> <p>Ongoing, in line with Government targets for Project Gigabit</p> | Cllr Ian Parry | Laura Ballinger |
| | Improve support for Staffordshire's Armed Forces community against a set of priority areas, by working with partners through a reconvened Armed Forces Partnership Group | <p>Gain a better understanding of the Armed Forces community and their needs through a range of data and information, to help match providers of services to areas of need</p> <p>Identify key national and local organisations supporting the Armed Forces community to help inform our IAG approach</p> <p>Review and improve information and signposting for our Armed Forces community, through measures such as improved webpage content and greater links with Staffordshire Connects and Staffordshire Help points</p> | <p>Increase in the number of veteran friendly GP practices</p> <p>Increased visits to information pages on SCC website and Staffordshire Connects</p> <p>SCC to achieve MOD Employee Recognition Scheme gold status</p> | <p>Review of existing national and local support for AF completed – March 2023</p> <p>Initial analysis of AF data and information completed – April 2023</p> <p>Improved IAG offer for AF in place – April 2023</p> | Cllr Alan White | Cristian Marcucci |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|--|---|---|---|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Promote community action and build community capacity | Deliver priorities for year 1 for Lot A (VCSE Capacity Building and Supportive Communities) | <p>Work with Public Health to ensure delivery of key activities in the VCSE Lot A delivery plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity Building and Sustainability, including VCSE sector development and funding support - Volunteering, including volunteer brokerage, promotion and support - Engagement, including hosting VCSE networking forums and supporting the Community Champions programme - Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG), including connecting the VCSE to training and supporting SCC IAG work - Representing VCSE at key strategic forums - Communications, including working with SCC on DoingOurBit and Supportive Communities campaigns | <p>Deliverables and metrics set out in Lot A delivery plan are delivered successfully</p> <p>Specific details on deliverables and metrics can be found within the Lot A delivery plan</p> | <p>Contract Review - 16th January 2023, 17th April 2023 and 7th July 2023</p> <p>Year 1 end - 31st July 2023</p> <p>Timescales for delivery of individual activities can be found in the Lot A delivery plan.</p> | Clr Victoria Wilson | Wendy Tompson Claire McIver |
| | Deliver priorities for year 1 of Lot B (Supporting Young People - including children, young people & families voice and representation) | <p>Ensure delivery of key activities in the VCSE Lot B delivery plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staffordshire Young People's Offer, ensuring sufficient positive activities and targeted earliest help support - Youth Participation, facilitating Staffordshire's membership of UK Youth Parliament, Make your Mark and Bremen Friendship programme - Specialist CYPF Capacity Building and provision of specialist support for VCSE organisations working with young people - Earliest Help and Place Based Approach, working with the Council and partners to raise awareness of earliest help and support the VCSE sector | <p>Deliverables and metrics set out in Lot B delivery plan are delivered successfully</p> <p>Specific details on deliverables and metrics can be found within the Lot B delivery plan</p> | <p>Contract Review - 24th January 2023, 25th April 2023 and 25th July 2023</p> <p>Year 1 end - 31st July 2023</p> | Clr Victoria Wilson | Wendy Tompson Natasha Moody |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---------------------|--|---|--|---|----------------------|-------------------|
| | Manage our grant programmes with Lot C partners as required | <p>Work with Commissioners to manage grants through the Framework where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with procurement to undertake mini competition process as part of the framework - Commissioners to work with the successful provider to manage each grant scheme - Align management of grant schemes with performance management of the VCSE Capacity Building Framework | <p>Grant programmes are commissioned and successfully managed as required through VCSE Capacity Building Framework as required</p> <p>Amount of additional funding from Staffordshire that has been distributed to the voluntary sector through Lot C the framework</p> <p>Number of VCSE organisations that have received additional funding through Lot C of the Framework</p> | Deliver any grant call offs as required - ongoing | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Wendy Tompson |
| | Develop and deliver a communications plan for the next phase of DoingOurBit, aligned to corporate Communications priorities | <p>Communications plan developed and agreed</p> <p>Promote DoingOurBit messaging as required in relevant campaigns throughout the year</p> <p>Undertake 4 specific DoingOurBit campaigns to promote the new website and refresh the messaging on DoingOurBit and key themes, including health and wellbeing, climate change and 'lending a hand'</p> | <p>DoingOurBit communications plan agreed and associated campaigns delivered</p> <p>Increase in number of unique page visits to the new DoingOurBit.info campaign</p> <p>Increase in number of visits to campaign related IAG sources with specific campaign messaging</p> <p>Number of social media impressions on DoingOurBit campaigns – targets to be agreed with stakeholders during development of each campaign</p> <p>Specific behaviour change metrics / case studies associated with each campaign (e.g. volunteering, climate change and health and wellbeing) - to be agreed with stakeholders during development of each campaign</p> | <p>DoingOurBit specific campaigns:</p> <p>February 2023 - refresh of messaging and website re-launch</p> <p>April 2023 - Clean, Green and Safe</p> <p>June / July 2023 - Lending a Hand</p> <p>October 2023 - Health and Wellbeing</p> <p>DoingOurBit messaging in relevant campaigns throughout the year</p> | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Cristian Marcucci |
| | Update the DoingOurBit website (DoingOurBit.info) to support these campaigns and provide a portal of information to support community action | <p>Review DoingOurBit.info website</p> <p>Update DoingOurBit.info website based on findings of review</p> <p>Prepare for launch and inform stakeholders</p> <p>Launch website and promote with communications campaign</p> | <p>DoingOurBit.info website review conducted</p> <p>DoingOurBit.info website refreshed so that information is updated and easier to navigate</p> <p>Increase in number of unique page visits to the new DoingOurBit.info campaign over next 12 months</p> | <p>Website update - February 2023</p> <p>Prepare for launch and inform stakeholders - February 2023</p> <p>Launch website and promote with campaign - February 2023</p> | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Helena Hornby |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|--------------|
| Page 89 | Explore opportunity to align messaging with VCSE partners / campaigns | Discuss DoingOurBit with VCSE Capacity Building Framework partners to identify collaboration opportunities Build any additional DoingOurBit activity into Y1 VCSE Delivery Plans as required Work with VCSE Capacity Building Framework partners to promote ongoing DoingOurBit campaign messaging throughout the year | VCSE Capacity Building Partners and SCC identify opportunities for further collaboration on DoingOurBit DoingOurBit messages and campaigns promoted to the VCSE sector through partner channels Number of VCSE groups involved in delivery and promotion of DoingOurBit campaign messaging | DoingOurBit specific campaigns: February 2023 - refresh of messaging and website re-launch April 2023 - Clean, Green and Safe July 2023 - Lending a Hand October 2023 - Health and Wellbeing DoingOurBit messaging in relevant campaigns throughout the year | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Adam Rooney |
| | Deliver the 2022/23 Members Community Fund, distributing grants to local community organisations | Process all applications received ahead of funding use deadline Take annual report on fund to County Council, including examples of impact within communities | Amount of funding spent Number of unique organisations supported Match funding secured and total value Funded projects contribution to the aims of the fund Full Council receive report on Members Fund 2022/23 | Deadline for full use of money - 21st March 2023 Report received / discussed by Full Council - July 2023 | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Kate Loader |
| | Design 2023/24 Members Community Fund | Identify and agree focus for the 2023/24 fund with key stakeholders Begin promotion of 2023/24 fund and stakeholder engagement (e.g. Members) Review governance and approval systems for fund, making further improvements as required Launch and ongoing promotion of 2023/24 Members Fund | Focus of 2023/24 fund agreed and approved by key Cabinet Leads Governance and approval systems reviewed and agreed with MADS and Key Cabinet Leads Fund successfully launched and promoted | Focus for 2023/24 fund agreed - February 2023 Promotion of 2023/24 fund begins - March 2023 Governance and approval systems agreed - April 2023 Launch fund - April 2023 | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Kate Loader |
| Support the organisation and others to have a communities mindset | Review our current social value process and make recommendations for developing the Council's approach. | Draft a proposal for taking forward our approach to social value Discuss social value and any recommendations with the Communities Leadership Group Discuss and agree way forward in relevant forums / boards (e.g. SLT) Implement delivery of agreed social value approach. | Social value proposal and recommendations developed and agreed New approach / recommendations implemented Social value measured using agreed approach (e.g. TOMS Framework) | Draft proposal completed - Spring 2023 Draft proposal discussed at CLG - Summer 2023 Recommendations agreed and implemented - Autumn 2023 | Cllr Victoria Wilson Cllr Mark Deaville | Ian Turner |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---------------------|--|--|---|---|---------------------|----------------|
| | Develop some volunteering principles and guidance to clarify offer for SCC volunteers and support staff in managing volunteers | <p>Volunteering principles developed and tested with volunteers in Libraries, Children's Centres and young people</p> <p>Volunteering guidance reviewed and developed following input from SCC volunteering leads, HR and Health and Safety (Volunteering Task and Finish Group)</p> <p>Discuss draft volunteering principles and guidance with CLG</p> <p>Discuss draft volunteering principles and guidance with SLT and Cabinet</p> <p>Volunteering principles and guidance go live and are available for staff / volunteers to access online</p> | <p>Volunteering principles and guidance successfully tested and developed with key staff, VCSE partners and volunteers</p> <p>Cabinet and SLT agree to a set of principles for how we work with volunteers</p> <p>Guidance on volunteering and how to best support volunteers is available and accessible for all staff and volunteers</p> <p>Number of visits to online sources of volunteering IAG for both staff and members of public</p> | <p>Draft principles and guidance document shared with SLT and Cabinet - Summer 2023</p> <p>Principles and guidance document goes live - Autumn 2023</p> | Clr Victoria Wilson | Catherine Mann |
| | Review and produce community engagement guidance and toolkit, using learning and working alongside the Public Health Community Champions programme | <p>Review national and local examples of community engagement good practice and approaches, including working with Public Health to use the learning of Community Champions</p> <p>Develop draft toolkit, guidance and supporting materials informed by learning and engagement of key stakeholders</p> <p>Test and shape first draft with key stakeholders</p> <p>Refine and secure sign off through appropriate governance channels</p> <p>Launch and embed across the organisation</p> | <p>Principles and guidance successfully tested and developed with key staff and relevant partners</p> <p>Guidance on delivering effective engagement and how to access support is available and accessible for all staff</p> <p>Unique visits to web pages and positive feedback on use of guidance and toolkit in engagement activities</p> | <p>CLG to shape guidance - February 2023</p> <p>Review of guidance goes live - April 2023</p> <p>Access to guidance and toolkit promoted - May 2023</p> <p>Officer feedback on usage and impact - November 2023</p> | Clr Victoria Wilson | Wendy Tompson |
| | Work with representatives from key Corporate Support functions (Property, Legal, Procurement etc) to explore barriers to Community working in more detail and establish a way forward. | <p>Engage with stakeholders (including SCC commissioners and VCSE partners) to get feedback on current processes</p> <p>Establish working group with Corporate colleagues to discuss feedback and potential opportunities</p> <p>Develop plan and discuss with CLG</p> | <p>Corporate working group established</p> <p>Opportunities to reduce barriers to community working identified</p> <p>Action plan developed and discussed with CLG</p> | <p>Working group convened - Spring 2023</p> <p>Scoping paper at CLG - Summer 2023</p> | Clr Victoria Wilson | Catherine Mann |

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| Strategic Objective | Deliverable (We will...) | Key activities | Measures of Success | Milestones | Cabinet Lead | Officer Lead |
|---------------------|---|--|---|---|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Develop a year-long internal communications plan to raise awareness of the communities agenda | Strategy and Communications to develop 12 month plan Draft plan to be discussed with CLG Deliver 12 month plan, including one type of communities related communications activity each months, such as: - Communities related news updates - Case studies on effective community working - Promotion of community related events (e.g. volunteers week) Ensure there is a Communities focused agenda on the Business Brief at least twice a year | Internal communications plan developed and agreed Internal communications plan delivered Increase in staff interaction with communities related content on StaffsSpace Number of visits to StaffsSpace Communities page Communities related items appear at Business Brief Awareness raised with staff of Communities related work and tools | Business Brief progress updates - February 2023 and July 2023 Plan implemented - December 2023 | Cllr Victoria Wilson | Cristian Marcucci Adam Rooney |

Community Impact Assessment

Empowering Our Communities

Author: Adam Rooney, Senior Policy Officer

Date: 15th February 2023

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|--|--|
| Cross Cutting – Impacts that affect all or multiple protected characteristics | <p>All of the actions within the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 are designed to support communities in a positive way, which will benefit people with protected characteristics. This includes work with partners locally to embed and improve access to community-led prevention and early help, promote community action and build community capacity, and review the way we work as an organisation to encourage a ‘communities mindset’.</p> | <p>The increasing cost of living will potentially have a disproportionately greater impact on people with protected characteristics and could increase demand for early help and community-based support.</p> <p>Increasing cost of living will also impact VCSE organisations that provide community-based support for people with protected characteristics and the support available locally.</p> <p>The Covid-19 longer-term health impacts of Covid-19 could potentially have a disproportionately greater impact on people with protected characteristics.</p> | <p>Continue to align the work of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 with activity locally to address the cost of living (e.g. Here to Help campaign), ensuring impacts on people with protected characteristics are considered.</p> <p>Continue to offer support with the cost of living to VCSE groups that work with people with protected characteristics, including the VCSE Capacity Building Framework.</p> <p>Ensure the views of people with protected characteristics and the VCSE groups that support them are considered during the process of developing a Communities Strategy.</p> <p>Undertake individual CIAs on any areas of work in the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 as required, including when developing a future Communities Strategy.</p> |
| Age - older and younger people | <p>In addition to the benefits identified in the first row of this table, there are multiple actions</p> | <p>In addition to the risks identified in the first row of this table, older people and families with young</p> | <p>In addition to the mitigations identified in the first row of this table, ensure that older people and families with</p> |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|---|---|--|
| Page 35 | <p>within the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 that will specifically benefit both older and younger people. This work includes improving our local offer for families, developing the Family Hub model, and multiple actions to progress the Supportive Communities programme.</p> | <p>children may be more acutely impacted by the increasing cost of living.</p> <p>Older people may also be disproportionately impacted by any further Covid-19 outbreaks / variants.</p> <p>Older people and young people may be at greater risk from / impacted more severely by the longer-term impacts of Covid-19 (including social isolation, mental health etc).</p> <p>Older people and young people from families with lower incomes are at greater risk of digital exclusion. Parts of our offer that rely more on online signposting and IAG may be impacted.</p> | <p>young children are considered when providing support with the cost of living.</p> <p>Ensure that older people, young people, and families are properly engaged through appropriate forums when developing a future Communities Strategy.</p> <p>Ensure people at greater risk of Covid-19 are connected to community based support, and their access is considered in the event of additional outbreaks / variants.</p> <p>Work with the Digital Leadership Group to coordinate activity on digital inclusion and signposting to information, advice, and guidance (including Community Help Points).</p> |
| Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism, and other | <p>In addition to the benefits identified in the first row of this table, there are multiple actions within the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 that will specifically benefit people with disabilities.</p> | <p>In addition to the risks identified in the first row of this table, people with disabilities may be more acutely impacted by the increasing cost of living.</p> | <p>In addition to the mitigations identified in the first row of this table, ensure that people with disabilities are considered when providing support with the cost of living.</p> |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|---|--|---|
| neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment, and physical disabilities. | <p>This work includes improving our local offer for families, the SEND Strategy Delivery Plan, Community Help Points, and work to embed community based support and strengths based working into the adult social care pathway.</p> | <p>People with disabilities may also be disproportionately impacted by any further Covid-19 outbreaks / variants.</p> <p>People with disabilities may be at greater risk from / impacted more severely by the longer-term impacts of Covid-19 (including social isolation, mental health etc).</p> | <p>Ensure that any engagement regarding a Communities Strategy includes people with disabilities (including providing information in easy-read and other accessible formats as required).</p> <p>Ensure people at greater risk of Covid-19 are connected to community based support, and their access is considered in the event of additional outbreaks / variants.</p> <p>Work with Public Health to ensure health literacy is embedded across the organisation and that all information is produced in an accessible format.</p> |
| Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another | See first row for identified benefits. | See first row for identified risks. | See first row for identified mitigations / recommendations. |
| Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work | No specific benefits for marriage and civil partnerships have been identified. | No specific risks for marriage and civil partnerships have been identified. | No specific mitigations or recommendations for marriage and civil partnerships have been identified. |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|--|---|---|
| Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers Page 37 | In addition to the benefits identified in the first row of this table, there are multiple actions within the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 that will specifically benefit women who are pregnant or have recently had a baby, including improving our local offer for families, developing the Family Hub model, and continuing to deliver our Community Managed Libraries programme. | See first row for identified risks. | See first row for identified mitigations / recommendations. |
| Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins | See first row for identified benefits. | In addition to the risks identified in the first row of this table, conversations regarding equalities movements seen in 2020 have particular relevance for Black, Asian, and ethnically diverse communities. Black, Asian, and ethnically diverse communities were overrepresented in terms of risk and impacts of Covid-19 (as per national data) and may subsequently be disproportionately | In addition to the mitigations identified in the first row of this table, consider any additional language barriers in provision of early help and community-based support to ensure inclusive access and engagement. Ensure that any engagement regarding a Communities Strategy includes Black, Asian, and ethnically diverse communities locally and also considers any additional language barriers (including providing |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|---|--|
| Page 98 | | <p>impacted by any further outbreaks and longer-term impacts of Covid-19.</p> <p>The most recent census shows that Staffordshire has a significant increase in Polish and Romanian residents. As these are newer communities, there is a risk that their needs are not fully considered (e.g. language barriers).</p> | <p>information in different languages if required).</p> <p>Ensure that both the development a future Communities Strategy and the review of SCC's Community Engagement Guidance are aligned with ongoing work to review SCC's approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.</p> <p>Ensure people at greater risk of Covid-19 are connected to community based support, and their access is considered in the event of additional outbreaks / variants.</p> |
| Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered | See first row for identified benefits. | See first row for identified risks. | See first row for identified mitigations / recommendations. |
| Sex - men or women | See first row for identified benefits. | See first row for identified risks. | See first row for identified mitigations / recommendations. |

| Protected Characteristics | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes | See first row for identified benefits. | See first row for identified risks. | See first row for identified mitigations / recommendations. |

Workforce Assessment

| Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|---|--|---|
| All protected characteristics | The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 includes several actions relating to how we work with communities as an organisation. This includes providing staff with further guidance and support on volunteering, social value, and community engagement. | If staff are not properly engaged and informed about these activities, it may result in confusion and a lack of understanding amongst the workforce. | Ensure staff are engaged in key strands of activity relating to how we work with communities, including volunteering and community engagement guidance, social value, and the development of a future Communities Strategy. |

➤ **Health, Wellbeing and Social Care Assessment**

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 includes a number of actions relating to health and wellbeing, including Early Help for families, the Supportive Communities programme, Better Health Staffordshire, and #DoingOurBit. The plan also contains a pilot programme in Staffordshire Moorlands that is aiming to better embed community-based support and strengths based working into our adult social care pathway.</p> | <p>This work will provide a range of benefits to the health and wellbeing of local communities, including improving access to local community-based support, quality information and advice on health and wellbeing, and support for reducing obesity.</p> | <p>The increasing cost of living may potentially have negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of several cohorts within our communities, resulting in increased demand for early help and community based support.</p> <p>Older people and young people from families with lower incomes are at greater risk of digital exclusion. Parts of our offer that rely more on online signposting and IAG may be impacted.</p> | <p>Continue to align the work of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 with Council and partner activity locally to address the cost of living.</p> <p>Work with the Digital Leadership Group to deliver the Digital Inclusion Action Plan.</p> <p>Encourage and support people to get involved and help themselves and their communities through the #DoingOurBit campaign.</p> <p>Ensure people at greater risk of Covid-19 are connected to community based support, and their</p> |

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--------------------|----------|--|--|
| | | <p>The long-term impacts of Covid-19 may result in increased demand for support with health and wellbeing and growing health inequalities.</p> | <p>access is considered in the event of additional outbreaks / variants.</p> |

➤ Communities Assessment

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 includes a range of support to empower our communities, promote community action and build capacity in local communities. This work includes delivering year 1 of our VCSE Capacity Building Framework, the Members Community Fund, and partnership working with local Parish Councils.</p> <p>Work will also take place to engage with communities and partners to develop an aspirational, long-term communities strategy for Staffordshire.</p> | <p>The VCSE Capacity Building Framework will support the local VCSE sector to remain sustainable and build capacity in communities. It will also work alongside the Council to deliver priority workstreams including Supportive Communities, Early Help, and the Staffordshire Young People's Offer.</p> <p>The Members Community Fund and work with Parish and Town Councils will also help to build capacity locally to support communities, providing funding to</p> | <p>Increasing cost of living will impact VCSE organisations that provide community-based support for people locally.</p> <p>The cost of living also may impact on the ability of residents to get involved in community-based activity.</p> | <p>Continue to align the work of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 with Council and partner activity locally to address the cost of living, including providing ongoing support and funding where possible for local VCSE groups.</p> <p>Use the findings of any engagement on a future Communities Strategy to inform a detailed CIA as part of the process.</p> |

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|-------------------|--|-------|-------------------------------|
| | <p>community groups and ensuring community-based support for health and wellbeing at a hyperlocal level.</p> | | |

➤ Economic Assessment

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 includes continued support for the local VCSE sector, early help for families through the Supporting Families programme, and co-ordination with SCC's work on digital inclusion.</p> | <p>The VCSE Capacity Building Framework will provide infrastructure support for local VCSE groups and social enterprises to help them remain sustainable and an active part of the local economy.</p> <p>The Supporting Families programme helps to improve outcomes for families, including financial exclusion and worklessness.</p> <p>The Digital Inclusion Action Plan includes working with businesses and rural</p> | <p>The cost of living may continue to impact the local economy and increase demand for support from residents and local VCSE groups.</p> | <p>Continue to align the work of the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 with Council and partner activity locally to address the cost of living, including providing continuing support and funding where possible for local VCSE groups.</p> |

| Key consideration | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|-------------------|--|-------|-------------------------------|
| | communities to improve connectivity, increase digital adoption, and tackle the digital skills gap. | | |

➤ **Climate Change Assessment**

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 has a number of actions relating to climate change. This includes the next phase of the Community Climate Action Fund, the Do-It to Make Staffordshire Sustainable campaign, and work with partners and local businesses on climate change. | The climate change actions within the Communities Delivery Plan 2023 will support residents, businesses, and the local VCSE sector to take action locally and jointly develop an approach to tackling climate change. | No risks identified | No mitigations required |

➤ **Environment Assessment**

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|---|---|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| The Communities Delivery Plan 2023 includes work on a new Community Highways Offer. | This work will explore with Members and partners to local community priorities, | No risks identified | No mitigations required |

| Key considerations | Benefits | Risks | Mitigations / Recommendations |
|--------------------|---|-------|-------------------------------|
| | including the maintenance of verges and green spaces locally. | | |

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 15 February 2023

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2022/23



Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

"Creating the right conditions for businesses and our economy to thrive remains a priority for the county council while managing the inflationary pressures we continue to face.

"Our Here to Help campaign and dedicated webpages which launched in October continue to signpost families to help and support with rising cost of living pressures. The Holiday Activities and Food programme also ran over the Christmas holidays helping families by providing eligible children with a healthy meal and positive activities.

"The next phase of the successful Staffordshire Warmer Homes scheme (Sustainable Warmth Competition) is underway and is helping residents by installing measures to make their homes more energy efficient. This scheme will be able to help people across the county and will run until March 2023.

"We continue to face challenges in both adult social care and children's services including in recruitment and retention. Due to the delay in the adult social care charging reforms until 2025, the recruitment of additional capacity has been paused, however work to streamline pathways and explore digital solutions continues.

"We continue to support our local businesses to start up, survive, and adapt, including supporting five hundred individuals through the Staffordshire Start Up Programme. The number of business start-ups in the county have been increasing and are now in line with the national average for the first time. Businesses started within Staffordshire are also more likely to survive compared to the national average.

"Despite the inflationary pressures facing councils like ours, we will invest to keep growing the county in a sustainable way to make a positive difference in the lives of our residents."



Cllr Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources said,

"Significant progress has been made across the organisation during Quarter 3, however inflationary, recruitment and retention pressures continue.

"Levels of demand also remain challenging, particularly in children's services where there remain areas of financial risk. However, there have been improvements in some areas of adult social care over the quarter.

"The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £16.135m (2.74%), prior to additional funding for inflationary pressures being taken into account. Once this one-off funding is included and an allocation from the Inflation Reserve is assumed, the overspend reduces to £11.635m (1.97%). This is compared to an overspend of £6.408m reported at Quarter 2.

"Like many local authorities, we still face financial challenges, but we are a well run council and continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible. Well managed finances means we can continue to invest in our future, grow our economy and improve people's lives."

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. Approves the use of the remaining £4m of Contingency plus £1.189m of earmarked reserves.

| Local Members Interest |
|------------------------|
| N/A |

Cabinet – Wednesday 15 February 2023

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2022/23

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. Approves the use of the remaining £4m of Contingency plus £1.189m of earmarked reserves.

Report of the Director for Corporate Services and the Director for Finance

Reasons for Recommendations

This is an opportunity for Cabinet to consider and discuss Staffordshire County Council's quarterly performance and finance position.

Quarter 3 Summary

Performance ratings for the individual service areas across the council are as follows:

| Service Area | Delivery | Finance |
|----------------------------------|----------|---------|
| Health & Care | G | G |
| Families & Communities | A | R |
| Economy, Infrastructure & Skills | G | G |
| Corporate Services | G | G |

Key highlights

- Cost of Living Campaign, Here to Help, launched in October with 19,800 visitors to web pages, 38,000 page views and 18,000 leaflets distributed to vulnerable residents.
- Winter Holiday Activities and Food programme of activities complete.
- Sustainable Warmth Competition contract awarded and now delivering.
- Recent reduction in demand in Adult Social Care. Work continues to prioritise individuals at the highest risk.
- Highways transformation on track and delivering, while continuing to deliver a safe and secure network. Work ongoing to develop customer, client and community offer.
- Improvement in Staffordshire's Business Start Up performance, likely to be partly due to the council's dynamic business support offer.
- 165 Community Champions recruited in Burton, Newcastle and Tamworth to promote local health initiatives and share helpful information and guidance, as well as 48 dedicated Ukraine Champions to date.

Key challenges

- Continued pressures across Children's services, including the rising cost, number and complexity of Child Protection & Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures. Additional investment agreed to create new posts, reduce pressures on existing staff and to strengthen recruitment and retention.
- Increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans. Capacity of SEND Key Workers continues to be a challenge and was suggested as an area of focus in the review of the council's SEND Accelerated Progress Plan.
- The council continue to make as many contracted block booked care home beds live and in use as possible, although the number live is currently lower than anticipated, which impacts on savings.
- Continuing to monitor the number of Group A Strep cases in Staffordshire.
- Digital Infrastructure challenges remain due to lower than expected number of properties identified as eligible for broadband intervention by BDUK; discussions taking place.
- Inflationary pressures continue to be monitored closely, with the need for one-off resources to fund them.

Further details of the above can be found in the main report and accompanying appendices.

1. Summary

This report provides an update on Quarter 3 activities for each service area: Health and Care; Children and Families; Economy, Infrastructure and Skills; and Corporate Services.

Significant progress has been made across the organisation during Quarter 3, however inflationary, recruitment and retention pressures continue. Levels of demand also remain challenging, particularly in Children and Families. However, there have been improvements in Adult Social Care. There also continue to be areas of financial risk in Children and Families, with further details included within this report and its appendices.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £16.135m (2.74%), prior to additional funding for inflationary pressures being taken into account. Once this one-off funding is included and an allocation from the Inflation Reserve is assumed, the overspend reduces to £11.635m (1.97%). This is compared to an overspend of £6.408m reported at Quarter 2.

2. Health and Care

| Delivery Performance Assessment | Finance Performance Assessment |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| GREEN | GREEN |

3. Good progress has been made during Quarter 3 to deliver the Health and Care elements of the Corporate Delivery Plan; however, there remains a risk that any winter pressures may affect levels of demand early in Quarter 4. Immediate financial and recruitment pressures have eased in the short-term, as a result of the delay in the implementation of Adult Social Care Reform to 2025, however funding for adult social care reforms will continue to be used to support the care market. Due to the progress made in Quarter 3, the overall Delivery rating for Health and Care is Green. The Finance rating is also Green based on the current financial position for Quarter 3.



4. As a result of the Government's delay to the Adult Social Care Charging Reforms until 2025, the recruitment of additional capacity in Staffordshire has been paused, however work to streamline pathways and explore digital solutions continues.

5. Demand for adult social care assessments and safeguarding reduced in Quarter 3, with December's demand for Adult Social Care assessments recording the lowest level (1,017) since January 2022 (977). Safeguarding numbers returned to normal levels during Quarter 3

following a summer peak and over half (51.7%) were assessed within two working days in December 2022, which is a significant improvement on previous months and above target (30%). Work has commenced to verify ongoing capacity to prevent future waiting list increases. Despite the recent improvement in December, there were still 1,117 safeguarding contacts.

- 6.In December 2022, 80.1% of service users had received a review of their care within the past 12 months, meeting the target of 80%. The areas of Learning Disability (86.5%) and Mental Health (90.4%) performed particularly well. This improved performance is likely to be a consequence of implementing the action plan that has been put in place including additional resource dedicated to undertaking reviews, however, in the context of possible winter pressures and subsequent demand, ongoing positive performance in this area is dependent on resource not being diverted to higher priority work.
- 7.Timeliness of sourcing for brokerage (helping individuals to arrange care) also improved in December 2022. Following an increase in broker resource, a review of the supported living process and improving market conditions, December saw an improvement in sourcing within timescales from 67% in November to 78%. Improvements can be seen in care home, day/home care and supported living timeliness (see Appendix 1).
- 8.There have also been improvements in the Care Quality Commission assessment ratings of Staffordshire's registered locations in December with an increase in the percentage of 'good or outstanding' assessments for nursing care, residential care and community services (see Appendix 1). The council has made additional investment in its quality teams over the last financial year, increasing the number of officers within the team, which is having a direct impact on driving improvements in care services and helping increase the number of services with a positive rating.
- 9.The council continue to make as many contracted block booked beds live and in use as possible. Block booked beds contract for a fixed number of beds with guaranteed business once these beds are activated. They ensure timely access when required, as well as better value for money. The number live (in payment) is lower than anticipated due to lower than expected demand. This has delayed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings however these have been met through alternative means. As of 6th January 2023, 340 beds were contracted, of which 210 were live and of those 96% were filled with 4% vacant.
- 10.During Quarter 3, the council has been pursuing additional options for use of digital and assistive technology in providing better quality care, enabling independence, and facilitating hospital discharge. The Integrated Commissioning Service for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

has been successful in its 3-year bid application for £615,000 of funding to implement Digital Social Care Records management and Falls Detection technology in care settings. The process for the deployment of the funding is now underway.

11. There has been a recent national increase in notifications of 'Group A Streptococcus' which is more commonly known as 'Group A Strep' to the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), including Scarlet fever and 'Strep throat'. Proactive support and information has been sent to schools and nurseries as there have been a few cases reported in Staffordshire, with the situation continuing to be monitored. Further information on Group A Strep and Scarlet fever can be found [here](#).

12. The next phase of Staffordshire Warmer Homes (Sustainable Warmth Competition) has started installing measures with 67 installations between December 2022 and 17th January 2023, with the highest number in Newcastle-under-Lyme (15) and Stafford (14). The project runs until the end of March 2023 and is being rolled out in all districts. This will enable the council to continue helping low-income households to upgrade energy inefficient homes through the installation of insulation measures and replacement heating systems. Wrap around support services through the previous schemes saved c.£1.5m for vulnerable residents between May 2019 and October 2022.

13. As part of the Supportive Communities programme, the Community Champions scheme promotes local health initiatives and shares helpful information and guidance with specific groups through trusted community voices. In Quarter 3 the scheme was expanded to also include Tamworth, and there are now 165 Community Champions across Newcastle, Burton and Tamworth. In addition, there are also 48 dedicated Ukraine Champions to support families that have come to Staffordshire. A pilot project is also taking place in Staffordshire Moorlands to better connect adult social care practitioners to support and resources out in communities, with a focus on the strengths of both individuals and the place they live. Phase 1 of the 'Linking Supportive Communities' pilot has been successfully completed during Quarter 3, with an evaluation report to follow.

14. The Covid vaccination programme remains strong in Staffordshire with 66% of those eligible having received their Autumn Booster. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is one of only two systems in the Midlands to be above the national average for all cohorts.

15. From a Finance perspective, Health and Care is forecast to have a breakeven position at Quarter 3, compared to a breakeven position at Quarter 2. 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.

16. Children and Families

| Delivery Performance Assessment | Finance Performance Assessment |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| AMBER | RED |

17. Progress has been made across the Children and Families service in Quarter 3. The Amber delivery rating continues to reflect the challenges in relation to increasing demand and complexity of need, and workforce capacity and recruitment issues. The Red finance rating reflects overspend and cost pressures resulting from these issues, as well as pressures around the SEND High Needs Block and placement costs for children in our care; despite much work in quarter to address these.



18. In Quarter 3, increasing demand, complexity of need, and challenges around recruitment and retention remained. Additional investment has therefore been agreed to create new posts, reduce pressures on existing staff and to strengthen recruitment and retention, with new recruitment of posts now underway. The new children's change governance arrangements are now in place, consisting of four main programmes of work; Workforce, Embedding Ways of Working, Children in Care and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), but workforce capacity issues continue to be a high risk for all programmes. The Children in Care Programme is currently progressing at pace, with all children being reviewed in order to appropriately reduce numbers in our care by the end of March 2023.

19. Progress has been made across several elements of the SEND Programme; Task and Finish groups have been set-up to progress the Education Health and Care Needs Assessment pathway and co-production engagement work is being progressed to develop a Charter and toolkit for Staffordshire to support professionals by April 2023. The next quarter will see a focus on more detailed plans for the Workforce and Embedding Ways of Working programmes of work.

20. At the 31st December 2022, there were 1,382 children in care in Staffordshire, representing an increase compared to the quarter 2 position (1,330). This is a rate of 81 per 10,000 which is higher than the most recent national benchmark (70 per 10,000 - March 2022) but lower than the regional benchmark (88 per 10,000 - March 2022). The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan appears to have stabilised following a continuing increase that was seen in the previous quarter. At the end of December there were 700 children and young people subject of a plan compared to 716 at the end of Quarter 2 (a rate of 41 in

Staffordshire compared to the most recent benchmarks, March 2022, of 42 nationally and 43 regionally).

21. The number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) issued in time (within 20 weeks) in Staffordshire remains low. The rolling 12-month figure in Staffordshire to December 2022 is 38% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (from 2021/22). Increasing numbers of new plan requests, alongside annual reviews, means that the number of cases allocated to each Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) key worker has increased, impacting on timeliness.
22. The capacity of SEND Key Workers was one of a number of suggested areas of focus from the recent 6-month review of the council's SEND Accelerated Progress Plan. The plan was reviewed in late September by the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England, with feedback that the authority was on target. In addition to SEND Key Workers, the limited capacity of Social Workers and Educational Psychologists was also highlighted, as well as measuring impact in terms of the 'lived experience' of service users. The plan will be reviewed again, by the DfE and NHS England, early in the next financial year.
23. The Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have confirmed that the authority has retained its Earned Autonomy status for 2023-2025, demonstrating a level of maturity in Staffordshire's Early Help System of support, and retaining a status held by only 10% of local authorities. At the end of Quarter 3, Staffordshire has achieved successful outcomes for 957 families through the Building Resilient Families and Communities programme since April 2022; exceeding the target set by DLUHC (797). Staffordshire has set its own ambitious local target of 1,195 families, and by the end of the quarter the authority is already 80% of the way towards achieving this.
24. Round three of the Household Support Fund, which runs for 6 months from 1st October 2022, continues to support Staffordshire's most vulnerable children and families. In total over 54,300 supermarket vouchers have been provided to children and young people in the October half term and Christmas holidays. An additional 1,437 households and 781 care leavers and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) have also received supermarket vouchers. 984 households have also benefited from the Winter Warmth Scheme, with each household having received either top up credit on prepaid meters or credit paid directly to their energy supplier. In addition, eligible residents will have access to a "top up" grant to contribute to new boiler systems.
25. The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme continues to offer children and young people free activities and a healthy meal on site to help with the cost of food over school holidays. Following its success in the summer, which benefitted 2,769 primary aged and 905 secondary

aged children and young people, the winter scheme which ran during the Christmas holidays, made available over 13,500 places, with attendance figures available in Quarter 4.

26. Over 460 Staffordshire residents have come forward and agreed to accommodate almost 2,000 Ukrainians as part of the government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Since March 2022, almost 860 Ukrainians have arrived in Staffordshire, with over 630 still being hosted by local sponsors. In December 2022, Cabinet endorsed proposals to develop a Resettlement Integration and Independence Support offer and to create a dedicated resettlement team within the council that will work on both the Homes for Ukraine programme and broader resettlement work.

27. In terms of the financial position at Quarter 3 for Children & Families, taking into account a one-off funding allocation, there is a forecast overspend of £11.064m, compared to an overspend of £5.8m at Quarter 2. This is largely due to higher than forecast placements of children in the authority's care and an increase in placement costs, and the service is taking mitigating actions to address these pressures as far as possible.

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 3. The overall Green Delivery and Finance ratings reflects considerable progress made across the service against its key plans.



30. Progress has been made in Quarter 3 with an aligned way forward with Stoke-on-Trent City Council in terms of the development of a solution to waste disposal arrangements in the north of the county post 2025. Details of this are currently being worked through.

31. The Highways Transformation Programme is progressing well. Work is ongoing to develop the community focus, Member priorities and customer journey improvements. This is in parallel to continuing to ensure that Staffordshire's highways network remains safe and secure; successfully delivering a structural maintenance programme, with one site completed (Weston), six currently on site (Holmcroft, Blythe Bridge, Saredon, Burntwood, Rolleston on Dove, and Essington) and one due to start in February 2023 (Stone).

32. The council continues to support local businesses to survive, adapt and continue to operate as part of delivering its £6m Staffordshire Means Back to Business Support Scheme. As part of this scheme, the

Staffordshire Apprentice 500 initiative was launched in April 2021 to provide incentives to small and non-levy employers to provide apprenticeships to Staffordshire's young unemployed residents. This has now been completed and between the launch and November 2022, 418 apprentices have been approved and 401 of those have started their apprenticeship.

33.The number of business start-ups in Staffordshire have been increasing and latest performance for 2021 shows that Staffordshire is now in line with the national average for the first time with a start-up rate of 12.2% compared to the national rate of 12.4% (see Appendix 1). Staffordshire's three-year business survival rate in 2021 stood at 61.9% which was higher than the UK survival rate of 57.6%. This positive performance will partly be due to the enabling role that the council has played, especially since the start of the pandemic, and the dynamic range of business support that the council offers.

34.Between June 2020 and December 2022, the council has supported 500 individuals through the Staffordshire Start Up Programme, commissioned through the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce. Of these, almost half (228) have started their own business. Get Started and Grow has supported 113 business owners who have been trading up to 5 years with professional services support in marketing, finance or digital marketing, with the 'start up' support being in place since November 2021 and the 'step-up' element launching in Quarter 3. The programme is looking to expand further in 2023 to areas such as Human Resources and the council will continue to procure established Staffordshire businesses to provide this support.

35.Procurement took place during Quarter 3 for a new 'Working for Yourself' pilot scheme which launched in January 2023. This is taking place in Burton-on-Trent and is aimed at residents whose first language is not English, to provide them with support to start their own business. This scheme will work alongside 'My Own Boss' which started in 2022 to provide bespoke 1-2-1 mentoring to those who need additional support over and above the Start Up programme to help them launch their new business.

36.The Ignite programme delivered by Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce was launched in 2021, supporting young people in the final year of further education who have the aspiration to start their own business. The programme is constructed around an intensive workshop, to provide the skills needed to start a business, with 13,500 students supported on the programme to date. The programme continues to evolve.

37.It has been announced that the council was successful with its Government Levelling Up Fund bid of £20m. The associated schemes will improve a number of major roads around the county, reduce journey

times, put greener, cleaner buses on main roads, improve walking and cycling routes and reduce the impact of housing and commercial developments. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council was also successful with its £17.1m bid to redevelop Leek town centre.

38.Linked to Staffordshire's Local Transport Plan, there has been confirmation of an allocation of £314,000 from the Active Travel Capability Fund Bid for 2022/23 to promote cycling and walking in the county, with similar levels of funding expected for the next two years.

39.Work is underway on Chatterley Valley West development in Newcastle-under-Lyme. The multi-million-pound Enterprise Zone development will see major private sector investment, with an additional £3.7m funding through the Kidsgrove Town Deal and a £3.5m investment by the council. Through this joint funding, essential roads and infrastructure at the site are now being delivered to pave the way for the development of industrial units. The site could create up to 1,700 jobs and when fully built it could release total business rates of more than £2.5m a year that will be wholly retained within the area.

40.As part of Project Gigabit, work continues to take place locally to provide additional mapping analysis and local knowledge to help with the identification of premises and areas, that are not currently covered by providers' plans, to potentially be connected. There are challenges with lower-than-expected numbers of premises identified by BDUK as eligible for broadband intervention and this is being discussed between the council and BDUK.

41.Work to refresh the annual Climate Change Action Plan which identifies the priorities and actions for the year ahead has been completed. This will help the council to play its part in the global effort to reduce the impact of climate change and meet its net carbon zero target by 2050. This and the Climate Change Annual Report were approved at Cabinet in November. Further work during Quarter 3 to support these commitments saw the county's libraries introduce Climate Change Champions to inspire communities to be 'greener'.

42.The Climate Action Fund is now into its third year and continues to receive high levels of positive interest. The deadline for the latest round of applications was 23rd December 2022, with 92 applications received totalling over £90,000 of potential funding to community groups within Staffordshire.

43.Empowering our communities is a key part of the council's Strategic Plan 2022-26. It is one of the 'How We Work Statements' because it is central to delivering against all the Strategic Plan priorities and the way the council works. To ensure the council delivers on this work, a draft Communities Delivery Plan 2023 has been developed following

discussions with Cabinet and the Communities Leadership Group. This plan includes key communities-related priorities from across the council, greater detail on performance measures and milestones, and a robust performance management framework. A 'Communities Position Statement' is also being developed to accompany the plan. This statement will set out what the council has done in the past 18 months, what the council wants to achieve alongside its communities in the future, and how the council plans to do it. The draft plan and position statement are set to be discussed at Full Cabinet on 15th February 2023.

44.The council's 'Here to Help' campaign was launched in early October to make sure people are aware of the support and advice available, focussing on areas such as money and bills, food and essentials, staying warm and helping others. Up to December there were 19,800 visitors to web pages, 38,000 page views and 18,000 leaflets distributed to vulnerable residents.

45.Progress is being made in building the brand new £5.4m history centre for Staffordshire. Work on site is due to start in February. More than 60 volunteers have donated over 2,800 hours up to December 2022, which equates to £56,535 in matched funding for the project.

46.The financial position at Quarter 3 for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills is a forecast saving of £0.108m, compared to a saving of £61,000 at Quarter 2. This is following an allocation of one-off funding for inflationary pressures materialising in highways and transport.

47. Corporate Services

| Delivery Performance Assessment | Finance Performance Assessment |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| GREEN | GREEN |

48.Corporate Services is currently on track in terms of both Delivery and Finance in Quarter 3 and continues to provide vital support to the organisation in delivering on its priorities. 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 ongoing challenges regarding capacity.



49.In Quarter 3, 'We are Staffordshire' was recognised for its place branding work and was shortlisted for a 'Place brand of the year' top international industry award, which celebrated the best quality in marketing and design of locations across the world. Throughout the quarter, significant work also continued around promoting the Staffordshire story and place brand, with 150 Ambassadors now

registered and a successful Ambassador event took place at Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce 'Let's do Business Expo' in October, which attracted 50 attendees and speakers.

50. During 2022/23, the council aimed to raise £8m through the sale of unused land and buildings to fund transformation of services and activity, in line with new Government regulation. By the end of December 2022, the council was progressing sales with four surplus sites, set to deliver £6.6m. Two further sites have been delayed to 23/24 due to complexities which will not be resolved before the financial year end.

51. Work on the council's schools and property projects is ongoing. Bilbrook House in South Staffordshire site sale has been completed and the Enterprise Hub in the Shire Hall Stafford is now open. Brackenberry service has also relocated into Chesterton Vision Centre. Work continues on the construction of a new primary school at Deanslade (Lichfield) and work has also started on the £4m refurbishment of the Kingston Centre (Stafford) which will see pupils and staff from St Leonard's Primary School (Stafford) move from their current Victorian building to the new larger site in September 2023. In addition, contractors are also on site at Tamworth library for refurbishment to modernise and make the building greener. The c.£8m schools maintenance programme which comprises of over 100 projects also remains on track to be delivered during this financial year.

52. The council continues to review and develop its digital approach, with a refreshed Digital Delivery Plan for 2023/24 approved in December 2022. Good progress has been made, including purchasing automation software for trialling in a number of areas in Adults and Children's Financial Services, with benefits expected before the end of Quarter 4. Work is also continuing with district and borough councils to progress the "Single Front Door" project across Staffordshire, moving forward with pilots on Customer Experience and Single Phone Number.

53. Following a successful commissioning process, the new Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Capacity Building Framework went live on 1st August 2022. The Framework aims to promote social action in local communities, build capacity in the voluntary and community sector, and support the delivery of Staffordshire's Young People's Offer. Latest available data shows that between 1st August and 30th September 2022, 88 organisations were provided with development support such as help with planning, developing policies, and safeguarding. An additional 39 children and young people's organisations were provided with specific development support for their area. VCSE groups were also supported to access over £600,000 of additional funding, including an award of over £200,000 to Burton Addiction Centre from the National Lottery Community Fund, and several successful applications to the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme.

54. The council's 2022 Community Fund opened on the 19th April 2022 and closed on 31 October 2022. In total 199 applications were received, from 180 unique organisations. The total value of projects in the applications (including the requests from the fund) is nearly £1m – this total means that communities were offered around £4 for every £1 requested from the fund. Outstanding applications are currently being processed, and an end of year report will be brought to Full Council later in the year.
55. The first stage of the Electoral Review has now been completed, with the Council Size Submission submitted in November 2022 approved by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). The in-principle decision, released on January 10th, is to retain a council size of 62. The second stage of the process is a public consultation on division arrangements which runs from 10th January to 20th March 2023; during this time any individuals, groups or organisations can submit their proposals for new division boundaries. Work is also underway on a developing Staffordshire County Council's proposal, using local data and gathering community insight and knowledge, to propose a solution that reflects the LGBCE criteria.
56. There is a continued focus on absence across the whole of the council to help teams improve their number of days lost due to sickness absence. The People Operations team are working directly with the top 30% of locations with the highest days lost to understand the root causes for absence and proactively support them with both short and medium-term actions. Absence related surgeries have also been provided to the wider management teams to help them manage absence through their directorate absence improvement plans. A new Sickness Absence policy has also been launched in Quarter 3.
57. Long term absence is at 8.66 days lost per employee, higher than the same point last year (8.06), but an improvement from Quarter 2 where performance was 8.97. Short-term absence is at 4.04 days lost per employee, higher than the same point last year (2.99), but an improvement from Quarter 2 where performance was 4.13. Total absence levels (12.7 days lost per employee) are higher than the same period last year (11.05) but have improved by 0.4 days since Quarter 2 (13.1). Employees who have had no absence is at 46.3% (1,925 employees) of the workforce and 24.4% (1,015 employees) have had less than 5 days absence.
58. Corporate Services is forecast to have a saving of £0.140m at Quarter 3, compared to a saving of £0.181m at Quarter 2. There is potential for some additional income from Registrars due to the higher number of weddings that are being booked following the lifting of all COVID restrictions.

59. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications of note in relation to this report, which is for information and discussion, not for decision.

60. Resource and Value for Money Implications

Please see Finance Appendices.

61. Climate Change Implications

There are no direct climate change implications of note.

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Performance Dashboard
Appendix 2 - Finance Quarter 3 Summary
Appendix 3 - Finance Quarter 3 Detailed Report
Appendix 4 - Corporate Checklist
Appendix 5 - Revenue Forecast Outturn 2022/23
Appendix 6 - Capital Forecast Outturn 2022/23
Appendix 7 - Financial Health Indicators 2022/23
Appendix 8 - Prudential Indicators

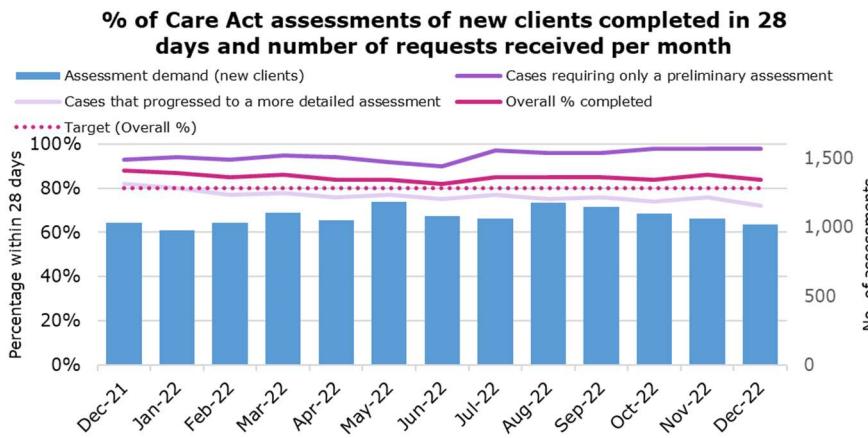
Contact Details

Report Author: Wendy Tompson
Job Title: Head of Policy and Insight
Telephone No.: 01785 854267
E-Mail Address: wendy.tompson@staffordshire.gov.uk

Report Author: Rachel Spain
Job Title: Corporate Finance Manager
Telephone No.: 01785 854455
E-Mail Address: rachel.spain@staffordshire.gov.uk

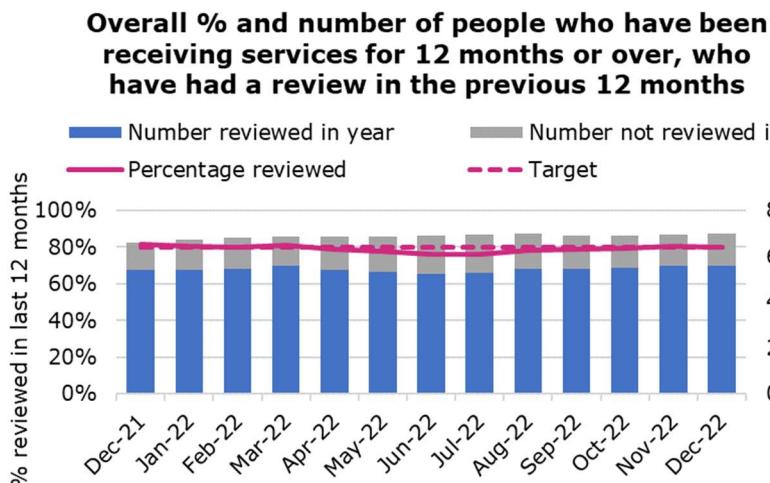
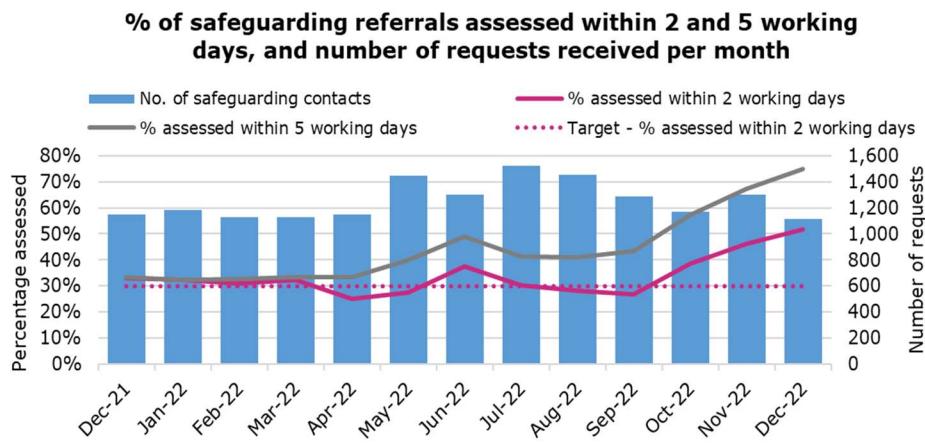
Health & Care Dashboard

Adult Social Care and Safeguarding



Demand for assessments reduced during Quarter 3. Where assessments are not completed in 28 days, this is usually because they are more complex. The council tracks these individually to ensure that progress is being made to determine appropriate care and support arrangements, and that any risks are being mitigated.

Additional permanent and temporary capacity has been recruited which has helped to improve the percentage of assessments undertaken within both 2 and 5 working days. All contacts continue to be assessed to ensure that the highest risk cases are prioritised immediately.

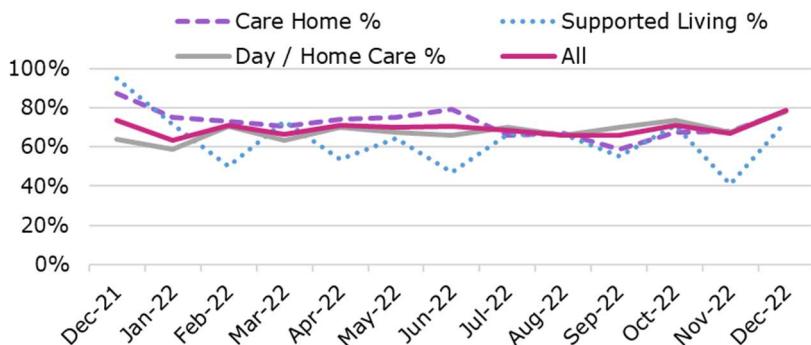


Q3 performance particularly good for Learning Disability and Mental Health reviews. Where people have not been reviewed within 12 months this may be because they were unavailable (for example in hospital) or because of insufficient capacity, which is being addressed. However if overall demand increases, resource may need to be diverted to higher priority work.

Health & Care Dashboard

Care Commissioning

% of brokerage sourced within agreed timescale by service type



Brokerage referral timeliness has improved and is rated Green for the first time since June 2021.

Source: SCC

% of care providers with CQC ratings of Good or Outstanding by provider type



Source: SCC and Care Quality Commission

Public Health and Prevention

Number of people who have accessed resources promoting independent living and community support, including SCC digital resources and community help points

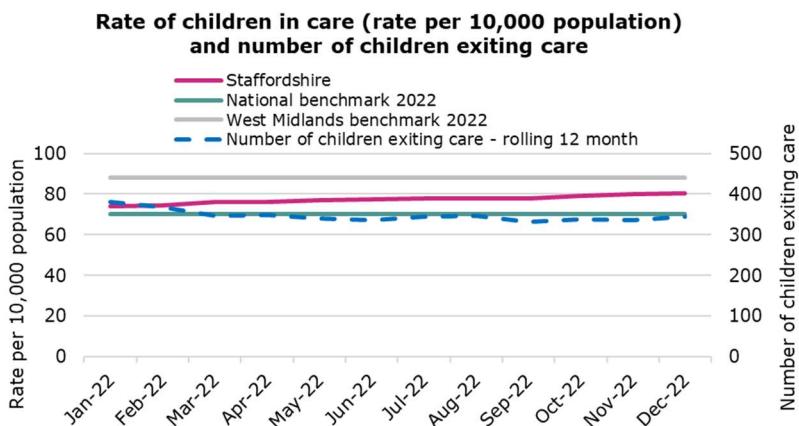


Of the 4,596 people who accessed resources in December 2022, 77% (3,550) were unique views of SCC adult social care webpages, 22% (1,011) were unique views of Staffordshire Connects adults homepage and 1% (35) were referred to Community Help Points.

n.b. There are limitations with this data; the actual number accessing digital resources is likely to be higher, as the chart only shows those users that have accepted the website analytics.

Children & Families Dashboard

Safeguarding

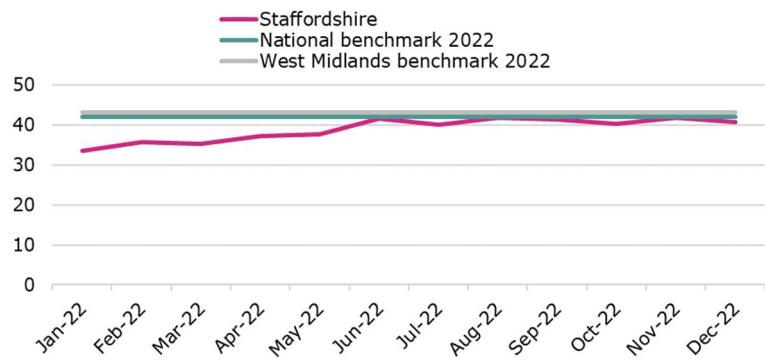


Staffordshire continues to experience increasing demand and complexity of need combined with challenges around recruitment and retention. Plans are now in place to reduce some of the staffing pressures and to strengthen recruitment and retention.

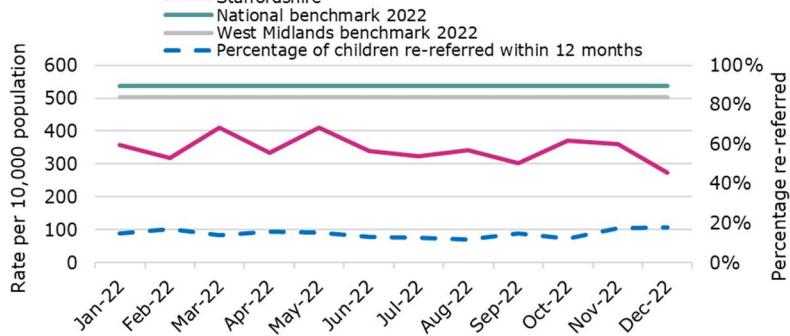
The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan stabilised during Quarter 3, having risen in the first part of the year.

Staffordshire rates remain below recent national and regional benchmarks. Of those children subject of a CPP, 20% have been subject of a plan more than once, compared to 23% nationally and regionally (based on the 2022 benchmarks).

Rate of children subject of a Child Protection Plan (per 10,000 population)



Rate of children referred, rolling 12 month average (per 10,000 population), and % re-referred within 12 months

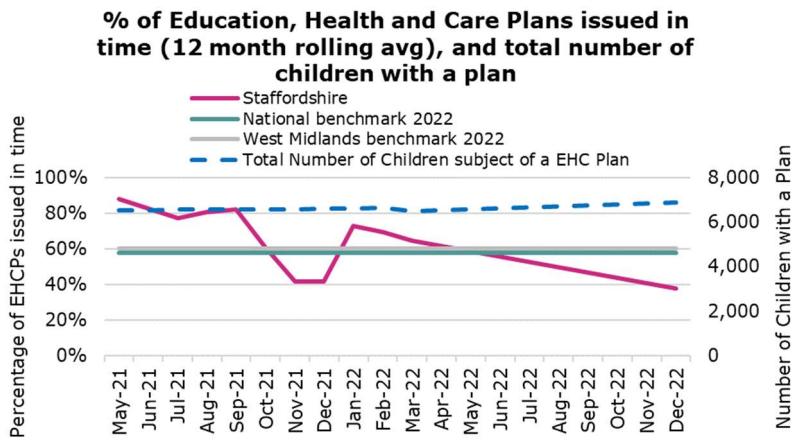


Referrals have reduced over the quarter; at the end of December 2022 they were at the lowest level they had been across the last 12 months.

Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

Children & Families Dashboard

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



Increasing demand continues to impact on Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) timeliness. In addition to those C&YP with an existing EHCP, 1,733 requests for assessment were made across the 12 months to 31/12/2022.

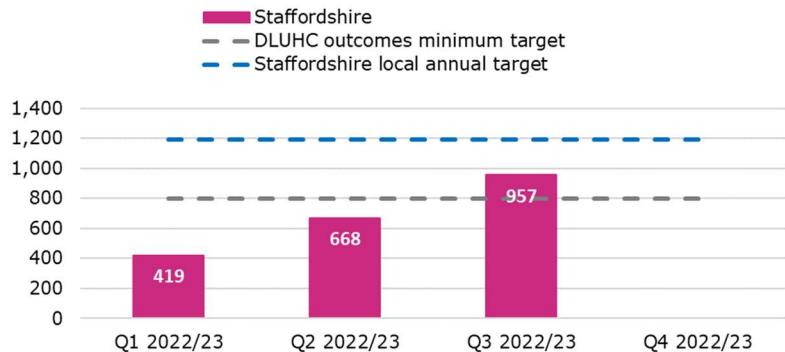
To help mitigate this, funding for additional Educational Psychologist capacity has been secured. Delivery of the SEND Accelerated Progress Plan continues, with recent Ofsted feedback that the authority's progress was on track.

Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

Supporting Families

At the end of Quarter 3, Staffordshire has already achieved the target set by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and is 80% of the way towards a more ambitious local target, which is 50% higher than that set by DLUHC.

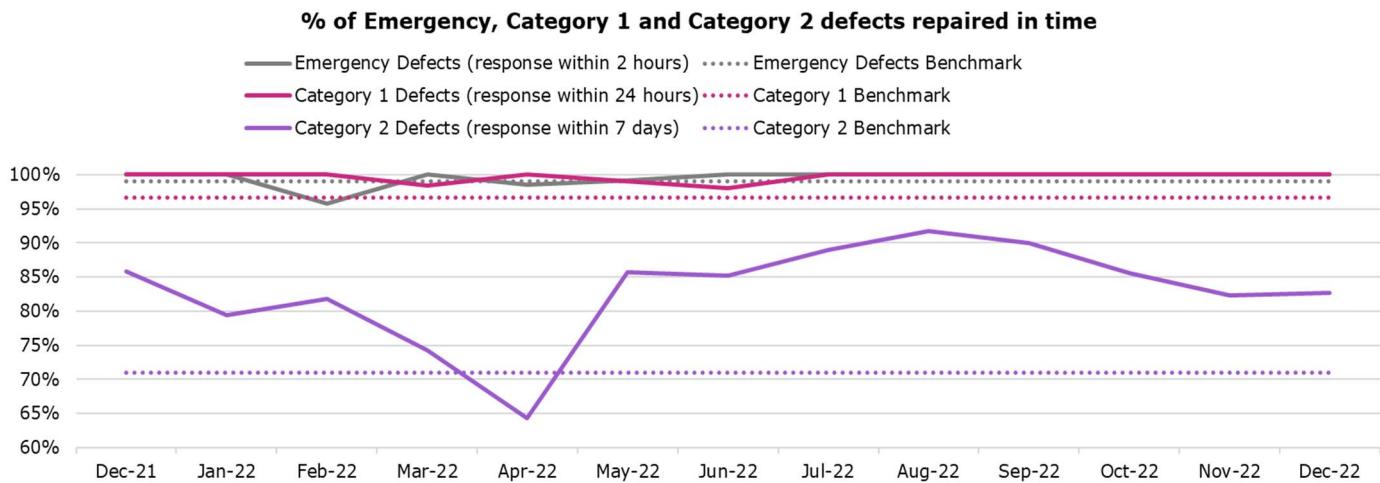
Supporting Families Programme - Reported successful family outcomes in 2022/23



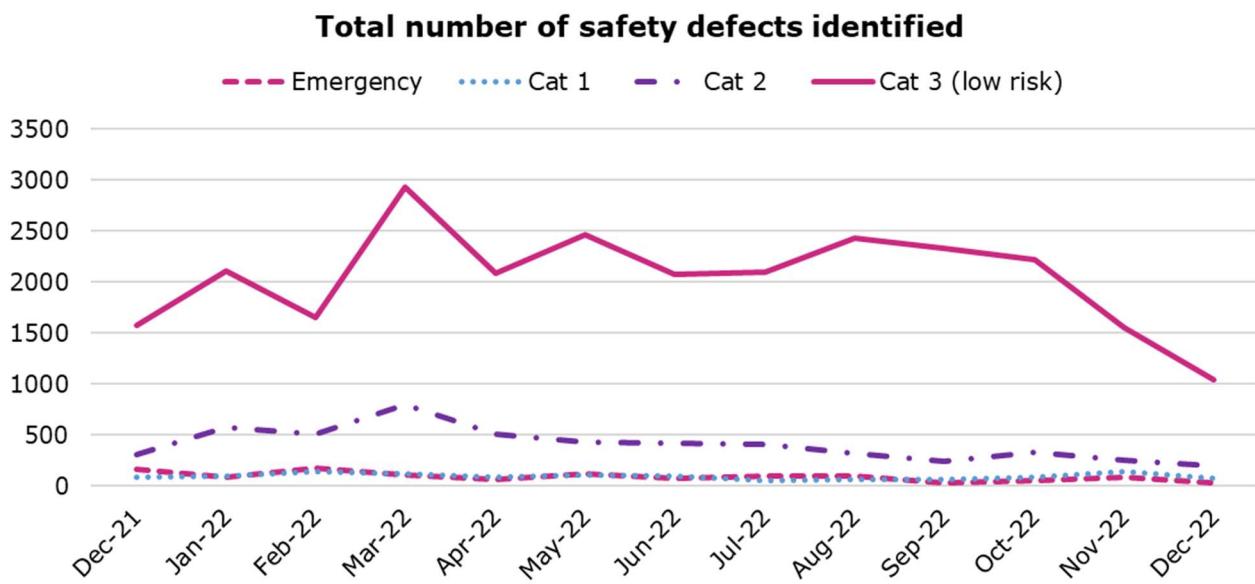
Source: SCC and Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities

Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Dashboard

Highways



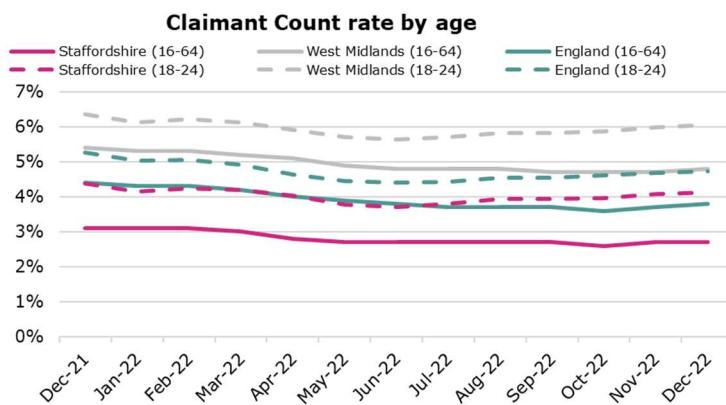
Staffordshire's performance continues to be above the benchmarks for all defect repairs.



This demand includes all defects identified on the highway in Staffordshire. The number identified each month can vary due to a number of factors. There are typically fewer annual and quarterly planned safety inspections carried out during the winter months (due to the weather conditions), which is likely to have contributed to the dip in the number of identified defects during Quarter 3, similar to previous years. This will continue to be monitored.

Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Dashboard

Employment



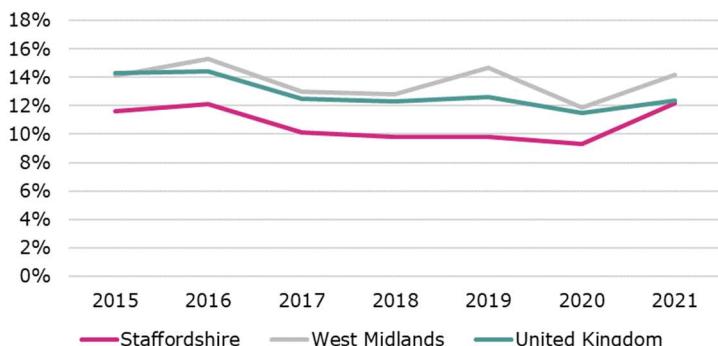
As of December 2022, there were 14,640 claimants in Staffordshire; an increase of 195 claimants compared with the figures reported in Quarter 2 (August 2022). Staffordshire Moorlands records the lowest rate (1.9%), and Tamworth records the highest at 3.5%, which is still below the national position.

Source: Office for National Statistics

Business Start-ups

Staffordshire is now in line with the national average for start-ups for the first time, and three-year business survival also remains above the national rate. This positive performance will partly be due to the enabling role that the council has played.

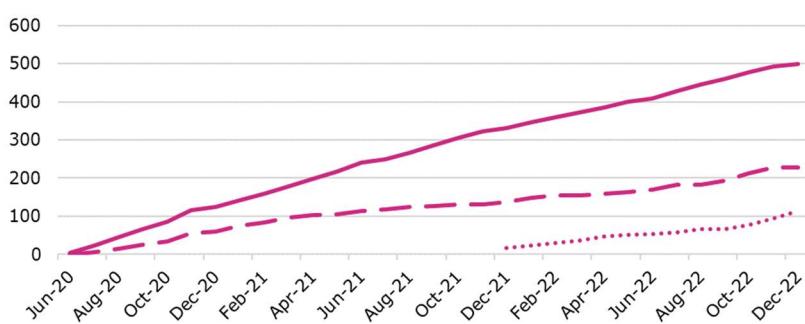
Annual Business Start-up Rates, 2015-2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Inter-departmental Business Register (IDBR)

Number of business start-ups assisted by the council (cumulative)

- Number of business attending start-up programme
- Number of businesses started trading
- ... Total number of businesses approved for the Get Started and Grow Scheme

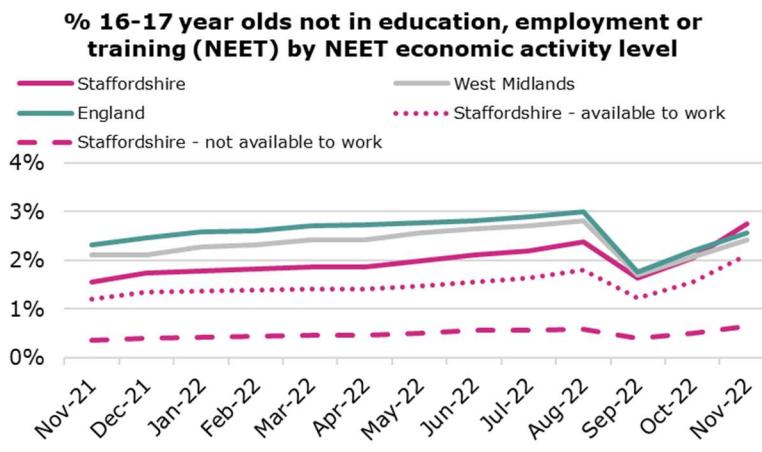


Source: SCC

The top two sectors for businesses attending the start-up programme continue to be 'Retail' and 'Services'. The 'Get Started' scheme expanded in Q3 to include 'Step up' support for businesses aged 2-5 years.

Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Dashboard

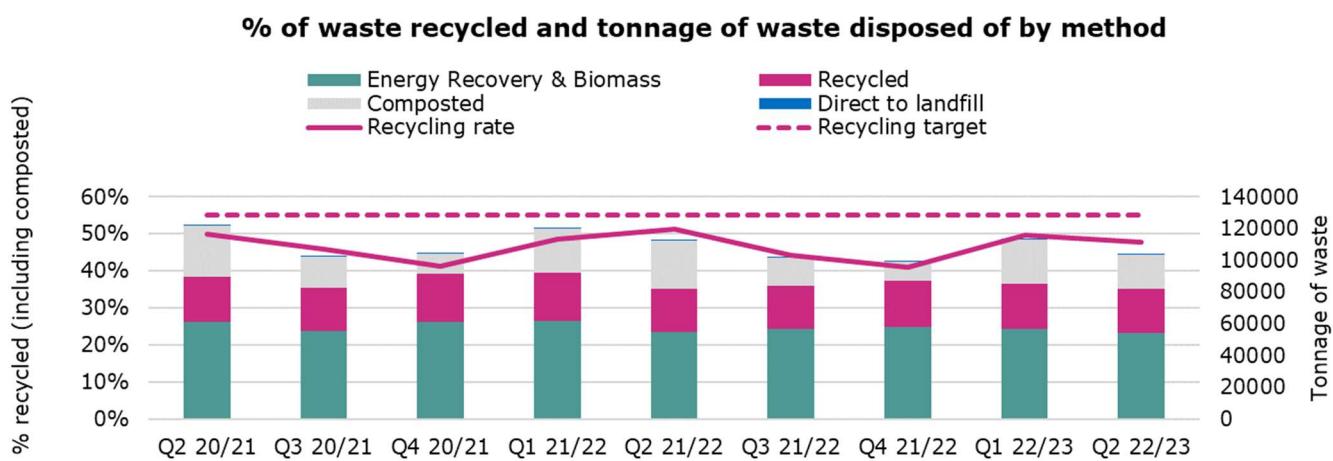
Skills



It is usual for there to be an increase in NEETs from September as young people leave school on 31 August and are then tracked. The local recent increase is partly due to the number of pupils not returning in Year 13 and an increase in work-based learning opportunities. To improve this measure, Entrust Skills and Employability are tracking young people who are NEET and working to re-engage them. This will continue to be monitored.

Source: National Client Caseload Information System

Climate Change and Waste



Staffordshire continues to send minimal waste directly to landfill.

Source: SCC

Corporate Services Dashboard

Finance

Revenue outturn forecast variance compared to the overall budget (target no more than +/- 2%)

| Quarter 1, 22/23 | Quarter 2, 22/23 | Quarter 3, 22/23 |
|--|---|---|
| 0.61% (£4m overspend) | 1.1% (£6.408m overspend) | 1.97% (£11.635m overspend) |

Although a 1.97% overspend is acceptable as it is just within the 2% target, there is an £11.635m overspend, which would be £16.135m (2.74%) without the one-off funding allocation which has been awarded.

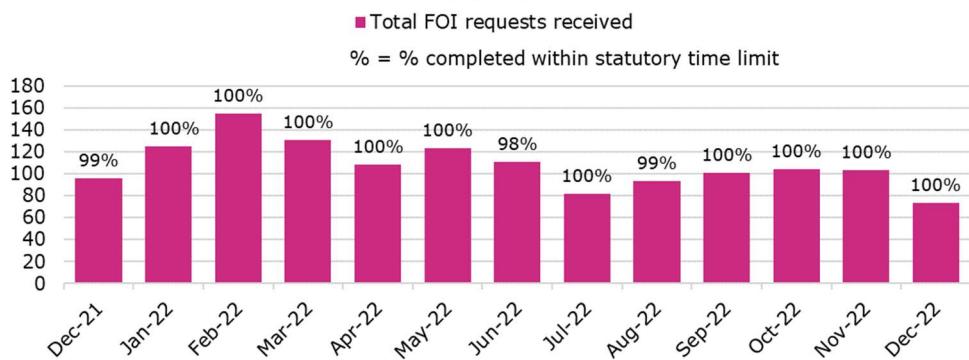
Staff Sickness Absence



There is a continued focus on staff absence levels to help teams improve their days lost to sickness, including working with those service areas experiencing the highest absence levels and promoting best practice absence management.

Freedom of Information

Number of FOI requests and % completed within statutory time limit



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 3 forecast information.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows an overspend of £16.135m (2.74%). Following the allocation of one-off funding this reduces to an overspend of £11.635m (1.97%). Inflationary pressures are forecast to be in the region of £50-70m in the current and future years and the situation is being monitored carefully.

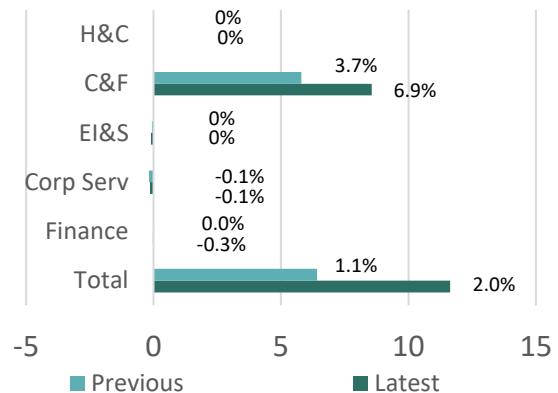
There is a forecast overspend of £10.6m for Children's Services, following an allocation of £8.5m of one-off funding. This is a highly complex and volatile service and costs depend on the type of placements provided. The service is taking mitigating actions to address these pressures as far as possible.

Savings are categorised into confidence of delivery. There are £0.736m savings that are delivered as at quarter 3. There are £1.145m savings classed as Low confidence which relate to accommodation based savings in Adult Social Care.

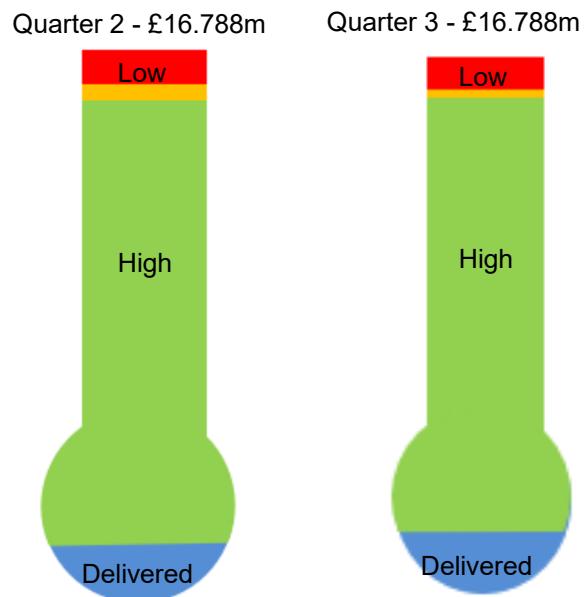
The latest capital outturn projection is £117.0m, compared to the quarter 2 position of £128.8m, an decrease of 9.1%. This projection is a fully funded position. This decrease is mainly due to slippage on New Care Homes Projects, SEND funding being rephased into the next financial year, and reductions due to planned programme works within Highways. There has also been some increase on Highways schemes, mainly due the inclusion of a provision for inflationary pressures.

Within the national context, the latest consumer price index is 9.3%. Interest rates have increased to 3.5% making them the highest level in 15 years. GDP is estimated to have increased by 0.5% in October 2022, following a decrease of 0.6% in September. Current unemployment figures show Staffordshire benefit claimant rate remains below that of the West Midlands and Great Britain.

Revenue Budget Variance

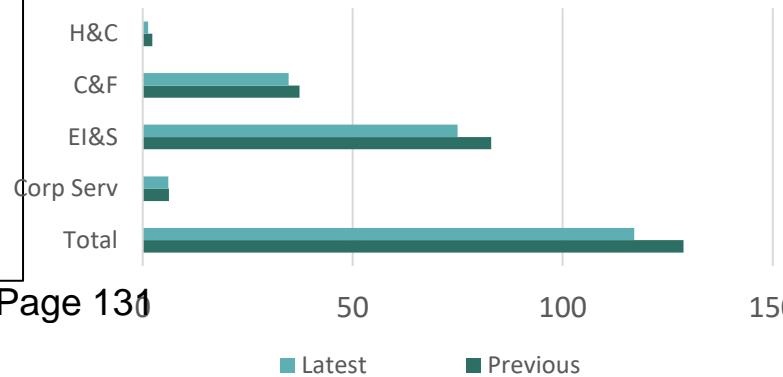


Savings Tracker – Target £16.788m



Savings Rating Key – Blue – Delivered - savings completed in year
 Green – High confidence – Expectation saving will be delivered in year
 Amber – Medium confidence – work still to be done to achieve saving
 Red – Low confidence – expectation that saving will not be made in year

Capital Programme



Appendix 3 – Quarter 3 Finance Report

Introduction

Revenue Forecast

1. The latest revenue forecast outturn (as provided in appendix 5) shows a forecast overspend of £16.135m (2.74%), prior to additional funding for inflationary pressures being taken into account. Once this one-off funding is included and an allocation from the Inflation Reserve is assumed, the overspend reduces to £11.635m (1.97%). This is compared to an overspend of £6.408m reported at quarter 2.
2. The one-off funding allocated from the inflation reserve amounts to £4.5m. There is £4m remaining in the Contingency budget and it is requested that this is used to fund the pay award which has been agreed for 2022/23. The current forecast of inflationary pressures for the current and future years is between £50m and £70m. These are being monitored closely and will be updated in future quarterly reports, however the need for one-off resources to fund these pressures remains.
3. The following paragraphs consider the key financial issues in each of the council's portfolios.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 4. Health and Care | Forecast – Breakeven |
| 5. <i>Public Health and Prevention</i> | <i>Forecast – Breakeven</i> |
| 6. There appears to be renewed interest in the Public Health Ringfenced Grant and we will review expenditure to ensure it is consistent with grant conditions. We are holding a contingency against the risk that the Public Health Ringfenced Grant is reduced in future years. | <i>Forecast – Breakeven</i> |
| 7. <i>Adults Social Care & Safeguarding</i> | <i>Forecast - Breakeven</i> |
| 8. There are a number of vacancies in the Adults Learning Disability Team (ALDT) which has led to a forecast saving of £0.814m. The vacancies will be filled during the year to ensure adequate capacity to complete assessments and reviews in a timely way. There is a forecast overspend of £0.225m for the Section 75 agreement with the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) due to the 2022/23 NHS pay award being slightly higher than budgeted and some unbudgeted agency costs being incurred. Over variances amount to | <i>Forecast - Breakeven</i> |

Appendix 3 – Quarter 3 Finance Report

a forecast saving of £1.160m. It is proposed that the total forecast saving of £1.749m is transferred to reserves as identified below.

9. Learning Disability In-House services are forecast to save £0.185m, largely due to vacancies being held in the residential services during the restructure. There is also a forecast saving of £1.471m against the budget for the new Enhanced Homecare Service as this will take time to build up to full capacity. It is proposed that the total forecast saving of £1.656m is transferred to the reserves as identified below.

10. Care Commissioning *Forecast - Breakeven*

11. The Older Peoples budget is forecast to save £6.096m which is an increase from the position at quarter 2. This is, in part, due to ongoing careful management of demand and prices.
12. The number of residential and nursing placements has increased during the first months of the year, but demand has been managed below the growth in the older population, which was budgeted for in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Price pressures have continued to increase throughout the year. With the additional growth in placements assumed for the remainder of the year, there is a forecast saving of £2.354m (compared with £3.461m reported at quarter 2). The Block Booked Beds saving is unlikely to be delivered in full this financial year. However, additional block booked beds are being commissioned and exiting capacity is monitored carefully to ensure effective utilisation.
13. Additional funding was built into the budget from 2022/23 for homecare for older people, recognising the ageing population. Challenges with recruitment and retention have limited the rate at which providers can increase capacity – however there has been an increase in provision recently, which has reduced the number of people waiting for home care and decreased the forecast saving to £3.590m (compared with £4.130m reported at quarter 2). There remains £0.901m worth of home care unprovided and this is budgeted in the MTFS for future years.
14. The profile of increasing demand and further price pressures has improved the income forecast for client contributions, resulting in a forecast surplus of £0.313m, compared with the forecast shortfall of £1.291m at quarter 2.

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15. Other variances in the Older People budget results in a forecast overspend of £0.161m.
16. The Physical Disabilities budget is forecasting an overspend of £0.245m (compared to a forecast overspend of £0.776m at quarter 2). The position has improved mainly from reduced forecast on residential and nursing placements and increased income forecasts which have been partially offset by an increase in the home care forecasts.
17. The Learning Disability placement budget is forecast to overspend by £0.464m. There is a risk that the Reviews Programme MTFS savings will not be delivered in full, and that NHS income could reduce. There also remains a risk that demographic growth and care price increases could exceed the budget assumptions, but these will be monitored and mitigated as we move towards the end of the year. The Council has reached a cost sharing agreement with NHS partners in respect of the placement costs of people discharged as part of the Transforming Care Partnership (TCP).
18. The Mental Health budget is forecast to overspend by £0.581m due to a growth in nursing and residential placements as well as an increase in the number of people benefitting from receiving a direct payment. The placement budget was increased in recognition of the growth in placement costs during the last two years, but there remains a risk of further increases in referrals following the Covid pandemic.
19. The Carers budget is forecast to save £0.477m and the Advocacy budget by £0.188m. There are partially offset by some additional temporary commissioning costs, forecast to be £63,000.
20. Other variances amount to a forecast saving of £1.547m. It is proposed that the total net saving of £6.955m is transferred to the reserves as identified below.
21. Forecasting the future demand for care is even more difficult than usual due to the impact of Covid. The frailty of the older population has increased, and more people appear to have mental health problems. Demand for assessments is up by 20% of pre-pandemic levels and despite strong demand management some of this will inevitably translate into increased numbers of people receiving care.

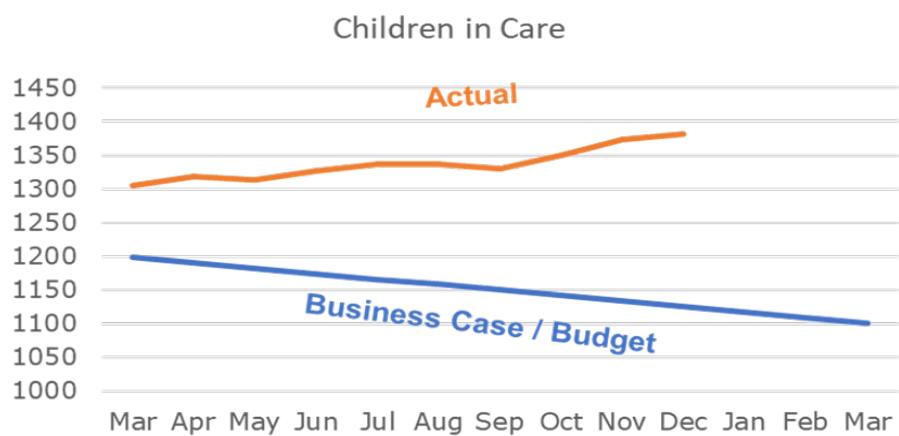
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22. In addition, inflation and the Covid pandemic has significantly increased care providers' costs and these are increasingly reflected in the prices offered to the Council. Given these pressures, it was recommended in the quarter 2 report that £5m be added to the Corporate Inflation Reserve.
23. **Adult Social Care Reform**
24. In the Autumn statement, the Chancellor announced that the following charging elements of the planned Adults Social Care reforms –
 - A cap on the costs that people pay for care during their lifetime
 - Increased capital thresholds for access to state funded care
 - The right for all self-funders to ask their local authority to arrange their carewill be delayed by 2 years from October 2023 to October 2025. However, the 'fair cost of care' element of the reforms will proceed.
25. To this end, the Government has announced details of the Adults Social Care Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund, with Staffordshire County Council receiving an allocation of £8.3m for 2023/24 (with an estimated allocation of £12.5m for 2024/25) to support the Council to continue to move towards paying a more sustainable rate for care. These sums will allow us to move towards the 'Fair' Cost of Care as calculated by the autumn cost of care exercise – but are unlikely to be sufficient to allow the Council to meet these values and may not cover the inflationary cost pressures faced by care providers. This will be considered during the Council's annual fee review exercise and the MTFS review.
26. To mitigate the financial risk posed by the reforms, it was proposed at quarter 2 that the Health & Care Risk Reserve was increased by £9.987m created by the reported savings. This figure needs to be updated slightly to £9.860m to reflect updated costs outlined earlier in this report. In addition to the transfers identified above, £4.5m of base budget has been released where grant funding has been used in line with conditions to fund a proportion of the 2022/23 fee uplift, recognising that the Council awarded a higher than usual uplift to support care providers with Covid related costs. The provision of reserves to lessen the risks around Adult Social Care Reform is a short term, non-recurrent measure and does not address the underlying and ongoing impact. The Council, along

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with other stakeholders, will continue to lobby the Government to request that the reforms are fully funded.

27. Covid Funding
28. Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) of £19.169m has been brought forward to 2022/23. The quarter 2 report detailed plans to spend the remainder of the funding. Guidance has now been issued that any COMF grant remaining unspent at the end of 2022/23 financial year can be rolled forward to 2023/24 “for purposes of COVID control and COVID recovery, including mitigating the impact of COVID on health and health inequalities in your populations”. Current spend plans will be reviewed early in the new year to identify possible 2023/24 costs and the spend plan will be reprofiled accordingly.
29. **Children & Families** **Forecast - £11.064m overspend**
30. *Children's Services* *Forecast - £11.564m overspend*
31. The forecast position is an overspend of £11.564m. This is £5.7m higher than previously forecast.
32. The number of Children in Care (CiC) has increased from the start of the year (and from the levels assumed at quarter 2) and – as at the end of December – currently stand at 1,382 (including 90 unaccompanied asylum seekers (UASC)). This is significantly removed from the approved business case and underlying assumptions that make up the existing budget and MTFS:



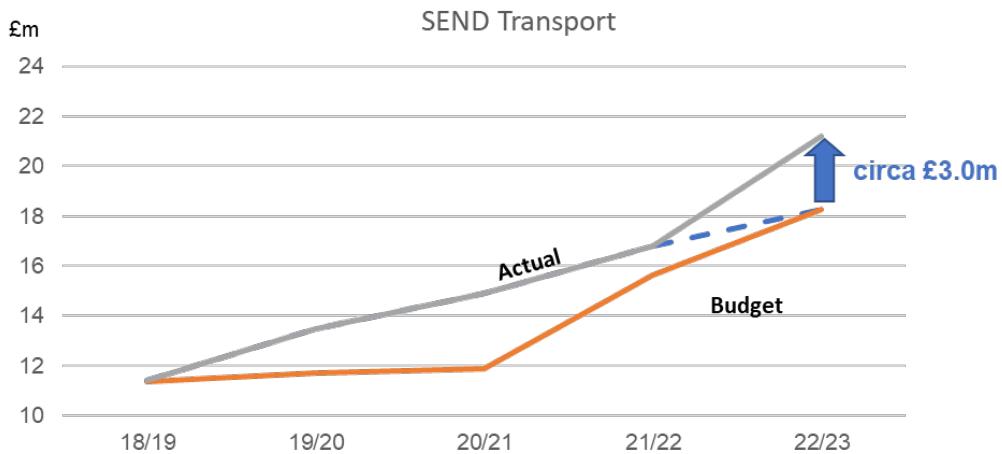
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33. This is a highly complex and volatile service with costs dependent significantly on the type of placement provided; however, based on existing levels – and assuming a similar level of demand for the rest of the year – it is forecast that the CiC Placements budget and Section 17 support, exacerbated by rising costs of inflation, will be £17.8m overspent.
34. The service is taking mitigating actions to address as far as possible pressures through a CiC action plan including, but not limited to
 - Additional income from partners
 - Greater challenge of the number of entering and leaving children in care
 - Introduction of a new ‘contract framework’ to reduce costs and improve value for money
 - Enhanced internal residential provision to further disrupt the market
 - Review of the existing ‘short breaks’ provision and capacity
35. A ‘Placements Transformation’ working group has also been established investigating alternative delivery options that may diversify existing delivery models and disrupt the market.
36. This will, however, take time and at this advanced stage of the year, even with the above mitigations (estimated to be at most £0.5m in year), the forecast is for an overall overspend this year of £17.3m. There is a risk that this position will worsen given the current economic climate or if anticipated mitigations do not come to fruition.
37. We continue to embed the new structure across our services; and while this highlights many positive outcomes, such as
 - Support for the vision and that the structure/design is already having a positive impact
 - Better working conditions and environment for our staff
 - Improved collaborative working across teams
 - Recognition that the increase in front line staff (i.e. social workers and family practitioners) will improve outcomes for families and children in Staffordshire

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38. The transformation has been hindered by continuing recruitment and retention problems. This has caused not only an over reliance on more expensive agency support for essential service delivery (leading to a forecast overspend of £2.2m across the structure) but also some inconsistency of support and capacity. Proposals have been worked on to address these concerns and have been put forward as part of the recommended MTFS proposals.
39. There are other mitigating savings of £1m, mainly additional UASC grant but also allowing for a forecast increase in the required provision for bad debts of £0.3m. This leads to an overall forecast overspend in Children's services of £18.5m.
40. As previously reported, an allocation of £6m has been provision from the Corporate Contingency budget and a further £1m earmarked from other one-off corporate resources towards the rising cost of inflation, reducing the net overall forecast overspend to £11.5m.
41. *Education Services* *Forecast - breakeven*
42. There is a forecast overspend of £2.9m, similar to the quarter 2 position.
43. This is mainly a result of SEND transport which in recent years has seen a significant increase in demand as a result of the rise in Education Health and Care plans (EHCPs). While this has been reflected in the MTFS with a significant investment in the budget over the last two years, unprecedented rises in inflation (in particular, fuel) have placed additional pressure on the budget this year.
44. Given the current financial circumstances, a paper was brought forward earlier this year by the transport commissioners' service and approved proposing an 'exceptional' in year increase to transport contracts (backdated to March 2022) of 8.5%, equivalent to £1.4m, to help mitigate the immediate pressure rising.
45. However, additional inflationary costs through the year as contracts are retendered and awarded at even higher levels driven by the adverse market conditions are forecast to increase the overspend further to £3m.

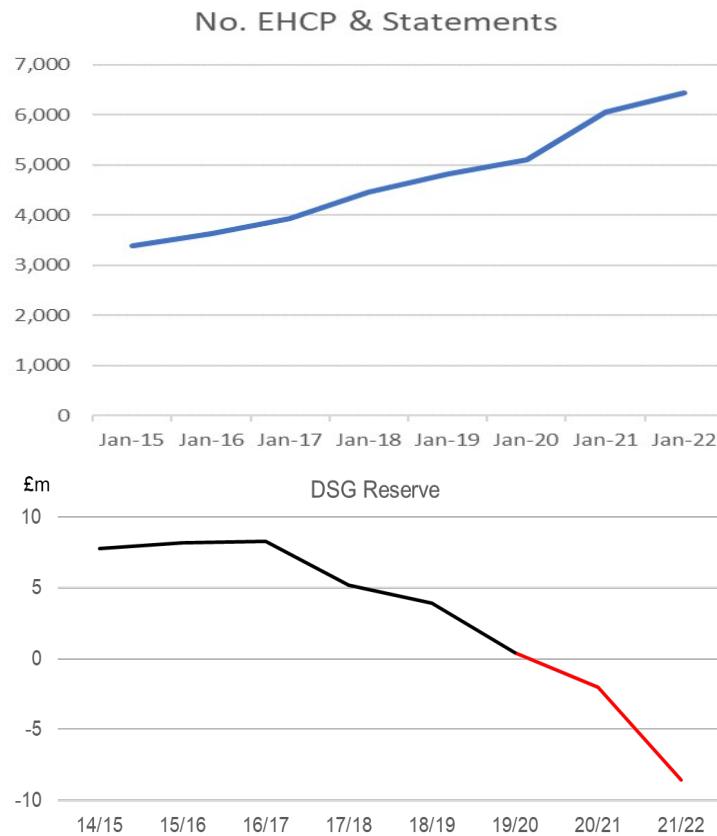
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- 46. While a contribution from corporate reserves in 2022/23 of £1.4m has been agreed (funding the ‘exceptional’ policy outlined above), this still leaves an overall likely overspend this year of £1.6m.
- 47. A further amount of £1.5m has been earmarked from other one-off corporate resources to support and, along with other small savings of £0.1m across Education Services (mainly historic teacher pensions contributions), brings the overall forecast within budget.
- 48. A review of SEND transport is being implemented to identify any actions that may be taken to mitigate the existing demand and costs as far as possible – however this is a complex service and will take significant time and resources and is unlikely to have an impact in the current year.
- 49. *SEND High Needs Block*
- 50. The High Needs Block is currently forecast to overspend by £7.8m, £1.8m more than previously reported, and reflects continuing growing demand for SEND support. This is impacting across all areas but especially the Independent sector with numbers now nearly double what they were just three years ago. Given the more expensive placement costs, this is by some way the largest budget pressure in the Higher Needs Budget.
- 51. This overspend will be charged against the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve which, at the end of 2021/22 was already £8.6m in deficit. Staffordshire County Council is not alone in this difficult financial predicament – this is a position shared by the majority of Councils across the sector. The Government has put in place a ‘statutory override’ requiring that accumulated DSG deficits

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should remain ringfenced and separate to the Council's other reserves and this has been extended through to the end of 2025/26.



- 52. It will take time to address the current shortfall and a longer term 'deficit management plan' has been developed that is consistent with the actions and objectives outlined in the Council's Accelerated Progress Plan and wider SEND strategy. This was presented, in summary, to the Schools Forum in November.
- 53. *Partnerships & Wellbeing* *Forecast - £0.5m saving*
- 54. There is a forecast saving of £0.5m, compared with a breakeven forecast at quarter 2, this increased reflects the fact that existing staff were utilised to respond and administer the Government funded Afghan resettlement 'Bridging Hotel' programme and therefore are covered in the staffing budget.
- 55. A large majority of the Partnerships and Wellbeing budget comes from external grants from Central Government, including:

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- Resettlement - £0.9m – funding to support the resettlement of refugees for example as a result of and in response to developments in Ukraine, Afghanistan and Syria
- Household Support fund - £11m – a programme to support vulnerable or struggling families that may be finding it difficult to meet essential costs such as energy or water bills, food, or other essential items
- Holidays and Activities Fund - £2.3m – a programme to coordinate and provide support to children through holiday periods including healthy food and enriching activities
- Supporting Families - £2.3m – funding for the transformation and development of the Early Help system. Staffordshire, by demonstrating its commitment and effective use of this funding is one of only a few authorities in the country that has been awarded ‘Earned Autonomy’ status and as such is guaranteed funding up front for the accelerated transformation of its services and positive impacts this will have on families. We have recently received confirmation that we have retained its Earned Autonomy status for the Supporting Families programme for the next two years and was recognised, through the Governments assurance process “for the standard of maturity in the development of its Early Help System of support”.

56. Each of the above programmes have planned spend to utilise the above allocations and to deliver national programmes of work for the benefit of residents.

57. **Economy, Infrastructure & Skills** **Forecast - £0.108m saving**

58. *Business & Enterprise* *Forecast – £47,000 saving*

59. The service is forecast to save £47,000 which is a small increase from the previously reported position. This increase is related to project income and a few temporary vacancies. There is a forecast pressure in 2022/23 related to the Shire Hall Enterprise Centre due to project delays which has led to an extended period of the units being fully vacant. The Centre is now open and has tenants and enquiries coming in. This pressure is expected to be mostly subsidised by surpluses on other Enterprise Centre budgets.

60. *Infrastructure & Highways* *Forecast - £45,000 overspend*

61. The forecast for the service is a small overspend of £45,000 although there are various savings and overspends across the budget area.

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62. There is a forecast saving of £0.2m on vacancies in the Community Infrastructure service which is offset by an income budget shortfall in the Highways Lab as well as a pressure on the land charges budget within the Sustainable Development area.
63. This forecast position assumes that any underspend on the additional investment monies in 2022/23 is used on priority work in the remaining months of this financial year, or early in the new year. It also includes a £50,000 increase to the bad debt provision in the Infrastructure & Highways service.
64. The situation around inflation and material supplies remains challenging for Highways budgets. Although a small saving is forecast against the additional inflation money in 2022/23, this is offset by a provision for the inflation pressures expected in 2023/24 and moving forwards.
65. *Transport, Connectivity & Waste* *Forecast - £0.156m saving*
66. The Transport and Connectivity area is forecast to overspend by £0.381m. This position includes making a provision of £1m in the Concessionary Fares budget to mitigate expected risks in this area during the next financial year. In October, we changed our payments to actual patronage levels rather than pre-pandemic levels. This was following the Department for Transport (DfT) guidance, but future Government directives could change, and the impact of the DfT Toolkit remains unclear. It is also likely that any savings made will need to be ring fenced to be used to support the bus network in future years.
67. In other budget areas within Transport, the effects of inflationary pressures (along with the rising fuel costs) are still being felt. Terminated contracts that have had to be renewed at short notice are coming in at much higher costs which is contributing to the overall overspend position. These will need to be monitored closely to understand any impact in future financial years.
68. The forecast position also includes putting a further £0.2m aside for Local Transport Assessment Works in future years.
69. For Sustainability and Waste, there is a forecast savings position of £0.538m, which assumes that the £0.6m MTFS saving for Green Waste recycling credits will be achieved.

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70. There is an overspend forecast within the Woodfuels budget. This business unit has been impacted by increased delivery costs due to the diesel price increase and also an increase in raw material costs due to global availability of resources impacted by the war in Ukraine.
71. There is a significant underspend forecast for the Waste budgets, partly due to strong commercial management of available waste capacity and Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) material off-takers. This is offset by making a £1m provision into the Waste reserve. This is provision for the Hanford re-procurement expected in 2023/24 as well as provision towards the required Waste to Recycling (W2R) plant cost which is in response to changes in emissions legislations.
72. *Skills* *Forecast - £0.104m saving*
73. The Skills team are forecast to save £0.104m which is a small increase from the quarter 2 forecast of £64,000. The main reason for this increase is the recovery of some staff costs from Grant income and training providers in 2022/23.
74. *Culture, Rural & Communities* *Forecast - breakeven*
75. The quarter 3 position now includes the Culture, Rural and Safer Communities budgets that have temporarily moved over from Children & Families. This area currently has a break-even position forecast.
76. There is a forecast saving of £0.181m on the Culture and Communities budgets due to savings in staffing structures and against the resources budget offset by the under-recovery of income post Covid.
77. The Rural budgets have a forecast overspend of £49,000 due to one-off tribunal and legal costs, post structure set up costs and an underachievement of income, offset slightly by staffing savings.
78. The Safer Communities area has a £70,000 forecast overspend which is partly due to increased costs within the Joint Coroners service.
79. *EI&S Business Support* *Forecast – £0.153m overspend*

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80. The service is forecast to overspend by £0.153m due to an increase in the bad debts provision.
81. **Corporate Services** **Forecast – £0.140m Saving**
82. The service is forecast to save £0.140m which is a small reduction from the quarter 2 position of £0.181m.
83. There are a number of savings due to vacancies across Corporate Services along with additional income in Registrars due to the higher number of weddings that are being booked now all Covid restrictions are lifted. These savings have been offset by moving money into reserves to ease one-off pressures arising in 2023/24 around EDRMS and the annual leave purchase scheme, and to allow investment into the Business Support areas.
84. The overall position assumes the delivery of the £0.460m Property rationalisation MTFS saving and an increase of £0.2m to the bad debt provision.
85. **Finance** **Forecast - £31,000 Saving**
86. Finance has moved out of Corporate Services and is its own stand-alone directorate. This directorate includes Corporate Finance, Decision Making Support, Accounting Services, Treasury and Pensions, Audit and Children's Financial Services.
87. At quarter 3, Finance is forecast to have a small saving of £31,000. This includes one-off additional income of £0.1m for staff recharges to capital projects as well as small savings on salary budgets due to in year vacancies which will be used to fund additional capacity requirements in other teams within the directorate.
88. **Centrally Controlled**
89. The forecast for centrally controlled is an overspend of £0.850m, the same as the position reported at quarter 2. This overspend is on the gas energy budget as prices have continued to rise as a result of global events. The forecast assumed that for the last few months of the financial year we are able to utilise a

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price cap similar to the domestic price cap of 10.3p/kWh which Central Government have just announced. This budget will be monitored closely as more detail around the price cap for public sector organisations and other businesses comes forward. There is also a £0.480m overspend on the electricity budget as prices continue to rise in this area as well. This overspend is being funded from the remaining contingency budget in 2022/23. Finance are working closely with the service to forecast what might happen with energy prices in 2023/24 and future years, as they are currently extremely volatile.

90. There is a breakeven position forecast for landlords repairs and maintenance and insurances.

91. **Nexxus Trading Services Ltd**

92. Nexxus, like many Adult Social Care providers, continues to face difficult trading conditions, particularly around recruitment and retention of staff. This has affected the company's ability to deliver the full volume of contracted care services and slightly impacted profitability. Work is on-going to improve the position in the second half on 2022/23.

93. **Capital Forecast**

94. Appendix 6 compares the latest capital forecast outturn of £117.0m, a decrease from the quarter 2 position of £128.8m. The key reasons for this decrease of £11.8m are set out in the following paragraphs.

95. **Health and Care** **Forecast spend £1.262m**

96. There has been a rephasing of £1m into 2023/24 due to work on the market position statement and demand analysis for the new Nursing Homes at Hilston Hill and Rowley Hall.

97. **Children and Families** **Forecast spend £34.708m**

98. *Maintained Schools* *Forecast Spend £33.932m*

99. There has been a decrease of £2.423m since the quarter 2 report. There have been rephasing of budgets into 2023/24 for unallocated SEND of £2.5m, and Schools Capital Allowance of £0.850m and £0.132m across a number of projects.

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100. There have also been increases over four projects – Anker Valley new Primary School, new Primary at Tamworth, Dunstall Farm Primary and Oldfield Middle Sports Hall and Teaching Spaces, totalling £1.2m.
101. **Vulnerable Children** *Forecast Spend £0.776m*
102. There has been a decrease in the forecast spend of £0.184m since the quarter 2 report, which is due to rephasing of budgets into 2023/24 for refurbishment and furnishing for In-House Children's Home Project totalling £0.197m, offset by small budget refinements for the In-House Residential Pilot programme of £13,000.
103. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills** *Forecast spend £74.969m*
104. **Economic Planning & Future Prosperity** *Forecast spend £4.604m*
105. There has been a decrease in forecast spend of £0.592m due to reprofiling of budgets on i54 of £0.546m and on i54 Western Extension of £0.531m due to risk provision, additional remedial works and inflation issues. There has also been increases in forecast spend due to reprofiling of budgets into 2022/23 for Chatterley Valley of £0.467m and Eastgate Regeneration of £65,000, as well as other minor reductions totalling £47,000.
106. **Highways Schemes** *Forecast spend £68.589m*
107. There has been a reduction of £3.895m since the quarter 2 report. A reduction of £6m reflects the planned programme of works to better align with anticipated levels of work.
108. This reduction is offset by net changes in the Maintenance & Integrated Transport budgets, including – increases for inflation for Bridge works of £0.127m and increase of £3.5m for Minor Carriageway Maintenance for inflationary pressures, as well as slippage of Holmcroft and A34 Stone schemes – early indications suggest further slippage in these works is likely, the value of which is dependant in part on weather conditions, with the situation continuing to be monitored and any necessary remedial action will be reflected once the weather impact is known.

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109. There has also been an increase of £1.730m for inflationary pressures and budget refinements for Integrated Transport.
110. *Connectivity* *Forecast Spend £0.275m*
111. There has been a decrease in forecast spend of £0.812m since the quarter 2 report due to reprofiling of the Gigabit Broadband project – there have been delays with BDUK, eligibility changes and voucher amounts in the process of being amended and refinements of the SFBB budget.
112. *Tourism and Culture* *Forecast Spend £0.768m*
113. The forecast spend has reduced by £2.525m since the quarter 2 report due to Tenders which have been submitted were higher than expected resulting in a need to increase the funding package – which required approval from both external and internal funders and this has taken some time to achieve, therefore the forecast spend for the scheme has been repaved predominantly into 2023/24 and onwards.
114. **Property, Finance and Resources & ICT** **Forecast spend £6.086m**
115. There has been a small reduction of £0.150m since the quarter 2 report, this is due to a delay in equipment procurement of £0.150m and rephasing of PSN Core Switch replacement in line with the latest business case timeline of £0.3m.
116. There has been an increase of £0.3m due to the introduction of the new Seabridge Centre Demolition. There has also been the introduction on the Kingston Centre Partial Demolition project with forecast spend of £0.410m, and a corresponding reduction of District Property Rationalisation budget.
117. **Financial Health**
118. Appendix 7 provides a forecast outturn performance against the key Financial Health Indicators approved as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process.
119. There have been 97.7% of invoices paid within 30 days of receiving them at the end of July, exceeding the financial health indicator target.

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120. The estimated level of outstanding sundry debt over 6 months old is £19.415m, this is over the target of £14.7m by £4.715m. This is an increase of £2.201m since the quarter 2 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.
121. The level of CCG health debt over 6 months old is now £1.936m, £1.964m below the target figure.
122. Client debt now stands at £10.572m and could potentially increase as a consequence of the 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 | 2022/23 Target | 30/09/2022 | 31/12/2022 | Increase / (Decrease) |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Health Bodies & CCGs | 3.900 | 1.100 | 1.936 | 0.836 |
| Other Govt. and Public Bodies | 2.000 | 1.590 | 2.220 | 0.630 |
| Other General Debtors (Individuals & Commercial) | 4.700 | 4.285 | 4.687 | 0.402 |
| Health & Care Client Debt | 4.100 | 10.239 | 10.572 | 0.333 |
| TOTAL | 14.700 | 17.214 | 19.415 | 2.201 |

123. The working group has made progress on reducing debt under 12 months old and this is now also progressing on debt aged between 1 and 2 years. The number of clients waiting more than 12 months for a review has now reduced significantly from the peak, however the net to gross initiative has resulted in over 1,140 more accounts being created.

124. **Prudential Indicators**

125. Appendix 8 provides a forecast outturn performance against the Prudential Indicators approved as part of the 2022/23 budget setting process.

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126. The County Council operated within the limits and Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management as set out in the County Council's Treasury Management practices, except for the indicator relating to variable interest rates. This indicator is calculated based on the highest expected cash balance in year, but this was surpassed towards the end of last financial year when forward funding was received.
127. Given the current volatile economic situation, these indicators are being monitored even more closely than usual. At the time of writing it is considered that the Treasury Management Strategy does not need amending but this will be subject to regular monitoring and any changes will be reported to Cabinet as part of the Half Year Treasury Management report.

Appendix 4 – Corporate Checklist

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.

Report authors:

Author's Names: Rachel Spain, Nicola Lycett

Telephone No: (01785) 85 4454

Location: Staffordshire Place No.1

Appendix 5

Revenue Forecast Outturn 2022/23

| | Revised Budget Qtr 3 £m | Forecast Outturn £m | Variance £m | Use of one- off funding £m | Total Variation £m |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Health and Care</u> | | | | | |
| Public Health & Prevention | 0.263 | 0.263 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Adult Social Care & Safeguarding | 39.729 | 39.729 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Care Commissioning | 203.540 | 203.540 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health) | (0.263) | (0.263) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Health and Care Total | 243.269 | 243.269 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| <u>Children and Families</u> | | | | | |
| Children's Services | 117.991 | 130.555 | 12.564 | (1.000) | 11.564 |
| Children's Public Health | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Education Services | 33.890 | 35.390 | 1.500 | (1.500) | 0.000 |
| Wellbeing & Partnerships | 7.588 | 7.088 | (0.500) | 0.000 | (0.500) |
| Children and Families Total | 159.469 | 173.033 | 13.564 | (2.500) | 11.064 |
| <u>Economy, Infrastructure and Skills</u> | | | | | |
| Business & Enterprise | 1.979 | 1.932 | (0.047) | 0.000 | (0.047) |
| Infrastructure & Highways | 33.090 | 35.135 | 2.045 | (2.000) | 0.045 |
| Transport, Connectivity & Waste | 42.963 | 42.807 | (0.156) | 0.000 | (0.156) |
| Skills | 2.886 | 2.782 | (0.104) | 0.000 | (0.104) |
| Culture, Rural & Communities | 12.117 | 12.118 | 0.001 | 0.000 | 0.001 |
| EI&S Business Support | 1.146 | 1.299 | 0.153 | 0.000 | 0.153 |
| Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total | 94.181 | 96.073 | 1.892 | (2.000) | (0.108) |
| Corporate Services | 33.674 | 33.534 | (0.140) | 0.000 | (0.140) |
| Corporate Services Total | 33.674 | 33.534 | (0.140) | 0.000 | (0.140) |
| Finance | 9.279 | 9.248 | (0.031) | 0.000 | (0.031) |
| Traded Services | (0.955) | (0.955) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| TOTAL PORTFOLIO BUDGETS | 538.917 | 554.202 | 15.286 | (4.500) | 10.786 |
| <u>Centrally Controlled Items</u> | | | | | |
| Interest on Balances & Debt Charges | 28.076 | 28.076 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Pooled Buildings and Insurances | 17.402 | 18.252 | 0.850 | 0.000 | 0.850 |
| Investment Fund | 1.164 | 1.164 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Contingency | 4.000 | 4.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Inflation reserve (one-off funding) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 4.500 | 0.000 |
| TOTAL FORECAST (SAVING)/OVERSPEND | 589.559 | 605.694 | 16.135 | 0.000 | 11.635 |

Appendix 6

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23

| | <u>2nd Quarter Budget</u> £m | <u>Enhancements to Programme</u> £m | <u>3rd Quarter Budget</u> £m |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| | | | |
| Health and Care | | | |
| Care and Independence | 2.262 | (1.000) | 1.262 |
| Health and Care Total | 2.262 | (1.000) | 1.262 |
| Children and Families | | | |
| Maintained Schools | 36.355 | (2.423) | 33.932 |
| Vulnerable Children's Projects | 0.960 | (0.184) | 0.776 |
| Children and Families Total | 37.315 | (2.607) | 34.708 |
| Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | | | |
| Economic Planning & Future Prosperity | 5.257 | (0.653) | 4.604 |
| Highways Schemes | 72.484 | (3.895) | 68.589 |
| Connectivity | 1.087 | (0.812) | 0.275 |
| Rural County (Countryside) | 0.305 | (0.070) | 0.235 |
| Tourism and Culture | 3.293 | (2.525) | 0.768 |
| Waste & Sustainability Projects | 0.559 | (0.061) | 0.498 |
| Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total | 82.985 | (8.016) | 74.969 |
| Trading Services - County Fleet Care | 0.460 | 0.000 | 0.460 |
| Finance, Resources & ICT | 0.565 | (0.450) | 0.115 |
| Property | 5.211 | 0.300 | 5.511 |
| Total | 128.798 | (11.773) | 117.025 |

Financial Health Indicators 2022/23

Appendix 7

| Indicator | Current Performance |
|--|--|
| <u>Debtors</u> Level of outstanding general debtors more than 6 months old does not exceed £14.7m (Current Performance – £19.4m) |  |
| <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 – 97.7%) |  |
| <u>Monitoring</u> Quarterly financial monitoring reports have been issued to Cabinet during the last 12 months The council's most recent revenue outturn forecast did not vary by more than +/-2% when compared to the overall revenue budget Quarterly monitoring reports of progress against MTFS savings have been produced for the Senior Leadership Team during the last 12 months |    |
|  Indicator not met |  Indicator not met by small margin |
| |  Indicator met |

Appendix 8

Prudential Indicators 2022/23

| Indicator | Estimate 2022/23 | Q3 Estimate 2022/23 |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | £m | £m |
| External Debt – Authorised Limit for borrowing | 662 | 459 |
| External Debt – Authorised Limit for other liabilities | 258 | 226 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>920</i> | <i>685</i> |
| External Debt – Operational Boundary for borrowing | 515 | 459 |
| External Debt – Operational Boundary for other liabilities | 258 | 226 |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>773</i> | <i>685</i> |
| External Debt - Loans | 721.6 | 429 |
| Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Fixed) | 543 | 429 |
| Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Variable) | (316) | (397) |
| Upper limit for total principal sums invested for longer than a year | 195 | 30 |
| Estimate of Capital Expenditure | 106 | 117 |
| Estimate of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) | 575.2 | 572.1 |
| Gross Debt – External Loans (Should remain below CFR, except in the short term) | 459 | 459 |
| Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Financing Costs | 38.9 | 27.9 |
| Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Proportion of Net Revenue Stream - % | 6.7% | 4.8% |

Cabinet - Wednesday 15 February 2023

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 Deputy Chief Executive and Director for 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 Education (and SEND) | In approving the determination of admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools in 2024/25, and coordinated admissions scheme in 2024/25. |
| Cabinet Member for Health and Care | In approving the relocation of the Newcastle Specialist Day Opportunities service to the Brackenberry site along with refurbishment and modernisation of the building. |
| Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) | In approving the recommended revised Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus in Religious Education, under Schedule 31(2) of the Education Act 1996. |
| Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport | In approving the level of support from the approved concessionary travel budget which will be used to support local bus services in Staffordshire to avoid extensive bus network reductions during 2023. |
| Leader of the Council | In approving the amendment of the pay structure to accommodate the deletion of spinal column point 1 on the national pay spine. |

List of Background Papers:

Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions No. 553 - 557

Contact Details

Report Author: Mike Bradbury
Job Title: Democracy Manager
Telephone No.: 01785 276133
E-Mail Address: michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk

Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Period: 15 March 2023 - 19 July 2023

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 <https://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
Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Corporate Services

Forward Plan of Key Decisions
Period: 15 March 2023 - 19 July 2023

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

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| Predicted Date of Decision | Public or Private Decision | Title and Description | Consultation | Contact Officer |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| 15 March 2023 | Public | <p>Our People Strategy 2023 and Beyond (Leader of the Council (Alan White)) To present Our People Strategy to Cabinet for approval.</p> | Employees, Trade Unions | Sarah Getley (Tel: 01785 854265) Service Area: People Services |
| 15 March 2023 | Public | <p>Capital Programme for Schools 2023/ 2024 (Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) (Jonathan Price)) The Capital Programme for Schools 2023/ 2024 consists of SCC's Statement of Priorities for its schools and associated appendices for major projects and maintenance projects. Programme to be approved by Cabinet for commencement/completion in 2023/ 2024.</p> | None at this stage | Ian Turner (Tel: 01785 277228) Service Area: Strategic Property |
| 15 March 2023 | Public | <p>Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2023/24 (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport (David Williams)) Staffordshire County Council 2023/24 highways and transport capital delivery programme is made up of asset</p> | None at this stage | James Bailey (Tel: 01785 276591) Service Area: Highways and |

| | | | | |
|---------------|--------|---|--|---|
| | | <p>management (including bridges) and integrated transport improvements. Funding for 2023/24 to deliver the capital programme is likely to come from a number of different sources including Government Capital Grant Block funding allocation for both maintenance and integrated transport, Section 106 contributions from developers and contributions from other grants and bids. The Cabinet Report will outline the approach to highway asset management in Staffordshire, an estimate of the level of investment required to maintain the condition of the local road network at an appropriate level, the funding available in 2023/24 for this purpose and the proposed Highways and Transport capital investment programme. Cabinet will be asked to consider the report and approve the Highways and Transport capital investment proposal that will be set out in the Report.</p> | | the Built County |
| 15 March 2023 | Public | <p>Staffordshire County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change (Simon Tagg))</p> <p>An updated Staffordshire County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy</p> | We are in process of consulting external partners | <p>James Bailey (Tel: 01785 276591)</p> <p>Service Area: Flood Risk Management</p> |
| 15 March 2023 | Public | <p>Mental Health and Mental Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2028 (Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel))</p> <p>Staffordshire County Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have jointly developed a final draft of a new Mental Health and Mental Well-being Strategy 2023-2028 titled 'Good Mental Health in Staffordshire'. This replaces the previous Mental Health Strategy 'Mental Health is Everybody's Business.'</p> | A wide range of engagement and consultation with members, SCC and ICB officers has taken place in the development of the strategy. | <p>Andrew Jepps (Tel: 01785 278557)</p> <p>Service Area: Health & Care</p> |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|--------|--|---|--|
| 17 May 2023 | Public | Corporate Delivery Plan 2023/4 (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry)) A discussion and approval of the SCC Corporate Delivery Plan for 23/24. | None at this stage | John Tradewell (Tel: (01785) 27 6102) Service Area: Corporate Services |
| 21 June 2023 | Public | Joint Coroners Service - Legal Framework and Financial Protocol (Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture (Victoria Wilson)) It is proposed that Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council's Coronial areas are merged to form a single jurisdiction. The Legal Framework and Financial protocol for the merged area will be tabled for approval. | There will have been a consultation organised by the Ministry of Justice. | Catherine Mann (Tel: 01785 278320) Service Area: Regulatory Services and Community Safety |
| 21 June 2023 | Public | Maintenance and Minor Works Framework (Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters (Mark Deaville)) Framework Agreement for the Provision of Maintenance and Minor Works consisting of a Building, Electrical and Mechanical Lot | None at this stage | Ian Turner (Tel: 01785 277228) Service Area: Strategic Property |