

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday 26 February 2024

10:00

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

The meeting will be webcast live and archived for 12 months. It can be viewed at the following link: <https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell
Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Corporate Services
16 February 2024

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2023** (Pages 3 - 6)
4. **Local Joint Enterprise Partnership** (Pages 7 - 20)
Report of Leader of the Council
5. **Quarterly Integrated Performance Report (Q3)** (Pages 21 - 74)
Report of Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance
6. **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes** (Pages 75 - 96)
7. **Work Programme** (Pages 97 - 112)
8. **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	
Tina Clements	Jeremy Pert
Mike Davies	Bernard Peters
John Francis	Bob Spencer
Gill Heath (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))	Samantha Thompson (Vice-Chair (Overview))
Jeremy Oates	Mike Worthington
Kath Perry, MBE	Nigel Yates

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

Filming of Meetings

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If you have privacy concerns about the webcast or do not wish to have your image captured, then please contact the Member and Democratic Services officer named at the top right of the agenda.

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 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 18 December 2023

Present: Mike Wilcox (Chair)

Attendance	
Tina Clements	Jeremy Pert
Mike Davies	Samantha Thompson (Vice-Chair (Overview))
Gill Heath (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))	Nigel Yates
Kath Perry, MBE	

Also in attendance: Councillor Alan White

Officers: Sarah Getley and Rachel Spain.

Apologies: John Francis and Bernard Peters.

Part One

26. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

27. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2023

Resolved: – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. People Strategy: 2023 – 2027 Update on Progress

The Leader of the Council introduced the report which summarised the progress made against the 'Our People Strategy' targets. The four key Pillars of the strategy were:

- Attracting and keeping talented people.
- Promoting a positive working environment.
- Developing skills for now and in the future.
- Developing leaders for now and in the future.

The main issues discussed at the meeting were:

- The use of the words equality and equity in strategies and was the council using the right one to achieve the best outcomes for people. The Leader felt that equality was more appropriate as it would ensure that people had the skills they need to succeed and achieve the best that they can.
- Under the 'developing skills for now and in the future' pillar, it was

confirmed that local colleges would be worked with to develop qualifications which would make the Council a more desirable employer.

- The new careers website had been developed and the recruitment team was now in-house and was working with schools and colleges.
- The number of colleagues affected by post covid 19 syndrome would be supplied to the Committee after the meeting.
- The support offered to colleagues on for bereavement issues would be supplied to the Committee following the meeting.
- Mandatory training was normally online and was enforced/supervised by team managers.
- The Peoples strategy was designed to be easy to understand. Each work stream was supported by an action plan which contained deliverable performance measurements. The Integrated quarterly performance reports which was also reported to this committee, monitored actions and any delivery issues would be reported through that report.
- A steering group met monthly and a programme board was being established to provide an extra layer of governance.
- The careers website was now well used and had received over 2,000 hits within the first week of launch. This compared to 4,000 for the previous month. More information on its usage would be provided to the Committee.
- Additional schemes, such as cycling to work or green car scheme were being offered to attract new applicants and retain current employees.
- A Health plan was being established to assist with medical and dental care.

The Chair thanked the Officer for a positive report and suggested that future monitoring of progress should be done through the integrated performance quarterly report.

Resolved:

- a) That the progress made against the year 1 and year 2 priorities of 'Our People Strategy 2023-27' be noted.
- b) That future monitoring of performance be monitored through the committees Integrate performance quarterly report.
- c) That the following detailed information be provided to the committee after the meeting:
 - The number of colleagues affected by post covid 19 syndrome.
 - Bereavement support offered to colleagues.
 - The usage of the new careers website, compared to previous months.

29. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Principles, Objectives and Action Plan update

The Leader introduced the report which listed the progress undertaken in the last 12 months to deliver against the equality diversity and inclusion principles, objectives and action plan.

The work experience offered to care leavers by Amey was thought to be a good opportunity for young people. It was hoped that this could be offered to partners, including the voice project.

The employment broker, which was an inhouse service, works with individuals to secure employment. The service worked with anyone needing extra support such as care leavers, those with a disability or ex-offenders. Information on the success of the scheme was not available at the meeting but would be reported to the committee.

Resolved:

- a) That work experience for care leavers was encouraged with partners.
- b) That the information on the employment broker service and how to works with individuals to secure employment be provided to the committee after the meeting.

30. Medium Term Financial Scrutiny - Draft Working Group Report

The Chair of the Working Group, Councillor Wilcox gave a short summery of the findings and recommendations of the group.

The report would be referred to Cabinet for consideration and a response received within two months.

It was hoped that the Government settlement, would be more favourable than anticipated given the recent number of councils issuing section 114 notices. Members felt that if this was the case, they should be given to opportunity to suggest target areas for investing in properties.

Resolved:

- a) The draft report of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Working Group be approved.
- b) The report be referred to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 January 2024, to be considered as part of the draft budget setting process and that the Cabinet provide an executive response to the recommendations within two months of receipt of the report.
- c) That the working group be provided with a briefing on the governments settlement as soon as available and that any they suggest priority areas of investment for the Cabinet, if appropriate.
- d) That the Chairman be authorised to finalise the final report subject

to any amendments made following the settlement briefing c) above.

31. Work Programme

The Chair informed members that since the last meeting a triangulation meeting had taken place and all items discussed were listed in the work programme for information. Items which had been agreed would be considered by the Committee and had been added to the work programme.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be noted.

Chair

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Monday 26 February 2024

Joint Enterprise Delivery Committee

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Considers and comments on the approach to form a Joint Enterprise Delivery Committee with Stoke-on-Trent City Council (“Joint Committee”).
- b. Considers and comments upon the draft Terms of Reference for the Joint Committee.
- c. Notes that ahead of the Joint Committee being established and once the reserves of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) are formally transferred to the County Council as the accountable body, it is being recommended that Cabinet agrees to the immediate ring-fencing of funding for the Growth Hub, Careers Hub and Local Visitor Economy Partnership as key economic programmes for the local area.
- d. Notes that the Cabinet decisions referred to in recommendation C will be considered by the Prosperous Overview & Scrutiny Committee through the 6-monthly Economic Strategy Delivery Update, as the committee responsible for such matters.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the Leader of the Council

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The imminent closure of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) and integration of its responsibilities into the upper tier authorities has created a need to consider how these functions are managed and decisions made across the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent geography. At its meeting in March 2024, it is being recommended that Cabinet agrees to the establishment of a Joint

Committee for this purpose. This report sets out the key points for consideration to create a new Joint Committee for Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and Stoke-on-Trent City Council (SoTCC) to take all decisions, within existing budget and policy frameworks, arising from the winding down and cessation of the SSLEP. Recommended Terms of Reference for establishment and operation of the Joint Committee are appended to this report and contain further detail.

2. This is therefore an opportunity for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider and comment upon the issues related to the establishment of the Joint Committee prior to this being considered by Cabinet. It should also be noted that it will also be recommended that Cabinet agree to ring-fence funding that will be transferred to the County Council from the SSLEP in advance of the Joint Committee being established. This funding is for three key economic growth programmes that form part of the delivery of our Economic Strategy, and therefore this decision will be considered by the Prosperous Overview & Scrutiny Committee through the standing 6-monthly Economic Strategy Delivery Update as the committee responsible for such matters.

Report

Background

3. For the last decade, the Stoke-on-Trent, and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) has acted as an important organisational means of bringing together businesses and local leaders to drive economic growth across the area. It has also been responsible for the management and delivery of several major funding streams from central government. In March 2022 we received guidance that following the review of LEPs, most of their responsibilities would transfer to local and combined authorities, with the primary role for LEPs in the future being to provide the voice of business for their respective areas. However, at Spring Budget 2023, the Chancellor stated that the Government was 'minded to' end the national funding of LEPs from 1st April 2024 and this decision was confirmed on 4th August 2023. Over recent months work has been progressing on the integration of the functions of the SSLEP to the upper tier local authorities, in-line with Government guidance.
4. The SSLEP has already agreed in principle to the closure of the company and in its absence the governance for making decisions related to the LEP responsibilities to be integrated within the local authorities has had to be considered. It is being recommended that a Joint Committee is established which can make decisions on these responsibilities that are to be delivered across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, based upon SCC's and SoTCC's existing shared services (e.g. Archives and Coroners).

5. The draft Terms of Reference for the Joint Committee, which Cabinet will be recommended to agree, set out the intention for two members of each council to be appointed to the Joint Committee, with one member of each council needing to be present for any decision to be quorate. It is recommended that the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills are appointed given their remit as directors of the SSLEP and the responsibilities of the Joint Committee. Further details on the responsibilities and operation of the Joint Committee are set out within the draft Terms of Reference for consideration by the Committee.

Link to Strategic Plan

6. The responsibilities of the Joint Committee primarily relate to the Strategic Plan priority to support Staffordshire's economy to grow, generating more and better paid jobs.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

7. The Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been responsible for scrutiny of the SSLEP since its inception, with the Committee last considering this in January 2023.

Community Impact

8. The Joint Committee itself is not considered to have any direct impact on any specific communities within Staffordshire. The programmes that the Joint Committee will oversee and have decision making responsibility for will likely have impacts, particularly related to the local economy, and these will be considered through the appropriate governance processes and delivery of each programme.
9. Advice has been received from external advisers Bevan Brittan in respect of the legal implications of matters arising under the Agreement and that the work is ongoing to conclude matters in accordance with their advice.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Joint Enterprise Delivery Committee Terms of Reference

Contact Details

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STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

and

STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

STAFFORDSHIRE AND STOKE ON TRENT

JOINT ENTERPRISE DELIVERY COMMITTEE AGREEMENT

1. Background

1.1. The Authorities to this Agreement are:

- (1) STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL of 1 Staffordshire Place Stafford Staffordshire ST16 2DH (**SCC**)
- (2) STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL of The Civic Centre, Glebe St, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1HH (**SOTCC**)

2. Purpose

- 2.1. To establish a Joint Committee on behalf of SCC and SOTCC to take all decisions within the budget and policy frameworks for both councils arising from the winding down and cessation of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

3. Governance

- 3.1. The Authorities have agreed to nominate the Lead Authority as the Relevant Authority (defined below) and to establish and to participate in a joint committee known as the Joint Enterprise Delivery Committee (hereinafter the "**Joint Committee**") to jointly discharge their respective executive functions as set out in this Agreement.

- 3.2. The Authorities have entered into this Agreement in reliance on the exclusive rights given to local authorities to undertake administrative arrangements of this nature in Section 101, 102, 112 of the 1972 Act and the regulations made under the 1972 Act and Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 (the **2000 Act**).
- 3.3. The Joint Committee will comprise Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council ("the constituent authorities").
- 3.4. The Joint Committee will be a legally constituted body with powers delegated to it by the constituent authorities in the following areas:
- 3.4.1. To agree and lead the exit strategy for each of the existing LEP initiatives.
- 3.4.2. In the interim to take all decisions on the Growth Hub delivering a collaborative approach to business support across the Staffordshire sub-region, prior to consideration being given to the best vehicle to take on this function in the medium term most likely the Leaders Board. SCC has agreed to be the accountable body for this function until such a time as the successor arrangements for the leadership of the Growth Board have been developed and executed.
- 3.4.3. In the interim to take all decisions on the Careers Hub (including decisions regarding the transfer), prior to this function being transferred to SCC by September 2024. Nb. The Committee can only make Executive decisions as specified under the LGA 2000, all non-executive decisions e.g. staffing and TUPE will need to be made under each Councils non-executive arrangements).
- 3.4.4. To lead the strategic transition of tourism from the LEP prior to consideration being given to the best vehicle to take on this function in the medium term most likely the Leaders Board. It is intended that the Local Visitor Economy Partnership would operate as an internal body, hosted by and with SCC as accountable body.
- 3.4.5. To provide a clearing house for all returns and reporting to central government for all legacy programmes and funds including Local Growth Fund (SCC accountable body), Getting Building Fund (SCC accountable body), City Deal (SoTCC accountable body), Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone / i54 (local

EZ governance to continue, with any remaining required governance to be provided by the Joint Committee) and Growing Places (SCC accountable body and will collect all remaining revolving funds).

3.4.6. To make decisions using any remaining LEP funds (including Growing Places, LEP Core Team budget, LEP Admin reserve, and LEP project reserves) to fund the transition and provide contingency and to agree the distribution between SCC/SoTCC of any remaining LEP funds to fund economic growth activity.

3.4.7. To provide a single point of executive liaison between the SCC, SOTCC and central government on the cessation and winding down of the LEP and to act as an interim management vehicle for all delivery matters arising from this process until they end or are amalgamated into each local authority.

3.4.8. To delegate to officers as appropriate. "in line with delegation protocols adopted in each Council"

3.5. Should the Joint Committee necessitate a change in the delegated powers and terms of reference of the Joint Committee, any such change would require the approval of both the constituent authorities.

3.6. These terms of reference will be reviewed on a biennial basis or sooner if necessary.

4. Membership

4.1. The Joint Committee will comprise two Executive members from each constituent authority.

4.2. Each constituent authority to have two named substitute members who must be an executive member.

4.3. In the event of any voting member of the Joint Committee ceasing to be a member of the constituent authority which appointed them, the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.

4.4. Each constituent authority may remove its member(s) or substitute member(s) and appoint a different member or substitute as per that authority's rules of substitution, and by providing twenty-four hours' notice to the Chairperson or the Secretary.

4.5. The Joint Committee may from time to time, following a majority vote of those present and voting, co-opt additional non-voting members ("co-opted members") at its discretion but such co-opted members will not be members or officers of the constituent authorities.

5. Quorum

5.1. The quorum shall be 2 members (1 from each constituent authority). No business will be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum exists at the beginning of a meeting. If at the beginning of any meeting, the Chairperson or Secretary after counting the members present declares that a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.

6. Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

6.1. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are appointed on a rotational basis at the annual meeting i.e. Year 1 Chairperson SCC, Vice-Chairperson person SoTCC and vice-versa for Year 2 etc.

6.2. The Chairperson or in their absence the Vice Chairperson or in their absence the member of the Joint Committee elected for this purpose, shall preside at any meeting of the Joint Committee.

6.3. Appointments will be made in May of each year unless following an election where appointments may not be made until June.

6.4. Where, at any meeting or part of a meeting of the Joint Committee both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are either absent or unable to act as Chairperson or Vice Chairperson, the Joint Committee shall elect one of the members of the Joint Committee present at the meeting to preside for the balance of that meeting or part of the meeting, as appropriate. For the avoidance of doubt, the role of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson vests in the member concerned and in their absence the role of Chairperson or Vice Chairperson will not automatically fall to the relevant constituent authority's substitute member.

7. Voting

7.1. One member, one vote for each constituent authority.

7.2. All questions shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present, the Chairperson having the casting vote in addition to their vote as a member of the Committee. Voting at meetings shall be by show of hands.

- 7.3. On the requisition of any two Members, made before the vote is taken, the voting on any matter shall be recorded by the Secretary so as to show how each Member voted and there shall also be recorded the name of any Member present who abstained from voting.

8. Advisory Groups

- 8.1. The Joint Committee may set up advisory groups as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively and may delegate tasks as it sees fit to these bodies, which may be formed of officers or members of the constituent authorities or such third parties as the Joint Committee considers appropriate.

9. Hosting and Administration

- 9.1. SCC will be the host authority, and a member of staff from that authority shall be Secretary to the Committee ("the Secretary").
- 9.2. The Joint Committee will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the S151 Officer role.
- 9.3. The Joint Committee will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the Monitoring Officer & Legal Adviser to the Joint Committee.
- 9.4. The administrative costs of supporting the committee will be met by SCC.
- 9.5. The functions of the Secretary shall be:
- 9.5.1. to maintain a record of membership of the Joint Committee and any sub-committees or advisory groups appointed;
 - 9.5.2. to publish and notify the proper officers of each constituent authority of any anticipated "key decisions" to be taken by the Joint Committee to enable the requirements as to formal notice of key decisions as given under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to be met;
 - 9.5.3. to carry out such notification to and consultation with members of any appointing constituent authority as may be necessary to enable the Joint Committee to take urgent "key decisions" in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities

(Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information)
(England) Regulations 2012;

- 9.5.4. to summon meetings of the Joint Committee or any sub-committees or advisory groups;
- 9.5.5. to prepare and send out the agenda for meetings of the Joint Committee or any sub-committees or advisory groups; in consultation with the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson of the Committee (or sub-committee/ advisory group);
- 9.5.6. to keep a record of the proceedings of the Joint Committee or any sub-committees or advisory groups, including those in attendance, declarations of interests, and to publish the minutes;
- 9.5.7. to take such administrative action as may be necessary to give effect to decisions of the Joint Committee or any sub-committees or advisory groups;
- 9.5.8. to perform such other functions as may be determined by the Joint Committee from time to time.

10. Meetings

- 10.1. The Joint Committee will meet no less than every six months and meetings will be aligned where necessary with deadlines for decisions on resources and investment plans.
- 10.2. Meetings will be held at such times, dates and places as may be notified to the members of the Joint Committee by the Secretary, being such time, place and location as the Joint Committee shall from time-to-time resolve.
- 10.3. Meeting papers will be circulated five clear working days in advance of any meeting. The Chairperson may choose to accept or reject urgent items that are tabled at any meeting.
- 10.4. Additional ad hoc meetings may be called by the Secretary, in consultation, where practicable, with the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Committee, in response to receipt of a request in writing, which request sets out an urgent item of business within the functions of the Joint Committee, addressed to the Secretary:
 - 10.4.1. from and signed by two members of the Joint Committee, or from the Monitoring Officer of any of the constituent authorities.

10.5. The Secretary shall settle the agenda for any meeting of the Joint Committee after consulting, where practicable, the Chairperson or in their absence the Vice Chairperson; and shall incorporate in the agenda any items of business and any reports submitted by:

- the Monitoring Officer of any of the constituent authorities;
- the Section 151 to any of the constituent authorities;
- the Monitoring Officer to any of the constituent authorities; or
- any two Members of the Joint Committee.

10.6. The Joint Committee shall, unless the person presiding at the meeting or the Joint Committee determines otherwise in respect of that meeting, conduct its business in accordance with the procedure rules set out in Procedure Rules below.

11. Access to Information

11.1. Meetings of the Joint Committee will be held in public except where confidential or exempt information, as defined in the Local Government Act 1972, is being discussed.

11.2. These rules do not affect any more specific rights to information contained elsewhere under the law.

11.3. The Secretary will ensure that the relevant legislation relating to access to information is complied with. Each constituent authority is to co-operate with the Secretary in fulfilling any requirements.

11.4. Any Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests received by the Joint Committee should be directed to the relevant constituent authority(s) for that authority to deal with in the usual way, taking account of the relevant legislation. Where the request relates to information held by two or more constituent authorities, they will liaise with each other before replying to the request.

12. Attendance at meetings

12.1. The Chairperson may invite any person, whether a member or officer of one of the constituent authorities or a third party, to attend the meeting and speak on any matter before the Joint Committee.

12.2. Third parties may be invited to attend the Joint Committee on a standing basis following a majority vote of those present and voting.

12.3. Where agenda items require independent experts or speakers, the Officer or authority proposing the agenda item should indicate this to the Secretary and provide the Secretary with details of who is required to attend and in what capacity. The participation of independent experts or speakers in Joint Committee meetings will be subject to the discretion of the Chairperson.

13. Procedure Rules

13.1. Attendance

13.1.1. At every meeting, it shall be the responsibility of each member to enter their name on an attendance record provided by the Secretary from which attendance at the meeting will be recorded.

13.2. Order of Business

13.2.1. Subject to paragraph 13.2.2, the order of business at each meeting of the Joint Committee will be:

- Apologies for absence;
- Declarations of interests;
- Approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting;
- Matters set out in the agenda for the meeting which will clearly indicate which are key decisions and which are not; and
- Matters on the agenda for the meeting which, in the opinion of the Secretary are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public.

13.2.2. The person presiding at the meeting may vary the order of business at the meeting.

14. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

14.1. If a member is aware that they have a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, the Member must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held:

- a) in the case where 14.2 applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

- b) in any other case, wherever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;
- c) unless the Member has obtained a dispensation from their own authority's Standards Committee or Monitoring Officer. Such dispensation to be notified to the Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting.

14.2. Where a member has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any business of the Joint Committee, the Member may attend the meeting (or a sub-committee or advisory group of the committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

15. Minutes

15.1. There will be no discussion or motion made in respect of the minutes other than except as to their accuracy. If no such question is raised or if it is raised then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chairperson shall sign the minutes.

16. Rules of Debate

16.1. A Member wishing to speak shall address the Chairperson and direct their comments to the question being discussed. The Chairperson shall decide the order in which to take representations from members wishing to speak and shall decide all questions of order. Their ruling upon all such questions or upon matters arising in debate shall be final and shall not be open to discussion.

16.2. A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:

- a) To amend the motion;
- b) To adjourn the meeting;
- c) To adjourn the debate or consideration of the item;
- d) To proceed to the next business;
- e) That the question now be put;
- f) That a member be not further heard or do leave the meeting; and
- g) To exclude the press and public under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972.

17. Conduct of Members

17.1. Members of the Joint Committee will be subject to their own authority's Code of Conduct.

18. Application to Sub-Committees

18.1. The procedure rules and also the Access to Information provisions set out at paragraph 11 shall apply to meetings of any sub-committees of the Joint Committee.

19. Scrutiny of decisions

19.1. Each constituent authority which operates executive arrangements will be able to scrutinise the decisions of the Joint Committee in accordance with that constituent authority's overview and scrutiny arrangements.

20. Winding up of the Joint Committee

20.1. The Joint Committee may be wound up immediately if either constituent member withdraws or by a unanimous vote of all constituent authorities.

21. Amendment of this Constitution

21.1. This Constitution can only be amended by resolution of each of the constituent authorities which must be made at each council.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Monday 26 February 2024

Integrated Performance Report, Quarter 3 2023/24

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- a. Committee Members note and challenge performance and advise of any further information and/or action required.

Report of Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. This quarterly Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council's progress, performance, and financial position in delivering against our Strategic Plan, Delivery Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
2. We recommend that Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.

Report

Background

3. The Integrated Performance report is considered by Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 21 February 2024

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2023/24



Cllr Alan White, Leader of Staffordshire County Council said,

“Creating the right conditions for businesses and our economy to thrive, whilst supporting the most vulnerable in our communities, remain priorities for the county council.

“We continue to support local businesses to start up and grow. Our ‘We are Staffordshire’ brand continues to raise the profile of the county as a great place in which to live, visit and invest. The ‘We are Staffordshire’ partnership was nominated for two categories at the Comms2point0 awards and will be showcased at the UK’s Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF) 2024 in Leeds.

“Our work to tackle the effects of climate change continues, with a 12% reduction in the authority’s carbon emissions since 2020/21, and a 50% reduction since 2018/19. Since December 2022, the Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme has installed 513 improvements in 349 properties to make them more energy efficient. We have also appointed partners to bring eco-friendly heating solutions to rural properties situated away from the gas network.

“Through our Winter Warmth Project and the Household Support Fund, 2,748 eligible residents have received their first payment of £300 towards help with their energy bills. We still face challenges in both adult social care and children’s services, although we continue to make good progress on timely social care assessments and have seen a slight drop in the number of children in our care. An OFSTED Inspection of Children’s Services resulted in ‘Requires Improvement to be Good’ and we are developing a plan to improve this rating.

“In addition to investment in digital infrastructure and highways, other major projects underway include the Staffordshire History Centre and three new primary schools, which remain on track to be completed and open by Autumn 2024.

“Despite the inflationary pressures facing councils like ours, we continue to deliver on a balanced budget and will invest to keep growing the county in a sustainable way, to make a positive difference in the lives of

our residents. We continue to find new, better, and lower cost ways of delivering services and achieving results.”

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



“We continue to make significant progress across the organisation during Quarter 3 and departments are delivering on their priorities.

“Rising costs across the organisation, along with recruitment and retention pressures continue. Levels of demand and complexity of needs also remain challenging, particularly in children’s and families services and in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities where transport costs are rising very significantly.

“The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £5.4m (0.9%), compared to the Quarter 2 forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.1%). Like most local authorities, we still face financial challenges, but we are a well-run council and continue to live within our means, deliver value for money for taxpayers, whilst improving the customer experience. This approach, along with 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, Corporate Delivery Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Recommendation

We recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Notes and challenges performance and advises of any further information and/or action required.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet – Wednesday 21 February 2024

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2023/24

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.

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services and the Director of 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

This report provides an update on Quarter 3 progress in relation to delivering the council's priorities and pledge as set out within the council's [Strategic Plan 2022-26](#).

Key highlights

- **Number of Children in Care:** Number has reduced, reflecting significant work that has taken place to bring overall numbers down, while continuing to make sure the right children are in care.
- **We are Staffordshire:** Staffordshire's place brand highlighted nationally by nomination for two awards with Comms2point0. Attendance at UK's Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF) 2024 launched online.
- **Care Act Assessment timeliness and Reviews:** Good performance continues.
- **Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme:** Since December 2022, 513 measures have been installed in 349 properties. Providers have now been appointed to bring eco-friendly heating solutions to rural properties that are situated away from the gas network.
- **Household Support Fund:** Through the Winter Warmth Project, 2,748 eligible residents have received their first payment of £300 towards help with their energy bills.
- **Climate Change:** Annual report highlights a 12% reduction in the authority's carbon emissions since 2020/21, and a 50% reduction since 2018/19.
- **Schools & Corporate Property Projects:** Stafford History Centre is progressing well. All 3 new primary schools remain on track to open in September 2024.
- **Digital Infrastructure:** Connect Fibre awarded contract to supply fibre broadband to 5,400 properties (£16.5m public sector investment).

Key challenges

- **OFSTED:** Inspection of Children's Services took place with an outcome of 'Requires Improvement to be Good'. An OFSTED improvement plan will be submitted in April 2024.
- **Children in Care (sufficiency and cost of care):** Continued pressures across Children's services, including the rising cost and complexity of Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures. Recruitment of additional workforce continues.
- **SEND:** Increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans continues to impact on timeliness. All additional Senior Key Workers are now in post.
- **DoLs Demand:** Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLs) requests remain high. Processes are under review to mitigate against delays in commencement of assessments.
- **Care Quality Commission (CQC) assurance:** Preparations continue following publication of guidance.
- **Highways Performance:** Levels of demand were high, particularly in relation to higher risk defects, mostly due to the weather. However, the timeliness of repairs has been maintained, alongside delivery of the Highways Maintenance and Transformation Programmes. Additional resource has been recruited to help tackle the level of demand.

Further details of the above can be found on [Page 26](#) of the main report and accompanying appendices.

Financial Overview

4. The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £5.4m (0.9%), compared to the Quarter 2 forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.1%). There continues to be areas of financial risk in Children and Families, with further details included within this report and appendices 2-7.

5. Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience, and independence.

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

6. In Quarter 3, demand for Care Act Assessments for new clients was 36.6% higher than last year, with 4,337 assessments initiated between October and December 2023, compared to 3,175 between October and December 2022. However, positively the council continues to exceed its target for completed Care Act Assessments within 28 days (see Appendix 1). There has been a substantial rise in new assessments and a slow increase in unplanned re-assessments over the last 12 months, but demand appears to be stabilising, e.g. someone's needs have escalated, and they may require different support.

7. The number of monthly safeguarding contacts reduced from 1,429 in September 2023 to 1,214 in December 2023, but remained higher than December 2022 (1,117). Analysis indicates that there has been an increase in contacts which are lower in risk; it is not apparent that there has been an increase in risk of abuse or neglect to adults within Staffordshire. Recognising the priority of safeguarding, the council has allocated additional temporary resource to the service and is reviewing its pathways to identify any further improvements that can be made.

8. The number of reviews of people receiving services for 12 months or more has continued to remain high, with 90.2% reviewed in the previous 12 months to December 2023, exceeding the target of 80% (see Appendix 1), which is slightly less than the peak in performance observed in October 2023, of 92.2%.

9. The council continues to see high demand for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) applications where it is necessary to deprive a person of their liberty in a hospital or care home if they lack capacity to consent to their treatment and care. The council currently has 3,904 people with DoLS authorised, an increase of 21% since March 2023. In the three months to December 2023, an average of 670 referrals per month were received, higher than the preceding 3 months (620 per month). The number of DoLS applications pending at the end of January 2024 was 1,060. Of these, 109 had a DoLS authorisation from their managing

body, and 352 were within the statutory 21-day timescale for approval by the supervisory body. 599 exceeded the 21-day timescale of which 91 were requests from hospitals and 46 were high priority. The council is reviewing processes to ensure that requests from hospitals are updated to reflect that people have been discharged and DoLS is no longer required. Additional capacity has been appointed to reduce the number of DoLS requests pending, focusing on those exceeding the 21-day timescale. The long-term trend for the number of DoLS requests pending is downwards and the council compared favourably to similar local authorities on this metric.

10. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is responsible for assessing how the council is performing against duties under the Care Act 2014. Following the completion of pilots with five councils in November 2023, the CQC published its guidance for local authority assessments in December 2023 and announced the first three councils that will be inspected. The council is now reviewing its self-assessment and the required evidence for its own inspection which may happen any time between now and 2025.
11. The council continues to support its most vulnerable residents through the Warmer Homes Programme. Final figures from the Sustainable Warmth Competition show that since December 2022, there were 513 measures installed within 349 properties. This brings the total number of measures installed through Staffordshire Warmer Homes to 1,329 within 1,021 properties. The council has appointed providers to commence with Phase 2 of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2), bringing eco-friendly heating solutions to rural residences (situated away from the gas network). Properties have started to be processed however no installations have yet taken place.
12. A new Older People Strategy 2024-29 was approved at Cabinet in December, which sets out how the council will support the growing aging population in Staffordshire. The strategy is designed to help people live independently at home, to ensure good quality services are available for those who do need care, to support those needing care to live independently for as long as possible, and to ensure that if someone can no longer stay at home, the right support is available.
13. During Quarter 3, thousands of residents benefited from help, advice, and guidance from the county council's dedicated cost-of-living campaign. The 'Here to Help' website offers information on eligibility for benefits, help with energy bills, business support, wellness, food, essentials and accessing help in the community. Over 21,000 people have visited the website since its launch in 2022 with a total of more than 71,000 page views. Front line services have also provided significant support to residents managing cost-of-living pressures and

have saved families an estimated £60,000 since 2020 with pre-loved school uniform.

Offer every Staffordshire child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential.

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	RED

14. The council continues to face challenges within Children’s Services, including the rising cost and complexity of Children in Care, and is prioritising improvements in Children’s Services after an Ofsted inspection found that the service ‘required improvement to be good.’ Following the inspection Ofsted praised provision for the children and young people in care, but also raised areas for improvement. The council is committing to a series of actions, including stronger targets with more structured monitoring, a clearer escalation process when it is felt progress on issues is not fast enough, closer cooperation with health and housing providers, more sampling of work, and better provision of broadband access for care leavers to support their first independent steps.
15. Recruitment of additional capacity in the children’s workforce continued in Quarter 3, with further external Social Worker appointments to be made in Quarter 4 for Social Work Practice Leads and Senior Social Worker roles that have not been filled internally. As part of the children and family’s social worker progression scheme project, 30 Social Work Practice Leads have been recruited, with 15 of these posts funded by the Cabinet investment that was approved in December 2022.
16. Progress has been made over Quarter 3 to reduce the number of children in care. As at the 31st, December 2023, there were 1,353 children and young people in the authority’s care in Staffordshire, which is a slight reduction compared to the previous quarter (1,364, as of September 2023). This is a rate of 80.1 per 10,000; higher than the most recent national benchmark (70 per 10,000 - March 2022) but lower than regional (88 per 10,000 - March 2022). The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan at the 31st, December 2023 was 622, down from a peak of 717, and the lowest number since a low of 606 in March 2022. This is a rate of 36.8 per 10,000 in Staffordshire, which is lower than the most recent benchmarks from March 2022 of 43.2 nationally and 44.8 regionally.
17. The number of children and young people with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) was 7,325 on 31st December 2023 compared to 6,985 a year earlier. This increasing demand means that the number of EHCP’s issued in time (within 20 weeks) remains low in Staffordshire;

28% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (2023). Recruitment is ongoing for Educational Psychologists whose appointments will assist in improving timeliness of Education, Health, and Care Plans, and support early intervention. Work is underway to categorise the reasons for EHCP delays and mitigating actions are taking place. The council is also implementing an Enhanced Assess, Plan, Do, Review (EAPDR) approach, which enables schools to assess what additional support the child or young person needs and refine this support through regular reviews. This will also impact on timeliness in the longer term.

18. Final figures for Quarter 3 have confirmed that 1,030 families have achieved a successful and sustained outcome through the Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme since 1st April 2023. The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have increased this year's target number of families by 62% to 1,290, and at the end of Quarter 3, 80% of this annual target had been achieved. As the council strives to achieve more for families in Staffordshire, it was hoping to achieve outcomes for 1,677 families (30% above DLUHC target), and at the end of Quarter 3, 61% of this more challenging target had been achieved. Work is underway with partners during Quarter 4 to identify families that demonstrate successful and sustained outcomes to further improve this performance.
19. The Household Support Fund (HSF) supports families and others who need it most, to pay for food and energy bills. Over 9,300 households benefited through phase 1 of the professionals' referral scheme between April and September 2023, and a further 6,800+ through phase 2 since October 2023. Over 700 care leavers also received the first of four £50 voucher payments at the end of August and in December. Through the Winter Warmth Project, 2,748 eligible residents have received their first payment of £300 towards help with their energy bills.
20. Support was made available to Staffordshire's most vulnerable families through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme, which continues to offer children and young people free activities and a healthy meal, over school holidays. Of 50,335 places available across the county 37,454 (75%) were taken. On average an eligible child attended 10 of the maximum-allowed 16 sessions over the summer, compared to 7 nationally. The offer is increased with new provision such as indoor climbing, paddleboard lessons, and specialist sessions offering wellbeing and confidence building.

Support Staffordshire’s economy to grow, generating more and better paid jobs.

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

21. A key driver for further investment in Staffordshire is the council’s Place Marketing campaign, with good progress made during Quarter 3 in promoting the ‘We are Staffordshire’ place brand, which has been shortlisted for two awards with Comms2point0, a learning and sharing space – Best Collaboration and Best Small Team. A huge achievement from over 450 entries. There was also a successful Ambassador Event held at Stafford Gatehouse in October with over 80 attendees. Staffordshire’s attendance at the UK’s Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF) 2024 to market Staffordshire nationally was launched online, sharing the video on social media, and reaching out to previous sponsors. Work is also taking place to relaunch the school engagement work for Staffordshire Day 2024, which is being led by a young person’s delivery group engaging with local artists in schools to showcase what Staffordshire means to them.
22. Development at the Chatterley Valley West employment site near Newcastle-under-Lyme re-started in Quarter 3. The project developer, Harworth Group appointed council highways partner Amey Plc to work on critical highways infrastructure to be completed by late spring and has appointed a replacement earthworks contractor to prepare the wider site for development. The multi-million-pound development could create up to 1,700 jobs and when the site is fully built out, it could release total business rates of more than £2.5 million per annum. Until March 2041 these business rates will be wholly retained in the local area and can be used to help fund further regeneration schemes.
23. The council has continued to support local businesses to start up and grow through its dynamic range of business support schemes. Between June 2020 and December 2023, the council has supported 624 businesses through the Staffordshire Start Up Programme. Of these, almost half (294) have started trading following the programme. Get Started and Grow has supported 222 business owners who have been trading up to 5 years with professional services support.

Fix more roads and improve transport and digital connections.

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

24. Demand challenges remained in Quarter 3 in relation to the volume of high risk 'Emergency', 'Category 1' and 'Category 2' highways defects identified. This was mostly due to the adverse weather, particularly in December 2023. In December, there were over 2.5 times more high-risk defects identified compared with December 2022. Positively, despite the increase in demand, the timeliness of repairing higher risk defects (against benchmarks) has been maintained (see Appendix 1). To mitigate against some of the demand challenges that the council is facing, additional resource has now been recruited to the inspection team.
25. As well as these reactive repairs, the council has also continued to successfully deliver its Highway Investment Strategy, with 18 capital structural maintenance schemes completed year to date, including A53 Broad Street, Leek and A511 Ashby Rd, Burton during Quarter 3. Ten more schemes are in design and due to start during Quarter 4. This is in addition to continuing to deliver the Highway Transformation programme of work, with priority projects clearly defined and resource requirements to support delivery outlined.
26. The Government's Network North announcement included additional highways maintenance funding for all Local Authorities. In Staffordshire this equates to £6.3m between 23/24 and 24/25. For the following 9 years there is £180m remaining but the breakdown of this allocation is yet to be confirmed by the Department for Transport.
27. As part of Project Gigabit, which aims to provide gigabit-capable coverage to Staffordshire residents, Connect Fibre recently won the contract to supply fibre broadband to 5,400 premises (a £16.5m public sector investment) in the north-east of the county. Challenges remain around a high number of premises still under review for broadband intervention. These are being monitored by a Rolling Open Market review, which confirms where gigabit capable broadband infrastructure currently exists or is planned to be built and identifies eligible target areas for intervention. Plans to deliver to these premises are still on track to reach 85% coverage by 2025.

Tackle climate change, enhance our environment, and make Staffordshire more sustainable.

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

28. Staffordshire's Climate Action Fund offers funding assistance to local communities to build resilience and reduce Staffordshire's contributions to climate change. The deadline for the latest round of applications was 22nd December 2023, with 52 applications received and 33 approvals

totalling over £33,400 of potential funding to community groups within Staffordshire.

29. 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. The report highlighted a range of initiatives which have seen a 12% reduction in the authority's carbon emissions since 2020/21, and a 50% reduction since 2018/19. Further work during Q3 to support these commitments saw the council launch a £10.5 million scheme to help Staffordshire residents heat their homes for less using greener and more energy efficient solutions.
30. The new Household Waste Recycling Centre permit scheme continues to work well with 10,158 permits applied for and 9,931 as of December 2023. Launched in September 2023, the scheme aims to improve services and reduce queues for residents while promoting sustainable waste disposal within the county. The e-permits are free of charge for Staffordshire residents, are valid for 12 months and allow up to 12 visits each year. Under the scheme, vehicles such as vans, pick-up trucks, tipper trucks, minibuses with seats removed and campervans with fixtures and fittings removed all require a permit.

How we work

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

31. To achieve the council's ambitions, we continue to challenge and change how we work.
32. Good progress can be seen during the quarter as part of the council's commitment to working with its communities. In November, the [Let's Talk Staffordshire](#) survey was launched as the next step in the council's #DoingOurBit campaign, to get residents involved with their communities. The survey is also running alongside a wide range of other engagement activities underway, to help ensure the council reaches as many residents as possible. Staffordshire residents are being asked about what community means to them, how they are helping others in their local area and to collect ideas about how the council can help get more people involved and improve the community in which they live. Findings from the survey, which runs until the end of February 2024, will be used to help develop an ambitious communities strategy for Staffordshire.

33. The council's Libraries and Arts service, in partnership with The Reading Agency, and funded by Arts Council England delivered a successful Summer Reading Challenge during 2023, and figures became available in Quarter 3. In total 10,675 children signed up to the challenge (a 6.9% increase compared to 2022) and 6,358 children completed it (a 4.7% increase).
34. Work to deliver the Staffordshire History Centre project remains on track despite recent adverse weather conditions, with most of the structural work to the Grade II* William Salt Library building completed. Volunteer support has been ongoing, between October and December 380 hours were provided by volunteers, valuing £7,605.
35. Digital continues to be fundamental to the way the council works as an organisation, as well as how it interacts with partners, citizens, and communities. Progress has been made across multiple priorities, such as exploring opportunities within the Health & Care and Children & Families service, for automation software to streamline operational processes and free up capacity for added-value work. Work is ongoing with Lichfield District Council (LDC) to progress a collaborative "Single Front Door" approach across Staffordshire. A single Environmental Health customer service process has now been successfully embedded and work progresses on the Disabled Facility Grant Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) pilot. A fourth pilot has been initiated focused on a single Blue Badges process working with Lichfield District Council (LDC) and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC).
36. Work is ongoing to deliver the council's refreshed internal People Strategy and will continue throughout 2024. A new careers website was launched in October to improve the candidate experience and support the council's recruitment process. Since launch to the end of December there have been 10,944 views of the website by 5,601 unique visitors. As of 31st December, time to hire was at 43.8 days, which is below the benchmark of 45 days.
37. There is also a continued focus on workforce absence across the council to help improve the number of days lost due to sickness; evidenced by a consistent downward trajectory for the last twelve months. The People Operations Team are working directly with those services with the highest days lost to understand the root causes for absence and proactively supporting them with short and medium-term actions. Across these services, half have improved their absence in the last quarter. Work has already been completed to identify the next services for support into Quarter 4. Additionally, absence related surgeries have continued to be provided to wider management teams to help them manage absence.

38. As a result of this work, as of December 2023, long term absence stood at 7.83 days lost per employee, compared to 8.70 days at the same point in 2022 and an improvement from Quarter 2 where performance was 7.86 days. Short-term absence stood at 3.19 days lost per employee compared to 4.04 days at the same point in 2022. Over half of the workforce has had no sickness absences over the last year (52%, 2,306 people), with a further 23.9% (1,067 employees) having been absent for 5 days or fewer.

Live within our means and deliver value for money.

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

39. Key priorities for 2023/24 continue to include carrying out the council's pledge of living within its means and delivering value for money, improving the customer experience, and inspiring a culture of innovation.
40. Work has been completed on refreshing the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, and a balanced budget has been achieved for 2024/25. Cabinet has recommended that Council approve this budget at its meeting in February.
41. Inflation and rising demand for council services requires the council to find new, better, and lower cost ways of delivering services and achieving results. This requires creativity and innovation across the council, finding new ways of working, trialling technology, and applying best practice from other organisations. The council therefore launched the Staffordshire Innovation Challenge in 2023, a cross-organisation approach to discuss and generate innovative ideas and solutions. In recent months there has been a specific focus on ways the council can improve fostering uptake in the county.
42. During 2023/24, the council aims to raise £10.1 million net income 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 2023, the council had delivered £7.91m.
43. Work on the council's schools and corporate projects is ongoing. All three new primary schools at Beaconfields (Stafford), Amington (Tamworth) and Dunstall Farm (Tamworth) remain on track to open in September 2024. In addition, Burntwood Health Centre, Douglas Road, Wombourne Library, Hawthorne House and Brackenberry projects are all proceeding as per programme.

44. The 2023 Community Fund closed on 31 October 2023. There were 186 applications received from 177 unique organisations, 9 of which were retrospective applications linked to celebratory events for the King's Coronation. The total value of projects in the applications (including the requests from the fund) was c.£760k – this total means that communities offered around £3.73 for every £1 requested from the fund. As a result of new processes implemented all applications have been processed, approved and all payments have been made to the various Community Groups. An end of year report will be brought to Full Council in July 2024.

Legal Implications

45. There are no legal implications of note in relation to this report, which is for information and discussion.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

46. Please see Finance Appendices, where resource and value for money implications are set out.

Climate Change Implications

47. There are no direct climate change implications of note.

Link to Strategic Plan

48. Cross-cutting as the performance of the Corporate Delivery Plan represents the most significant activity that directly delivers against all areas of the strategic plan.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

49. Detailed scrutiny of the council's activity in relation to the various areas discussed in this report takes place at the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as appropriate.

Community Impact

50. This report represents a strategic summary of the county council's performance against key indicators, finances, and delivery of priorities. The individual projects and programmes are reported separately where specific decisions are required, and community impact assessments are completed where appropriate. As such there is no community impact presented with this report.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Performance Dashboard
- Appendix 2 - Finance Quarter 3 Summary
- Appendix 3 - Finance Quarter 3 Detailed Report
- Appendix 4 - Revenue Forecast Outturn 2023/24
- Appendix 5 - Capital Forecast Outturn 2023/24
- Appendix 6 - Financial Health Indicators 2023/24
- Appendix 7 - Prudential Indicators

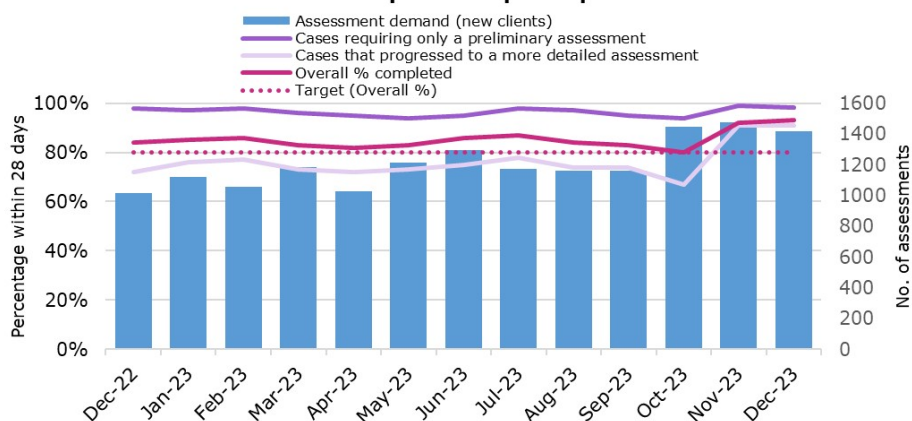
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Health, Wellbeing & Independence Dashboard

% of Care Act assessments of new clients completed in 28 days and number of requests completed per month



Source: SCC

Performance remained above target in 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.

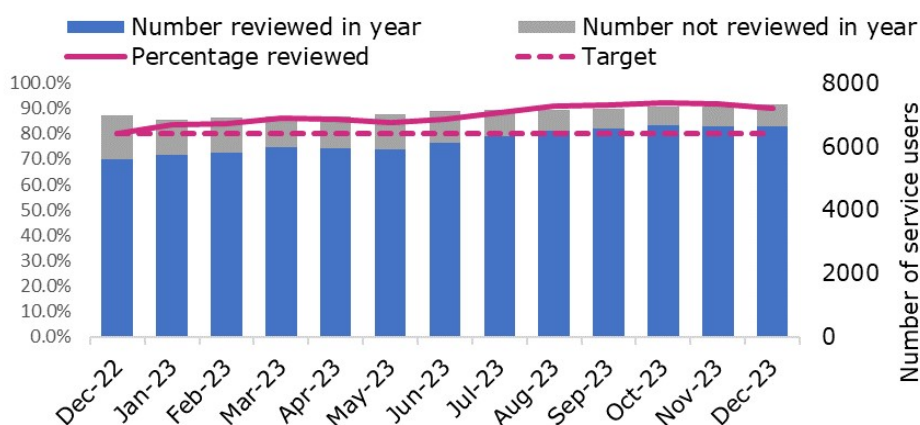
% of safeguarding referrals closed or assigned within 5 working days



Source: SCC

The number of safeguarding contacts has reduced since Quarter 2. Additional temporary resource has been allocated to the service and pathways are being reviewed to identify any further improvements that can be made.

Overall % and number of people who have been receiving services for 12 months or over, who have had a review in the previous 12 months



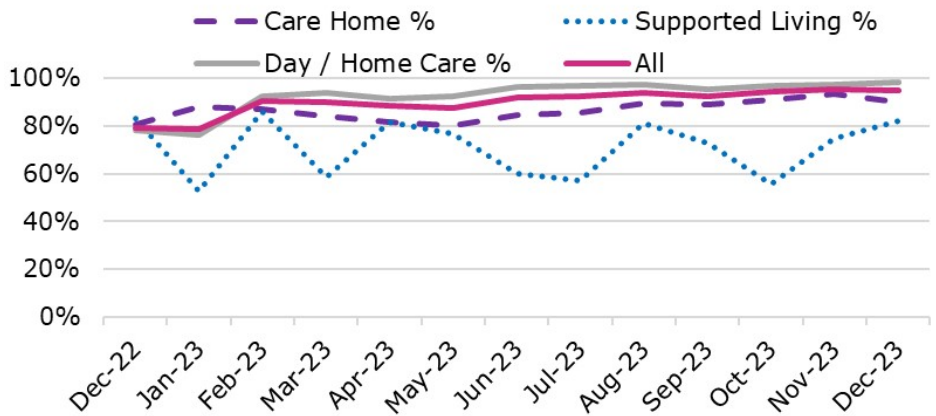
Source: SCC

Performance has remained above target in Quarter 3. 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, Wellbeing & Independence Dashboard

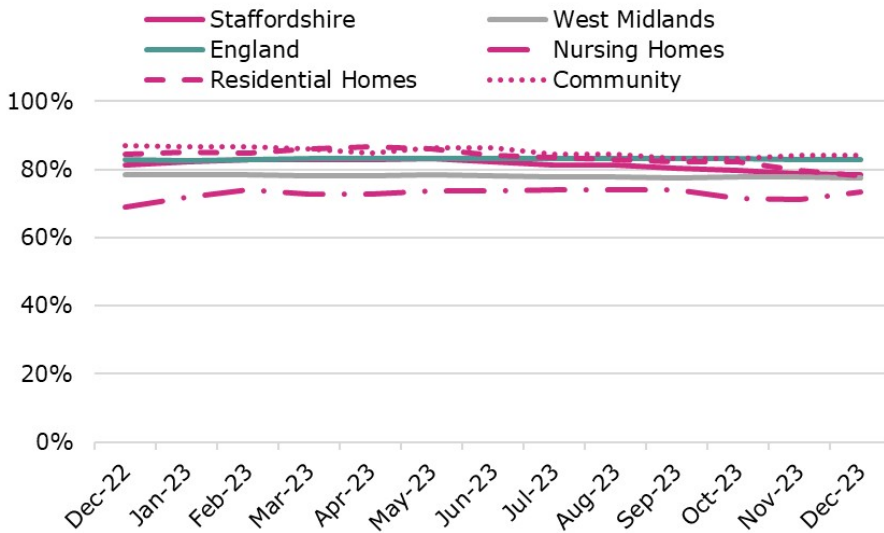
Timeliness of sourcing for brokerage (helping individuals to arrange care) has remained high in Quarter 3 with 94.9% receiving timely access to care in December 2023, and performance remaining 'green' for the service.

% of brokerage sourced within agreed timescale by service type



Source: SCC

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

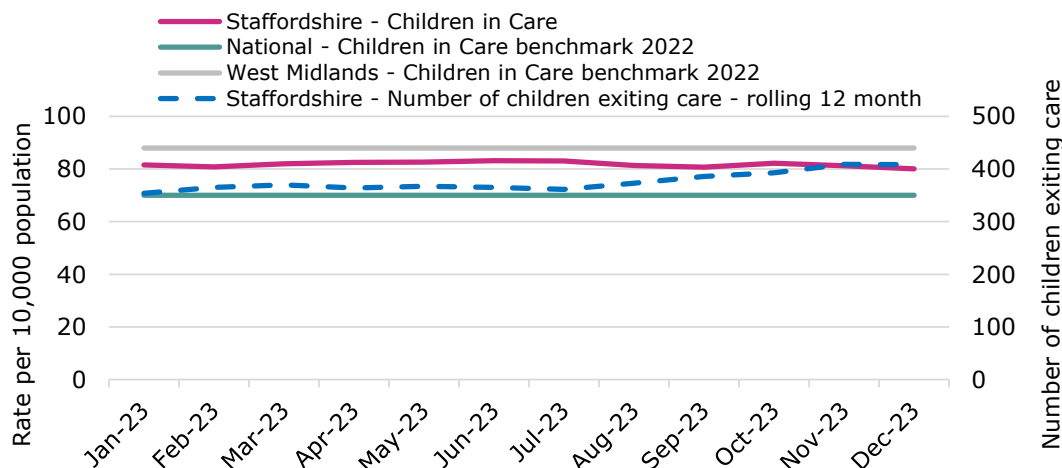


There has been a slight decrease in Quarter 3 of Care Quality Commission Good or Outstanding assessment ratings of Staffordshire's registered locations, with 78.4% Good or Outstanding in December 2023, which is lower than national (82.8%) but remains above the regional average (77.6%).

Source: SCC and Care Quality Commission

Offer the Best Start in Life Dashboard

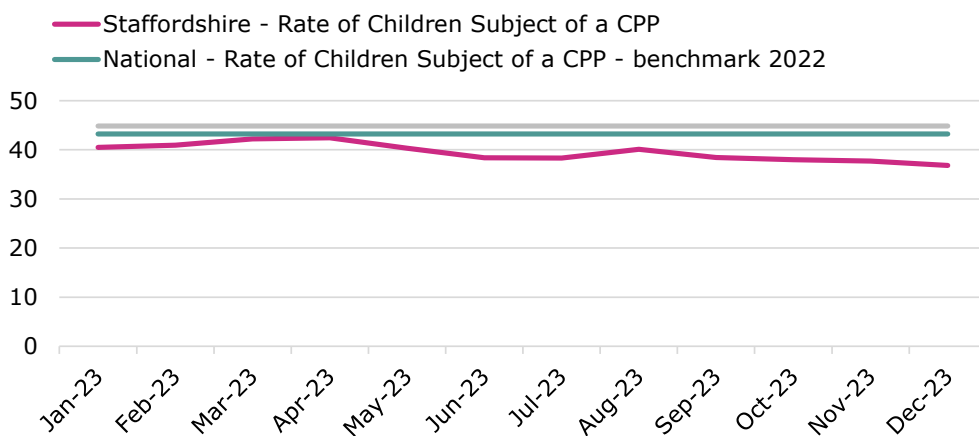
Rate of children in care (rate per 10,000 population) and number of children exiting care



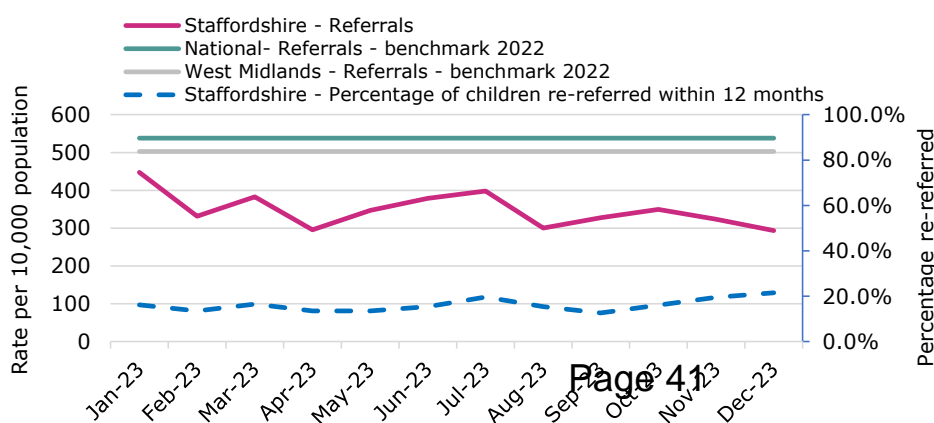
As at the 31st December 2023, there were 1,353 children and young people in the authority's care; a slight decrease compared to the previous quarter (1,364). To help address demand those past exit dates are regularly reviewed to understand any barriers to exiting care and agree any action that might be required.

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

The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan at the 31st December 2023 was 622, down from a peak of 716 in April and the more recent low of 649 in June.



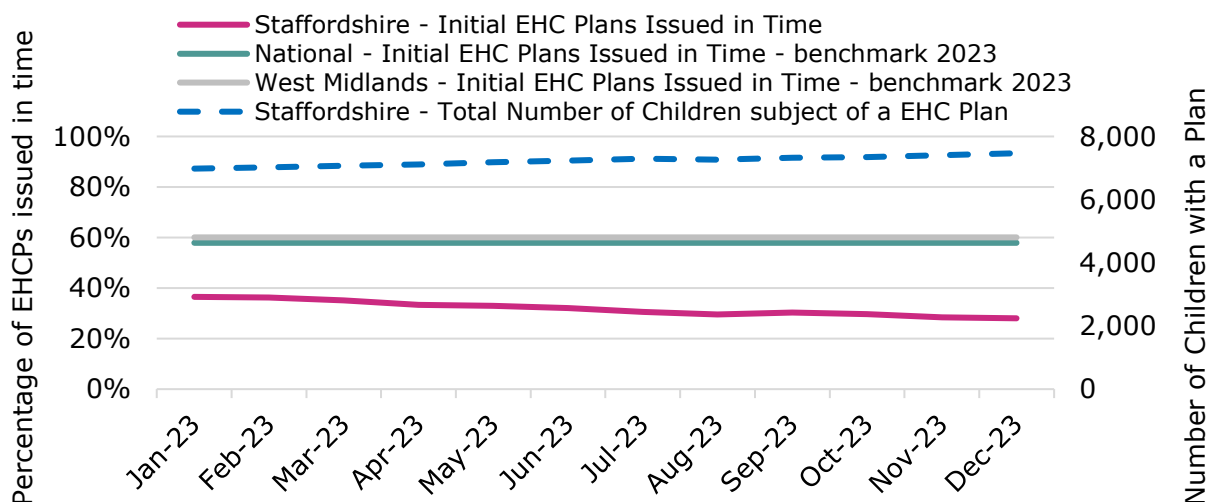
Rate of children referred, rolling 12 month average (per 10,000 population), and % re-referred within 12 months



Referrals continue to remain below both national and regional benchmarks. In Staffordshire, 21.5% of children have been re-referred within 12 months as of December 2023 (compared to latest national benchmark of 21.5% in 2022).

Offer the Best Start in Life Dashboard

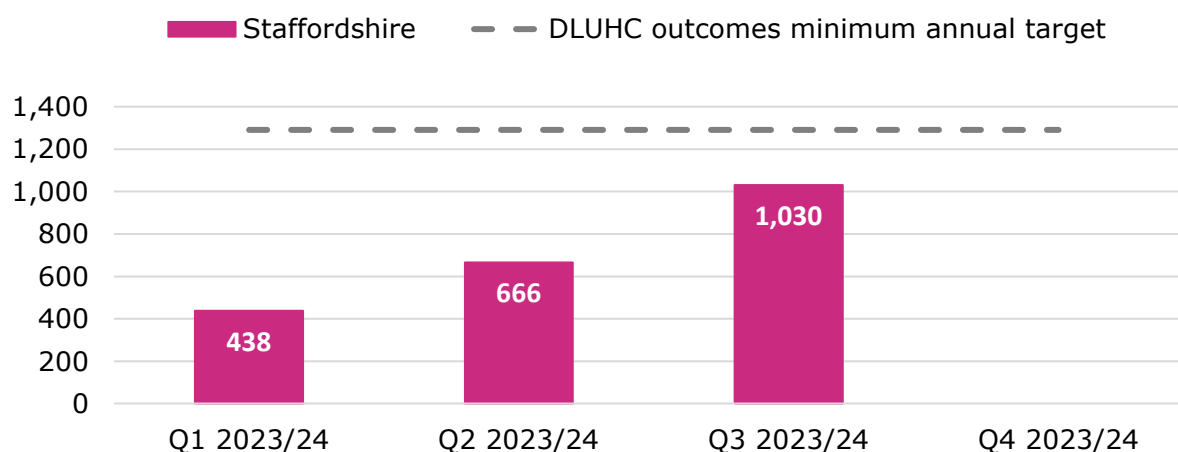
% of Education, Health and Care Plans issued in time (12 month rolling avg), and total number of children with a plan



Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

The number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 7,467 at 31st December 2023 compared to 6,985 a year earlier. This increasing demand means that the number of EHCP's issued in time (within 20 weeks) remains low in Staffordshire; 28% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (2023). Recruitment has been taking place to assist in improving timeliness of EHCPs and support early intervention.

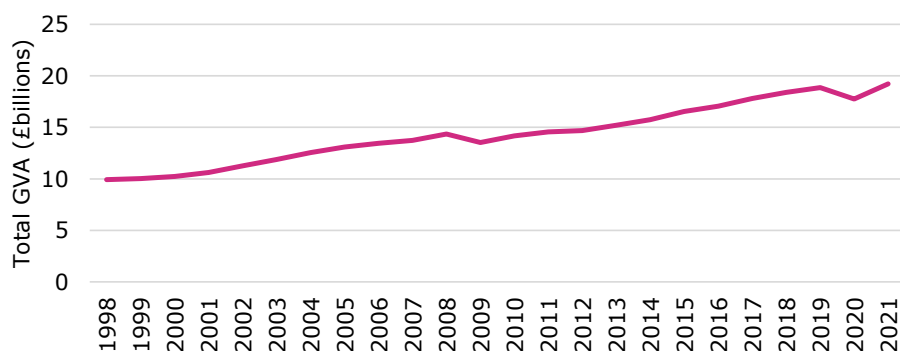
Supporting Families Programme - Reported successful family outcomes in 2023/24 (Cumulative)



At the end of Quarter 3, 80% of the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC's) annual target had been achieved.

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow Dashboard

Total Gross Value Added (GVA) in Staffordshire (£billions)



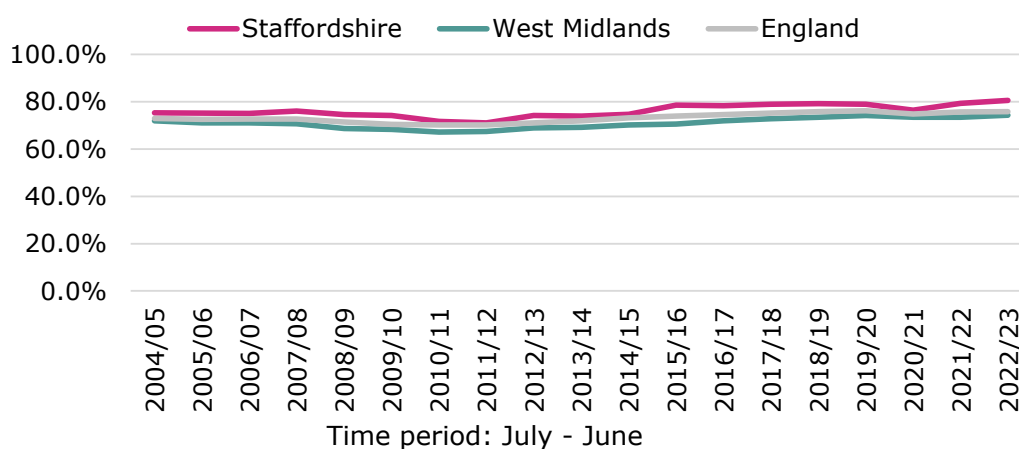
In 2021 (latest data) the Staffordshire economy was worth £19.2bn showing an increase of over £1.5bn between 2020-2021, equivalent to a 8.3% growth and greater than the growth seen for the West Midlands (6.9%) and England (7.1%).

Source: Office for National Statistics

NO UPDATE SINCE QUARTER 1

Employment Rate (aged 16-64)

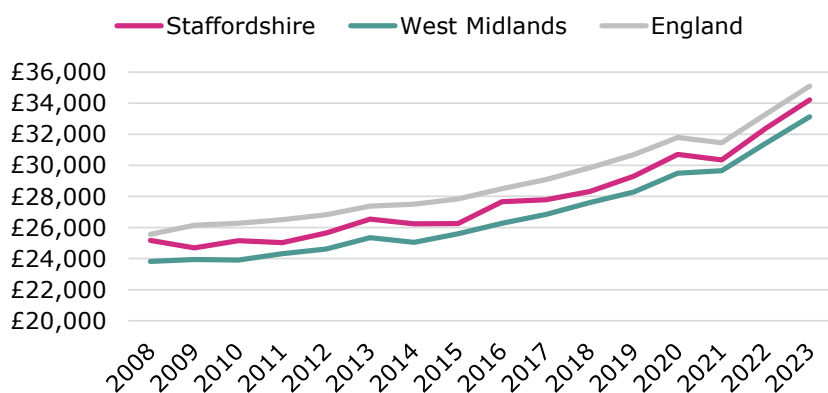
Latest employment figures for the period July 2022-June 2023 show that in Staffordshire there were an estimated 422,900 working age (aged 16-64) residents employed, with an employment rate of 80.6% well above the national and regional averages



Source: ONS National Population Survey

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow Dashboard

Average (median) annual resident earnings

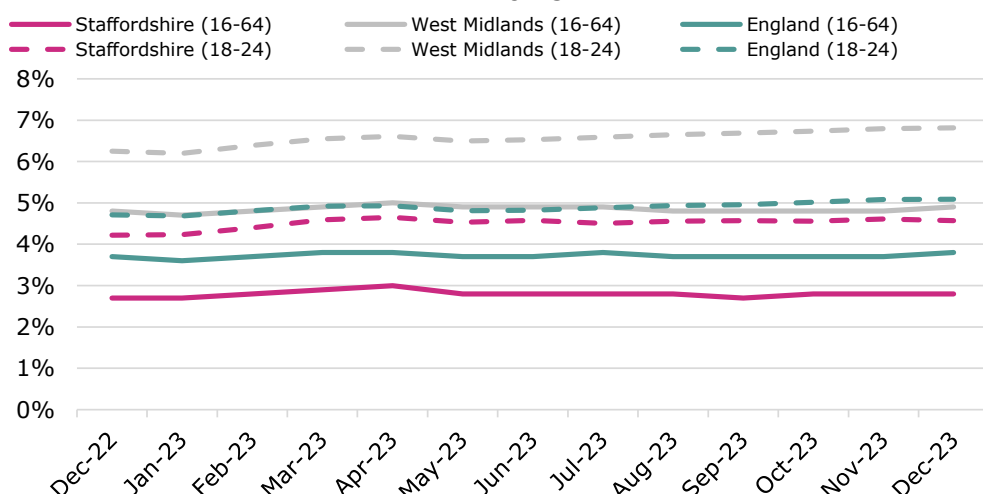


In 2023 average annual resident earnings for full-time workers in Staffordshire stood at £34,204 which was just below the England average of £33,208. Between 2019-23 Staffordshire saw faster improvement in resident earnings compared to national, with 16.8% growth compared to 14.4% for England.

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings—resident analysis

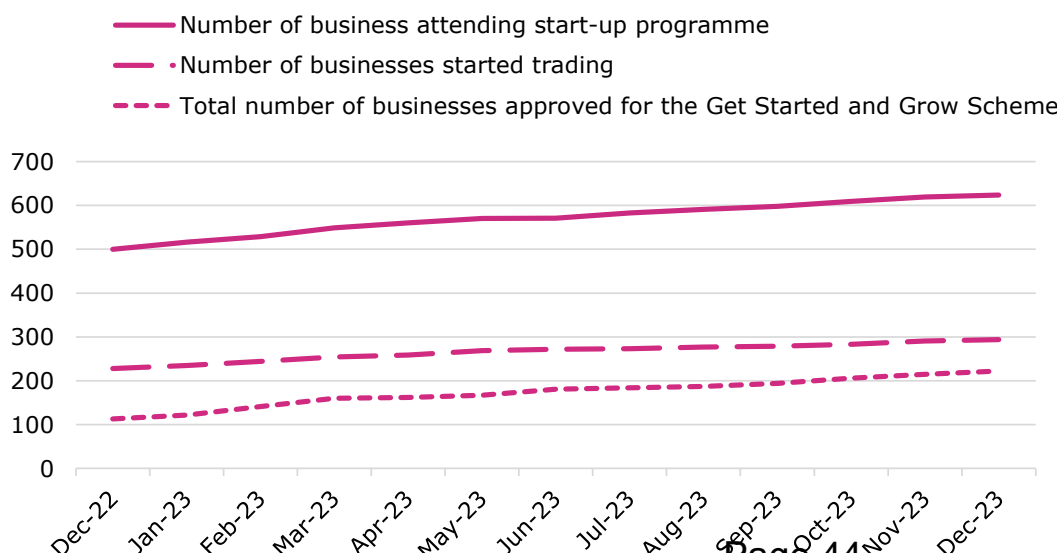
As of December 2023, there were 15,165 claimants in Staffordshire; an increase of 210 claimants compared with the figures reported in Quarter 2 (14,955). Staffordshire Moorlands records the lowest rate (2.1%), and Tamworth records the highest at 3.5%, which is still just below the national position (3.8%).

Claimant Count rate by age



Source: Office for National Statistics

Number of start-up businesses supported by the council (cumulative)

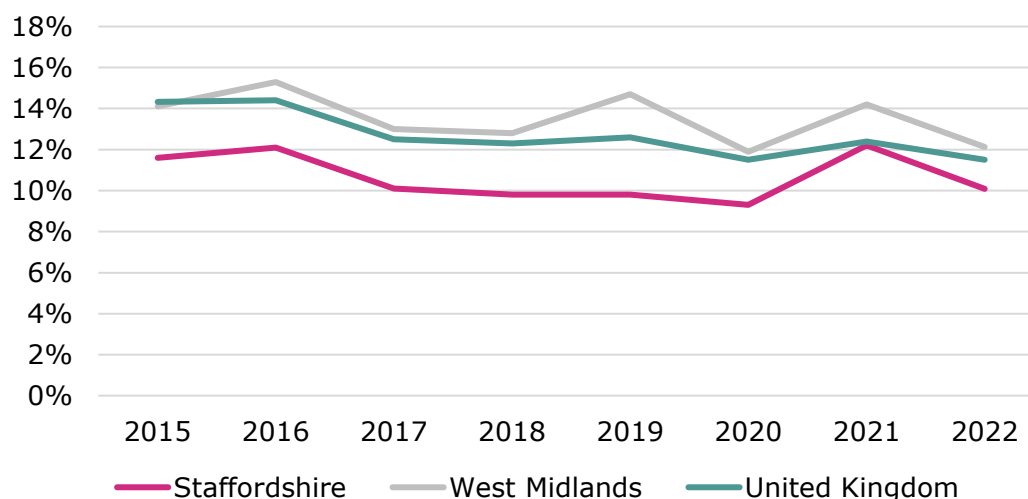


The top sector for businesses attending the start-up programme is 'Professional Services' (digital, financial, marketing, training, science and tech). The 'Get Started' scheme expanded in Quarter 3, 2022/23 to include 'Step up' support for businesses aged 2-5 years.

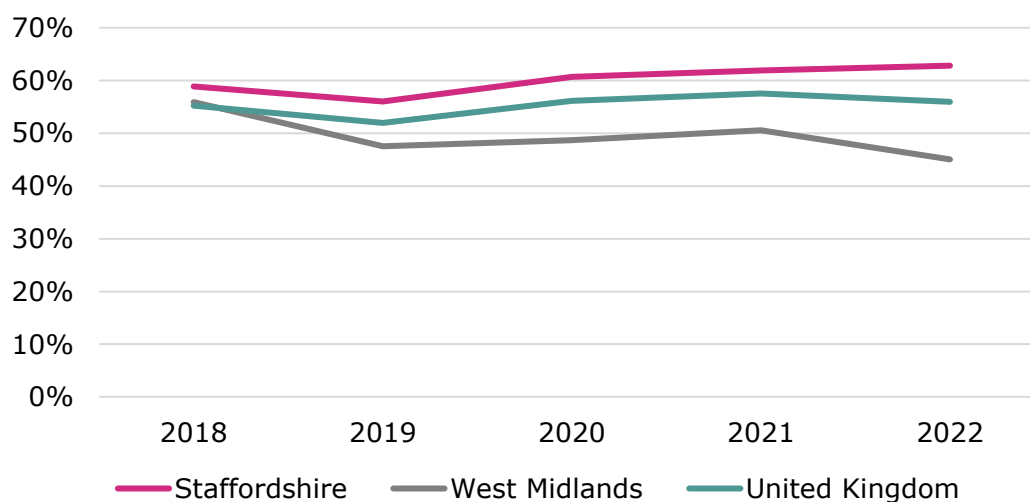
Source: SCC

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow Dashboard

Annual Business Start-up Rates, 2015-2022



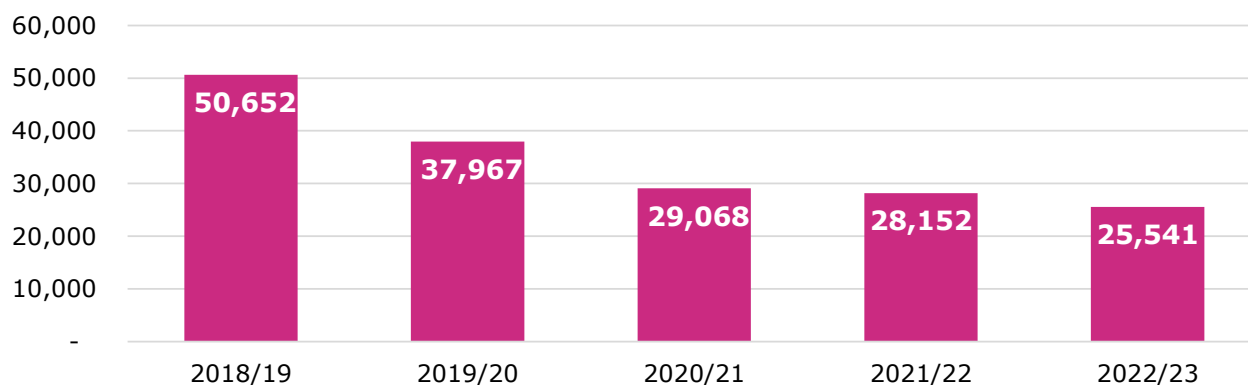
3-Year Business Survival Rates, 2018-2022



Despite a dip in 2022 in Staffordshire's annual business start-up rate (which was also seen regionally and nationally), Staffordshire's 3-year business survival rate continues to increase and outperforms national and regional rates.

Climate Change, Environment & Sustainability Dashboard

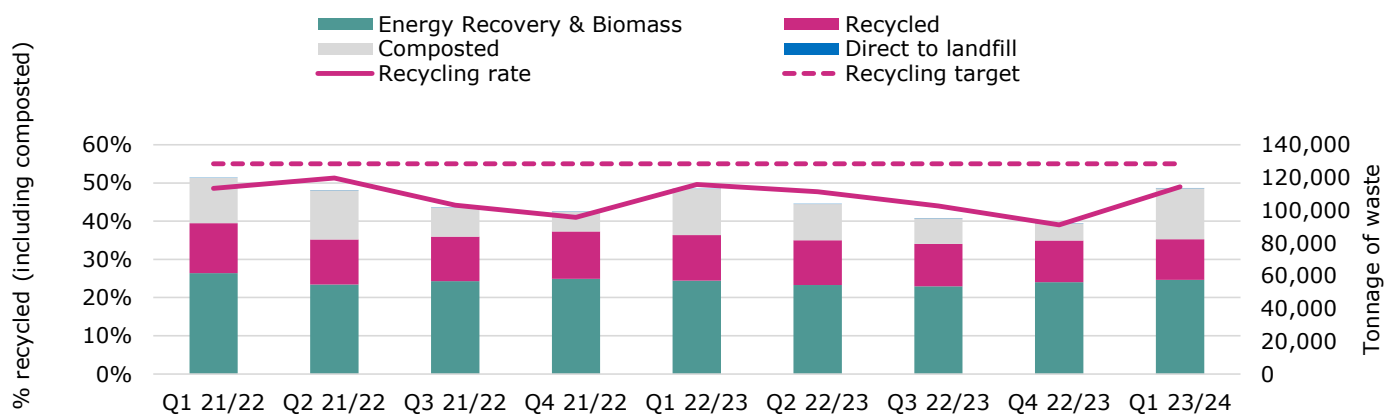
Staffordshire County Council's carbon emissions - Tonnes of carbon (tCO₂e)



There has been a 12% reduction in the authority's carbon emissions since 2020/21, and a 50% reduction since 2018/19 .

Source: SCC

% of waste recycled and tonnage of waste disposed of by method



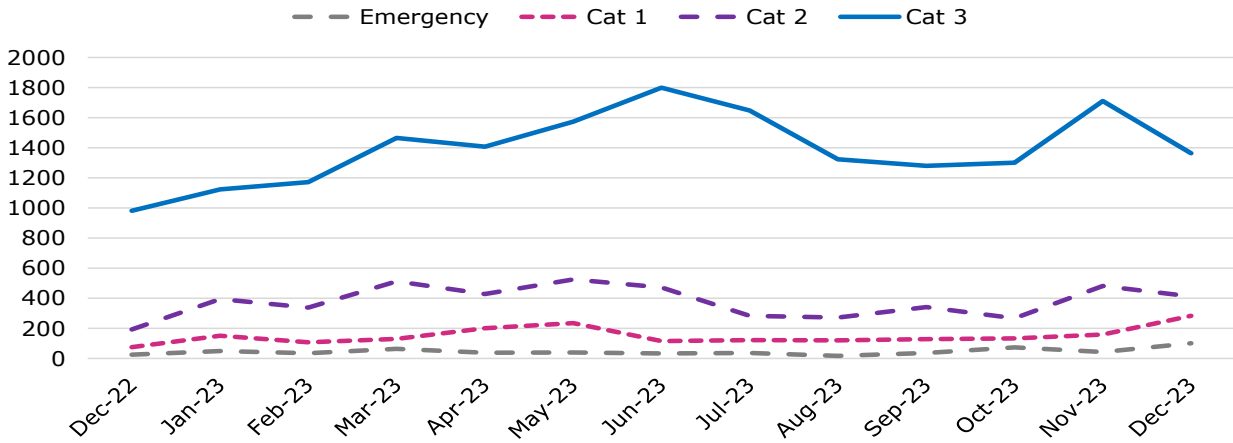
Source: SCC

The recycling rate increased again in Quarter 1 following the usual reduction during the winter, partly due to less composted waste in the winter months. Staffordshire continues to send minimal waste directly to landfill.

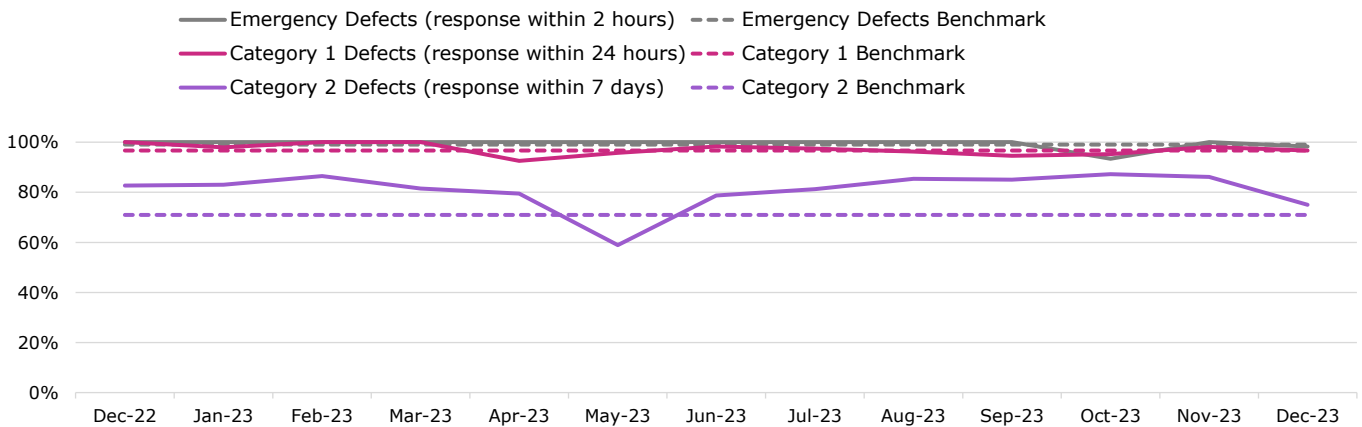
NO UPDATE SINCE QUARTER 1

Roads, Transport and Digital Connections Dashboard

Number of safety defects identified each month



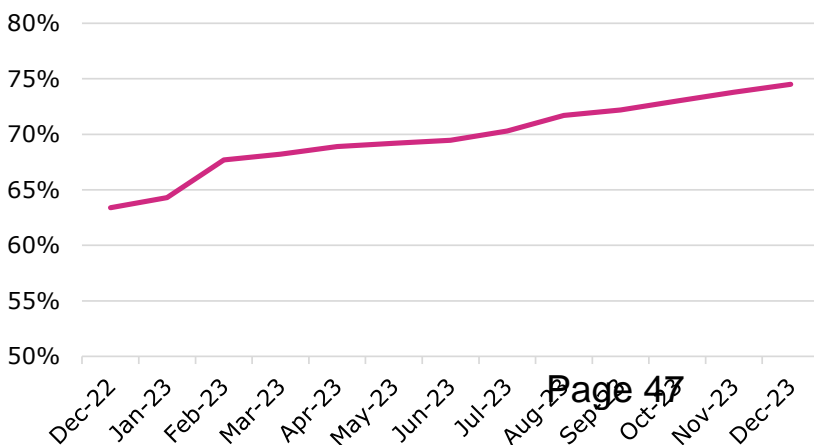
% of Emergency, Category 1 and Category 2 defects repaired in time



Source: Amey, Confirm

There were demand challenges in relation to the volume of high risk 'Emergency', 'Category 1' and 'Category 2' highways defects identified in Quarter 3, particularly in December which was mostly due to the adverse weather. Positively, despite the increase in demand, the timeliness of repairing higher risk defects (against benchmarks) has been maintained.

% of premises with Gigabit capability

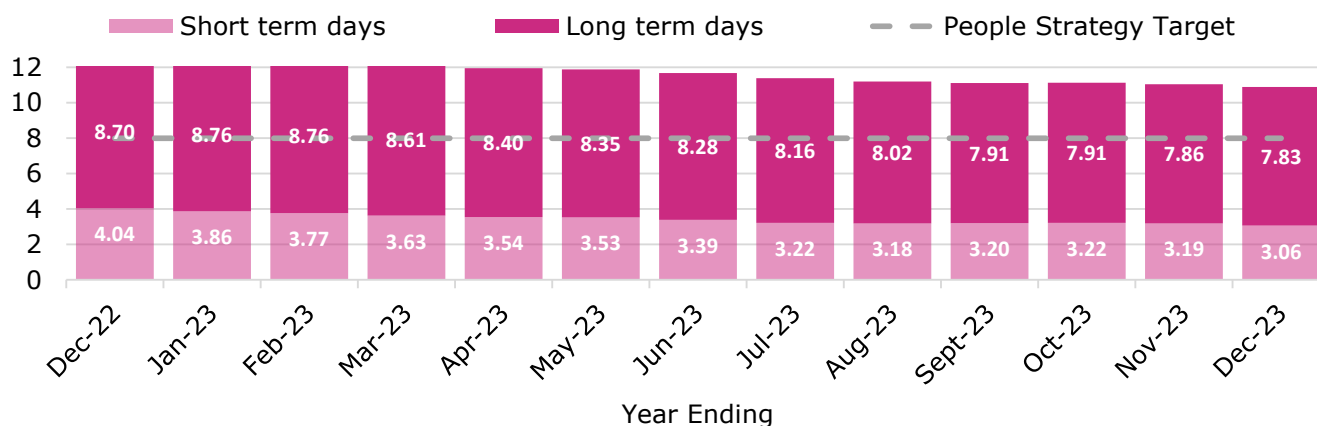


The percentage of premises with Gigabit capability continues to increase, with a target of 85% by the end of 2025 and close to 100% by 2030. It is not appropriate to benchmark against other areas due to differing approaches in rolling this out.

Source: Thinkbroadband.com

How we Work Dashboard

Average payroll days lost per employee



Source: SCC

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.

Live Within Our Means Dashboard

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

Quarter 1, 2023/24	Quarter 2, 2023/24	Quarter 3, 2023/24
1.39% (£9.5m overspend)	1.13% (£7.7m overspend)	0.89% (£5.4m overspend)

Source: SCC

A forecast 0.89% overspend is acceptable as it is within the council's Financial Health target of 2% variation on revenue budgets.

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 £5.4m (0.89%), compared to the quarter 2 forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.13%).

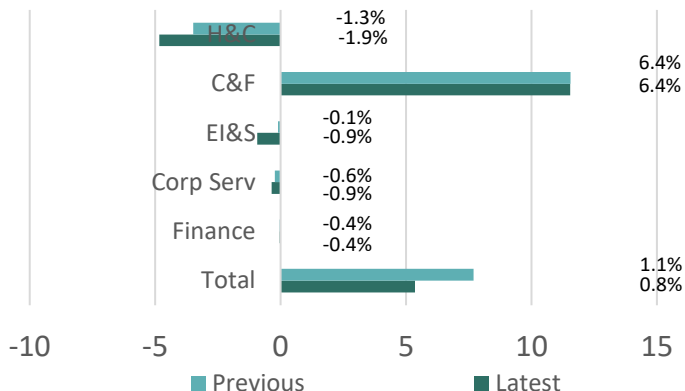
There is a forecast overspend of £11.5m for Children’s Services. This is a highly complex and volatile service and costs depend on the type of placements provided. The service is taking mitigating actions to address these pressures as far as possible.

Savings are categorised into confidence of delivery. There are £2.485m savings that are delivered as at quarter 3. There are £6.118m savings classed as Low confidence which mainly related to reductions in Looked After Children’s placement costs, and Adults Social Care accommodation-based care.

The latest capital outturn projection is £127.0m, compared to the quarter 2 position of £136.0m, a decrease of 6.6%. This projection is a fully funded position. There have been movements across the whole capital programme, however, there has been significant rephasing within Maintained Schools projects.

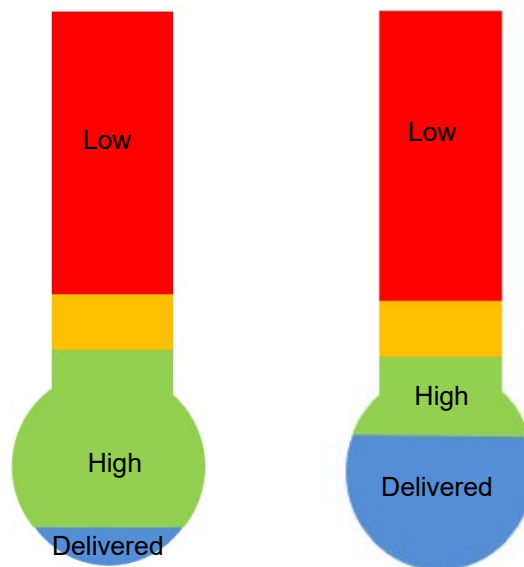
Within the national context, the latest consumer price index is 4.2%. Interest rates have increased to 5.25% making them the highest level in 15 years. GDP is estimated to have fallen by 0.3% in October 2023, following an increase of 0.2% in September 2023. Current unemployment figures show Staffordshire benefit claimant rate remains below that of the West Midlands and Great Britain.

Revenue Budget Variance



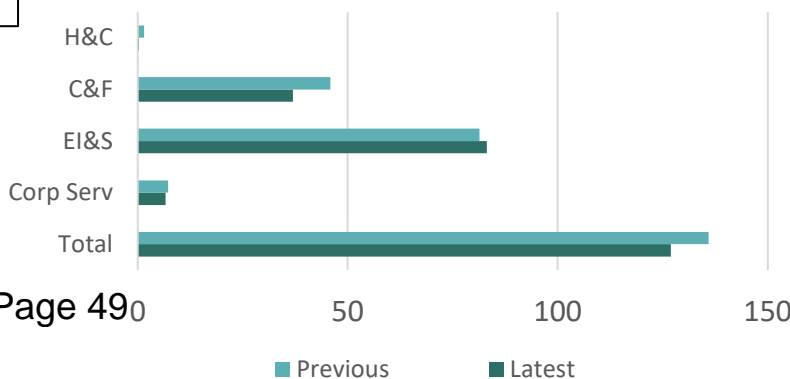
Savings Tracker – Target £11.176m

Quarter 2 - £11.176m Quarter 3 - £11.176m



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



Introduction

Revenue Forecast

54. The latest revenue forecast outturn (as provided in appendix 4) shows a forecast overspend of £5.4m (0.9%), compared to the quarter 2 forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.1%).
55. The following paragraphs consider the key financial issues in each of the council's portfolios.
56. **Health and Care** **Forecast – £4.842m saving**
57. *Public Health and Prevention* *Forecast – Breakeven*
58. The Public Health budget is forecast to breakeven. Inflationary costs are likely to exceed any increases in the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant which may produce a cost pressure in future years, however it is anticipated that this could be met from Public Health reserves.
59. *Adults Social Care & Safeguarding* *Forecast - £2.229m saving*
60. There remain a number of vacancies in the Adults Learning Disability Team (ALDT) which has led to a forecast saving of £0.833m. The vacancies are planned to be filled during the remainder of the year. The team is currently being supported by some temporary external capacity which is being funded from reserves.
61. Posts created in order to prepare for adult social care assurance is forecast to result in a small overspend of £0.750m however it is anticipated that this will not exceed £0.5m in year. Recurrent funding for these posts has been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). There is a forecast overspend of £0.383m to secure some additional temporary resource to tackle a backlog of best interest assessments. Approval has been given to fund this pressure from Health and Care reserves where and if necessary.
62. There is a £0.272m forecast pressure for the Section 75 contract with the Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPUFT) due to the 2023/24 pay award being higher than budgeted.

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63. Other variances in the Adult Social Care and Safeguarding budget led to a forecast saving of £0.605m.
64. In house services are forecast to save £2.196m which reflects vacancies in the residential services and Independence at Home homecare service being funded from the Adult Social Care Discharge grant. This is slightly offset by a small overspend within the Complex Needs Service.
65. *Care Commissioning* *Forecast - £2.613m saving*
66. The Older Peoples budget is forecast to save £1.813m. The ongoing management of demand and prices continues to have a positive impact on the financial position. This position is a consequence of a forecast saving of £3.440m on the Home Care budget, mainly due to the utilisation of £2m non-recurrent funding in year. This is offset by a forecast overspend on the Residential and Nursing budget of £1.653m. Other variances result in a small forecast saving of £26,000. A review of the allocation of costs between Older People and Mental Health budgets is in progress, the outcome of which may impact on the above position and will be reflected in future reports.
67. The Physical Disabilities budget is forecast to save £1.139m. The Home Care budget is forecast to save £0.744m due to the utilisation of non-recurrent funding in year. There is also a forecast saving on direct payments of £0.334m as the number of people in receipt of a direct payment during the year has been lower than anticipated. Other variances result in a small forecast saving of £16,000.
68. There is a forecast overspend of £0.157m for legacy items such as pensions costs.
69. There is a forecast additional income of £1.657m for client income, in line with increased expenditure on residential and nursing placements.
70. The Learning Disability budget is forecast to overspend by £1.038m. This is due to an increase in the number and price of supported living placements and because the £1.2m MTFs saving is not expected to be fully achieved. There is a risk of further increases in demand and price, and commissioners will explore actions to mitigate these and bring expenditure back within budget.

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71. The Mental Health budget is forecast to overspend by £1.775m. This is due to an increase in the number and price of supported living placements over and above the additional budget in the 2023/24 MTFS. There is a risk of further increases in demand and price and commissioners will explore actions to mitigate these. Work is ongoing to review the allocation of placements between Older People and Mental Health, the outcome of which may impact this position and will be subject of future reports.
72. There are forecast savings on the Carers budget of £0.302m and on the Advocacy contract of £0.183m, both due to lower activity than assumed in the budgets. These are partially offset by some additional temporary commissioning costs, forecast to be £0.188m. Further to this, there is a forecast saving on the reablement contract of £0.496m, due to final contract value being lower than the sum assumed when the budget was set.
73. Other variances in the Care Commissioning budget total a forecast saving of £0.181m.
74. **Covid Funding**
75. The Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) of £9.703m has been brought forward to 2023/24. Grant conditions require that this must be spent on Covid related activities and there is a final cut-off date where all funds must be utilised by 30th September 2024, when any remaining grant will need to be returned.
76. While spend is progressing against approved proposals, there is a risk that £1.4m of the £2.8m earmarked for Learning Disabilities property refurbishment will not be utilised by the deadline. If this is the case, there is an opportunity to mobilise further proposals to ensure the full utilisation of the COMF. Any funding shortfall on the renovation projects as a result will be monitored and proposed mitigations will be subject of future reports and necessary approvals.

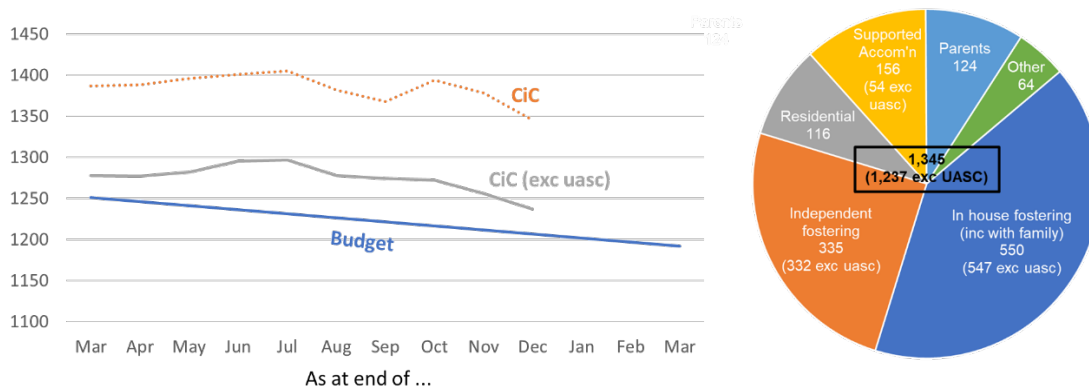
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77. **Children & Families** **Forecast - £11.538m overspend**

78. *Children's Services* *Forecast - £9.317m overspend*

79. The forecast for the service is an overspend of £9.3m, an increase from the quarter 2 position of £8.7m.

80. There has been a reduction in the number of Children in Care (CiC) in recent months. At the start of January, the number of CiC was 1,345 (1,237 excluding Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers). This is 60 children lower than at the highest point at the end of July this year. Unfortunately demand remains significantly higher than the level assumed in the transformation programme – especially for more expensive residential provision – and, given the pressure which has accumulated through the year so far, the CiC Placements budget and Section 17 support is forecast to be £9.6m overspent.

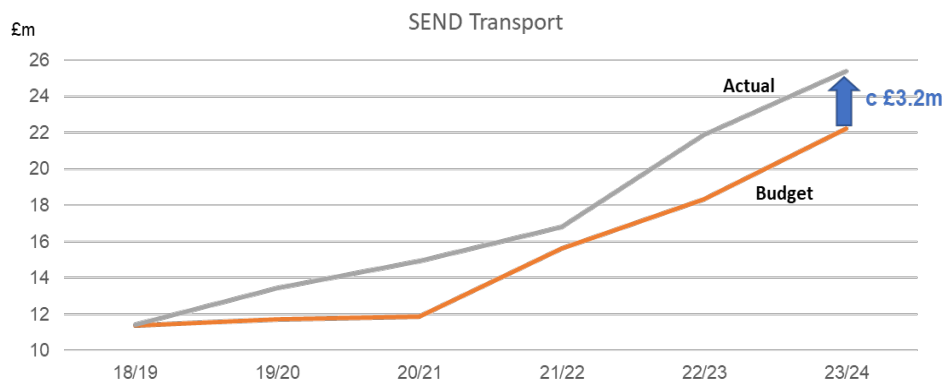


81. The service is taking mitigating actions to address as far as possible the pressures for CiC Placements including:

- Continuously monitoring thresholds for children entering care, especially those requiring residential provision
- Reviewing and expanding Edge of Care provision to mitigate and avoid escalation
- Reviewing and improving the reunification support offer
- A review of all existing children in care by cohort, considering areas working well and areas for potential improvement
- Maximizing income contributions from key partners
- Engaging with providers to actively source quality placements and ensure a vibrant market so that the costs of care are competitive

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82. In recent times, the service has been hindered by on-going recruitment and retention problems leading to inconsistent support and capacity. This was recognised in the MTFs, and significant additional resources brought into the budget this year to address these concerns. The service has secured people within several roles and is actively recruiting to other roles, planning to realign services and appointing to new positions; however, this will take time and, for now, the service continues to rely on more expensive agency support for essential service delivery leading to a forecast overspend of £1.3m across the District structure. This is offset by vacancy savings and one off savings due to the staged implementation of the workforce review/restructure that is currently being worked through, forecast to total £2.4m.
83. There are also other forecast overspends of £0.8m, including additional provision for aged debts. There is a risk that this forecast overspend will increase if further high need or complex placements are brought into SCC care before the year end.
84. *Education Services* *Forecast - £2.722m overspend*
85. The service is forecast to overspend by £2.7m, a slightly improved position from the £2.9m forecast at quarter 2.
86. The forecast overspend is primarily due to pressure in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport budget which in recent years has seen a significant increase in a demand as a result of the rise in Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCPs). Costs increased during 2022/23 as a result of rising inflation, and despite a further increase in budget this year it is forecast that there will be an overspend of £3.2m.

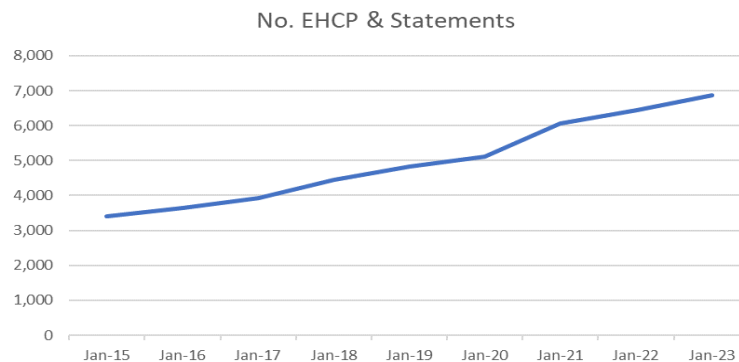


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87. A review of SEND transport is being implemented to identify any actions that may be taken to mitigate the existing demand and costs as far as possible, for example, to improve average occupancy levels and to identify the most efficient transport routes.
88. There is an additional pressure within the Educational Psychology service which is forecast to total £0.3m, due to additional locum costs arising as a result of the increasing demand for EHCP assessments.
89. There are other small savings across the service, including historic teacher pensions contributions, and provision for school deficit converters, which total a forecast of £0.8m.

90. *SEND High Needs Block*

91. The High Needs Block (HNB) is forecast to overspend by £20m and reflects
- Continuing growing demand for SEND support. This is impacting across all areas but especially the Independent sector with numbers now more than double what they were just four years ago and, given the more expensive placement cost, by some was the largest budget pressure in the HNB.
 - Increasing complexity of need and costs impacting all areas.
 - From April 2022 the Council implemented a new 'Education Banding Tool' for assessing a child's EHCP. Following concerns of increasing costs, this has been temporarily suspended while further consideration is undertaken.

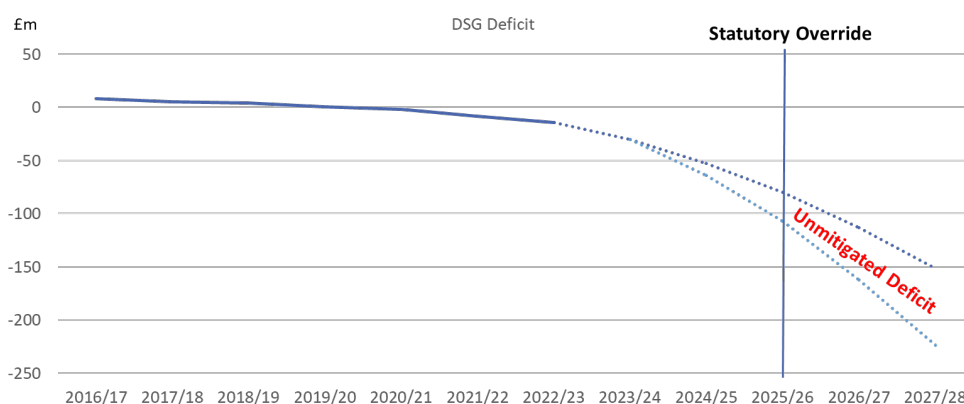


92. This is a position shared by many Councils across the sector. The Government has put in place a 'statutory override' requiring that accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficits should remain ringfenced, separate to

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the Council's other reserves and this has now been extended through to the end of 2025/26.

93. Accordingly, this forecast overspend will be charged against the DSG reserve which, at the end of 2022/23 was already £14.2m in deficit, and, given the forecast overspend this year, will likely be over £30m in deficit at the end of this year. The Council's Deficit Management Plan (DMP), that is consistent with the wider objectives outlined in the SEND Strategy, outlines the targeted interventions that will seek to mitigate the existing shortfall that is expected to rise over the next 4 years; however, this will take time and is unlikely to address in full the worsening position without further Government support. A key element of the 2024/25 DMP is for a 0.5% funding switch from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block as permitted under Government guidelines; this was initially rejected by Schools Forum, but the Council's subsequent disapplication request to the Secretary of State has since been approved and will provide for an additional £3.2m next year.



94. *Partnerships & Wellbeing* *Forecast - £0.501m saving*

95. The forecast for the service is a saving of £0.5m, an increase from the quarter 2 forecast of £0.1m. This is mainly due to savings against the health and wellbeing contract of £0.1m, along with one off staffing savings of £0.1m. There has also been a reduction in the costs associated with the transfer in-house of the Early Years Entrust contract of £0.3m.

96. A large majority of the Wellbeing and Partnerships budget is funded from government grants, including Resettlement grants of £10.6m, Household Support Fund of £11m, Holidays and Activities Fund of £2.4m and Supporting Families of £2.6m. The programmes included in the service have Cabinet

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approved plans to utilise the allocations and to deliver national programmes of work for the benefit of local residents.

97. **Economy, Infrastructure & Skills** **Forecast – £0.933m saving**

98. *Business & Enterprise* *Forecast – £0.135m saving*

99. The service is forecast to save £0.135m, which is an increase from the quarter 2 position of £8,000 saving. The main reasons for this increase are that a provision for staffing costs has not been required, and that a number of external funding contracts are being agreed for the delivery of business support services over the next two years. These funding agreements include UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funding from District and Borough Councils, as well as Business Energy Advice Service (BEAS) funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), and Funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to deliver legacy activities.

100. *Infrastructure & Highways* *Forecast - Breakeven*

101. The forecast for the service is to breakeven, although there are various overspends and saving forecast across the budget area.

102. The position continues to assume that additional network management income will be used to offset a budget pressure in the traffic signals energy cost area and that staffing vacancies in the school crossing patrol teams will be used to offset the land charges budget pressure.

103. The current forecast position also assumes that the emerging new priority work can be delivered through carry forward of unspent highways transformation monies. It also assumes the additional revenue inflation allocation is needed as the situation around increased costs and material supplies remains challenging for Highways budgets. These areas will continue to be monitored closely.

104. *Transport, Connectivity & Waste* *Forecast - £0.205m saving*

105. The Transport and Connectivity service is forecast to save £0.205m in year. There continue to be risks in the Concessionary Fares service as future Government directives could change and the impact of the Department for Transport Toolkit review is still unclear. There is provision to mitigate these

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risks, but the impact is still uncertain. Furthermore, any savings achieved in this area will need to be ringfenced to support the bus service in future years.

106. The Sustainability and Waste service is forecasting a breakeven position, which includes the delivery of the £0.565m MTFS Dry Mixed Recycling credits saving.
107. It is proposed that the additional third-party waste income and electricity generated income surpluses from the Waste to Recycling Energy plant contract are to be carried forward to fund the remaining 4 years of the 5 year Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) capital investment programme, and to earmark £0.4m to cover the remaining £1m necessary for the Local Transport Assessment work.
108. *Skills* *Forecast - £0.559m saving*
109. The Skills service is forecast to save £0.559m, an increase from the £82,000 saving forecast at quarter 2. The main reason for this increase is the identification of saving on the Schools Career Service contract, which has been brought in house this year from Entrust. This saving is worth £0.458m in 2023/24 and forecast to be £0.3m on going. This saving is earmarked in future years to enable the extension of the Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Service, which currently has temporary funding for its net cost. In addition to this, there is a forecast saving on staffing costs due to vacancies to be filled over the coming months. Some of this forecast saving is earmarked for use to fund an extension to the Ignite Student Start Up programme.
110. *Culture, Rural & Communities* *Forecast – £1,000 saving*
111. The service is forecast to achieve a small saving of £1,000 which is a reduction to the £0.130m saving forecast at quarter 2. This is largely made up of a forecast overspend of £85,000 in Community Safety due to costs for cattle in our care due to delays in the court system, which has been partly offset by increases in income and savings against contracts. There is a forecast overspend of £50,000 for Rural Services due to an increase in expenditure on equipment and services and an underachievement of income, partly offset by vacant posts and a reduction in transport costs.
112. The forecast overspend in Community Safety and Rural is partly offset by a forecast saving for Culture of £0.135m. This is made up of staffing vacancies

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and a reduction in transport costs for the Libraries service, as well as small savings in the Archives service due to additional income.

113. *El&S Business Support* *Forecast - £33,000 saving*

114. The service is forecast to save £33,000 due to small savings across training and pension liabilities budgets.

115. **Corporate Services** **Forecast – £0.357m saving**

116. The service is forecast to save £0.357m, which is an increase of £0.127m from the quarter 2 position.

117. The additional saving is a result of turnover of staff and vacant posts which have not been filled in Commercial of £80,000, Strategic Property of £80,000 and Member and Democratic Services of £50,000. There is also additional income within the Governance Team of £13,000.

118. These forecast savings have been slightly offset by a shortfall in income within the Communications Service of £25,000 as well as several increases in expenditure across the service in areas such as innovation, amongst others.

119. **Finance** **Forecast - £46,000 saving**

120. At quarter 2, there has been no change in the forecast saving for the service. This saving position includes provision for future capacity in the Adult Finance Services team, offset by temporary staffing vacancies.

121. **Centrally Controlled**

122. The forecast for this area is breakeven.

123. In line with the approach contained in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), a contribution of £3m has been made to the Information Technology Reserve as part of the funding required for replacement systems. Also, in accordance with existing practice, additional contributions have been made to care risk and inflation reserves to help mitigate known risks over the next few years of the MTFS.

124. **Capital Forecast**

125. Appendix 5 compares the latest capital forecast outturn of £127.0m, a decrease of £9.0m when compared with the quarter 2 forecast of £136.0m. The key reasons for this decrease of £9m are set out in the following paragraphs.

126. **Health and Care** **Forecast spend £0.308m**

127. There has been a decrease of £1.218m from the quarter 2 report, this is due to the rephasing of several budgets into 2024/25 and 2025/26 in line with the latest project timelines. This includes Hawthorne House Extension/Refurbishment of £0.270m, Care Director Upgrade of £0.170m, Adult Social Care Provider Monitoring System of £0.166m and Brackenberry Renovation of £0.692m. There has been a small increase on Douglas Road Respite Service of £80,000.

128. **Children and Families** **Forecast spend £36.936m**

129. *Maintained Schools* *Forecast Spend £36.739m*

130. There has been a decrease of £8.896m since the quarter 2 report. There have been several schemes rephased into 2024/25 including Madeley High of £1.029m, Oldfields Hall of £2.735m, unallocated Basic Needs of £1.5m, Merryfield's of £0.670m, Rocklands of £0.460m, Littleton Green of £0.751m, unallocated Schools Capital Allocation of £1.738m and unallocated High Needs Provision Capital Allocation of £0.650m.

131. These reductions have been offset by additional Section 106 funding for St Leonards Primary of £0.366m and small budget refinements across the programme of £0.273m.

132. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills** **Forecast spend £83.135m**

133. *Economic Planning & Future Prosperity* *Forecast spend £4.310m*

134. There has been a reduction of £1.932m since the quarter 2 report. There is uncertainty over the cashflow for the Chatterly Valley project as the contractor has gone into administration, therefore we have adopted a prudent stance and further rephased budget of £0.686m into 2024/25.

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135. There has also been reprofiling of Newcastle Enterprise Centre Extension and Refurbishment project of £0.208m due to the delays with tender, reprofiling of i54 Employment Site of £0.217m and i54 Western Extension of £0.470m reflecting provisions for risk and contingency to 24/25 and 25/26.
136. Rephasing of the Forward Programme into 2024/25 means a reduction in forecast spend in year of £0.172m. Farms budgets have been rephased by £80,000. There have also been minor budget refinements across a number of programmes totalling £99,000.
137. *Highways Schemes* *Forecast spend £73.662m*
138. There has been an increase of £5.507m since the quarter 2 report. This increase is due to the introduction of Network North Funding of £3.188m in 2024/25 enhancing Carriageway Maintenance budgets, as well as a reflection of latest forecast spend levels for Carriageways and Integrated Transport.
139. There has also been a £1m increase due refinements in Developer Funded Scheme budget refinements, as well as a reduction of £0.846m for the Stafford Western Access Route which is in line with the latest project progress reports.
140. *Skills* *Forecast Spend - £0.212m*
141. The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme has been rephased by £0.188m into 2024/25 to better reflect the forecast project delivery plan.
142. *Rural County* *Forecast Spend - £0.437m*
143. There has been an decrease of £0.153m since the quarter 2 report, which is mainly due to the rephasing of Greenways into future years of £0.1m, M6 Toll rephasing due to ongoing land ownership issues of £50,000.
144. *Waste & Sustainability Projects* *Forecast Spend - £1.339m*
145. There has been a small increase of £62,000 since the quarter 2 report, due to budget refinements for the JCB/CAT Fleet replacement budget of £0.103m and the introduction of NHRC Lighting Repairs programme of £40,000. There have

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been rephasing and refinements of other schemes totalling a reduction of £81,000.

146. **Property, Finance and Resources & ICT** **Forecast spend £6.593m**

147. There has been a decrease of £0.6m since the quarter 2 report. There has been a project scope review which has resulted in a number of projects within the District Property Rationalisation being carried over into 2024/25 totalling £0.760m. There has also been rephasing of £0.3m for the Back up Solution Premises Hardware project as this is still under review.

148. There has been the introduction of a new project for Burntwood Youth Centre Demolition, increasing the forecast spend by £0.2m, and there is forecast acquisition of 10 new vehicles for the Network team and 1 vehicle for the Fostering team, increasing the forecast spend by ££0.260m.

149. **Financial Health**

150. Appendix 6 provides a forecast outturn performance against the key Financial Health Indicators approved as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.

151. There have been 97.7% of invoices paid within 30 days of receiving them at the end of May, exceeding the financial health indicator target.

152. The Debt Key Performance Indicator (KPI) has been amended, which reflects the following:

- The aged debt indicator has been re-calculated in the light of increased income levels and changes to charging arrangements, it is expected that the target will be reviewed and amended for 2024/25

153. Due to increasing income levels year on year (in particular in residential care) and changed to charging arrangements, the target will need to be reviewed and revised annually, the target will be updated for 2024/25.

154. The estimated level of outstanding sundry debt over 6 months old is £24.242m, this is over the revised target of £21.5m by £2.742m. This position is an increase of £3.738m since the quarter 2 report. The debt recovery process involves chasing by a range of methods with the eventual escalation to the

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external collection agent or to Legal for the possibility of a court decision to recover the debt.

155. The level of CCG health debt over 6 months old is now £0.339m, £0.861m below the target figure.
156. Non-Residential Client debt now stands at £14.980m 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	2023/24 Target	30/09/2023	31/12/2023	Increase / (Decrease)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health Bodies & CCGs	1.200	0.876	0.339	(0.537)
Other Govt. and Public Bodies	2.800	1.977	2.102	0.125
Other General Debtors (Individuals & Commercial)	5.200	4.527	5.514	0.987
H&C Non-Res Client Debt	11.000	12.474	14.980	2.506
H&C Residential Client Debt	1.300	0.650	1.307	0.657
TOTAL	21.500	20.504	24.242	3.738

157. Prudential Indicators

158. Appendix 7 provides a forecast outturn performance against the Prudential Indicators approved as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.
159. 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.

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160. 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.

Revenue Forecast Outturn 2023/24









	Revised Budget Qtr 3 £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Total Variation £m
Health and Care			
Public Health & Prevention	0.263	0.263	0.000
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	41.826	39.597	(2.229)
Care Commissioning	218.195	215.582	(2.613)
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	(0.263)	(0.263)	0.000
Health and Care Total	260.021	255.179	(4.842)
Children and Families			
Children's Services	132.406	141.723	9.317
Children's Public Health	0.000	0.000	0.000
Education Services	39.802	42.524	2.722
Wellbeing & Partnerships	9.028	8.527	(0.501)
Children and Families Total	181.236	192.774	11.538
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Business & Enterprise	2.627	2.492	(0.135)
Infrastructure & Highways	40.915	40.915	0.000
Transport, Connectivity & Waste	45.981	45.776	(0.205)
Skills	2.825	2.266	(0.559)
Culture, Rural & Communities	13.504	13.503	(0.001)
EI&S Business Support	1.199	1.166	(0.033)
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	107.051	106.118	(0.933)
Corporate Services Total	39.070	38.713	(0.357)
Finance Total	12.038	11.992	(0.046)
Total Portfolio Budgets (Saving)/Overspend	599.416	604.776	5.360
Centrally Controlled Items			
Interest on Balances & Debt Charges	23.881	23.881	0.000
Pooled Buildings and Insurances	28.066	28.066	0.000
Pensions	1.706	1.706	0.000
Investment Fund	0.039	0.000	(0.039)
Care Market Pressures	15.000	9.679	(5.321)
Capital Investment Fund	3.500	3.500	0.000
Traded Services / Business Partner	(0.812)	(0.812)	0.000
Contingency	11.578	11.578	0.000
Net Revenue Budget (Saving)/Overspend	682.373	682.373	0.000

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24

	2nd Quarter Budget	Enhancements to Programme	3rd Quarter Budget
	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care			
Care and Independence	1.526	(1.218)	0.308
Health and Care Total	1.526	(1.218)	0.308
Children and Families			
Maintained Schools	45.635	(8.896)	36.739
Vulnerable Children's Projects	0.197	0.000	0.197
Children and Families Total	45.832	(8.896)	36.936
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Economic Planning & Future Prosperity	6.242	(1.932)	4.310
Highways Schemes	68.155	5.507	73.662
Connectivity	0.400	(0.400)	0.000
Skills	0.000	0.212	0.212
Rural County (Countryside)	0.590	(0.153)	0.437
Tourism and Culture	4.736	(1.561)	3.175
Waste & Sustainability Projects	1.277	0.062	1.339
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	81.400	1.735	83.135
Trading Services - County Fleet Care	0.712	0.260	0.972
Finance, Resources & ICT	0.885	(0.300)	0.585
Property	5.596	(0.560)	5.036
Total	135.951	(8.979)	126.972

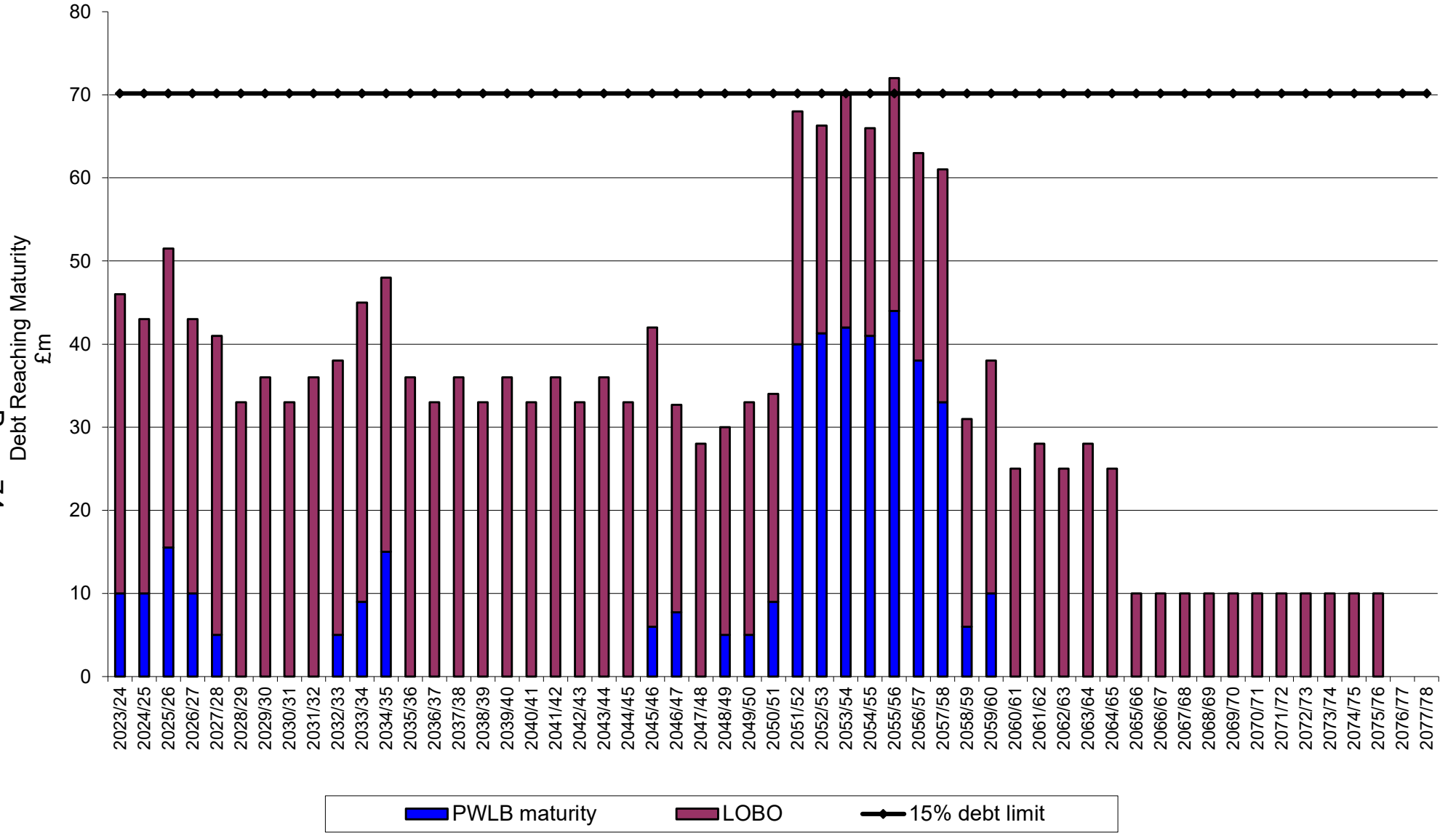
Financial Health Indicators 2023/24

Appendix 6

Indicator		Current Performance
<p><u>Debtors</u> Level of outstanding general debtors more than 6 months old does not exceed £21.5m (Current Performance – £24.2m).</p>		
<p><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%).</p>		
<p><u>Monitoring</u> Quarterly financial monitoring reports have been issued to Cabinet during the last 12 months.</p> <p>The council's most recent revenue outturn forecast did not vary by more than +/-2% when compared to the overall revenue budget.</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring reports of progress against MTFS savings have been produced for the Senior Leadership Team during the last 12 months.</p>		  
 Indicator not met	 Indicator not met by small margin	 Indicator met

Prudential Indicators 2023/24

Indicator	Budget 2023/24	Q3 Estimate 2023/24
	£m	£m
External Debt – Authorised Limit for borrowing	621	399
External Debt – Authorised Limit for other liabilities	118	69
<i>Total</i>	<i>739</i>	<i>468</i>
External Debt – Operational Boundary for borrowing	525	399
External Debt – Operational Boundary for other liabilities	118	69
<i>Total</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>468</i>
External Debt - Loans	596.5	399
Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Fixed)	546.4	399
Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Variable)	(470.0)	(370.5)
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for longer than a year	245.0	30
Estimate of Capital Expenditure	111.9	127.0
Estimate of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	572.1	562.9
Gross Debt – External Loans (Should remain below CFR, except in the short term)	568.2	399
Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Financing Costs	22.9	19.2
Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Proportion of Net Revenue Stream - %	3.6%	2.97%



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 February 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Update

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. receive the Work Programme 2023-24 update.
- b. agree the Combined Work Programme (Appendix 1).
- c. note the tracking recommendations and outputs (Appendix 2).

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services John Tradewell

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the overarching scrutiny body with responsibility for developing and agreeing the combined work programme for the Council's four overview and scrutiny committees.

Members are asked to consider the update, consider the combined work programme for the remainder of 2023-24 municipal year and note the tracking of recommendations and outputs.

Report

Background

1. The Local Government Act 2000 states that Councils operating executive arrangements must also make provision for the appointment of one or more overview and scrutiny committees. At their annual meeting on 18 May 2023, the County Council appointed the following committees:

- Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
 - Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny
 - Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny
 - Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny
4. The Terms of Reference for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be viewed in [Section 7 of the County Councils Constitution](#).
 5. Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programmes are reviewed each meeting to ensure the remit falls in the Committees terms of reference and that the matters remain timely and relevant.
 6. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs hold regular Triangulation meetings with Executive Members, Directors, and where applicable senior officers from partner organisations, to discuss emerging matters, priorities and circumstances that might impact on decision making and scrutiny timelines.
 7. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee maintains oversight of the combined work programme which provides opportunity to identify matters which might fall under the Terms of Reference of more than one Committee and provides a wider view of the subject matter and related issue(s), to help focus on key lines of enquiry.

Current position

8. September 2023 – January 2024

- a. Nineteen Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee meetings were held in this period.
- b. One informal meeting of the Safeguarding O&S Committee was held to invite the Police and Crime Commissioner to consider 'Right Time, Right Place.'
- c. Five overview and scrutiny working groups have met on a total of nineteen occasions to look in depth at specific issues. A summary of activity can be found in paragraph 10 of this report.

9. Activity Summary

Corporate:

- a. [12 September 2023](#) meeting considered Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Corporate Services, Annual Report 2022/23 and the Electoral Review of Staffordshire County Council - Draft Recommendations

- b. [6 November 2023](#) scrutiny of the Integrated Performance report – quarter 2, Entrust – Review of Changes, Climate change annual report and action plan and the Climate Change Working Group - Carbon Sequestration and Woodland Creation for Net Zero.
- c. [18 December 2023](#) meeting considered People Strategy 2023 – 2027 Update on Progress, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – Principles, Objectives and Action Plan update and the Medium-Term Financial Scrutiny - Draft Working Group Report

Health and Care:

- a. [11 September 2023, 10:00am](#) scrutiny of Good Mental Health in Staffordshire Strategy 2023-2028 – Draft Action Plan and Mental Health Performance
- b. [16 October 2023](#) scrutiny of SSOT Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICS (Integrated Care System) People/ Workforce, Staffordshire’s Social Care Workforce: Adult Social Care Update and Freedom to Speak Up
- c. [13 November 2023](#) additional meeting: WMAS (West Midlands Ambulance Service) Performance Update.
- d. [20 November 2023](#) additional meeting: Health impacts of Walleys Quarry Landfill Site, Silverdale.
- e. [27 November 2023](#) scrutiny of Maternity and Neonatal Services Update.
- f. [29th January 2024](#) Scrutiny of Access to General Practice in Staffordshire, Social Prescribing and SSOT ICB Primary Care Dental Overview.

Prosperous:

- a. [28 September 2023](#) scrutiny of Employment and Skills Strategy, HS2 Impact on Staffordshire - Update Oral report/presentation of HS2 and Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly Update.
- b. [17 October 2023](#) (additional meeting) scrutiny of Avanti West Coast Mainline Rail Services.
- c. [9 November 2023](#) scrutiny of Community Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022 – 2023, Annual Street Works Permit Scheme Reports and draft Traffic and Network Management Plan.
- d. [22 November 2023](#) (site visit to Staffordshire History Centre and additional meeting) scrutiny of Staffordshire History Centre Update and Staffordshire Libraries and Arts Service Performance 2022-2023.
- e. [13 December 2023](#) scrutiny of Natural Environment Strategy, Staffordshire County Council’s Economic Strategy – Delivery Update and Review of Schools Performance.

- f. [11 January 2024](#) scrutiny of Update on the Preparation of the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan, and Lighting for Staffordshire Update and Energy Framework Proposal.

Safeguarding:

- a. [14 September 2023](#) scrutiny of Impact of Cabinet Investment in Children's Services and Children in Care Programme
- b. [24 October 2023](#) scrutiny of Strategic Vision for Early Years.
- c. 24 October 2023: Informal meeting 'Right Care, Right Person' interview with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- d. [23 November 2023](#) scrutiny of Family Hubs in Staffordshire and Trading Standards including Vaping Safeguarding Concerns.
- e. [4 January 2024](#) scrutiny of Homes for Children in Our Car, Family Help Model, Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) Annual Report 2022-2023 and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2022/2023.

10. Working Groups Activity

Climate Change	7 September: Expert witnesses from Forestry Commission and The National Forest Company. 14 September: Evaluation of evidence, drawing conclusions and recommendations. 4 October: Consider draft report and recommendations. 6 November: Corporate agreed the report. 17 January 2024: Cabinet received the report and will respond to recommendations.
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	13 September: Tracking & Outturn underspends. 27 September: Dedicated Schols Grant HHB. 4 October: DSG – Cabinet Member interview. 25 October: Leader /Cabinet Member interview Draft MTFS 6 November: Testing/ evaluating evidence / conclusions. 4 December: Consider draft report and recommendations. 18 December: Report agreed at Corporate OSC. 24 January 2024: Cabinet received the report and will respond to recommendations.
Women's Health Strategy	26 September: Meeting with ICS Lead: National strategy august 2022 and Staffordshire Women's Health assessment. 18 October: agreed focus on Endometriosis and lines of Enquiry. 19 January 2024: The Chair met with Stafford MP to discuss birth trauma and women's health matters within the working group scope. 23 February 2024: Evidence gathering session.

Adult Social Care (ASC)	7 September: Workshop feedback Digital Information 9 October: Care Act Assessment Workshop 19 October: Theme Working with People 6 November: Theme Providing Support 4 December: Theme Ensuring Safety within the system 9 January 2024: Theme Leadership 21 February 2024: findings and draft report
Integrated Care Hubs	Carried forward – paused whilst ICH bid process ongoing.
Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)	5 September: Agreed terms of reference, methodology and timetable of work. 17 October: Feedback from Primary evidence gathering sessions - shadowing CPE officers; reviewing existing Service Level Agreement and data re current provision. 11 December: Taking evidence from Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and existing service Provider. Further feedback from shadowing CPE officers. 15 February 2024 – evidence feedback and evaluation of findings.

11. Chair/Vice-chair Forum update

To ensure the continuous development of the scrutiny function Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees meet regularly with the Scrutiny and Support Team to reflect on, discuss and develop working processes and share good practice:

- a. 12 September improving scrutiny mechanisms, the Executive /Scrutiny Protocol and leadership essentials training.
- b. 28 November effective work programming and methods of scrutiny.
- c. 24 January 2024 Process improvement, committee remits and Overview and Scrutiny Members Survey.

12. Scrutiny Member Training and Development

Summary of training activities:

- a. LGA (Local Government Association) Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Leadership training sessions are planned in January / February 2024. An in-house training session for Chairs and Vice-Chairs has been requested for Spring 2024.
- b. 30 January four members attended LGA Charing Skills online training.

13. Work Programme – Planned items

- a. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees work programme items, work group meetings and other Scrutiny work for the remainder of the municipal year (February – April 2024) are listed for consideration (Appendix 1).
- b. The Work Programmes for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee are working documents and are continuously reviewed and updated.
- c. Triangulation meetings and agenda planning in advance of the scheduled meetings determines the timeliness and relevance of items and the need for prioritisation of emerging issues.
- c. Committee is requested to identify any matters that cut across or duplicate planned work and consider the most appropriate way to carry out scrutiny of the issue.

14. Tracking and Monitoring Recommendations

A detailed action log is maintained by Scrutiny and Support Officers for each committee. The update on progress against agreed actions is included in the work programme update report to each meeting. A tracker log to highlight progress and outcomes of recommendations made to Cabinet / Cabinet Members and Partners has been included in this report for information (Appendix 2).

15. Link to Strategic Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees' remits and work programmes are developed to ensure that scrutiny reinforces the value and importance of challenge, and they are aligned to the ambitions and delivery of the principles, priorities, and outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

16. Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

The Combined Work Programme will co-ordinate scrutiny activity between the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, identify matters for joint scrutiny or determine the lead committee for an issue, and consider where and when scrutiny can add value and influence decision making.

Background Documents:

Link 1: Corporate O&S Committee Work Programme: [26.02.2024](#)

Link 2: Health and Care O&S Committee Work Programme: [29.01.2024](#)

Link 3: Prosperous O&S Committee Work Programme: [11.01.2024](#)

Link 4: Safeguarding O&S Committee Work Programme: [04.01.2024](#)

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Overview and Scrutiny Planned Items 2023-24

Extract February-April 2024

Date	Committee	Other Meeting	Comments	Corporate Priority
01/02/24	Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Site visit to MPFT & NSCHT	February date TBC - Zero by Nature - North Staffordshire Air Quality Action Plan	Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence Tackle climate change, enhance our environment, and make Staffordshire more sustainable.;#Fix more roads, and improve transport and digital connections.
02/02/24	Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership - Performance - Adult Safeguarding Early Response - Community safety Agreement, performance and impact - MASH Review and adoption of a Staffordshire Children's Front Door	
15/02/24	Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- Right Care Right Person Scrutiny Chair's Report - Quarterly integrated performance report (quarter 3) - LEPC	
26/02/24	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- O&S Joint work programmes - Carers Strategy - Adult Social Care Assurance Working Group Report - Mental Health in Schools update	
18/03/24	Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- Community Mental Health (Following from site visits to MPFT and NSCHT) - HS2 - Six monthly update (impact on and opportunities for Staffordshire) - Household Waste Recycling Centres Performance - SACRE Annual Report 2022/23	Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence Support Staffordshire's economy to grow, generating more and better-paid jobs;#Fix more roads, and improve transport and digital connections.;#Tackle climate change, enhance our environment, and make Staffordshire more sustainable.
28/03/24	Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- Customer Services Strategy - Climate change exec response - MTFS exec response - O&S work programmes - Digital strategy	
09/04/24	Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- Adult Vulnerability Hubs - Adult Safeguarding Assessment	Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence
18/04/24	Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee		- Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services, Outcome and Action Plan	

Appendix 2

Tracking actions / outputs

May 2023 – April 2024

Item	Considered at meeting	Summary of action and Executive response	Updates and Outcomes	RAG
Corporate				
Corporate Delivery Plan 2023/24	Corporate 9 May 2023 Ref 22/23-66	Recommendation to Cabinet That the comments of the Committee be considered prior to the Plan being approved by Cabinet.	The comments of the Committee as listed in the minutes were considered prior to the Plan being approved by Cabinet.	G
Volunteering for Staffordshire County Council	Corporate 9 May 2023 Ref 22/23-68	Comments and suggestions referred to Council for consideration along with the Volunteering strategy.	21 June 2023 Cabinet Report	G
O&S Annual Report 22/23	Corporate 20 June 2023 Ref 23/24-4	Referred to Council for consideration on 20 July 2023.	Agreed by Council 20G July 2023	G
Integrated Performance Q1	Corporate 1 August 2023 Ref: 23/24-11	Further information requested Divisional Highways Programme funding allocation refer to Ch/Vc Forum for discussion	Further information emailed 24.08.2023 DHP referred to Ch/Vc Forum 12 September 2023	G
Corporate Complaints Annual Report	Corporate 12 September 2023 Ref:23/24-15	Corporate Complaints training be added to the Annual training schedule for all members	Information emailed 29.09.2023	G
Electoral Review of Staffordshire County Council	Corporate 12 September 2023 Ref:23/24-16	The comments of the Corporate O&S Committee be referred to Cabinet as part of the consultation	Reported to Council 12.10.2023	G
Entrust – Review of changes	Corporate – 6 November 2023 Ref 23/24-22	The Committee hold an informal meeting to discuss the possible future targets for the service.	24 January 2024 – Cllrs Wilcox, Pert, Francis and Yates Met and discussed performance with officers. Suggestions were made on	G

			information needed to inform performance.	
Climate Change Annual Report and Action Plan	Corporate – 6 November 2023 Ref 23/24-23	Pre-decision Scrutiny. The comments made by the Committee, listed in the minutes were reported to the Cabinet on 15.11.2023.	Reported to Cabinet 15.11.2023	G
Climate Change Working Group report on Carbon Sequestration	Corporate – 6 November 2023 Ref 23/24-24	The report and recommendations to Cabinet on 13 December 2023. Due to report back in April 2024	Cabinet response added to the work programme – 9 April 2024	A
Integrated Performance report– quarter 2	Corporate – 6 November 2023 Ref 23/24-21	<p>a) The tolerance on graph axis's should be changed, wherever practical, so that it starts at a number closer to the actual e.g. started at 90 if the data started at 94 and not zero.</p> <p>b) That the following information be provided to the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full list of schemes which had applied for covid funding as well as the successful ones. • A copy of the Cabinet (20/09/23) report entitled "SEND Accelerated Progress Plan: Enhanced Assess-Plan, Review Pathway, Strategy for Special Provision and the Staffordshire Children and Young People's Framework". • The financial impact of the new online financial self-assessment portal, as mentioned in Paragraph 41 of the report. • An update on the Chatterley valley scheme slippage be sent to Councillor Yates directly. 	Information requested was emailed 27/11/23	G
Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and -	Corporate 18 December 2023 Ref 23/24-29	That work experience for care leavers was encouraged with partners.	Information emailed 12/01/24 The procurement team worked with the C&F Care Leavers team to get	G

Principles, Objectives and Action Plan update		The Committee asked for information on the employment broker service and how to works with individuals to secure employment be provided to the committee after the meeting.	some legal wording added into our agreements regarding care leavers. This is not applicable to all contracts and is therefore removed to suit the contract subject matter.	
Peoples Strategy	Corporate 18 December 2023 Ref 23/24-28	The progress made against the year 1 and year 2 priorities of 'Our People Strategy 2023-27' was noted. Future monitoring of performance be monitored through the committees Integrate performance quarterly report. The following detailed information be provided to the committee after the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of colleagues affected by post covid 19 syndrome. • Bereavement support offered to colleagues • The usage of the new careers website, compared to previous months. 	Information emailed 12/01/24	G
MFTS 2022-2027 Working Group Report	Corporate 18 December 2023 Ref:23/24-30	The draft report of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Working Group was approved. The report was referred to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 January 2024, to be considered as part of the draft budget setting process and that the Cabinet provide an executive response to the recommendations within two months of receipt of the report. The working group to be provided with a briefing on the government settlement as soon as available and that any they suggest priority areas of investment for the Cabinet, if appropriate.	Briefing note sent out, no substantial change and no comments made. Cabinets response added to WP – April 2024	G

		The Chairman be authorised to finalise the final report subject to any amendments made following the settlement briefing.		
Health and Care				
Primary Care Dental Overview	Health and Care 12 June 2023 Ref 23/24-4	The Committee write to the ICB and Keele university to support a dental school at Keele University.	Letter of support sent	G
Good Mental Health Strategy, action plan and performance	Health and Care 11 September 2023 Ref: 23/24-25	Cabinet Member to share the strategy and action plan with partners and give consideration to expanding the Staffordshire connects to include a section for Children and young people. Committee to receive a list of voluntary sector schemes funded by the NHS.	Emailed to committee	G
SSOT ICS People / workforce	Health and Care 16 October 2023 Ref 23/24-32	Further information/data relating to international recruitment, incidents of violence towards staff and a list of development programmes and metrics around learning, development and employee engagement.	Emailed to committee	G
West Midlands Ambulance Service	Health and Care 13 November 2023 Ref: 23/24-40	Recommendation to SSOT Commissioner to investigate training provided to Staffordshire Fire and Rescue service officers to provide the commissioned falls service. Facilitate a summit with all relevant parties to consider improving system flow across the system. Receive data relating to people conveyed to acute hospital but not admitted.	Emailed to progress	A

Health Impacts of Wallys Quarry	Health and Care 20 November 2023 Ref 23/24-43	Letter to Environment Agency to respond to questions raised by committee	Response from EA received 18 December and circulated to Members	G
Maternity and Neonatal Services	Health and Care 27 November 2023 Ref: 23/24-48	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB investigate the feasibility of an external audit of maternity services in Staffordshire. The Committee receive an update on maternity services and on the Freestanding Midwife-led birthing Units.	Added to Work programme 2024-25	G
SSOT ICB Performance and Finance Overview Q2	Health and Care 27 November 2023 Ref: 23/24-49	the Committee receive a briefing note detailing the actions to address the CAHMS waiting list.	Chased 17 January 2024	A
Prosperous				
Highways Transformation Programme	Prosperous 7 June 2023 Ref 23/24-3	Cabinet Member to have regard to the comments made by Committee in his work to implement the new future delivery model for Staffordshire Highways. Scrutiny Committee to have oversight of Functional Service Level Commissioning (FSLC).	Various additional measures implemented to performance manage existing Highways Strategic Partner and; Arrangements made for FSLC to be considered at their July meeting;	G
Staffordshire CC Economic Strategy Delivery	Prosperous 7 June 2023 Ref 23/24-4	That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills arrange for Members to receive an update on the development of the West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange. That the Deputy Leader investigate the potential of promoting some of the initiatives available in support of the Economic Strategy, as set		A A

		out in the report, through Staffordshire Schools.		
Employment and Skills Strategy	Prosperous 28 September 2023 Ref 23/24-17	<p>That the Cabinet Member have regard to the various comments made by the Committee in finalising Staffordshire's Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member explore how the County Council's engagement with school pupils (including those with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) wishing to undertake work experience placements could be improved having regard to the various ambitions contained in the Strategy.</p> <p>That the Committee receive a progress update on implementation of the Strategy in six-months' time taking into consideration their other Work Programme priorities.</p>		A
Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly Update	Prosperous 28 September 2023 Ref 23/24-19	<p>That satisfactory progress had been made in the Highways Transformation Programme to date.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member be urged to have regard to the above-mentioned comments in his work to implement the new future delivery model for Staffordshire Highways.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member investigate what additional support (financial and practical) could be provided to local communities by the County Council during Highway Improvement Works, in the future.</p>	Various additional measures implemented to performance manage existing Highways Strategic Partner and; investigations underway looking at what further support can be given to local communities affected by Highway Works in co-operation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills.	A

Community Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022 - 2023	Prosperous 9 November 2023 Ref 23/24-29	<p>That the 'Good' performance of the Community Learning Service during 2022/23 be welcomed.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member continue his efforts to address the above-mentioned areas of weakness with a view to achieving significant improvement by December 2023.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member consider reconfiguring future Self-Assessment reports to the Committee to include Key Performance Indicators listed by gender.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member consider reconfiguring future Self-Assessment reports to the Committee to better illustrate learners by ethnicity so that any inequalities highlighted can be addressed, as appropriate.</p>	Significant rapid improvement in outcomes for learners on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and digital courses, especially for Black and minority ethnic learners achieved; Self-Assessment Report submission to Ofsted included Key Performance Indicators by gender, benchmark data and narrative. Further enhancements planned for 2023/24 report in line with Committee's recommendations.	G
Annual Street Works Permit Scheme Reports and Draft Traffic and Network Management Plan	Prosperous 9 November 2023 Ref 23/24-30	<p>That the Street Works Permit Scheme Annual Report for Years 1 and 2 (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2022) indicating the successful operation of the Scheme during that time, be welcome.</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport consider lobbying Central Government regarding the level of fees and charges applicable under the Scheme to ensure they better reflect the scope of the Authority's strategic aims, as set out above.</p> <p>That the proposed format/headings for the Traffic and Network Management Plan be supported and that the draft Plan be</p>	To be taken forward by Cabinet Member in his ongoing communication with Roads Minister. Any significant developments to be reported to the Committee as necessary.	A

		presented to the Committee for Scrutiny when it becomes available in Spring 2024.		
Staffordshire History Centre Update	Prosperous 22 November 2023 Ref 23/24-35	That the key findings of the Independent Evaluation Report on the Staffordshire History Centre Capital Works progress be welcomed. That consideration be given to the citing of a Time Capsule at the Staffordshire History Centre, as part of the celebrations to mark its opening in 2024.	Working with Partners to gather items and site Time Capsule in the archive once the History Centre is open. NB. capsule cannot be incorporated into the design of the building as there is nowhere suitable to bury this to ensure future preservation of the contents.	G
Review of Schools Performance	Prosperous 13 December 2023 Ref 23/24-43	That the Cabinet Member undertake further detailed analysis of the Educational Achievement in Staffordshire schools results September 2022 – July 2023 in order to better understand the reasons for the various key messages with a view to ensuring appropriate remedial measures were implemented where possible. That further scrutiny of Educational Achievement in Staffordshire schools be undertaken at the appropriate time, as necessary.	Ongoing – Significant work required and an update to be made available to the Committee in 2024/25 Municipal Year in line with their Work Programme Planning intentions.	A
Safeguarding				
"Living my Best Life" Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028	Safeguarding 15 June 2023 Ref 23/24-4	Pre-decision scrutiny, with the Committee supporting the Strategy and intending to consider the action plan in due course	The Strategy was adopted at the 19 July cabinet meeting	G

Customer feedback and complaints service – Adult Social Care	Safeguarding 27 July 2023 Ref:23/24-8	The Committee made a referral to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny to consider the impact of changes to the financial assessment accessibility and method of charging six months from implementation.	This will be included in the Work Programme	G
Early Years Strategy	Safeguarding 24 October 2023 Ref:23/24-19	Pre-decision scrutiny. The Committee supported the strategic vision for the Early Years' Service, welcoming the work to reorganise the service delivery model and planned budget profile	The Strategy was adopted by Cabinet at their meeting of 15 November 2023	G
Family Hub and the work of the Family Improvement Boards	Safeguarding 23 November 2023 Ref 23/24-23	The Committee supported the emerging Family Hub model. They intend to investigate the possibility of becoming advocates, pledging their support for the Staffordshire Co-production Promise. They also requested further details on: the Bump to Toddler Pathway; the Risk register; and location of Family Hubs. The Committee intend to scrutinise progress against the Family Hub performance framework in either 6 or 12 months (at the discretion of the Chairman in consultation with the Cabinet Member)	All information requested has been forwarded to the Committee for consideration of any further scrutiny. The performance framework progress will be included on the Committee's work program for the new municipal year.	G
The work of Trading Standards	Safeguarding 23 November 2023 Ref 23/24-24	Scrutinising the enforcement work of Trading Standards in safeguarding Staffordshire residents, particularly focusing on scams. The proactive work of Trading Standards on this issue was welcomed. Members requested specific enforcement data. Members will also consider becoming scam champions.	Enforcement data emailed on 5/12/2023	G

Safeguarding Concerns of Vaping	Safeguarding 23 November 2023 23/24-24	Scrutinising SCCs approach to dealing with vaping non-compliance, the unsafe nature of these products and marketing at children. They agreed to write to all district and planning committee chairs to highlight the Committee's concerns around vaping, seeking their consideration to include planning restrictions through their Health in all Policies to prevent vaping outlets being positioned near schools, colleges etc.	Letter to be co-signed by the Cabinet Support Member for Public Health and Integrated Care. Letter emailed to each of the Planning Committee Chairs for the 8 Districts and Boroughs	G
SSCB Annual Report 2022-2023	Safeguarding 4 January 2024 Ref 23/24-30	The Committee have a number of concerns around communication, information sharing, and delegation of attendees to Board meetings. They are writing to the three statutory partners to highlight their concerns and request a meeting to consider how these concerns are being addressed.	Letter drafted, awaiting comment from the Chair Following discussions during and in preparation for the 15 February Committee Members agreed to investigate the concerns raised by the Annual Report further before requesting the meeting. This will take place at the MASH, with a visit to see how this works alongside discussion on the concerns raised within the Annual Report. The visit is scheduled for 28 February. Following this visit Members will discuss whether their concerns remain and what further scrutiny is necessary.	A

<p>Provision of Services for Children and Young People (previously entitled "Homes for Children in our Care")</p>	<p>Safeguarding 4 January 2024 23/24-28</p>	<p>Pre-decision scrutiny. The Committee supported opening 6 new in-house local authority children's homes, the requested contribution from the Council's transformation fund to meet upfront costs. They also supported joining the West Midlands Framework for the Provision of Residential Placements from October 2024 and joining the West Midlands Foster Care Framework from April 2024.</p>		<p>G</p>
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WORK PROGRAMME

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2023/2024

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the Council's principal overview and scrutiny committee. It is responsible for co-ordinating and approving the scrutiny work programmes, overseeing the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and ensuring coherence of approach to cross cutting policy themes. The committee also has a key role in challenging progress around the Council's ambitions of running the business well.

The Committee also scrutinises those areas of the County Council's activity focused on corporate improvement. Its remit covers:

- Holding the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources of the Council to account for achievement of the overall vision of a connected Staffordshire.
- The Council's overall performance and approach to managing performance and Strategic Corporate Planning
- The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- The Council's on-going programme of improvement and transformation.
 - The Committee is responsible for scrutiny of achievement against the Council's strategic priorities.
 - The Council as a commissioning organisation including how it uses customer insight to drive improvements in services.

We review our work programme regularly to ensure it remains relevant to the challenges facing local communities, the Council and its partners.

Chairman of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

If you would like to know more about our Work Programme or how to raise issues for potential inclusion on a Work Programme, then please contact Mandy Pattinson, Scrutiny and Support Officer (mandy.pattinson@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Work Programme 2023/24

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
5 June 2023	Reserved for Call In		
20 June 2023	Work Programme Planning - Members: Alan White/Ian Parry	Development of the work programme for 2023/24	The draft work programme was approved. Action- Cabinet members and officers invited to meetings and dates confirmed
	Appointment of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Working Group Officers: Mandy Pattinson		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr M Wilcox (Chair) • Cllr B Peters • Cllr N Yates • Cllr J Pert • Cllr G Heath • Cllr S Thompson • Cllr J Oates
Page 98	O&S Annual report Officer: Deb Breedon		The report was approved and referred to Council for consideration on 20 July 2023
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes Overview and Scrutiny Chairman	To ensure communication between the committees and no duplication	The quarterly work programmes was agreed.
	Climate Change Working Group Update and member appointment Officer: Zach Simister	To receive an update report	a) The update was received. b) Cllrs Smith and Wileman would be asked if the wish to remain on the working group. Action-both confirmed they want to remain. c) That subject to councillors confirming their wish to remain on the Group, the membership remain as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr S Thompson (Chair) • Cllr C Wileman • Cllr N Yates • Cllr T Clements • Cllr J Pert • Cllr B Peters • Cllr D Smith

Work Programme 2023/24

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
<p>Page 99</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>Integrated Performance Report – Quarter 4 Members: Alan White/Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell/Rob Salmon</p>	<p>Quarterly report.</p>	<p>a) The Integrated Performance and Financial Outturn Report was noted as the position as at the end of year 2022/23. b) A copy of the “Social Care workforce strategy” be circulated to members for information. c) Information clarifying the position with the Household waste sites charging for DIY waste would be forwarded to members when available. Action- b and c Emailed to members on 030723</p>
<p>August 2023</p>	<p>Reserved for Call In</p>		
<p>August 2023</p>	<p>Integrated Performance Report – Quarter 1 Members: Alan White/Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell/Rob Salmon</p>	<p>Quarterly report.</p>	<p>a) That the information contained in the Integrated Performance and Financial Outturn Report be noted as the position as at the end of quarter one 2023/24. b) That the following information, which was not available at the meeting, be sent to Committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the national bench marking figures for re-referrals and where Staffordshire fell against that would be sent to the Committee for information. • Information on Wood burning use (paragraph 102 of the report). • Results of the SEND transport review as recommended by the MTFs working group 2022/23. • That Highway repairs be added to the key areas of concern as listed in the report, as this was one of the main complaints from local residents in most areas.

Work Programme 2023/24

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
			<p>c) That the O&S Chairs forum to asked to consider a review of the way that the Divisional Highway Programmes (DHP) funding is allocated, and the processes involved in identifying and progressing schemes. Members felt that once an issue had been identified and a feasibility study had been carried out, there was insufficient fund left to carry out the work.</p> <p>Action – information requested (b) emailed on 240823. (c) referred to Chair and Vice Chairs forum 12 October.</p>
17 August 2023 (6.2pm)	Reserved for Call In		
1 September 2023	Reserved for Call In		
20 September 2023	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes Overview and Scrutiny Chairman</p>	To ensure communication between the committees and no duplication	The work programmes for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees were agreed.
	<p>1. Corporate Complaints Annual Report 2021/22. 2. LGSCO Annual Report Member: Alan White Officers: John Tradewell/Kate Bullivant</p>	Annual reports	<p>a) The Complaints team be thanked for their support and work undertaken over the past 12 months.</p> <p>Action: Chairman thanked team on 22 09 23</p> <p>b) the Complaints process training be included in the annual Members Training Programme.</p> <p>Action : Included in annual training schedule for all members</p> <p>a) Information on the online app working for android phones be</p>

Work Programme 2023/24

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
			<p>reported to members after the meeting. Action: information emailed to members on 29 09 23</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 101</p>	<p>Electoral Review of Staffordshire County Council: Draft Recommendations Member: Alan White Officers: Katie Marshall/Chris Ebberley</p>	<p>Update and presentation prior to Council 12 October</p>	<p>a) The progress on the County's Electoral Review was noted and the officers were thanked for their work during the review. b) That the comments from the Committee as listed above be referred to Cabinet as part of the consultation. ACTION: Reported to Council on 12 October</p>
<p>6 October 2023</p>	<p>Reserved for Call In</p>		
<p>6 November 2023 (was the 24 October 2023)</p>	<p>Climate Change Annual report and action plan Member: Simon Tagg Officers: James Cartwright</p>	<p>Pre decision scrutiny. Annual report</p>	<p>Resolved: a) That the Committee receive an update in 12 months time. b) That the comments made by the Committee, listed above, be reported to the Cabinet on 15 November 2023. ACTION – reported to Cabinet on 15 November 2023.</p>
	<p>Integrated Performance Report – Quarter 2 Members: Alan White/Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell/Rob Salmon/Lyndsey Bissell</p>	<p>Regular quarterly report</p>	<p>a, That the Quarter 2 2023/24 Integrated Performance Report be noted. B, The tolerance on graph axis's should be changed, wherever practical, so that it starts at a number closer to the actual e.g. started at 90 if the data started at 94 and not zero.</p>

Work Programme 2023/24

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 102			<p>C, That the following information be provided to the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full list of schemes which had applied for covid funding as well as the successful ones. • A copy of the Cabinet (20/09/23) report entitled “SEND Accelerated Progress Plan: Enhanced Assess-Plan, Review Pathway, Strategy for Special Provision and the Staffordshire Children and Young People’s Framework”. • The financial impact of the new online financial self-assessment portal, as mentioned in Paragraph 41 of the report. An update on the Chatterley valley scheme slippage be sent to Councillor Yates directly. <p>ACTION: Emailed 27/11/23</p>
	<p>Entrust – Review of changes Member: Mark Deaville Officers: Ian Turner</p>	<p>Requested at 25 October 2022 O&S to scrutinise changes and implications.</p>	<p>Resolved: That the Committee hold an informal meeting to discuss the possible future targets for the service. ACTION: 24 January 2024 – Cllrs Wilcox, Pert, Francis and Yates</p>
	<p>Climate Change Working Group report on Carbon Sequestration Officers: Deb Breedon</p>	<p>Climate Change Working Group final report. Cllr Thompson Chairman</p>	<p>The draft report and recommendations to Cabinet – 13 December 2023. Due to report back in Feb/March 2024 ACTION: Response added to WP</p>
<p>4 December 2023</p>	<p>Reserved for Call In cancelled</p>		

18 December 2023	<p>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion - Principles, Objectives and Action Plan update (to include gender pay gap update) Member: Alan White Officers: S Getley</p>	Requested at 25 October 2022 O&S to scrutinise changes and implications.	<p>a) That work experience for care levers was encouraged with partners. b) That the information on the employment broker service and how to works with individuals to secure employment be provided to the committee after the meeting. ACTION: Emailed 12/01/24</p>
Page 103	<p>Peoples Strategy Member: Alan White Officers: S Getley</p>	Suggested at triangulation June 2023. Scrutiny of actions taken. Fits with the Equality report above	<p>a) That the progress made against the year 1 and year 2 priorities of 'Our People Strategy 2023-27' be noted. d) That future monitoring of performance be monitored through the committees Integrate performance quarterly report. e) That the following detailed information be provided to the committee after the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of colleagues affected by post covid 19 syndrome. • Bereavement support offered to colleagues • The usage of the new careers website, compared to previous months. <p>ACTION: Emailed 12/01/24</p>
	<p>MFTS 2022-2027 Working Group Report Chair of COSC - Cllr Wilcox Rob Salmon/Rachel Spain</p>		<p>a) The draft report of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Working Group be approved. b) The report be referred to Cabinet at its meeting on 24 January 2024, to be considered as part of the draft budget setting process and that the Cabinet provide an executive response to the recommendations within two months of receipt of the report. c) That the working group be provided with a briefing on the governments</p>

			<p>settlement as soon as available and that any they suggest priority areas of investment for the Cabinet, if appropriate.</p> <p>d) That the Chairman be authorised to finalise the final report subject to any amendments made following the settlement briefing c) above.</p> <p>ACTION: Briefing note © above sent out – no substantial change – no comments made. Cabinets response added to WP – April 2024</p>
5 January 2024	Reserved for Call In. cancelled		
24 January 2024	Cancelled		
February 2024	Reserved for Call In Cancelled		
16 February 2024	<p>Quarterly Integrated Performance report (Quarter 3) Members: Alan White Officers: John Tradewell/Rob Salmon/Lynsey Bissell</p>	Regular quarterly report	
	<p>Corporate Plan/ Delivery Plan Members: Alan White/Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell/Lynsey Bissell</p>		
	<p>Progress and next steps for Staffordshire's digital strategy Members: Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell</p>	Input into the refresh of the strategy	Moved to 9 April meeting

	/Lynsey Bissell		
	Joint Local Enterprise Committee Members: Philip White/Alan White Officers: Darryl Eyres/ Anthon Hodge	Pre decision scrutiny prior to Cabinet – March 2024. Forward plan item.	
	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes Overview and Scrutiny Chairman	To ensure communication between the committees and no duplication	
8 March 2024 Reserved for call-in 8 Followed by informal workshop/meeting	Consideration of any call ins		
	Informal meeting Corporate Plan/ Delivery Plan Members: Alan White/Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell/Lynsey Bissell	Moved from 26/02/24	
	Informal meeting Community Strategy Members: Victoria Wilson Officers: Cathrine Mann/Lynsey Bissell/Pete Barker		
	Climate Change Working Group report on Carbon	Moved to 09/04/24	

	<p>Sequestration- cabinets response Members: Simon Tagg Officers: James Cartwright</p>		
8 April 2024	Reserved for Call In		
9 April 2024	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes Overview and Scrutiny Chairman</p>	To ensure communication between the committees and no duplication	
	<p>Customer Services strategy Members: Alan White/Ian Parry Officers: Tracy Thorley/ Emily Doorbar</p>	Pre decision scrutiny	
Page 106	<p>Climate Change Working Group report on Carbon Sequestration- Cabinets response Members: Simon Tagg Officers: James Cartwright</p>	Cabinet (170123) response to the working groups report.	
	<p>MTFS Working Group - Cabinets response Members: Ian Parry Officers: Rachel Spain</p>	Cabinet (240123) response to the working groups report.	
	<p>Progress and next steps for Staffordshire's digital strategy Members: Ian Parry Officers: John Tradewell /Lynsey Bissell</p>	Input into the refresh of the strategy	
29 April 2024 Council chamber	Reserved for Call In		

Items for Consideration or needing more detail– Work Programme 2023/24 and 2024/25. Includes items raised at triangulation meetings and pending items.		
Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
Leadership Board Raised at triangulation meeting	Already in the work programme as pending. Leader suggested scrutiny of priorities	Priorities going to CEO board in March. Mtg with Chair 31/11/23 – report to Chair and vice chairs in the first instance. Leader requested scrutiny in September 2024. In draft work programme
BEST Transformation and the impact on the children’s transformation	Raised at triangulation 08/11/22.	Discussion on appropriate time with Tracy Thorley. Very early stages of redesign – Report to committee for pre decision scrutiny
Scrutiny of the Local Enterprise Partnership – Officer Pete Shakespeare	Previously annual scrutiny in January each year. LEP now transferring to LA. Felt that an update on transition would be more useful. Approx June 2024. Set up of Joint Local Enterprise Committee – February 2024 – Forward plan item	26 February 2024
Cyber Security Raised at triangulation meeting	Range of activity taking place currently – JT suggested early 2024. Ian Turner is lead officer	Briefing paper to Committee members in early 2024. – Can be discussed at O&S meeting if required.
Legal function Raised at triangulation meeting	How do they operate, their offer	No decisions to be taken or performance to be monitored. Information gathering session Member briefing session-January 2024
Planning Raised at triangulation meeting	As above (legal services)	Chair to talk to Chair of Planning Committee
Customer services Raised at triangulation meeting	Performance – are we getting it right for the public	Draft strategy being developed. 9 April O&S
Delivery plan Raised at triangulation meeting	To be considered with the Corporate Plan	Informal March 2024 meeting
Digital Strategy Raised at triangulation meeting	To consider the strategy when appropriate if it covers corporate issues.	9 April 2024

Items for Consideration or needing more detail– Work Programme 2023/24 and 2024/25. Includes items raised at triangulation meetings and pending items.		
Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
	Prosperous O&S consider digital infrastructure.	
Climate Change Working Group report on Carbon Sequestration-cabinets response Members: Simon Tagg Officers: James Cartwright	Due 2 months after it is considered at Cabinet	April 2024
MTFS Working Group report - cabinets response Members: Ian Parry Officers: Rachel Spain	Due 2 months after it is considered at Cabinet	April 2024

Updates/ Briefing Notes / Visits 2023/24

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
24 January 2024: informal meeting Cllrs Wilcox, Francis Pert.	Entrust https://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIid=604&Mid=16602&Ver=4 Following 6 November Corporate meeting	Notes attached for information (26 February 2024)	Update to Committee if contract or relationship with Entrust changes.

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2023/2024

MTFS Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr M Wilcox (Chair) • Cllr B Peters • Cllr N Yates • Cllr J Pert • Cllr G Heath • Cllr S Thompson • Cllr J Oates 	Draft report submitted to Committee 18 December.
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Updates/ Briefing Notes / Visits 2023/24

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Climate Change Working Group	Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr S Thompson (Chair) • Cllr C Wileman • Cllr N Yates • Cllr T Clements • Cllr J Pert • Cllr B Peters • Cllr D Smith 	Draft report submitted to Committee 6 November. Reported to Cabinet early 2024.	



Membership – County Councillors 2022-23	Calendar of Committee Meetings – 2023-24
<p>TBC (Chairman) Samantha Thompson (Vice Chairman - Overview) Gill Heath (Vice Chairman - Scrutiny) Charlotte Atkins Tina Clements Mike Davies John Francis Jeremy Oates Jeremy Pert Bernard Peters Math Perry Bob Spencer Mike Worthington</p>	5 June 2023 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	20 June 2023
	6 July 2023 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	1 August 2023
	7 August 2023 (2pm) (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	1 September 2023 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	12 September 2023
	6 October 2023 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	24 October 2023 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	6 November 2023
	4 December 2023 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	18 December 2023
	5 January 2024 (reserved for call-ins) - cancelled
	24 January 2024
	9 February 2024 (reserved for call-ins)
	26 February 2024
	8 March 2024 (reserved for call-ins) followed by a private informal workshop
8 April 2024 (reserved for call-ins)	
9 April 2024	
29 April 2024 (reserved for call-ins)	

Notes of an informal meeting to discuss entrust performance (KPI's)
24 January 2024

Present: Cllrs Wilcox, Francis, and Pert. Officers: Ian Turner and Deena Hughes.

Apologies: Cllr Yates

The meeting had been arranged following consideration of a report taken to Corporate O&S on 6 November 2023. Report and minutes link: <https://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=604&MIId=16602&Ver=4>

The informal meeting was to consider the current situation with Entrust as a company and the Service Delivery Agreement with the Council and to think about the expectations of these two aspects of the arrangement and how the performance could be measured.

Officers explained the background to Entrust. When it was set up there were two strands to the agreement:

1. The company with a 49% share held by the County Council and;
2. Service Delivery Agreements(SDA) which carried KPI's.

The school related support services that Entrust now deliver are greatly reduced compared to 10 years ago and amount to approximately £500k (roughly the equivalent of 10 FTE posts) e.g. Education improvement, Governance services, HR for academy conversions etc.

The majority of the services are property related, such as new schools and expansions, corporate property projects and all types of maintenance, as well as catering, cleaning and grounds on corporate properties and the remaining maintained schools.

Entrust hadn't been able to grow and develop as a company as they had envisaged at the outset of the arrangement which had resulted in them not making the profits originally envisaged.

The report which had been presented to Corporate O&S in November, related to the SDA part of the agreement not the Company part.

The Company now had 2 Directors representing the Council and discussions were being held on their role and responsibilities.

Officers informed members that they were comfortable with current performance and reported that there were no substantial issues.

However, it was understood that councillors needed to know and scrutinise performance.

Members were concerned with the current relevance of the KPI's and if they were measuring inputs/outputs and if everything was achieving 100%, how challenging were the indicators. Members wanted to see indicators which would demonstrate the difference that Entrust was making to the public, so matched to performance and current activity.

During the discussion it was agreed that outcomes and outputs would demonstrate achievement for the public.

Recommended: that the Committee keep Entrust in the Work programme as a pending issue until there are changes to the contract or Governance arrangements which would need member involvement and pre-decision scrutiny.