

Cabinet

Wednesday 19 July 2023

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
11 July 2023

Agenda

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16**
- 3. Decision notice of the meeting held on 21 June 2023** (Pages 1 - 10)
- 4. Leader's Update** (Verbal Report)
Leader of the Council
- 5. Staffordshire Means Back to Business - Oral Update** (Verbal Report)
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills
- 6. 'Living My Best Life' - A Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent People in Staffordshire 2023-2028** (Pages 11 - 64)
Cabinet Member for Health and Care, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

7. **Supported Living Future Commissioning Arrangements Update** (Pages 65 - 116)
Cabinet Member for Health and Care
8. **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards - Contract Award** (Pages 117 - 126)
Cabinet Member for Health and Care
9. **Staffordshire Bus Strategy** (Pages 127 - 156)
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
10. **Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 1, 2023/24** (Pages 157 - 206)
Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
11. **Treasury Management Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2023** (Pages 207 - 230)
Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
12. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions** (Pages 231 - 234)
13. **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)

Nil.

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

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

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Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 21 June 2023

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

Cabinet Support Members in attendance: Paul Northcott and Robert Pritchard.

Part One

1. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

2. Decision notice of the meeting held on 17 May 2023

Decision – That the notes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023 be approved.

3. Leader's Update


Decision – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including Armed Forces Week, the annual celebration of our serving men and women and veterans, including an event in the Shire Hall in Stafford, in partnership with the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce, to show businesses how they can support and benefit from employing reserves among their workforce; the success of the IRONMAN 70.3 Staffordshire on Sunday 11 June 2023 which saw around 3,000 athletes compete in a gruelling 70.3-mile race across the County; progress of work across the country to fix and improve more roads, including the extra investment of £5 million in pothole repairs, on top of an extra £30 million investment in larger repairs and resurfacing of roads and junctions over the next two years; the Council's on-going work to create the right conditions for it to grow and create more good jobs and opportunities for Staffordshire people, including joining forces with our district and borough council partners last month at the UK's largest conference for developers and investors, UKREiiF, in Leeds; how the Council is working with Staffordshire businesses large and small to reduce their impact on the environment, cut energy costs, and help tackle climate change; and the new initiative (Integrated Co-occurring Needs Pathway) to support people with mental health issues and drug and

alcohol use being pioneered in Staffordshire; be noted.

4. **Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 7 June 2023**

Decision – That the minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 7 June 2023 be received.

5. **Volunteering for Staffordshire County Council**

	<p>“Our dedicated army of volunteers across Staffordshire make an invaluable contribution to the council, this county and the communities we all serve.</p> <p>Without them life would certainly be more difficult for many and I would like to thank them for the difference they make to so many lives.</p> <p>We recognise too that volunteers can get a huge amount out of helping others and our new “volunteering principles” aims to make the experience flexible, enjoyable and personally rewarding.”</p> <p>Victoria Wilson, Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture</p>
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Council’s new volunteering principles and practical guidance documents for staff, ensuring that everyone who volunteers with the Council is supported to have a positive and consistent experience.

Decision – (a) That Cabinet commits to the nine new ‘volunteering principles’ for the organisation to adopt.

(b) That the implementation of the volunteering guidance documents for managers and colleagues supporting Council volunteers be approved.

(c) That the proposed plan to embed this approach across the organisation and further develop our volunteer offer, noting the approach to monitor progress, be approved.

6. **Joint Coroners Service - Legal Framework and Financial Protocol**



"This proposal will see the creation of a new joint coroner's service for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

It is expected that the merger will not only help improve services for bereaved families, but would also provide opportunities for efficiency savings, ensuring that the service is sustainable and fit for the future. Inquests will continue to be heard in both Stafford and Stoke-on-Trent, however there will be the potential to use other sites and locations under the new joint service.

The proposal links in with wider Ministry of Justice aspirations to merge smaller services which helps create a more consistent service and results in more coroner's areas being of a similar size and population."

Victoria Wilson, Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture

Reasons for the Decision – To consider proposals for the creation of a new joint coroner's service for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Decision – (a) That the Heads of Terms for the Legal Framework for Staffordshire County Council to enter a partnership with Stoke on Trent City Council to allow the operation of a joint Coroner's service through the Joint Executive Committee, subject to a similar resolution being passed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and subject to Ministerial sign off, be approved.

(b) That it be agreed that the merger should take place subject to a similar resolution being passed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council, and subject to Ministerial sign off.

(c) That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, to take all steps necessary to enable the Joint Agreement.

(d) That authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture, to finalise any Legal Agreement.

7. Staffordshire Means Back to Business - Oral Update


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

- This month saw a decrease of -465 claimants, with the total number of claimants in the county now standing at 15,385 or 2.9%. The claimant count rate in Staffordshire continues to be one of the lowest in the West Midlands and is far lower than the average for the region of 4.9%, and lower than the average for England of 3.8% of the working age population. The youth claimant count in Staffordshire saw a decrease of -40 claimants to a total of 2,870 young people. The proportion of young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 that are claiming work-related Universal Credit has remained the same this month at 4.6%. This is lower than the national rate of 4.9% and far lower than the regional rate of 6.6%, both of which also remained at the same level this month. These decreases coincide with a significant 26% increase in job vacancies seen between April and May, both in Staffordshire and nationally.
- The Staffordshire Jobs & Careers service to support people to find a job and help businesses to find suitable employees now has six Employment Brokers in post with a 7th Broker to be recruited in the Summer to specifically support employment and training needs related to the West Midlands Interchange scheme.
- The Staffordshire Jobs & Careers Service website continues to be well publicised, and the team continue to develop promotional materials and messaging to promote the service.
- We are in the process of developing updated communications to support our Open Door Staffordshire programme, which continues to support work placements within the County Council and external organisations. Since April 2022 the team have supported 47 Open Door candidates to start a placement, with eight going on to secure paid employment to date.
- To support the delivery of our overarching Economic Strategy, we are currently developing a new Employment and Skills Strategy for Staffordshire with the support and input from our skills providers and partners. This will be used to guide our future employment and skills work programmes, support external funding bids, enable effective communication of Staffordshire’s shared employment and skills goals and to inform the development of other relevant skills plans and actions as appropriate.
- Developing higher-level technical skills is one of the emerging priorities of our Employment & Skills Strategy, and the growth of

high-quality apprenticeships will be key to us achieving this. Our partners have recently relaunched The Ladder for Staffordshire, previously established to support Apprenticeship growth across Staffordshire, with the aim to secure 1,500 individuals as a minimum onto an apprenticeship across the county by January 2025.

- Staffordshire’s recent success in the National VisitEngland Awards for Excellence where three of our visitor economy businesses collected awards, most notably the National Memorial Arboretum won Gold for Business Events Venue of the Year. Also, the Duncombe Arms for Pub of the Year and Trentham Gardens for Unsung Hero who both brought home Bronze.

8. Community Learning Ofsted Inspection and Accountability Agreement 2023-2024

	<p>“Our Community Learning Service provides an excellent service to thousands of people across the county and fully deserved to receive a Good Ofsted rating.</p> <p>It recognises the hard work and dedication of our staff and learning providers in the delivery of the courses which make a real difference to people’s lives.</p> <p>The inspection provides us with the assurance that we are providing a quality service to our learners and has also helped us identify ways in which we can further develop and improve our provision.</p> <p>Now we are using the findings in the report to set out our plan for the service for the coming year in the accountability agreement, including key aims, targets and outcomes that demonstrate our contribution to local skills needs.”</p> <p>Philip White, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills</p>
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider the outcome of a recent Ofsted Inspection of the Community Learning Service.

Decision – (a) That the Cabinet commends the outcome of the recent

Ofsted inspection and the contribution to Staffordshire priorities.

(b) That the accountability statement for the 2023-2024 academic Year be approved.

9. **Integrated Performance - Performance and Finance Final Outturn Report 2022/23**




"Creating the right conditions for businesses and our economy to grow and thrive while supporting our most vulnerable residents remain priorities for the county council.

We know that many people still face challenges in dealing with the increased cost of living and we continue to do what we can to support them. Programmes such as the Household Support Fund which has provided over £15 million of financial assistance and the Sustainable Warmth Competition which has installed energy saving measures in almost 900 homes are all providing valuable support. Through the Holiday Activities and Food Programme we've also helped thousands of families while the 'Here to Help' campaign has provided advice to over 24,000 visitors to the website.

Alongside this, our supportive communities work is helping people to live independently with support from their families and local communities. The programme has seen the recruitment of 166 Community Champions and the creation of 26 community help points to date.

Our work to support local businesses to start up, survive, and grow remains a priority, while our 'We are Staffordshire' campaign goes from strength to strength in promoting business and employment opportunities in the county. We also continue to invest in highways, enterprise centres and infrastructure including broadband which benefit both residents and businesses alike. Major investment projects at Chatterley Valley in Newcastle, i54 South Staffordshire and highways work at Pets at Home's new headquarters in

	<p>Stafford are all helping attract more jobs to the county.</p> <p>Work to tackle climate change and achieve net zero by 2050 is ongoing with the council already reducing its carbon emissions by 44% since declaring a climate change emergency in 2019. We do continue to face challenges in adult social care and children’s services including levels and complexity of demand in both areas. However, additional investment is helping ease the situation”.</p> <p>Alan White, Leader of the Council</p> <p>“Significant progress has been made across the organisation during quarter 4 and during the year with departments delivering on key areas of work.</p> <p>We still face pressures from inflation across all council areas which we continue to monitor carefully. Challenges around recruitment and demand within children’s services also continue which we are trying to address within our longer-term plans. The final outturn position for the county council for the year is an overspend of £11.294m (1.9%). The quarter 3 forecast was an overspend of £11.635m.</p> <p>Like most local authorities, we still face financial challenges, but we are a well-run council and continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible. Well managed finances means we can continue to invest in our future, grow our economy and improve people’s lives”.</p> <p>Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</p>
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider an overview of Staffordshire County Council’s progress, performance, and financial position in delivering against its Strategic Plan, Delivery Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Decision – (a) That the report be received.

(b) That the final financial outturn be noted and the planned contributions to reserves be approved.

10. Framework Agreement for Maintenance and Minor Works



“The county council has a large property portfolio of varying age and condition. As we continue to innovate and develop our services, we need to be able to manage our property assets effectively.

This new framework agreement will allow us to procure works for planned and reactive maintenance and minor works.”

Mark Deaville, Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters

Reasons for the Decision – To seek Cabinet approval to undertake a procurement exercise to procure a framework agreement for the provision of planned and reactive maintenance and minor works. (The scope of the framework agreement also includes for, Building, Electrical and Mechanical works).

Decision – (a) That it be agreed that officers undertake a procurement exercise in compliance with the requirements of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (the “Regulations”) for the Framework Agreement for Maintenance and Minor Works (the “Framework Agreement”).

(b) That following the procurement process, the successful suppliers be appointed to the Framework Agreement for the period 1st May 2024 to 30th April 2028. Agreement of the final contractual agreements being delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets.

(c) That it be noted that any instructions in terms of the framework agreement subsequent call-offs will be approved in accordance the council’s Procurement Regulations.

11. Decisions taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers

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

Cabinet Member	Decision
Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters	In agreeing to work in partnership with Stoke-on-Trent City Council (SoTCC) to procure a suitable operator when the current Hanford Energy from Waste (EfW) contract ends on 31 March 2025.
Cabinet Member for Health and Care	In approving proposals relating to Cannock Specialist Day Opportunities
Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change	In agreeing the Council's appointment by the Secretary of State as Responsible Authority to work with Supporting Authorities and stakeholders to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, as required under the Environment Act 2021.

12. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 19 July to 15 November 2023, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

Subject Matter	Contact
'Living My Best Life' - A Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent People in Staffordshire 2023-2028	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23	Name: Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 1, 2023/24	Name: Rachel Spain/ Wendy Tompson Tel: (01785) 854455/ (01785) 854267
Staffordshire Bus Strategy	Name: Darryl Evers Tel: (01785) 854265
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards - Contract Award	Name: Jo Cowcher Tel: 07772 011078
Supported Living Future Commissioning Arrangements Update	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Children & Young People's Programme Framework	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079
Strategy for Special Provision	Name: Tim Moss Tel: (01785) 277963
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24	Name: Rachel Spain/ Wendy Tompson Tel: (01785) 854455/ (01785) 854267
Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy	Name: Anthony Baines

13. John Henderson

The Cabinet extended their thanks to Mr Henderson, who was shortly to retire from his position as the Council's Chief Executive, for the contribution he had made during the eight years he had served with the Council and wished him well for the future.

Alan White
Leader of the Council

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2023

'Living My Best Life' - A Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent People in Staffordshire 2023-2028



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

Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care said:

“People of any age with a disability or neurodivergence should be supported to live the best life they can, for as long as they are able. This new strategy ensures these people are put at the centre of everything we do in Staffordshire.

“Throughout the development of this strategy, we have been speaking directly to those with experience of disability and neurodivergence.

This means we have been able to put something together that is meaningful, will make a difference, and has been directly influenced by disabled and neurodivergent people, their carers and their families.”



Councillor Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People said:

“Young people who have a disability or neurodivergence need to be supported so they can live their best lives. Throughout the creation of this strategy, we have learned that this is especially important when it comes to their education, social lives, and families. By putting them at the centre of this strategy, we can ensure their needs are met, their voices are heard, and they have choice and control over the support they have.”



Councillor Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (including SEND) said:

“Taking into account the unique experiences and thoughts of young people with disabilities and neurodivergences are crucial in shaping a strategy that truly works. By listening to them in putting together this strategy, we can empower them to live their best lives, where they are encouraged to dream big and are supported in achieving their goals.”

Report Summary:

Staffordshire County Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have jointly developed a final draft of a new ‘Living my Best Life’: Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028. This is informed by evidence of need and best practice and by feedback from engagement focussing on quality of life and factors associated with people living their best lives.

The vision for the new strategy is: ‘We want Staffordshire to become a place where people living with disabilities and neurodivergences can do what matters to them; where they are valued and treated as equals in all aspects of society; and where they can live a healthier and better quality of life for longer.’ This is reflected in five strategic outcomes for the new strategy.

Following ICB and Cabinet approval, an action plan based on the five strategic outcomes is to be co-produced by the end of December 2023. Delivery of the action plan will be overseen by the new Disability Partnership Board and ultimately, the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Recommendation

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approve the proposed ‘Living my Best Life’: Report on the Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028.

Cabinet – Wednesday 19 July 2023

'Living My Best Life' - A Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent People in Staffordshire 2023-2028

Recommendations of the Cabinet Members Julia Jessel, Mark Sutton and Jonathan Price

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approve the proposed 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. Staffordshire County Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have jointly developed a final draft of a new 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028. This replaces the Whole Life Disability Strategy 2018-2023. It aspires to support all disabled and neurodivergent individuals to live the best lives possible.
2. There are around 21,000 adults with a learning disability living in Staffordshire, of whom 3,400 have a moderate or severe disability, and 7,000 adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. 26,000 Staffordshire residents aged 18-65 have a disability that makes personal care difficult; 35,000 aged over 65 are unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own, such as going to the toilet or getting in and out of bed. 6,200 adults have registrable eye conditions or are severely visually impaired; 18,200 experience severe hearing loss (Source: Poppi and Pansi Data, Oxford Brookes). Currently, national prevalence data for children and young people is limited. There is no national repository of quality reviewed data for individuals under 18.
3. The majority of people with disabilities and neurodivergences manage with help and support from their family, friends and communities, and assistance from technologies. It is important that universal services such as education, shops, leisure and cultural activities, and health services are inclusive, accessible and adapted to their needs. Also, that there are appropriate housing options that enable them to live independently. A

small number of people with disabilities and neurodivergences are eligible for dedicated care and support from the County Council and/or the NHS and need a reasonable choice of good quality, sustainable services that can achieve their outcomes.

4. The Strategy will complement the [Staffordshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy](#) and the [SEND Strategy for Special Provision - Staffordshire County Council](#). In addition, the strategy considers national statutory duties, national government and NHS disability and neurodivergence guidance, strategy and plans, and various CQC and NICE best practice guidance. It also considers related local strategies and plans to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences including:
 - a. [Our strategy for carers - Staffordshire County Council 2019-2023](#)
 - b. Good Mental Health in Staffordshire: 2023-28
 - c. [Staffordshire's Health & Wellbeing Strategy \(2022-2027\)](#)
 - d. NHS Operation and Joint Forward Plan
 - e. [Autism Joint Implementation Plan \(2018-2023\)](#)

'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028

5. The Strategy has been co-produced through a two-stage process:
 - a. Stage One. A survey exploring quality of life and factors considered most important by disabled and neurodivergent people for them to live their best lives. This was carried out during December 2022. The findings are summarised in the next section and have been used to develop a draft vision and priorities for the Strategy.
 - b. Stage Two. The draft vision and priorities for the Strategy have been discussed with disabled and neurodivergent people, politicians, carers and professionals face-to-face in each district/borough during January and February 2023 to seek their views.
6. The Strategy has also been co-produced with commissioners and senior managers across Care Commissioning, Children and Families and the Integrated Care Board. This is to ensure we can be honest about what is possible within the resources available and develop a vision, priorities and outcomes that work towards the aspirations of disabled and neurodivergent people whilst remaining realistic and deliverable.

What We Have Learnt

7. Over 500 individuals responded to the survey across all eight Staffordshire Districts, including 265 disabled and neurodivergent people. Responses were provided from all gender, sexual orientation and ethnic groups identified in the survey. 146 carers and 97 professionals and organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors also responded to the survey.
8. Views on disabled and neurodivergent people's quality of life suggest:
 - a. Disabled and neurodivergent people have good contact with friends and family; where they live feels like home and a place where they can do what they want; and the people who support them are listening to their needs.
 - b. Disabled and neurodivergent people do not have as many opportunities as they would like to learn and develop and do not know enough about activities and services in their communities. Disabled and neurodivergent people are not getting as much help as they would like when needed or as much choice and control as they would like – carers of disabled and neurodivergent children and young people felt this particularly strongly.
9. The factors mentioned most as being important by disabled and neurodivergent people to live their best lives were as follows:
 - a. Adults: 1 - Family, friends and relationships; 2 - Access to health and social care, shops and other services, 3 - Appropriate and safe home, 4 – Social life, social skills and getting out and about, and 5 – Learning and education.
 - b. Children and young people: 1- Positive educational experience; 2 - Social life, social skills, getting out and about, and 3 - Family, friends and relationships, 4 – Adjustments made to support me, and 5 – Personal safety.
10. A draft vision for the Strategy and key priorities were drafted in response to the feedback received from the Stage One engagement process. The Stage Two engagement process (to engage on these) involved face to face conversations with disabled and neurodivergent people, carers, professionals and independent organisations. Some individuals were able to reflect more than one perspective (for example a carer and a person with a disability themselves). It also involved engagement through various forums. These included Day Opportunities, Supported Living and the Learning Disability and Autism Carers Forum working group and the

Staffordshire Autism Joint Implementation Group. They also included various district-based voluntary organisations, facilitated by an independent Advocacy provider.

11. A summary of the feedback that has been received in the Stage Two engagement process and associated actions are outlined in Table 1:

Table 1: Stage two feedback and actions taken in response to that.

Feedback received	Actions taken
Most of the changes to the vision focussed on improvements to the wording, not the intention within it, and its deliverability.	The vision statement has been shortened and simplified. Embedding the Disability Partnership Board arrangements are seen as key to oversee Strategy delivery.
A small number of individuals (mostly from the Learning Disability and Adult Social Care Carers Forum) have had slightly different ideas about how we worded our emerging priorities for the Strategy.	The suggestions given for rewording were very action orientated. This approach led to a rewording of emerging priorities into clearer strategic outcome statements to drive positive change.
People identified a number of issues and potential actions that they felt the Strategy needed to address.	Suggestions people gave were captured in relation to individual strategic outcomes and we found a good connect between these. They have been used to create key priority actions in the Strategy and will also inform the action plan.
A small number of individuals indicated that they were not comfortable with our 'Living my Best Life' title and some recommended that Autism should not be mentioned separately within the title of the Strategy. There has also been some debate over the best terminology to use for neurodivergences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will retain the Strategy title 'Living my Best Life' agreed by most people we have engaged with. Autism has however been removed from the title. • Some individuals suggested we used terms such as 'neurodiversity' instead of 'neurodivergence' or 'deaf' instead of 'hearing impaired'. We have sought advice from communications colleagues in drafting the Strategy.

12. The strategy was informed by stage one and two engagement feedback, evidence of need (summarised in paragraphs 2 and 3), evidence of best practice (summarised in paragraph 4), the draft Strategy (Appendix One) and a Community Impact Assessment (Appendix Two). A review of feedback linked to quality of life was collated from previous engagement processes and cross checked against current engagement feedback. This demonstrated a strong association between current and previous viewpoints shared.

13. The vision for the new strategy is: 'We want Staffordshire to become a place where people living with disabilities and neurodivergences can do

what matters to them; where they are valued and treated as equals in all aspects of society; and where they can live a healthier and better quality of life for longer.’

14. The strategic outcomes of the strategy are as follows:

- a. Staffordshire is more open and inclusive – The focus is on raising awareness and people having more equitable access to day-to-day opportunities.
- b. Stronger partnerships are built around and include disabled and neurodivergent people – the focus is on ensuring more individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences are better connected and able to influence a range of services and strategies impacting on them in their local area. It is also about exploring more opportunities for the Integrated Care Board and the Council to work together for the benefit of these groups.
- c. Disabled and neurodivergent people are communicating their needs and action is being taken – The focus is on building more opportunities so that individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences can self-advocate, and for their needs to be listened to.
- d. Disabled and neurodivergent people and their carers are better informed and in control – The focus is on understanding how individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences prefer to receive information, advice and guidance and ensure it is sufficiently comprehensive and accessible to them.
- e. In carrying out their responsibilities for care and support, the ICB and Council will consider the whole person’s needs, aspirations and what they can do. It will not stop them doing what they want to do – The focus is on ensuring more timely identification and diagnostic services and aspirational person-centred care and support.

15. The strategy focusses on supporting people to live their best lives, regardless of the nature of their disability or neurodivergence or whether they have care and support needs. It considers experiences and needs of individuals throughout their lives in education, work and as individuals in their homes and in local communities using transport, accessing social, leisure and cultural opportunities and accessing local shops and services and health and social care support.

Governance Arrangements

16. An overview of the learning from the engagement processes was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 2 March 2023.

17. The draft strategy will be presented and reviewed at the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 June 2023 and any potential amendments will be made accordingly following this meeting.
18. The draft strategy will also be reviewed at the ICB Quality and Safety Committee on 14 June 2023 and considered for approval by the ICB board on 20 July 2023.
19. The Strategy will be considered for final approval by Cabinet on 19 July 2023.
20. An associated action plan will be co-produced by the end of December 2023. Delivery of the action plan will be overseen by the new Disability Partnership Board and ultimately, the Health and Wellbeing Board. Progress will also be reported periodically to Cabinet and the ICB.

Legal Implications

21. There are no legal implications anticipated from the strategy itself as both the Council's relevant current statutory responsibilities and potential future legislative and national policy changes have been considered in its development. There are no expected contractual implications.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

22. There are no expected financial implications arising from the strategy. The associated action plan will be delivered within existing resources.

Climate Change Implications

23. Whilst the strategy is not anticipated to have significant climate change implications, there are a number of areas that relate to the environment that have been identified through the Community Impact Assessment. These include:
 - a. Encouraging access to green spaces and time outdoors to help people look after their own physical and mental wellbeing, acknowledging the benefits and accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences.
 - b. The strategy includes the outcome for people with disabilities and neurodivergences to be supported to live in the community in good quality homes of their own, influencing the planning and maintenance of suitable high quality, affordable housing, including energy efficient specialist housing solutions. These buildings need to be "fit for the

future" and suitable to mitigate the impacts of a changing climate as a means of climate change adaptation.

- c. The strategy will encourage good workplace practices that balance supporting both the wellbeing of the employee (and their accessibility needs) and reducing carbon emissions.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 - 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent People in Staffordshire 2023-2028. *Draft Strategy*

Appendix 2 - 'Living my Best Life' - A Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent People in Staffordshire 2023 - 2028 (Design Proof)

Community Impact Assessment

Contact Details

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Living my Best Life

A Joint Strategy for Disabled and
Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-
2028

Foreword

1. Many people with disabilities and neurodivergences have positive life experiences and outcomes. However, some do not experience the same opportunities that other people take for granted. This Strategy aims to improve health and wellbeing, economic, educational and social outcomes and help make Staffordshire a place where disabled people and people with neurodivergences can live their best lives.
2. This is a joint Strategy between Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB). It complements national and local strategies and good practice (including our SEND and Carers' strategies, as detailed on our [ADD WEBPAGE ADDRESS] webpage here). It also considers what people have told us. This includes our partners, the public, professionals, politicians, local organisations and people living with disabilities and neurodivergences, and their carers.
3. In this Strategy, we are referring to the Equality Act (2010) definition of a disability, rather than, for example, using a narrow definition based around eligibility for particular services. This Equality Act definition is a 'physical or mental impairment with a significant and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' Neurodivergences are about brain function and behaviours that are not considered typical.
4. The Strategy supports a wide range of people, and not just those who receive particular services. It aims to raise community awareness and remove barriers so people can be recognised and treated as individuals and not for their disability or neurodivergence. Accountability will come through our new county-wide joint Disability Partnership Board arrangements, so that meaningful change can happen at scale.
5. We would like to thank everyone who has supported this Strategy so far. This marks the start of a journey. It will take years, not months for big changes to happen. We hope that through commitment from ourselves, our partners and the wider community, we can create the right conditions for this.

Cllr Julia Jessel - Cabinet Member for Health and Care, SCC

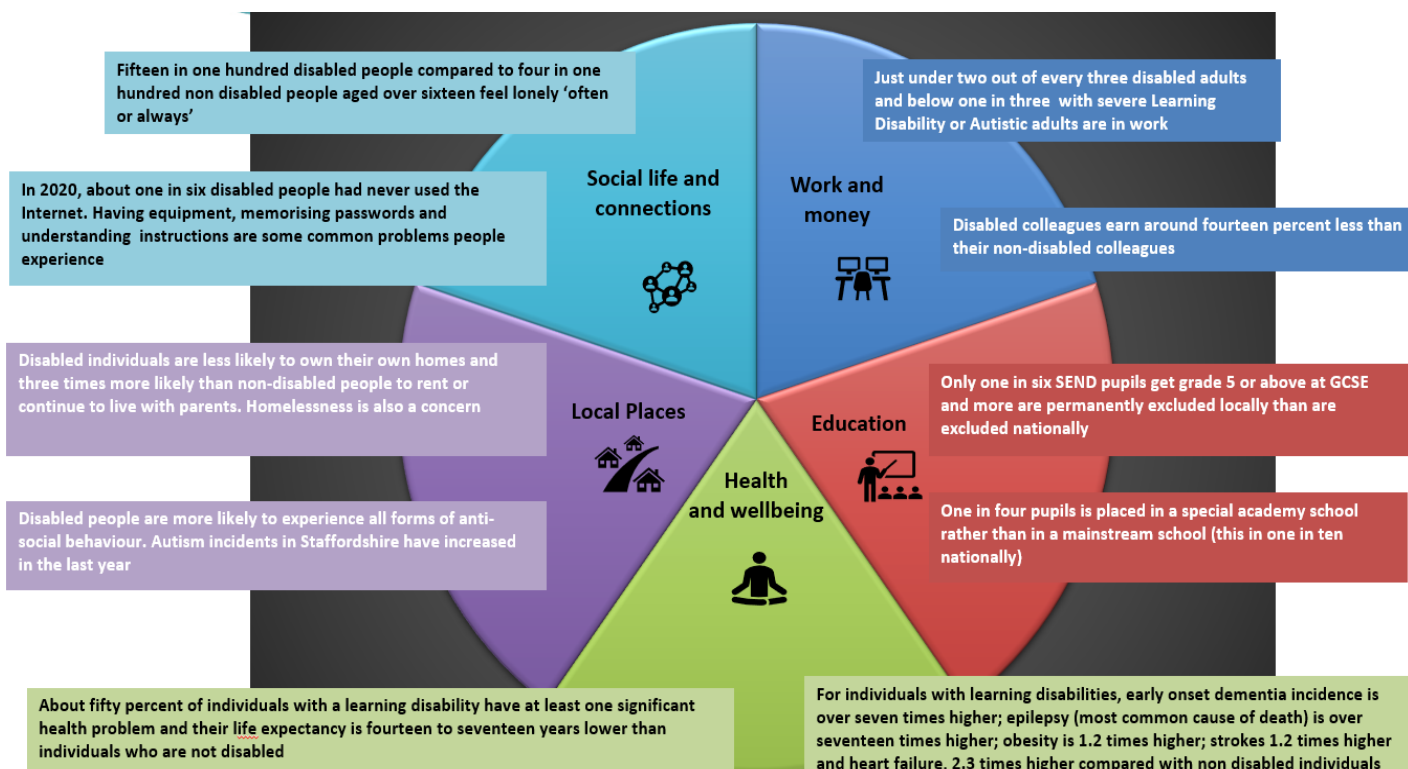
Cllr Mark Sutton - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, SCC

Cllr Jonathan Price – Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND), SCC
Dr Richard Harling, MBE - Director of Health and Care, SCC
David Pearson, MBE - Non-Executive Chair, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB
Peter Axon – Interim Chief Executive Officer, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System / Board

Background: What We Know

Disability / Neurodivergence	Prevalence: Adults	Prevalence: Under 18's
Impaired mobility / Personal care activities	About 6 in 100 aged 18-65; 1 in 6 aged over 65	Less than 1 in 100
Registrable eye condition / Severe visual impairment	Approximately 2 in 100	Less than 1 in 1,000
Severe hearing loss	Around 3 in 100	Close to 0
Learning disability	About 1 in 40	Same as adults
Autism	About 1 in 100	1 in 50
Down syndrome	Less than 1 in 1,000	Same as adults
ADHD	Around 3-4 in 100	Same as adults
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	Just over 3 in 100	Same as adults

6. Disabilities and neurodivergences can impact on people's experiences and their chances of achieving their potential. They may struggle educationally and at work. They may have difficulty accessing social, leisure, retail sport, cultural and religious opportunities in their local area. They may feel more lonely and unsafe and be more vulnerable to crime and abuse. They may also have problems accessing health services and using digital technologies. Certain disabilities and neurodivergences are associated with an increased risk of chronic ill health and can shorten an individual's life expectancy.
7. Some disabilities and neurodivergences are not diagnosed. Some are not visible. Not all people living with them want others to know. This makes reducing inequalities (ensuring everyone can experience things in an equal way) a more complex challenge.



What you have told us

Views on Quality of Life

8. Views on disabled and neurodivergent people's current quality of life suggest that disabled and neurodivergent people:
 - i. Have good contact with friends and family.
 - ii. Where they live feels like home and a place where they can do what they want.
 - iii. People who support them are listening to their needs.
9. However, they:
 - i. Do not have as many opportunities as they would like to learn and develop.
 - ii. Do not know enough about activities and services in their communities.
 - iii. Are not getting as much help as they would like when needed.
 - iv. Are not having as much choice and control as they would like.
 - v. Do not always feel respected and listened to (under 18's)

Views on what people need to live their best lives

10. The top five factors mentioned most often by disabled and neurodivergent people to live their best lives were:

For adults:

1. Family, friends and relationships
2. Access to health and social care, shops and other services
3. Appropriate and safe home
4. Social life, social skills, getting out and about
5. Learning and education.

For children:

1. Positive educational experience
2. Social life, social skills, getting out and about
3. Family, friends and relationships
4. Adjustments made to support me
5. Personal safety.

Our Shared Vision for the Strategy

We want Staffordshire to become a place where people living with disabilities and neurodivergences can do what matters to them; where they are valued and treated as equals in all aspects of society; and where they can live a healthier and better quality of life for longer.

The outcomes we aim to achieve

11. Based on suggestions from our engagement processes, we will aim to achieve the following outcomes through this Strategy:

A. Staffordshire is more open and inclusive.

- i. Co-ordinating training and awareness raising for 'all.'

This includes general awareness raising in educational settings, in the wider community and in local businesses (including those that offer services to local communities and those that are employers).

It also includes specialist training and awareness raising for statutory service professionals (including education, emergency services, health and social care, housing, transport or police and criminal justice).

- ii. Expanding 'Celebrating Differences' as a tool to record, share and grow good practice.

This means expanding [Celebrating Differences](#) from a campaign focussed on Learning Disability and Autism into a larger 'movement' representing all visible and invisible disabled and neurodivergent groups. We will consider introducing influential champions and positive role models, lived experience- mentoring and organisational equality self-assessments into this.

B. Stronger partnerships are built around and include disabled and neurodivergent people.

- i. Continuing to establish the Disability Partnership Board and promoting inclusion and equality as a core theme for local partnerships.

The Disability Partnership Board (linking to the Family Strategic Partnership Board) will oversee the Strategy and involve individuals with lived experience and their carers. Inclusion and equality across all

aspects of health and wellbeing will be considered (including for example housing, health and employment).

- ii. The Council and Integrated Care Board (ICB) working closer together to improve outcomes.

The Council and the ICB will explore more opportunities for joint working and joint funding of services, where this improves outcomes.

- iii. Creating more safe spaces in Staffordshire.

The Strategy will aim to help more businesses to offer designated safe spaces across local communities.

- iv. Ensuring Supportive Communities and Family Hubs link with disabled and neurodivergent people and professionals.

These programmes of work helps individuals and local communities to help themselves. For example, [Community help points](#) and [Family Hubs](#) are central points of access to information and advice. Local community navigators help people navigate to opportunities and support available in the wider community. It is important to understand what is needed, maximise community capacity and link to wider support networks and improve accessibility of information for disabled and neurodivergent people, their carers and for professionals.



C. Disabled and neurodivergent people are communicating their needs and action is being taken.

- i. Expanding opportunities to give more people a voice (self-advocacy), so they can communicate confidently, be heard and influence action.

This could include the following, among other actions:

- a. Including a 'How can I help you' or similar campaign into Celebrating Differences to normalise reasonable adjustments.
- b. Encouraging more peer support networks and providing a means for statutory and other organisations to communicate and share information with them.
- c. Including people with lived experience and their carers in shaping strategies and services and feeding back on the impact this has.
- d. Using or developing simple approaches so that people can identify their needs confidently and discretely.
- e. Embedding health passports.
- f. Applying lessons learnt from the LeDeR programme.



D. Disabled and neurodivergent people and their carers are better informed and in control.


- i. Identifying people's preferences and making information, advice and guidance and signposting information more accessible to them.

This is about exploring the ways people with disabilities and neurodivergences prefer to access information and advice whilst also considering their different accessibility needs.

- ii. Making sure that existing information, advice and guidance is comprehensive.

This is about supporting people to access digital technology. It is also about linking people to information and advice, including for example:

- a) Helping them cope with day to day living (such as paying bills, completing online forms and locating disabled facilities).
- b) Coping with key life changes (such as parenting and transition to adulthood).
- c) Accessing specialist equipment and support.
- d) Carer skills development to help carers cope with day-to-day challenges and changing needs of the individuals they support.

 **E. In carrying out their responsibilities for Care and support, the ICB and Council will consider the whole person's needs, aspirations and what they can do. It will not stop them doing what they want to do.**

- i. Reinforce a strengths-based approach across health and care.

This is about considering people's aspirations and potential in terms of service planning; market development; assessment and care planning; service commissioning; quality assurance; and monitoring of care and support provided. It is also about increasing people's choice and control in relation to the support they receive.

- ii. Reduce health inequalities and improve access to NHS services.

This includes earlier identification and diagnostics, giving people tools and support to prevent their needs escalating and making adjustments so that people have equal access to and experience of services.

- iii. Ensure quality and value for money of dedicated services.

This means offering a good standard of care and support as well as spending public money wisely and living within our means. It includes for example exploring more opportunities for joint working with the ICB.

Our Approach



Measuring our Success

The five strategy outcomes will form the basis of an action plan for this strategy. The County-wide Disability Partnership Board will meet every four months and oversee delivery of the action plan. It will provide an update on progress to the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board every year.



Living My Best Life

A joint strategy for disabled and neurodivergent people in Staffordshire
2023 - 2028

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services. This Equality Act definition is a 'physical or mental impairment with a significant and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' Neurodivergences are about brain function and behaviours that are not considered typical.

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Background: What we know

Disability or Neurodivergence Prevalence



Impaired mobility or personal care activities

About **6 in 100 adults** aged 18-65

1 in 6 adults over 65

Less than **1 in 100** under 18s



ADHD

Around **3-4 in 100** people



Severe hearing loss

Around **3 in 100** adults

Close to **0** under 18s



Down's syndrome

Less than **1 in 1,000** people



Registrable eye condition or severe visual impairment

Approximately **2 in 100** adults

Less than **1 in 1,000** under 18s



Learning disability

About **1 in 40** people



Autism

About **1 in 100** adults

1 in 50 under 18s



Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder

Just over **3 in 100** people

Disabilities and neurodivergences can impact on people's experiences and their chances of achieving their potential. They may struggle educationally and at work. They may have difficulty accessing social, leisure, retail sport, cultural and religious opportunities in their local area. They may feel more lonely and unsafe and be more vulnerable to crime and abuse. They may also have problems accessing health services and using digital technologies. Certain disabilities and neurodivergences are associated with an increased risk of chronic ill health and can shorten an individual's life expectancy.

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Social Life and Connections



For every one hundred disabled people aged over sixteen, fifteen feel lonely 'often or always'. Only four in one hundred non-disabled people feel like this.



In 2020, for every 6 disabled people, 1 person had never used the Internet. Having equipment, memorising passwords and understanding instructions are some common problems.



Health and Wellbeing

About half of all people with a learning disability have at least one significant health problem and their life expectancy is fourteen to seventeen years lower than individuals who are not disabled

When we compare the non-disabled population to the learning disability population as an example:



For every non-disabled individual with **early onset dementia**, there will be seven people with learning disabilities with the same condition.



For every individual with **epilepsy**, there will be seventeen more with a learning disability. This is the most common cause of death for people with a learning disability.



For every five individuals with **obesity or suffering from a stroke** in the non-disabled population, there will be six people with learning disabilities with these health conditions.



For every ten individuals with **heart failure** who are not disabled, there will be twenty three who have a learning disability.'



Local Places



Disabled individuals are less likely to own their own homes. For every non-disabled person there are three disabled people renting or continuing to live with parents. Homelessness is also a concern.



Disabled people are more likely to experience all forms of anti-social behaviour. Autism incidents in Staffordshire have increased in the last year.



Education



For every six SEND pupils, one will get grade 5 or above at GCSE and more are permanently excluded locally than are excluded nationally.



For every four pupils in Staffordshire (and for every ten nationally), one is placed in a special academy school rather than in a mainstream school.



Work and Money



For every ten autistic adults and adults with learning disabilities, two to three are in work. This compares to eight out of every ten non-disabled adults.



On average, for every £10 a non-disabled person earns, disabled people will earn £8.60.

What you have told us

Views on quality of life

Views on disabled and neurodivergent people's current quality of life suggest that disabled and neurodivergent people:

- › Have good contact with friends and family.
- › Where they live feels like home and a place where they can do what they want.
- › People who support them are listening to their needs.

However, they:

- › Do not have as many opportunities as they would like to learn and develop.
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Views on what people need to live their best lives

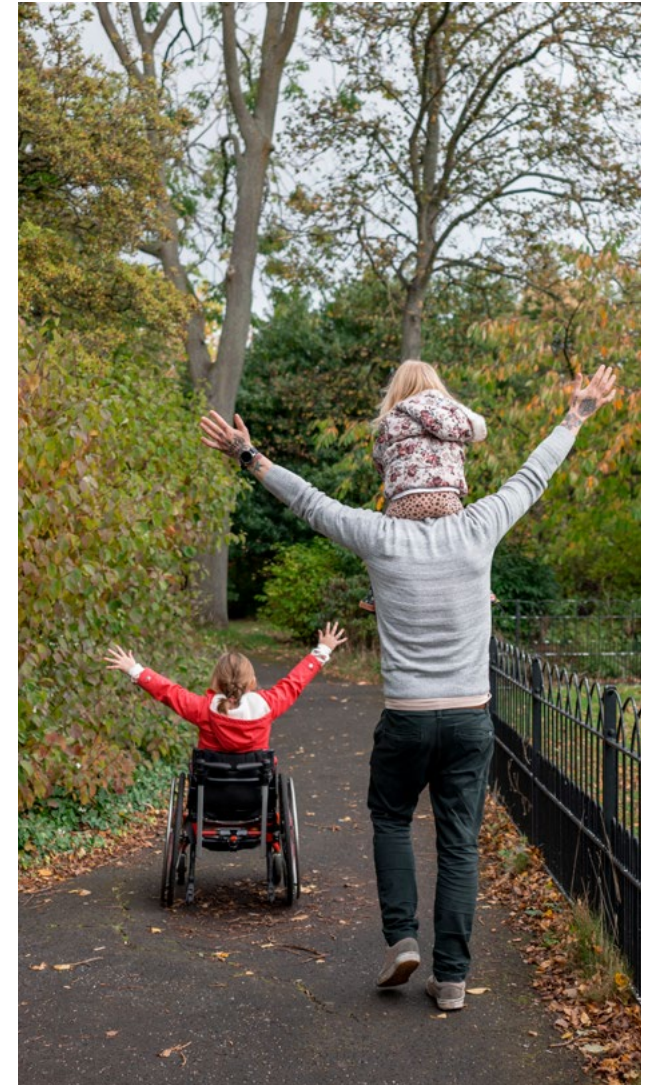
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For adults

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- 5 | Learning and education.

For children

- 1 | Positive educational experience
- 2 | Social life, social skills, getting out and about
- 3 | Family, friends and relationships
- 4 | Adjustments made to support me
- 5 | Personal safety.





Our shared vision for the strategy

We want **Staffordshire** to become a place where **people living with disabilities** and **neurodivergences** can do what matters to them; where they are **valued** and **treated as equals** in all aspects of society; and where they can live a **healthier** and **better quality of life** for longer.

The outcomes we aim to achieve

1 Staffordshire is more open and inclusive

Co-ordinating training and awareness raising for 'all.'

This includes general awareness raising in educational settings, in the wider community and in local businesses (including those that offer services to local communities and those that are employers).

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This means expanding Celebrating Differences from a campaign focussed on Learning Disability and Autism into a larger 'movement' representing all visible and invisible disabled and neurodivergent groups.

We will consider introducing influential champions and positive role models, lived experience- mentoring and organisational equality self-assessments into this.

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Continuing to establish the Disability Partnership Board and promoting inclusion and equality as a core theme for local partnerships.

The Disability Partnership Board (linking to the Family Strategic Partnership Board) will oversee the Strategy and involve individuals with lived experience and their carers. Inclusion and equality across all aspects of health and wellbeing will be considered (including for example housing, health and employment).

The Council and Integrated Care Board (ICB) working closer together to improve outcomes.

The Council and the ICB will explore more opportunities for joint working and joint funding of services, where this improves outcomes.

Creating more safe spaces in Staffordshire.

The Strategy will aim to help more businesses to offer designated safe spaces across local communities.

Ensuring Supportive Communities and Family Hubs link with disabled and neurodivergent people and professionals.

These programmes of work help individuals and local communities to help themselves. For example, [Community Help Points](#) and [Family Hubs](#) are central points of access to information and advice. Local community navigators help people navigate to opportunities and support available in the wider community. It is important to understand what is needed, maximise community capacity and link to wider support networks and improve accessibility of information for disabled and neurodivergent people, their carers and for professionals.

3 Disabled and neurodivergent people are communicating their needs and action is being taken.

Expanding opportunities to give more people a voice (self-advocacy), so they can communicate confidently, be heard and influence action.

This could include the following, among other actions:

- › Including a 'How can I help you' or similar campaign into Celebrating Differences to normalise reasonable adjustments.
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4 Disabled and neurodivergent people and their carers are better informed and in control.

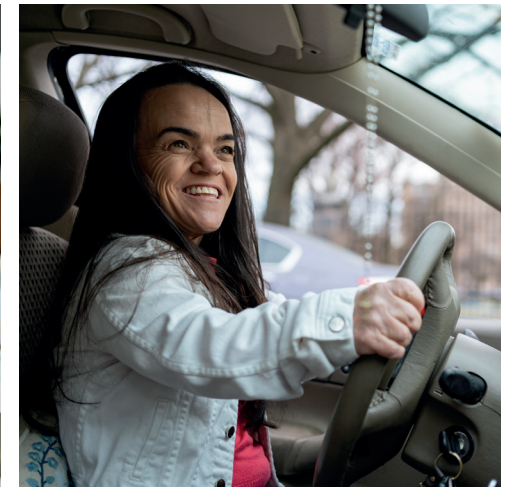
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Making sure that existing information, advice and guidance is comprehensive.

This is about supporting people to access digital technology. It is also about linking people to information and advice, including for example:

- › Helping them cope with day to day living (such as paying bills, completing online forms and locating disabled facilities).
- › Coping with key life changes (such as parenting and transition to adulthood).
- › Accessing specialist equipment and support.
- › Carer skills development to help carers cope with day-to-day challenges and changing needs of the individuals they support.





5

In carrying out their responsibilities for care and support, the ICB and Council will consider the whole person's needs, aspirations and what they can do. It will not stop them doing what they want to do.

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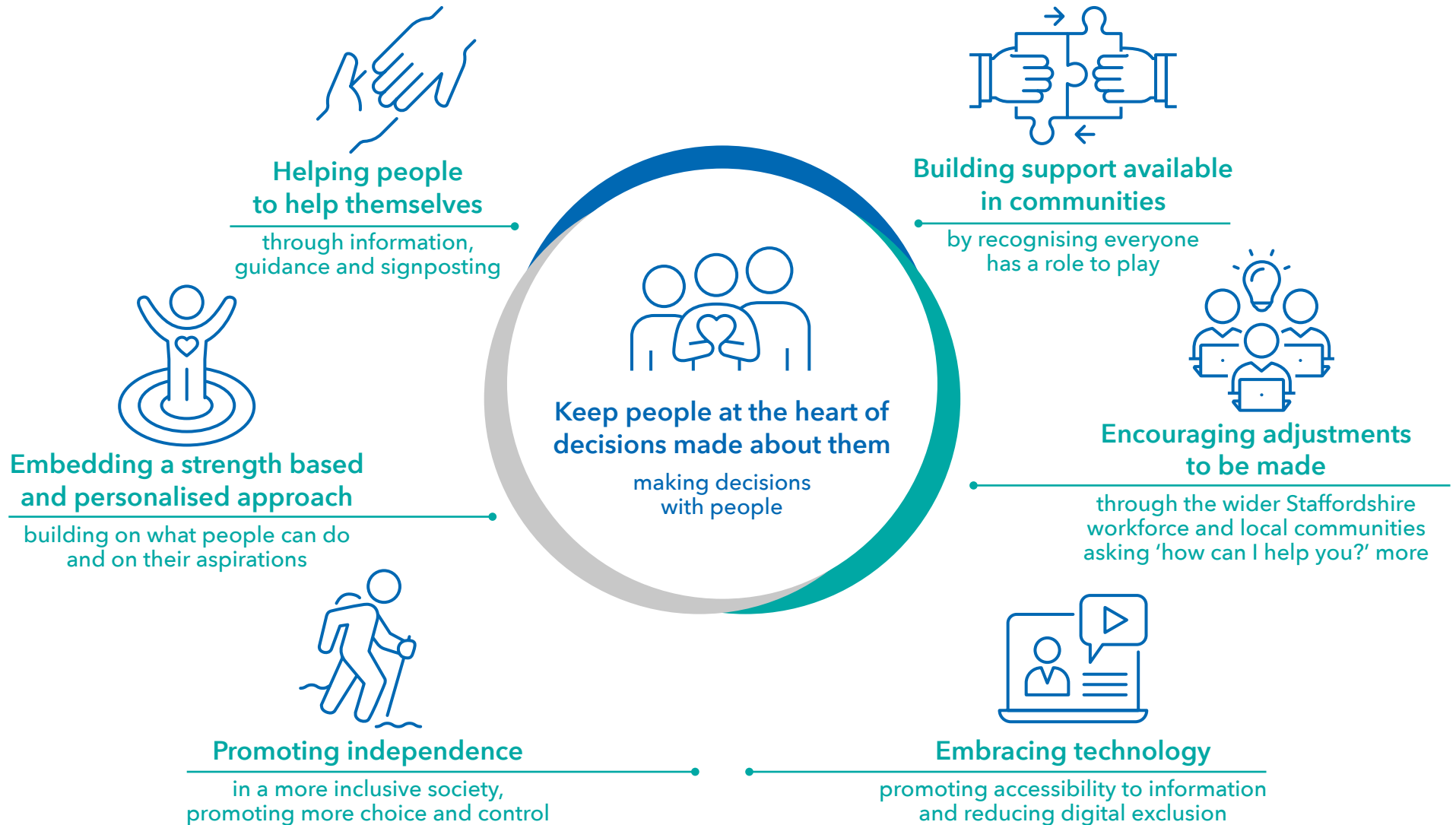
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Our approach



Measuring our success



The **five strategy outcomes** will form the basis of an **action plan** for this strategy.



The **County-wide Disability Partnership Board** will meet every **four months** and oversee delivery of the action plan.



It will provide an **update on progress** to the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board **every year**.



Community Impact Assessment

Living My Best Life: An integrated strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028

Authors: Nicola Day/Richard Deacon

Date: May 2023

➤ **Equality Assessment**

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Cross Cutting themes - Impacts that affect all or multiple protected characteristics and health and care needs</p>	<p>The strategy is about people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, Autism and other neurodivergent conditions.</p> <p>All of the actions within the Strategy are designed to support individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences in a positive way, which will consider and is intended to benefit all groups of people with protected characteristics and health and care needs to help to enable them to live their best lives.</p> <p>Raising awareness of various disabilities</p>	<p>The strategy needs to reach as many individuals with lived experience as possible and be sensitive to their individual needs to ensure its greatest impact.</p> <p>Understanding needs can be a challenge if people have rare conditions, if they mask or are undiagnosed or have multiple disabilities or neurodivergences for example. As such, community-based opportunities, support and services may struggle to be sufficiently sensitive and adaptable to their needs.</p> <p>To make a difference, the strategy requires a fundamental shift in understanding and behaviours in relation to individuals with a disability or neurodivergence, including the application of reasonable adjustments.</p>	<p>A review of best practice guidance has been collated in the development of the strategy.</p> <p>A central strategic outcome of the strategy is to make Staffordshire more open and inclusive to support individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences of all age groups and backgrounds. All other strategic outcomes within the strategy complement this, including more opportunities for partnerships which enable people to influence services and strategies in their areas; allowing individuals to have a voice and communicate their needs; improving accessibility to information advice and guidance, and; ensuring more timely identification and diagnostic services and aspirational person-centred care and support.</p> <p>A range of engagement activities have taken place in the development of the strategy, including a survey and public engagement events held across Staffordshire. These opportunities have involved individuals with lived experience of disabilities and neurodivergences, carers, professionals and organisations wishing to share their views. Our survey asked if individuals were happy to share</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>through communications, training, information, advice and guidance together with positive behaviour change campaigns and approaches and further embedding strength-based practice and personalisation, will help to support greater community integration and services being able to adjust to the needs of all individuals with protected characteristics.</p> <p>This strategy will complement the Staffordshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy and the SEND Strategy for Special Provision - Staffordshire County Council and other local strategies such as:</p>		<p>certain protected characteristics with us to help us understand if we were being inclusive of their needs. Our responses indicated that for those characteristics, we were able to demonstrate they have inputted into this strategy.</p> <p>The strategy also involves sharing information, advice and guidance in an accessible way through various channels that people living with disabilities and neurodivergence access. This will focus on communicating key information and signposting to appropriate support according to different life stages, characteristics, and types of need.</p> <p>The strategy considers access to health and care services but also to wider universal services and day to day experiences (such as access to work, education, shops, and wider services and reasonable adjustments made on public transport etc). It means considering individuals' wider needs such as their disability and neurodivergence alongside their wider protected characteristics. In terms of care and support, it is about ensuring good quality care and support that is joined up across the health and care system, reflecting a least restrictive model so that people can be as independent as</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our strategy for carers - Staffordshire County Council 2019-2023 • Good Mental Health in Staffordshire: 2023-28 • Staffordshire's Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2027) • NHS Operation and Joint Forward Plan 		<p>possible and take personal responsibility for maintaining as healthy a lifestyle as possible.</p> <p>As we evaluate the strategy, we will ensure quality of life measures remain central to that. Collective (Council and Integrated Care Board) ownership and governance around the strategy and its action plan through the Disability Partnership Board will help to ensure successful delivery of the strategic outcomes within it.</p>
<p>Age</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 46</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The expertise of the Voice Project was used to support development of the online survey and to check wording of questions so that they were appropriate for children and young people to answer directly.</p> <p>This strategy will complement the SEND strategy for children and young people. It will be used to influence key developmental workstreams (such as preparing for adulthood) and commissioned services to ensure the needs of children and young people and adults with disabilities and neurodivergences are accounted for across key life course transitions (such as from childhood to adulthood, in parenthood and in retirement).</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Disability</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Voice Project was used to support development of the online survey to ensure it was appropriate for children and young people to answer directly and to ensure general instructions were clear and that questions were straight forward for all groups to answer.</p> <p>Microsoft Forms was used as it allows good links with immerse readers and braille keyboards. Easy Read, large print and normal print forms were used as alternatives to online surveys. A webpage was developed using the Hemingway app to support more readable content. SCC have an inhouse British Sign Language service to ensure information, advice, guidance and signposting information, and the strategy itself is accessible to all communities.</p> <p>Engagement events were attended by child and adult advocates, sensory team staff and BSL interpreters. Venue accessibility was also clearly communicated on a dedicated strategy engagement webpage (e.g. disabled parking, wheelchair access, disabled toilets, breakout rooms, hearing loops etc.) Visitors were also asked to share any additional accessibility information with the commissioning team in case any further reasonable adjustments were</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
			<p>required. All poster content used in these sessions was converted to easy read format.</p> <p>People with lived experience will be directly involved in the development of the action plan through the engagement events and oversee its delivery through the Disability Partnership Board governance arrangements.</p>
Gender reassignment	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section
Marriage & Civil Partnership	See cross cutting themes section	None identified	See cross cutting themes section
Pregnancy & Maternity	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section
Race	See cross cutting themes section	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>People from ethnic minorities are more at risk of wider health inequalities that will impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing. These need to be considered in addition to people's disabilities and or neurodivergences.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>SCC have a translation and interpretation supplier to ensure information, advice, guidance and signposting information, and the strategy itself is accessible to all communities.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Religion or Belief	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section
Sex	See cross cutting themes section	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>There is evidence of gender differences in diagnosis of Autism. It is not clear why this is the case, but females appear to be more likely to mask their symptoms. Some evidence is suggesting incidence could be higher, but currently evidence is also mixed on links between gender dysphoria and incidence of Autism. Lack of awareness of traits to watch out for or delayed diagnosis in individuals with Autism can serve to isolate groups but could also cause inequalities in health and wellbeing outcomes.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism Health Education England is being co-ordinated by the Integrated Care Board and will be rolled out across health and social care for adults. This training raises awareness of gender differences and traits of Autism. The plan is also to ensure that the electronic element of the training can be made universally available to help raise awareness of traits and reasonable adjustments that can be made.</p> <p>There are opportunities through information, advice and guidance and wider awareness raising communications to help to further raise awareness.</p>
Sexual orientation	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section	See cross cutting themes section

➤ **Workforce Assessment**

Who will be affected -	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Employees across Staffordshire</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Greater inclusion by employer organisations would allow more individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences to enter, be retained in and develop more skills within the workforce. At a time when pressure on working-age adults is clearly evident, this could make an invaluable contribution to economic growth and activity and to the spending power of individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences in the local economy.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Businesses and organisations may need to invest both time and resources into ensuring individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences can make the most of their employment opportunities. At a time when businesses are under increasing financial pressures, it may be more difficult to promote the benefits of greater workforce inclusion measures, including training and awareness and costs of making reasonable adjustments and in managing and supporting staff with disabilities and neurodivergences.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy encourages access to meaningful training, work experience and work opportunities (both paid and voluntary).</p> <p>By promoting inclusion in employer organisations through widening Celebrating Differences, we would be encouraging them to openly share good practice in terms of how they are being more inclusive and the cost: benefits this brings to them. We would also be keen to ensure individuals with lived experience of disabilities and neurodivergences and businesses themselves are aware of and accessing support available to them to help people living with disabilities and neurodivergence into work (e.g. Intensive Personalised Employment Support and DWP Access to Work scheme, and the Council's Employment Broker scheme for people with a learning disability, autism and mental health needs). This may require training and awareness raising, cultural and</p>

Who will be affected -	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
			behavioural change and policy change by employers.

Health and Care Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Page 51</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>We anticipate the demand for mental health support is high for individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The County Council and the Integrated Care Board have statutory duties under the Care Act and the Mental Health Act to meet people's health and eligible social care needs around their mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Alignment between this strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2027) and the Mental Health Strategy (2023-2028) and their associated action plans will be made.</p>
<p>Healthy Lifestyles</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy recognises that independence and control is central to an individual living their best life, where this is possible and that this is affected by their physical health.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences are at a greater risk of wider health inequalities that will impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Encouraging greater capacity building of voluntary sector life skills support and linking more people to the opportunities that are available has a key role to play in maintaining independence and providing people with the basic skills to maintain a healthier lifestyle (one example being through improving access to sport and physical activity opportunities in local communities).</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		<p>There is evidence healthy life years and life expectancy are lower for some disabilities.</p>	<p>Ensuring people living with disabilities and neurodivergence can access universal services supporting lifestyle, substance use, and sexual health will also be important where this is needed. Both approaches are integral within the strategy.</p>
<p>Access to Social Care</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Where people’s needs require additional support, the strategy’s strategic outcomes include making sure that support considers the whole person’s needs in a least restrictive way, what they want to achieve and what people can do. The intention is that it should not interfere with their life. A personalised approach requires the right interventions to be in place at the right time</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Some individuals do not know where to go for support or the support that they need is not available or is not co-ordinated in the right way for their needs. This can ultimately result in people requiring more intensive care and support.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The County Council has statutory duties under the Care Act to meet people’s eligible social care needs.</p> <p>Building stronger partnerships between local organisations, people, and local communities as part of the strategy will aim to help people influence things that are happening around them that impact on them. For example, this supports partnerships including people with lived experience of disabilities and neurodivergences to influence strategies and services, and at an individual level, to build on a person’s strengths and assets and provide choices about their care and support.</p>
<p>Independent Living</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>This strategy recognises that many individuals will live their lives and need no support to retain their</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>People often do not know where or how to access the information and / or opportunities</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy is focussed on the quality of people’s lives, regardless of their disability or neurodivergence and regardless of whether or not they have assessed health and care needs. Independence is recognised as being central to this, regardless of an individual’s needs. That</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>independence. Many, with access to opportunities and support that is already available in their local communities will also manage to remain independent. A small minority will need more intensive and structured support to do so (and this may be part of an organised care and support package).</p>	<p>available to them or support that they need to enable them to lead a more independent life.</p> <p>There is a risk that factors such as poor quality housing owned by private landlords or lack of accessible housing options / access to adaptations or benefits are potentially significant barriers to an individual living a good life independently.</p> <p>Personal safety can be a big barrier to accessing opportunities in a local community that supports independent living.</p>	<p>means it is about access to education, job opportunities, providing support to manage finances, retain tenancies, accessing public transport etc, underpinned by ensuring people can feel safe from harm, discrimination and abuse.</p> <p>It also involves sharing information, advice and guidance in an accessible way through various channels that people living with disabilities and neurodivergence access. This can focus on measures that everyone can take to improve their independence.</p>
<p>Safeguarding</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Our strategic outcomes focus on inclusion, personalisation and people and organisations working</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>There is an ongoing risk that masking behaviour, communication or reporting difficulties with</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Strategy and associated action plan will consider the wider wellbeing needs of all individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences living in Staffordshire, including individuals with eligible care needs.</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>together and listening to people's needs, views, wishes, feelings and beliefs, which are all fundamental to ensure their wellbeing is promoted and to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.</p>	<p>people living with disabilities and neurodivergence is a key barrier to being able to support people to communicate safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>Whilst safeguarding principles and practice are clear, there is a risk that care providers, volunteers, informal carers and professionals do not understand the needs of all individuals with different disabilities and neurodivergences or individuals living with multiple conditions.</p>	<p>Quality assurance, safeguarding principles and practice are already embedded within County Council, NHS and commissioned services and will continue to be so in all future service/tender models.</p> <p>The County Council's statutory duties under the Care Act in relation to safeguarding apply as does the County Council's responsibilities under the Equality and Mental Capacity Acts.</p> <p>It will be essential to ensure statutory training and development targets to raise awareness of conditions are achieved (such as the Oliver McGowan training for Learning Disabilities and Autism). There are also opportunities for making some of this training more available for a much wider audience. Promoting / delivering / sharing / signposting to any training and development and information advice and guidance available for other disabilities and neurodivergences will also be important for health and social care professionals as well as the wider community.</p> <p>Key also to supporting individuals with eligible needs is building a culture of listening and adapting to every individual's needs; an approach which is being built into the strategy. It also involves ensuring lessons are being learnt (e.g. from LeDeR for Learning Disability and Autism and learning from complaints and serious case reviews etc.)</p>

➤ **Communities Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Community Development/ Capacity</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Positive actions will require changes in behaviours and attitudes at individual, community and organisational level.</p> <p>Failure to engage with a sufficiently diverse range of people within communities or not involving individuals and organisations who are able to drive and influence substantial positive change at a local level may limit the success of the strategy's aims.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Supportive Communities programme and Family Hubs and their links with organisations with a role in developing VCSE capacity will be key in helping to identify gaps and help to drive further community capacity in this area.</p> <p>Representatives from the Supportive Communities programme will be encouraged to be key partners on the Disability Partnership Board, overseeing the development of the action plan and delivery of the strategy.</p>
<p>Crime/ Community Safety</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Community inclusion, independence, crime and community safety is central to this. Preventing any potential discrimination</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Actions taken to reduce risk of harm, abuse and discrimination for people with disabilities and neurodivergences may</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Representatives from the police and criminal justice system will be encouraged to be key partners on the Disability Partnership Board, overseeing the development of the action plan and delivery of the strategy.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>and/or hate crime, because of a person's disability or neurodivergence, will be an essential component of the strategy and action plan.</p>	<p>not always result in people feeling safe from harm, abuse and discrimination still occurring - although we would expect the incidence of these to reduce.</p>	
<p>Educational Attainment and Training.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Accessibility is central to the strategy, including access to a good education and educational attainment.</p> <p>The strategy is intended to improve the lifelong learning outcomes for all individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences including access to training and employment/adult learning opportunities / work experience and volunteering opportunities.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>If communities and places where people learn are not inclusive or supportive of individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences, they may limit accessibility for some people to access or make the most of educational/training/work opportunities available to them.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Representatives from Children and Families and the DWP will be encouraged to be key partners on the Disability Partnership Board, overseeing the development of the action plan and delivery of the strategy.</p> <p>DWP and SCC employment initiatives will be promoted to support employers and individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences to access more and better work opportunities.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Leisure and Culture</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy aims to positively promote awareness, develop capacity, and improve access to leisure and cultural opportunities in an individual's local community recognising they are fundamental to people's physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>A See cross cutting themes section</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The action plan will be central in helping to ensure information, advice and guidance on leisure and cultural opportunities available can be shared in an accessible way. It will also link with the Supportive Communities programme and Family Hubs initiatives which aim to link people to opportunities in their localities.</p>
<p>Volunteering</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy is intended to improve the outcomes for children, young people and adults with disabilities and neurodivergences in Staffordshire, and this will include, where relevant and appropriate to the individual, access to volunteering opportunities.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>There will be pressures beyond the control of the strategy that can affect both the opportunities for volunteering and volunteer numbers. The current cost of living crisis is one such example.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Supportive Communities programme and Family Hubs will all support in helping to identify gaps and help to develop community capacity where gaps are identified.</p> <p>Representatives from the Supportive Communities programme will be encouraged to be key partners on the Disability Partnership Board, overseeing the development of the action plan and delivery of the strategy.</p> <p>SCC employment initiatives will be promoted to support employers and individuals with disabilities and</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	It will also aim to link people to opportunities and support within their local communities that are supported by / run by volunteers.		neurodivergences to access more and better volunteer work opportunities.
<p>Best Start</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy is intended to improve the outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and neurodivergences in Staffordshire and parents living with disabilities and neurodivergence.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The greatest risks lie in timely diagnosis and support to ensure children / parents (pre and post-natal and in the early years) have the tools and opportunities they need to support this.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>In addition to the Integrated Care Board, representatives from Children and Families will be encouraged to be key partners on the Disability Partnership Board, overseeing the development of the action plan and delivery of the strategy.</p> <p>Improving timeliness of diagnosis and support will be a key commitment within the action plan.</p> <p>Access to support through Family Hubs and also better access to information, advice and guidance will be aimed at supporting parents. That includes parents with disabilities and neurodivergences themselves in key life transitions, including in their roles as parents.</p>
<p>Rural Communities</p> <p>Will the proposal specifically impact</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Raising awareness of various disabilities and neurodivergences through communications, training,</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Access to services and opportunities such as education, social, leisure, sport, cultural, health and</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Better communications and access to information, advice and guidance and local support through the Supportive Communities programme and through Family Hubs will be aimed at supporting individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences across the Staffordshire geography.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>on rural communities?</p>	<p>information, advice and guidance together with positive behaviour change campaigns and approaches, will help to support greater community integration and services that more proactively listen to and adjust to the needs of all age groups in the population with these conditions as the norm rather than the exception.</p>	<p>work in rural communities can be more challenging, especially if accessibility to personal, private and public transport solutions are more limited. For individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences, additional physical, financial, cognitive or behavioural barriers may also exacerbate this.</p> <p>A significant number of individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences are also digitally excluded. High speed broadband connections may also be a limiting factor in some communities. This means that the limitations of digital technology to connect individuals, including those living in more rural locations with disabilities and</p>	<p>Digital inclusion and the importance of technology as a tool for connecting people and as a tool to enable people to be more independent is also a key consideration within this strategy.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		neurodivergences needs to be considered.	

➤ **Economic Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Economic Growth	See cross cutting themes section See Workforce Assessment section	See cross cutting themes section See Workforce Assessment section	See cross cutting themes section We would also anticipate benefits advice being of use to individuals entering paid employment.
Workplace Health and Environments	See cross cutting themes section Encouraging greater access to lifelong learning opportunities and employment should increase the number of people accessing not just work opportunities, but also meaningful work opportunities with all the benefits they can bring in terms of health and wellbeing. Reasonable adjustments made in the workplace will also help to	See cross cutting themes section As per the Economic Growth section above	See cross cutting themes section As per the Economic Growth section above

	lower the risk of work-related stress and ill health.		
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Climate Change Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Access to environments</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>This strategy encourages more people to be engaged in their local communities, which includes promoting their access to and use of outdoor and green spaces. Access to green spaces has been shown to have positive impacts on physical health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Wellbeing models encourage spending time outdoors and staying active to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing. For the purpose of this strategy, that could be linked to leisure and to work and volunteering opportunities (some of which may also benefit the environment) that individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences are intended to have greater access to.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Despite the best efforts of the strategy, there will be individuals who cannot access green spaces in their area, either due to the area in which they live or the complexity of their disability or neurodivergence.</p> <p>There is a careful balance between protecting natural environments and promoting greater access to such environments that protects and doesn't damage the biodiversity of that environment etc.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Disability Partnership Board includes representation from District and Borough Councils regarding planning and use of green infrastructure. It is recommended that consideration be made for more quiet outdoor sensory spaces, community gardens or orchards, disability accessible wild spaces or allotments and work experience and opportunities to support existing green infrastructure etc.</p> <p>Better communications and access to information, advice and guidance and local support through the Supportive Communities programme and through Family Hubs will be aimed at supporting individuals with disabilities and neurodivergences across the Staffordshire geography. These can link people to opportunities in their local community.</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>High quality housing</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The Disability Partnership Board will include representation from planning authorities. There is potential they can positively influence standards of properties for people with disabilities and neurodivergences promoting good practice from planning to property maintenance.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Developers and landlords failing to provide affordable, lifetime home standard housing or an appropriate standard of housing with support suitable for disabled people aligned to Staffordshire’s strategic plan for climate change action.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>It will be important to consider climate change adaptation opportunities in the commissioning of housing with care, including energy efficiency considerations within specifications or evaluations of tenders. Key links will be made between this strategy and a developing Housing with Care strategy.</p>
<p>Healthier workplaces</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Some reasonable adjustments that are made by employers who make their workplaces more accessible to people living with disabilities and neurodivergence (e.g. needing to dim lights and screens for light sensitive individuals) may also have a small beneficial energy use impact.</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>Due to the nature of their disabilities and neurodivergences, some work-related travel arrangements and reasonable adjustments in the workplace may also have a slightly higher associated carbon footprint (e.g., needing to drive to work in motability vehicles, or printing more if an individual reads using braille).</p>	<p>See cross cutting themes section</p> <p>The strategy will acknowledge good practice requires a reasonable compromise between supporting both the wellbeing of the employee and finding suitable ways of offsetting these.</p>

➤ **Environment Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Built Environment/ Land Use</p>	<p>See the 'High quality housing' section.</p> <p>Access to green spaces and to work opportunities have been shown to have positive impacts on wellbeing, as identified in the 'Access to environments to support mental health' section.</p>	<p>See the 'High quality housing' section.</p> <p>Relevant environmental risks have been mentioned in the 'High quality housing', 'Healthier workplaces', 'Access to environments to support mental health' and the 'Rural communities' sections of this document.</p>	<p>See the 'High quality housing' section.</p> <p>See the mitigations within the 'High quality housing', 'Healthier workplaces', 'Access to environments to support mental health' and the 'Rural communities' sections of this document.</p> <p>Travelling more sustainably (e.g., making best use of public transport or environmentally friendly solutions such as shared taxis, home to work travel or community transport) is an alternative option to allow people to remain connected whilst also reducing their carbon footprint.</p>
<p>Rural Environment organisations.</p>	<p>See the 'High quality housing' section.</p> <p>Refer to the response in the 'Access to environments to support mental health' and 'Access to environments' sections.</p>	<p>See the 'High quality housing' section.</p> <p>Refer to the response in the 'Access to environments to support mental health' and 'Access to environments' sections.</p>	<p>See the 'High quality housing' section.</p> <p>Refer to the response in the 'Access to environments to support mental health' and 'Access to environments' sections.</p>
<p>Air, Water and Land Quality - n/a</p>			
<p>Waste and Recycling - n/a</p>			

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Transport	See cross cutting themes section See also comments made in the ' Rural communities ' section	See cross cutting themes section See also comments made in the ' Rural communities ' section	See cross cutting themes section See also comments made in the ' Rural communities ' section
Noise Will the proposal cause disruptive noise - n/a			

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2023

Supported Living Future Commissioning Arrangements Update



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

“Supported Living care services provide individuals with disabilities and mental health conditions the support they need to be as independent as they wish.

“After talking with individuals who benefit from Supported Living care services, care providers and other stakeholders, we have developed a commissioning plan to ensure that we get the best possible quality of care, the outcomes that individuals want and value for money.”

Report Summary:

This report is to seek approval for the commissioning plan for Supported Living care services in Staffordshire and to delegate authority for the award of contracts.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approve the commissioning plan for procurement of a Flexible Framework for Supported Living care services in Staffordshire.
- b. Delegate authority to the Director of Health and Care to appoint successful care providers to the Flexible Framework for Supported Living care services and to award call-off contracts under the Flexible Framework for Supported Living care services as detailed in the report.
- c. Delegate authority to the Director of Health and Care to extend the current Dynamic Purchasing System for contracting Supported Living care services up to 01 July 2025 to cover the period of transition to the new contracts.

Cabinet – Wednesday 19 July 2023

Supported Living Future Commissioning Arrangements Update

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approve the commissioning plan for procurement of a Flexible Framework for Supported Living care services in Staffordshire.
- b. Delegate authority to the Director of Health and Care to appoint successful care providers to the Flexible Framework for Supported Living care services and to award call-off contracts under the Flexible Framework for Supported Living care services as detailed in the report.
- c. Delegate authority to the Director of Health and Care to extend the current Dynamic Purchasing System for contracting Supported Living care services up to 01 July 2025 to cover the period of transition to the new contracts.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

Introduction

1. Supported Living schemes support individuals with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, autism and/or mental health conditions to live independently in the community. Schemes are clusters of flats or shared houses, typically for 4 to 6 individuals, with on-site care staff.
2. Each resident should have a tenancy agreement with a housing provider, which may be a housing association, housing authority or private landlord, and housing costs are the responsibility of residents and their landlords. Residents with assessed eligible needs for adult social services have Supported Living care services funded by the Council and provided by care companies, which are required to be registered with the Care Quality Commission if they deliver personal care.

3. Note that Supported Living care services covered by this report are limited to those services required to meet individual's assessed eligible needs under the Care Act 2014 where these are funded by the Council: they do not extend to housing or other services that individuals may receive.
4. On 19 January 2022 Cabinet considered current arrangements and endorsed the outcomes of an options appraisal for future commissioning arrangements for Supported Living care services in Staffordshire, subject to engagement with stakeholders. The Council engaged with a range of current residents and their families as well as care and support providers.
5. On 19 October 2022 Cabinet considered feedback from stakeholders and approved future commissioning arrangements for Supported Living care services based on a number of block contracts of 5–10-year duration supplemented by flexible framework contracts, and with prices informed by a cost of care exercise. These commissioning arrangements have been further developed as set out in this report.

Supported Living Care Services in Staffordshire

6. There are 121 Supported Living schemes in Staffordshire and the Council also funds care for residents in 57 schemes out of county. The Council currently funds Supported Living care services for 559 residents, 474 in county and 85 out of county, at a gross annual cost of £34.1 million. This includes:
 - a. 475 individuals for whom the Council purchases or directly provides care: 398 in County and 77 out of county. Contractual arrangements include a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) (244 individuals), a Community Support Framework contract (139 individuals), in house care services (16 individuals), and off contract arrangements (76 individuals).
 - b. 84 individuals who purchase their own care from 27 care providers using Direct Payments: 76 in county and 8 out of county.
7. A range of issues have become apparent with current commissioning arrangements, many of which have been identified in the previous Cabinet reports:
 - a. Some individuals in Supported Living schemes have increasingly complex needs, sometimes with challenging behaviours, leading to an increased use of restrictive practices with limited innovation to explore how they could be managed with less intensive supervision.

- b. There is insufficient capacity within county for individuals with very high levels of need, leading to some individuals living out of county.
- c. For some Supported Living schemes there may be a link between the housing and care providers. This does not meet national good practice standards and could adversely affect security of tenure of residents. In some circumstances it could lead to a risk that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) requires registration as residential homes.
- d. With multiple small providers there are limited opportunities for economies of scale – for example sharing of staff to increase productivity and ensure business continuity, or exchange and develop skills.
- e. There are limited opportunities for the Council to develop strategic relationships with care providers to explore how to make the model of care and support more strengths based, harness opportunities from new technologies or plan for future demand.
- f. Transactions between the Council and providers are bureaucratic, both initially and also because the Council is frequently asked to review individuals, even though they do not always appear to have had a significant and long-term change in their level of need.
- g. Whilst in principle the DPS offers individuals a choice of Supported Living schemes, in practice this is limited due to small numbers of credible bids.
- h. In addition, whilst in principle the DPS offers competition between providers, again in practice this is limited by small numbers of credible bids.
- i. There are very wide variations in the price of Supported Living care services for individuals with relatively similar needs, with a consequent risk that some are not financially sustainable whilst others offer poor value for money.
- j. There are multiple contractual arrangements, leading to inconsistent standards.

Commissioning Objectives

- 8. The commissioning objectives for Supported Living care services remain similar to those set out in previous Cabinet reports, and are:

- a. Good quality, strengths-based care that promotes independence, has a positive approach to supported risk-taking, minimises restrictive practices and continually innovates.
- b. A market within Staffordshire with sufficient capacity to meet predicted and actual demand.
- c. Security of tenancy for individuals.
- d. Economies of scale with some larger providers and/or providers collaborating where this can achieve a benefit in either quality and/or value for money.
- e. Strategic relationships with care providers to explore how to make the model of care more strengths based, harness opportunities from new technologies and plan for future demand.
- f. Individuals can maintain and develop local connections within supportive communities.
- g. Commissioning focused on outcomes and a reduction in transaction costs with providers managing changes in individuals' needs, unless a significant and long term change is confirmed through a social work led review.
- h. Greater choice and control.
- i. A procurement process which offers competition to drive continual improvement while also supporting collaboration.
- j. Standardised prices that are financially sustainable whilst also being cost effective.
- k. Strengthened quality assurance and contract management.

Commissioning Plan

9. To achieve these a commissioning plan for procurement of a Flexible Framework has been developed including the following – further details are included in Appendix 1:
 - a. Service specification.
 - b. Pricing.
 - c. Procurement.

10. The commissioning plan has been developed using feedback from individuals receiving Supported Living care services, their families, and care providers.
11. Individuals receiving Supported Living care services and their families told us that their main priorities were as the points outlined below (their feedback is summarised in more detail in Appendix 2). The commissioning plan also reflects these in the service specification:
 - a. Privacy
 - b. Good communication
 - c. The opportunity for social activities
 - d. A tranquil environment
12. Local care providers were keen that future commissioning arrangements did not disadvantage small and medium sized companies. The commissioning plan reflects this in the lotting and procurement approach.
13. The commissioning plan is consistent with the future commissioning arrangements approved by Cabinet on 19 October 2022, except the proposal is that around 40% (rather than 85%) of Supported Living care services will be procured using call-off contracts that could be aggregated into blocks across multiple schemes with around 60% (rather than 15%) procured using call-off contracts for single schemes or individuals. This is to ensure sufficient opportunities for small and medium sized companies.

Procurement

14. The Council currently funds Supported Living care services for three groups of individuals living in Staffordshire, summarised below and in Appendix 1:
 - a. **Group 1.** Residents who predominantly have mental health conditions and where Supported Living care services offer specialist mental health support. There is confidence that housing and care providers operate separately, and care providers are mostly purchased by the Council.
 - b. **Group 2.** Residents living in schemes that were commissioned by the Council and/or NHS. Supported Living care services are typically provided by larger and/or national organisations. Residents' needs are predominantly medium to very high complexity. There is confidence that housing and care providers operate separately, and care provision is mostly purchased by the Council.

- c. **Group 3.** Residents living in schemes that have been established by local housing and care providers. Supported Living care services are typically provided by small and medium sized, often local, companies. It includes:
- i. **Group 3A.** Residents' needs are predominantly medium to very high complexity. There is confidence that housing and care providers operate separately, and care providers are mostly purchased by the Council.
 - ii. **Group 3B.** Residents' needs are predominantly medium to very high complexity. For some schemes further assurance is required that there is appropriate separation of housing and care provision. Care providers may be purchased by the Council or by individuals using Direct Payments.
 - iii. **Group 3C.** Residents' needs are predominantly low complexity. For some schemes further assurance is required that there is appropriate separation of housing and care provision. Care providers may be purchased by the Council or by individuals using Direct Payments.
15. The Council also funds Supported Living care services for a Group 4 of individuals living outside the Council's administrative boundary.
16. Procurement for Supported Living care services to schemes in **Groups 1, 2 and 3** would proceed as below:
- a. The Council would procure a Flexible Framework.
 - b. The Flexible Framework would be divided into Lots: a single Lot for Group 1 and three geographical Lots for Groups 2 and 3.
 - c. Care providers could apply to be appointed to Lots provided they met the Council's required selection criteria.
 - d. Once appointed to the Flexible Framework care providers could bid competitively to be awarded a call-off contract to provide Supported Living care services for a specific scheme or individual.
 - e. The Flexible Framework would be of 5 years duration with an ability, wholly at the Council's discretion, for it to be extended for a further 3 years, a potential maximum duration of 8 years.
 - f. The Council would reserve the right to re-open the Flexible Framework during its duration based on the Council's assessment of demand.
 - g. The Council would have the discretion to specify the duration of call-off contracts.

17. Supported Living care services for **Group 4** individuals would fall outside the scope of the procurement for the Flexible Framework. We would undertake a separate analysis to determine the most appropriate future contractual arrangements with the aim of aligning terms and conditions with Supported Living care services within Staffordshire where possible.

Alternative Options Considered

18. The alternative considered was a Prime Provider arrangement whereby a few large companies would be contracted to provide all Supported Living care services, providing care directly at some schemes and subcontracting care to small and medium sized companies at others. This was discounted due to a lack of confidence in the model and a lack of enthusiasm from the market.

Timescale

19. Publication of the Flexible Framework would be from August 2023 with applications closing in October. Evaluation would be in November and December with appointment expected by the end of March 2024.
20. For **Groups 1 and 2** call-off contracts would begin to be tendered from April 2024. Where the successful care providers are the incumbents, care providers may be able to mobilise from July 2024. Where the successful care providers are new there would be a mobilisation period to allow for TUPE of staff and CQC registration where necessary.
21. For **Group 3** call-off contracts would begin to be tendered from April 2024 in phases with mobilisation over a period of up to 2 years. Where necessary there would be due diligence, prior to call-off, to ensure the appropriate separation of housing and care provision, and for Group 3C we would also explore prior to call-off whether they might be able to achieve greater independence in alternative housing.
22. This would allow early mobilisation of call-off contracts for around 40% of current residents, with a more gradual mobilisation for the remaining 60%, which would help to manage risks during transition. The timescale will require an extension of the current DPS to cover the transition period onto new contracts.

Quality Assurance and Contract Management

23. All care providers would be required to demonstrate that they meet the quality standards set out in the service specification prior to appointment to the Flexible Framework, including compliance with CQC standards,

that they are committed to strengths-based care and willing work with the Council's Quality Assurance Team.

24. All care providers would be required to comply with the contractual management obligations as set out in the call-off contract and work with the Council's Commercial Team.
25. All care providers would be required to work with the Council to develop staff skills and consider environmental adaptations, especially to support management of challenging behaviour without use of intensive supervision.
26. Care providers would be expected to participate in a Provider Forum to share experiences and learning, exchange and develop skills, and consider opportunities from new technologies.

Choice and Control

27. Potential residents would have choice and control over the following four aspects of their lives:
 - a. **Where I live:** A new online booking application would give new residents information about Supported Living schemes and current vacancies so that they can make choices about where they live. This would include information about location, accommodation, other tenants and care provider. They would also have the option to choose self-directed support if they wished to live in Supported Living scheme other than those with Council contracted care.
 - b. **Who I live with:** The online booking application would enable new residents to view properties and virtually meet other tenants before making a decision to move in.
 - c. **Who supports me:** The new online booking application would include details about the care provider.
 - d. **How I am supported:** The call-off contract would require care providers to work with individuals to understand their health and well-being aspirations and outcomes, co-produce support plans that enable these to be achieved, and take a person-centred approach which places the individual at the centre of decisions about their care. Commissioning by outcomes would give individuals greater control over their lives, with the ability to vary their day and weekly routine in line with changing needs.

Integration

28. The commissioning plan would enable the Council to continue to commission Supported Living care services on behalf of the NHS where there are joint funded arrangements and the Council is the lead commissioner.

Future Demand and Capacity

29. Demand for Supported Living care services for individuals with medium to very high complexity of needs in Staffordshire is expected to rise due to our ambitions to offer a greater range of services within the county, facilitate moves into Staffordshire in line with the principles of choice and controls/best interests, and reduce use of residential care where appropriate. Demand for Supported Living care services for individuals with low complexity of need may fall if we can identify alternatives that offer a greater degree of independence.

30. Housing and care providers are likely to continue to develop new Supported Living schemes and care providers would be offered opportunities periodically to join the Flexible Framework.

Risks

31. There are a number of risks that would be managed during implementation of the commissioning plan:

a. Procurement of the Flexible Framework

- i. There is a risk of insufficient interest from care providers. This would be mitigated by ongoing market engagement. In the event of an insufficient response to procurement, provision of Supported Living care services in-house or by Nexxus Care would be considered.
- ii. There is a risk of challenge from care providers who are unsuccessful in their applications to be appointed to the Flexible Framework. This has been mitigated by giving substantial opportunities for care providers to comment on the commissioning plan and would be mitigated by compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The fact that the Council intends to re-open the Flexible Framework periodically will also offer care providers that have been unsuccessful on a first attempt an opportunity to re-apply to join the Flexible Framework.

b. Call-off contracts. There would be similar risks at the award of the various call-off contracts – both of insufficient interest from care providers and challenge from care providers who are unsuccessful in being awarded a call-off contract. The risks would be mitigated by

open and transparent competition in line with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and ensuring the Council has detailed when it would direct award a call-off contract.

- c. **Impact on individuals** receiving Supported Living care services. For some of the schemes if existing care providers are not appointed to the Flexible Framework or are not successful in the award of a call-off contract, then new care providers would be awarded the call-off contract to provide Supported Living care services. For some individuals this could mean building a relationship with a new care company. Individuals may choose self-directed support to receive care and support from a particular provider, although this could create complexity, with more than one care provider operating in a scheme. These risks would be mitigated by good communication and support for any individuals affected to help them adjust to new arrangements.
- d. **Staffing.** Where a new care provider is awarded the call-off contract to provide Supported Living care services at an existing scheme, TUPE may apply, and where it does so this would minimise disruption to individuals receiving care. It will be important that existing care providers share sufficient employee liability information at the tender of call-off contracts to enable interested care providers to submit their bids. There is a risk that sufficient employee liability information is not provided at the tender of call-off contracts and that care providers do not submit bids or withdraw from the process. There is also a risk that staff are lost during transfer. This would be mitigated by phased tendering and gradual mobilisation of call off contracts in Group 3 to avoid large numbers of schemes being affected simultaneously. The risks around staffing and pricing are inextricably linked.
- e. **Pricing.** If prices are set too low there is a risk that care providers do not bid for call-off contracts, potentially resulting in a failed tender. There would also be a risk of compromising the quality and/or financial viability of services. If prices are set too high there is a risk we would not achieve value for money for taxpayers. This would be mitigated by calculation of a sustainable rate for the four bandings using a range of methodologies. At the point of mobilisation some care providers might have liabilities for costs that exceed their income under the pricing structure - this could apply either to incumbent or new care providers. We are required to balance our responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 for market shaping against our responsibilities to ensure a legally compliant procurement process. Some mitigation would be through due diligence of contracts with existing care providers to understand their costs. We are taking external legal advice on how to further mitigate these risks although it

may not be possible to eliminate them entirely. The risks around staffing and pricing are inextricably linked.

- f. **Housing.** There is a risk that housing providers are reluctant to work with new care providers. This would be mitigated by up to two-year procurement and mobilisation period for Group 3B, which will allow due diligence.

32. If any of these risks prove material, there would be a further update to Cabinet.

Link to Strategic Plan

33. The recommended commissioning plan for Supported Living care services would contribute to the following Strategic Plan priorities:

- a. Support Staffordshire's economy to grow, generating more and better-paid jobs.
- b. Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence.

Staffing Implications

34. The Council provides 16 individuals with Supported Living care services at Horninglow Bungalows in Burton-on-Trent. Inclusion of these in this procurement has been considered but discounted at this stage due to the need to maintain a contingency in the event of an incomplete response to procurement. The role in-house care services and/or Nexxus Care or another Local Authority Trading Company will be explored if necessary.

Legal Implications

35. The Council has appointed external legal advisors, Sharpe Pritchard LLP, to support the development of the Flexible Framework. They will draft the Flexible Framework terms and conditions and provide advice on any requirements and risks, including those relating to the Care Act 2014, the Public Contract Regulations 2015, due diligence and advice around existing contractual arrangements and transition arrangements and any legal and contractual implications arising and TUPE.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

36. Supported Living care services will continue to operate overall within budget. A small saving may be necessary to contribute to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Savings requirement of £1.2 million across all learning disability and autism social care services. A small non-recurrent budget will be identified to invest in technology to enable less intensive

supervision. Over time further savings may be possible through economies of scale, greater freedom for care providers to use staff flexibly to achieve individual's outcomes and cessation of Council funding of costs other than those related to care.

37. During transition a change from net to gross payments will be implemented, similar to the approach already taken with care homes, so that in future the Council will collect individual's contribution to the cost of their care rather than expecting care and support providers to charge the individual. This will reduce bureaucracy for care and support providers.

Climate Change Implications

38. Environmental impact would be included in the evaluation of care providers on appointment to the Flexible Framework. This would score care providers on use of electric vehicles, disposables/consumables, working with housing providers on energy efficient homes, recycling/reuse, and adverse weather planning to support wellbeing on continuity of care.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Commissioning Plan

Appendix 2 – Summary of Individual and parent/carer feedback

Community Impact Assessment

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Appendix 1: Supported Living Care Services Commissioning Plan

Service specification

1. The Flexible Framework would include a service specification that would be applied to all Supported Living care services. This would set a range of quality standards required for all care providers including that they:
 - a. Work with individuals to understand their health and wellbeing aspirations and outcomes and co-produce support plans that enable these to be achieved.
 - b. Offer strengths-based care that makes use of individuals' abilities, promotes their independence, minimises restrictive practices, and uses technology to enable less intensive supervision where appropriate.
 - c. Take a person-centred approach which places the individual at the centre of decisions about their care.
 - d. Operate separately from the housing provider, enabling individuals to hold and maintain their own tenancy agreements, with the right to change their care provider whilst remaining in their own home.
 - e. Support individuals with care services living in a range of accommodation.
 - f. Offer a level of support dependent on the individual's assessed eligible care needs, which may be relatively low for some, and 24-hours a day for others.
 - g. Be registered with the CQC with staff observing relevant CQC standards and associated guidance.
 - h. Recognise that staff are visitors in the individual's home and should act as such.
 - i. Respect each individual's dignity and privacy, as well as their gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, race, religion, culture and lifestyle.
 - j. Facilitate access to mainstream and community-based activities and opportunities, including the services offered by voluntary and community sector organisations.
 - k. Accept that individuals have the right to take risks and promote a positive risk management approach.
 - l. Protect the safety and wellbeing of individuals and staff, including promoting a safe and caring environment.
2. A range of performance indicators will be developed to reflect these quality standards, and these will be measured at the appropriate intervals and examined through performance and management arrangements. Performance management will be through quarterly contract management meetings with a named Contract Manager and will

focus on effectiveness in delivering the performance indicators and outcomes for individuals.

3. Supported Living care services would be commissioned by outcomes rather than hours of care. This would give individuals greater control over their lives, with the ability to vary their day and weekly routine in line with changing needs. It would also offer care providers the ability to use staff flexibly within and between schemes where appropriate to respond to changing needs and ensure business continuity. However, to support safe transition to this model, which is a major change from current practice, the intention is to set out how the weekly price linked to outcomes has been calculated. Further detailed work is being undertaken on the weekly pricing structure, managing the significance of this transition and mitigating those risks as far as possible.

Pricing

4. The Flexible Framework would include a pricing structure based on banded weekly rates to achieve individuals' outcomes. There would be four band of weekly rates reflecting individuals' complexity of needs: low, medium, high and very high. These would be defined by social workers based on their abilities as defined in the domains in the Care Act. The weekly rates would apply to contracted services and self-directed support, including Direct Payments. This would enable the Council to move to standardised prices that are financially sustainable and cost effective.
5. The weekly rates would be informed by:
 - a. An analysis of the current cost of care for individuals at each level of complexity.
 - b. A cost of care exercise that has been completed with care providers.
 - c. Benchmarking of the rates paid by other local authorities.
 - d. An estimate of the typical number of hours of care required by individuals at each level of complexity and a sustainable hourly rate.
 - e. Clarity that the Council covers care costs only - not housing or non-care costs.
 - f. The budget available.
6. If an individual's complexity of needs changes significantly, and in the long term, then care providers could request a review by a social worker and if their banding changed then a contract variation will be considered to reflect a revised banded weekly rate.

Procurement

7. The Council currently funds Supported Living care services for three groups of individuals living in Staffordshire, summarised below and in Appendix 1:
- a. **Group 1.** Residents who predominantly have mental health conditions and where Supported Living care services offer specialist mental health support. There is confidence that housing and care providers operate separately, and care providers are mostly purchased by the Council.
 - b. **Group 2.** Residents living in schemes that were commissioned by the Council and/or NHS. Supported Living care services are typically provided by larger and/or national organisations. Residents' needs are predominantly medium to very high complexity. There is confidence that housing and care providers operate separately, and care provision is mostly purchased by the Council.
 - c. **Group 3.** Residents living in schemes that have been established by local housing and care providers. Supported Living care services are typically provided by small and medium sized, often local, companies. It includes:
 - i. **Group 3A.** Residents' needs are predominantly medium to very high complexity. There is confidence that housing and care providers operate separately, and care providers are mostly purchased by the Council.
 - ii. **Group 3B.** Residents' needs are predominantly medium to very high complexity. For some schemes further assurance is required that there is appropriate separation of housing and care provision. Care providers may be purchased by the Council or by individuals using Direct Payments.
 - iii. **Group 3C.** Residents' needs are predominantly low complexity. For some schemes further assurance is required that there is appropriate separation of housing and care provision. Care providers may be purchased by the Council or by individuals using self-directed support.
8. The Council also funds Supported Living care services for a Group 4 of individuals living outside the Council's administrative boundary.

Table 1: Supported Living services

Group			No. of residents by complexity
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	No. of schemes	No. of care providers	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Total
1	5	5	1	4	11	2	18
2	49	13	11	82	105	3	201
3a	12	11	1	11	7	0	19
3b	51	31	2	24	111	40	177
3c	4	3	0	0	0	26	26
4	57	43	7	13	58	7	85
Total	178	106	22	134	292	78	526

Please note: the table above does not include 33 individuals because they are out of scope for the recommission for reasons including receiving care in their own home and receiving care from the Council's in house care services. The above numbers are subject to change over the next 12 months.

9. Procurement for Supported Living care services to schemes in **Groups 1, 2 and 3** would proceed as below:

- a. The Council would procure a Flexible Framework.
- b. The Flexible Framework would be divided into Lots: a single Lot for Group 1 and three geographical Lots for Groups 2 and 3.
- c. Care providers could apply to be appointed to Lots provided they met the Council's required selection criteria.
- d. Once appointed to the Flexible Framework care providers could bid competitively to be awarded a call-off contract to provide Supported Living care services for a specific scheme or individual.
- e. The Flexible Framework would be of 5 years duration with an ability, wholly at the Council's discretion, for it to be extended for a further 3 years, a potential maximum duration of 8 years.
- f. The Council would reserve the right to re-open the Flexible Framework during its duration based on an assessment of demand. Housing and care providers are likely to continue to develop new Supported Living schemes and care providers would be offered opportunities periodically to join the Flexible Framework.
- g. The Council would have the discretion to specify the duration of call-off contracts.

10. Call-off contracts for a scheme would be appropriate when there is an expectation of appropriate demand - i.e. that the Council would be commissioning Supported Living care services for most or all the residents in the scheme. Call-off contracts for an individual would be appropriate when the Council is purchasing Supported Living care

services for single residents in schemes where we are not the main commissioner of care.

11. For Group 2 single care providers could be awarded call-off contracts for blocks across multiple schemes up to a maximum to be determined. This would support aggregation of Supported Living care services across schemes in order to achieve economies of scale and facilitate strategic relationships.

12. The expected timescale for procurement is outlined in table 2 below:

Table 2: expected timescales for procurement

Activity	Flexible Framework (all groups)	Groups 1 & 2	Group 3
Publication and application	Aug - Oct 2023		
Evaluation of applications	Oct - Nov 2023		
Appointment to framework	Mar 2024		
Tender of call off contracts		From Apr 2024	In phases from Apr 2024
Award of call-off contracts		Jun 2024	
Call-off contracts commence		From Jul 2024 subject to TUPE and CQC registration	

13. We would carry out due diligence prior to advertisement of call-off contracts to identify any issues that need to be flagged to potential care providers including where the workforce has previously transferred from the Council or NHS.

14. For Groups 3B and 3C, prior to call-off, we would undertake due diligence to ensure appropriate separation of housing and care provision prior to appointment of care providers under the call-off contracts. For Group 3C we would also explore prior to call-off whether they might be able to achieve greater independence in alternative housing.

15. This approach would combine an opportunity for larger care companies to provide Supported Living care services to multiple schemes, which offers economies of scale and the possibility of strategic relationships,

whilst preserving the opportunity for small and medium sized companies to provide care to single schemes.

16. Supported Living services for schemes in **Group 4** schemes are out of scope of the Flexible Framework, however the Council will work separately with care providers to move them onto similar terms and conditions, consistent with the commissioning objectives.
17. Supported Living care services for **Group 4** individuals would fall outside the scope of the procurement for the Flexible Framework. We would undertake a separate analysis to determine the most appropriate future contractual arrangements with the aim of aligning terms and conditions with Supported Living care services within Staffordshire where possible.

Supported Living care services for new residents

18. New residents would be offered accommodation and care at in-county schemes with Supported Living care services provided by providers on the flexible framework. Up to date vacancy information would be maintained with details available on a new online booking application. As an alternative they could choose self-directed support at the appropriate weekly rate and purchase their own Supported Living care services at a different scheme.

Supported living recommission: Co-production with individuals living in supported living in Staffordshire.

Page 85

20 June 2023 v 1.0

How are we co-producing with people living in supported living?

The advocacy organisation ASIST have been engaging with individuals on behalf of the Council.

They have carried out 2 rounds of engagement work over 12 months with people living in Supported Living across Staffordshire. Advocates visited people at home and asked pre-agreed questions to understand what was important to people and how SCC can improve supported living.

Engagement focussed on the following key areas:

- What works well
- What does not work well
- What was their experience of the process from assessment to placement
- What are their suggestions for improvements
- What is important to them that they want us to know
- How do providers support them to meet their outcomes?

How are we co-producing with parent carers of people living in supported living?

Over the last 12 months parents and carers of individuals within Supported Living had the opportunity to feedback on their experiences and aspirations for the recommission. Parent carers were invited to feedback via face-to-face sessions, questionnaires and email. In addition, we have engaged with the Staffordshire County Council Learning Disability and Autism Parent Carers Forum, attending one workshop in November with another planned for July (postponed from June).

Engagement focussed on the following key areas:

- What works well
- What does not work well
- What was their experience of the process from assessment to placement
- What are their suggestions for improvements
- What is important to them that they want us to know
- How do providers support them to meet their outcomes?

Privacy

- “I like the staff, having my own privacy, my own space, a flat of my own”
- “I like my privacy and solitude in my own flat”
- “I enjoy my own home, not having to share my space with others”
- “People should knock before they come into my bedroom”

Key themes - individuals

Living arrangements

Page 89

- “I enjoy my own home, not having to share my space with others”
- “There can be too much noise”
- “I don’t like having the office in my living room”
- “I don’t like people coming into my room”

Key themes - individuals

Social activities

- “Have more outings, more indoor activities”
- “To go on holiday”
- “Communal outings as a group”
- “I would like more support to go on holiday and day trips with the staff”
- “To have more staff on shift so I can go out in the community more”
- “Not enough communal activities”
- “I like doing my social activities and games with the staff”

Key themes - individuals

Communication

- “I like things in easy read otherwise I can't understand it”
- “Not everyone uses a computer”
- “Contact details so my mum can talk to my support worker or the manager”
- “Tell me when things are going to change”
- “Not enough information about supported living”

Key themes - individuals

Housing quality

- “The house needs painting; we’ve been waiting ages”
- “Maintenance issues need to be done quicker”
- “I like choosing how I have my room”

What matters most - staffing

- Ensuring staff have the right values for a career in care
- Better quality checks/support for new staff/staff with little experience
- Recruitment drives for more male staff in the care industry
- Recognition of the impact on service users of staff changes and the differences in quality of care between permanent staff and agency staff
- Involvement in recruitment
- Confidence and trust in providers to ensure the health and happiness of their family member
- Staff consistency

What matters most - housing

- Security of tenure
- Poor communication
- Finding the right property was hard
- Not enough choice of properties in the right areas
- Length of time the process took
- Unnecessary red tape
- Extra stress caused as the actual move happens quickly

What matters the most – quality.

- Ensuring staff have the right values for a career in care
- Better quality checks/support for new staff/staff with little experience
- Recognition of the impact on service users of staff changes and the differences in quality of care between permanent staff and agency staff
- Confidence and trust in providers to ensure the health and happiness of their family member
- Quality assurance



Key themes – parent carers

What matters the most - communication

- Improving communication between care providers and parents/carers
- Care providers involving parents/carers more (planning activities, staff recruitment, purchasing) so they know what is going on
- Family members want to know more how supported living works as an alternative to residential care
- Better/more involvement in the review process

Next steps

Key message

It is crucial that the specification reinforces people's rights to have a home of their own, and that they have choice and control over their life and enables providers to be held to account if this doesn't happen.

Page 97

How do we make sure it happens?

The Service specification requires providers to provide:

- Annual satisfaction surveys
- CQC registration requirement and inspection reports
- Outcomes monitoring framework

As a Council we are also providing:

- New information pack to share with people considering Supported Living
- Updated SCC webpages
- Conducting annual reviews with individuals in Supported Living
- Social workers are being allocated to each scheme
- Annual Quality Assurance visit
- Quarterly contract monitoring meetings

Next steps – people living in supported living

- Continued engagement throughout the project and transition process
- Production of video stories for people to tell their story
- Individual case study being used as part of the evaluation process so providers can practically demonstrate how they would support someone. Individuals in Supported Living will support to create a model answer of what good support would look like which will create the scoring matrix the evaluation panel will use.

Next steps – parent carers

- Ongoing communication with parent/carer groups
- Individual case study being used as part of the evaluation process so providers can practically demonstrate how they would support someone. Individuals in Supported Living will support to create a model answer of what good support would look like which will create the scoring matrix the evaluation panel will use.

Community Impact Assessment

Final Recommendations for the Future Commissioning Arrangements
for Supported Living Services in Staffordshire

Kate Harrold, Commissioning Manager

Date Monday, 10 July 2023

➤ Equality Assessment

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Age - older and younger people</p>	<p>The new contracting arrangements will allow for all service users aged 16+ with assessed eligible needs to access care and support. This will allow sufficient time to plan for services for when a service user reaches their 18th birthday.</p>		
<p>Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.</p>	<p>The new contracting arrangements will ensure the Supported Living provider market delivers quality care, meets demand and delivers outcomes to prevent, reduce and delay needs and enable independence.</p> <p>SCC will develop a thriving care market which can prevent,</p>	<p>Risk of complaint and challenge.</p> <p>Users of services who currently receive their support from a non-contracted Provider may be required to transition to a new Provider if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their current preferred provider wishes not to be a 	<p>Project currently in progress which is moving non contracted placements onto a contracted footing. This is anticipated to be completed during 2023.</p> <p>All proposed ways of working will align with The Care Act (inclusive of Choice Policy) TUPE may be applicable in certain circumstances, thus providing the potential for continuity of staffing in particular circumstances.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>reduce and delay needs, are asset focussed and promote independence.</p> <p>The process for making placements will be simplified and streamlined for all stakeholders involved.</p> <p>Users of services will receive support to meet their assessed eligible care and support needs in a timely way.</p> <p>Users of services will be able to express choice and control, as per the Care Act, when selecting their support, but not at any cost.</p>	<p>contracted provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their current preferred Provider is not successful in joining the new arrangements and the Service User is not able to manage a Direct Payment to enable them to choose to remain with their current Provider. • They are not able to afford the required 'top up' - as per SCC Choice Policy, when exercising choice. 	<p>Completion of a Care Act compliant Asset Based Assessment and MCA (as appropriate)</p> <p>Project underway to look at the option to use Individual Service Funds (ISF) which is a tri-party agreement with the Individual, Care and Support provider, and the Local Authority. If successful, this will provide an alternative option to a contracted provider and for a Service User to take a Direct Payment. A final report for recommendation will be compiled.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work	N/A	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers	N/A	N/A	N/A
Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins	N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sex - men or women	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes	N/A	N/A	N/A

➤ Workforce Assessment

Who will be affected - consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>There is an in house Supported Living scheme called Horninglow Bungalows however this service is out of scope for the recommission.</p> <p>For the general health and care market where applicable TUPE will apply.</p>	<p>The new commissioning arrangements with fewer providers will enable the Council to fill vacancies, benefit from economies of scale and establish a productive partnership with care and support providers and housing providers. It will facilitate the development of a 'core and cluster' model using staff flexibly across more than one scheme.</p> <p>Longer term contracts with providers will allow for longer term</p>	<p>There is a risk of TUPE failure.</p> <p>There is a risk that some individuals may lose their long term carer.</p>	<p>TUPE will be applied where applicable, thus providing the potential for continuity of staffing in particular circumstances. Support will be sought from Legal and HR as appropriate. To support this staffing information will be requested from providers up front to support the tenure process and allow providers make informed decisions.</p> <p>A number of provider engagement opportunities has taken place with the market including 5 engagement workshops led by an external consultancy agency 'Peopletoo', 2 provider Forums, and the offer of 1:1 meetings with</p>

Who will be affected - consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>business planning and staff stability.</p> <p>A move away from task and time focused care delivery to an outcomes focused model may give staff more satisfaction.</p>		<p>commissioners. Information and presentations were also sent to all providers on the Dynamic Purchasing System.</p> <p>A risk matrix has been produced to identify which providers have engaged and providers who had not engaged were sent direct communications.</p> <p>The number of SME providers has been identified.</p> <p>Staffordshire Care Association/ Care Providers Association (SARCP) have met with their members and sent a list of points for the Council to consider. The</p>

Who will be affected - consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
			<p>Council has asked providers for further comments and suggestions.</p> <p>There are options in the report which would have less impact on the SME market.</p> <p>Individuals have the option to use self directed support such as Direct Payments to source care packages, the Council is also investigating whether to develop an Individual Service Fund offer as part of self directed support.</p> <p>The Council is also scoping out the opportunity to run the block contract and the Flexible Framework concurrently to offer more provider choice.</p>

Who will be affected - consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
			A mobilisation period is being built into timescales for the block to allow the incoming providers sufficient time to recruit and train staff.

➤ Health and Care Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>A key priority within our Strategic Plan is to 'Encourage good health and well-being, resilience and independence'.</p> <p>As of May 2023 there are currently 241 providers registered on the Dynamic Purchasing System. Some of our current Supported Living Services are quite traditional in their approach focusing on tasks and time rather than enabling individuals to maximise their strengths and opportunities. Our current service specification for the Dynamic Purchasing System does not require providers to work in this way, and currently less than half are proactively contract managed with no ongoing monitoring from the quality assurance teams unless there is a specific issue.</p> <p>This recommission moves the market to outcomes based working which is person centered and utilises community resources and assets to enable individuals to reach their potential. The new arrangements will include</p>	<p>The new contracting arrangements will enable the Council to source care and support for our more complex clients with a range of needs in a simplified and consolidated commissioning approach to ensure the Council develops a thriving care market which can prevent, reduce and delay needs, are asset focussed and promote independence.</p> <p>There is currently insufficient capacity within county for people with very high levels of need, leading to people being placed out of county, the new arrangements allow for</p>	<p>Evidence of positive outcomes achieved within existing Supported Living services shows that without the right support at the right time, an individual's overall health and wellbeing may deteriorate.</p> <p>We currently have some smaller providers who already work in this way. With a move to block contracts and fewer large providers taking over the market there is a risk the personalisation will be lost.</p> <p>A move to outcomes focused work is</p>	<p>Fewer providers will enable the Council to build close working relationships with the providers and proactively contract manage them to identify any areas which are not being delivered. It also allows for peer support and co-production opportunities with individuals.</p> <p>A clear service specification will be developed which outlines the Councils expectations, and contains opportunity for the Council to monitor performance and to address issues, or ultimately terminate the contract if necessary.</p> <p>Individual, carer/parent, and provider feedback will be used to shape the specification.</p> <p>A number of provider engagement sessions have been held including a specific one on strengths based working. Communications for individuals and parents/carers is</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>proactive contract management and quality assurance and co production opportunities for service users, and parents/carers.</p>	<p>investment in Staffordshire in the long term, and further capacity to be developed to meet unmet need, it also creates the opportunity to plan ahead to support the needs of specific groups such as young people transitioning into adult services.</p> <p>Subject to assessed eligible needs and the personalised outcomes identified, the provision of effective Supported Living will support service users (where they are able) to meet the domains within the Care Act.</p>	<p>difficult to monitor on an individual basis.</p>	<p>planned for once the tender documents go live. However the Council has commissioned the advocacy organisation Asist to capture general feedback from individuals on Supported Living.</p> <p>A clear Quality Assurance process will be implemented which includes involvement from users of Services and parents/carers.</p> <p>A mobilisation period will be built into the timeframe to allow new providers to work with their staff on culture change and implement training.</p>

➤ **Communities Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The new commissioning arrangements which are focused on building strengths, and utilising assets require care providers to engage and work collaboratively with their local communities to achieve outcomes for individuals in their care. The new arrangements will link in with the Public Health Supportive Communities programme and Support Staffordshire, who have mapped opportunities within the community and VCSE sector for adults with disabilities and mental health conditions. There are also future opportunities to work collaboratively to create new community resource where there is an identified need.</p>	<p>Making more use of local community assets and services to increase independence such as through utilising community activities, and volunteering opportunities which may result in reduced care support required.</p> <p>Potential to build the capacity of the VCSE sector.</p>	<p>Support Staffordshire have mapped existing VCSE sector who can support adults with disabilities now but also a group who want to but require training and confidence building, which requires resource to support.</p> <p>Despite best efforts, via the new arrangements, to facilitate partnerships and joint working it may not be successful this way of working is a culture shift for the majority of the market and requires input and resource from the</p>	<p>Working in partnership with the Strengths Based Programme and Supportive Communities Programme.</p> <p>A clear service specification will set out the Councils expectations.</p> <p>Proactive contract management which will include monitoring of community engagement.</p> <p>A mobilisation period will be built in to the timeframe for the block contracts to allow new providers to work with their staff and implement training.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
		care providers to make it work.	

➤ **Economic Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>A key priority within our Strategic Plan is to 'Support Staffordshire's economy to grow, generating more and better paid jobs'.</p> <p>The new arrangements will create stability in the market, and opportunity for local investment and growth in Staffordshire through long term contracts. It will allow large providers to flex their staff across multiple sites to maximise efficiency.</p>	<p>The new commissioning arrangements with fewer providers will enable the Council to fill vacancies, benefit from economies of scale and establish a productive partnership with care and support providers and housing providers. It will facilitate the development of a 'core and cluster' model using staff flexibly across more than one scheme.</p>	<p>To make block contracting or a prime provider model viable the lots need to be large scale this removes SME providers and could destabilise the market.</p> <p>Risk of complaint and challenge from Providers especially from SME providers who do not want to or can not expand their business to be in a position to bid for a lot.</p>	<p>A number of provider engagement opportunities has taken place with the market including 5 engagement workshops led by an external consultancy agency 'Peopletoo', 2 provider Forums, and the offer of 1:1 meetings with commissioners. Information and presentations were also sent to all providers on the Dynamic Purchasing System.</p> <p>A risk matrix has been produced to identify which providers have engaged and providers who had not engaged were sent direct communications.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>The proposal for future pricing arrangements is for a range of weekly rates. This would allow providers to flex the care and support they offer between individuals and across schemes without the need to continually request an assessment or review</p> <p>This will provide the opportunity for existing Providers to potentially expand their existing provisions in Staffordshire as well as encourage new Providers to the region where applicable to do so.</p> <p>With fewer providers better relationships can be made and links made with supporting organisations to allow</p>	<p>There is a risk that TUPE could fail.</p>	<p>The number of SME providers has been identified.</p> <p>Staffordshire Care Association/ Care Providers Association (SARCP) have met with their members and sent a list of points for the Council to consider. The Council has asked providers for further comments and suggestions.</p> <p>There are options in the report which would have less impact on the SME market.</p> <p>Individuals have the option to use self directed support such as Direct Payments to source care packages, the Council is also investigating whether to develop an Individual Service Fund offer as part of self directed support.</p> <p>The Council is also scoping out the opportunity to run the block contract and the Flexible Framework concurrently to offer more provider choice.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	service users to become active members of society and, where appropriate, gain employment / volunteering experience in a step-down model of care.		<p>A mobilisation period is being built into timescales for the block to allow the incoming providers sufficient time to recruit and train staff.</p> <p>TUPE may be applicable, thus providing the potential for continuity of staffing in particular circumstances. Support will be sought from Legal and HR as appropriate.</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Our mission is to 'Make Staffordshire Sustainable', and we have made a commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across every aspect of our service provision and estate.</p> <p>Climate Change is relevant to Supported Living in terms of climate change adaptation and how individuals and support staff are supported during times of adverse weather such as</p>	<p>The recommission provides an opportunity to work with care providers in a strategic way.</p> <p>The service specification will include environmental</p>	<p>Climate Change is not a key focus of this recommission.</p> <p>This recommission states that housing should be completely separate to the care element to ensure</p>	<p>A question on environmental impact will be included in the evaluation questions for the tender which will look at; the use of electric vehicles, disposal of consumables, working with housing providers on energy efficiency, recycling/reuse, and</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>continued periods of hot weather, severe cold, or flooding, to supported wellbeing and continued care.</p> <p>Across social care as a whole, we the Council is trying to identify the areas where there is most potential impact gain in relation to carbon targets.</p>	<p>impact in the social value section.</p>	<p>security of tenure for Individuals. Therefore the Council does not have responsibility for housing and has no powers over energy efficiency in the schemes.</p>	<p>planning for adverse weather conditions.</p> <p>There is the opportunity for Commissioning to work with the Sustainability Team and co-produce a resource with awarded care providers around enabling individuals to cope well and remain independent during adverse weather and to enable staff to deliver continued care.</p> <p>Promote the use of public transport through support schemes such as 'travel buddies'</p>

Page 115

➤ **Environment Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>The new arrangements with larger providers across multiple schemes will allow for shared resources.</p>	<p>Under the recommission there is</p>	<p>Providers not meeting care requirements in</p>	<p>Work with Provider marketplace and assessment and care</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>opportunity for providers to review how they are meeting the agreed care needs of individuals in their care in terms of access to the local community and transport options.</p>	<p>terms of access to the community due to transport issues.</p>	<p>management teams to try and identify potential future needs.</p> <p>Ensure providers are clear and in a position to deliver against care needs in terms of access to the community and transport.</p>

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2023

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards – Contract Award



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

“The Council has a legal duty to consider Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications, where people are unable to make their own decisions in life.

“Staffordshire has a large number of care homes and we have more applications to consider than most local authorities. They require a lengthy process which creates a huge demand on our resources.

“With our social workers facing a rising demand for Care Act assessments we will need additional capacity for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards to avoid an unacceptable waiting list.”

“New legislation had been promised to reduce the burden of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, but unfortunately has been delayed. I have called on the Secretary of State to speed up this legislation and in the meantime to provide extra funding for the additional capacity we will require.”

Report Summary:

This report seeks approval to procure additional capacity to support the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards process.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approves procurement of additional capacity to support the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards process.
- b. Delegate authority to Director of Health and Care to award contracts for this additional capacity.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards – Contract Award

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Approves procurement of additional capacity to support the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards process.
- b. Delegate authority to Director of Health and Care to award contracts for this additional capacity.

Local Member Interest:

NA

Report of the Director for Health and Care

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. The Council has a statutory duty to manage Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) applications. This is a procedure prescribed in law when 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.
2. The term 'deprivation of liberty' can encompass a range of different restrictions that people may experience. The majority of applications relate to older people who have dementia and are deprived of their liberty because either the hospital ward or the care home has a locked door. This is entirely appropriate to keep them safe from harm and does not compromise the well-being of the individual.
3. The process of managing DoLS applications is prescribed in law and is time consuming. It requires six assessments completed by at least two different professionals to determine whether the restrictions are in the person's best interests. All aspects need to be satisfied and have to be agreed by a representative of the Council.
4. Staffordshire is a large county and has a lot of care homes, which means we receive a high number of DoLS applications compared to other local authorities. During 2022/23 we received an average of 550 applications monthly, an increase of more than 20% compared to the average of 450 monthly in 2021/22. Around 200 of these are subsequently withdrawn leaving around 350 applications to consider each month.

5. Historically we had a large waiting list of DoLS applications. On 8th March 2019 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman published a report finding that the Council had unlawfully decided not to carry out assessments of low and medium priority applications and significantly delayed assessing the remaining applications.
6. We are aiming to reduce the waiting list of DoLS applications below 550, equivalent to one month's work. This is to ensure that we can demonstrate that we are meeting our legal obligations. On 26 May 2023 we had 1288 DoLS applications waiting to be completed. This compares favourably with similar local authorities but still risks criticism from the Ombudsman and/or the Care Quality Commission as part of adult social care enhanced assurance.
7. We use Council and Midlands Partnership University Foundation Trust employed staff to support the DoLS process. However the increased demand for Care Act assessments, up 17% post-Covid compared to pre-pandemic, as well as some staff vacancies means that their capacity is limited to 50-100 applications per month. We have therefore been using additional capacity commissioned from adult social care agencies in order to reduce the waiting list.
8. The expectation was that this would be a temporary measure as the Government was planning to replace DoLS with new legislation called Liberty Protection Safeguards. This would have reduced demand as well as time requirements. However Liberty Protection Safeguards have been repeatedly delayed with no implementation date in the foreseeable future and a possibility that they will be abandoned altogether. The Council has written to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to highlight the burden of DoLS and ask that Liberty Protection Safeguards are brought forward.
9. We therefore need to maintain additional capacity to support the DoLS process in order to reduce the waiting list further. The recommendation is to procure additional capacity from an adult social care agency to consider 250-300 applications per month. The contract would be for 2+1 years and on a payment per case basis. The expectation is that the unit cost would be between £350 to £500.
10. We would also work with other local authorities to explore how the DoLS process could be partially automated, whilst still meeting the prescribed legal process, in order to reduce the time requirements.

Legal Implications

11. The additional capacity is required to ensure that the Council meets our legal obligations in respect of DoLS. The procurement of additional capacity would be undertaken in line with procurement regulations.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

12. The value of the contract would be up to £1,500,000 annually, a total of up to £4,500,000 over a three-year period. This would be funded from Health and Care reserves to avoid a pressure on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. This would require review before September 2025 light of emerging legislation and the Council's financial position.

Climate Change Implications

13. There are no implications on climate change.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Community Impact Assessment (CIA)

Contact Details

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Community Impact Assessment

Best Interest Assessment – Contract
Award

Peter Hampton/Ruth Martin

Date 4th May 2023

➤ **Equality Assessment**

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Age - older and younger people People currently in receipt of care: (38% aged less than 65, 11% aged 65-74, 51% aged 75+)</p>	<p>The proposed changes will not have any impact on the service that people with protected characteristics receive. There will be equal access to any person who requires a best Interest Assessment under the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.</p> <p>Any staff employed by the successful provider will be expected to provide the same quality of service as staff employed by MPFT and SCC.</p>	<p>There is a low risk that the assessors will not complete assessments equitably and that protected characteristics will not be recognised.</p>	<p>The noted risk will be mitigated by all assessments being reviewed and authorised by a trained member of Staffordshire County Council staff.</p> <p>The requests for a best interest assessment are also initially reviewed by a member of Staffordshire County Council who will have prioritised it and ensure equality at this stage.</p>
<p>Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism, and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment, and physical disabilities.</p>			
<p>Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another</p>			
<p>Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work</p>			
<p>Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers</p>			
<p>Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins</p>			
<p>Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief</p>			

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered.</p> <p>81% of people currently in receipt of care do not have a religion or belief recorded on our systems</p>	<p>In addition, the proposed change will support the Council to prevent waiting lists in the future in the event of any increased demand.</p>		
<p>Sex - men or women</p> <p>People currently in receipt of care (59% Female, 41% Male)</p>			
<p>Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes</p> <p>78% of people currently in receipt of care do not have their sexual orientation recorded on our systems</p>			

➤ **Workforce Assessment**

Who will be affected - consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
SCC and MPUFT staff who are qualified Best Interest assessors	The employment of additional resource will support the existing workforce capacity	There is a need to ensure that all staff employed by MPUFT and SCC who are currently qualified and practicing as a best interest assessor are not able to practice as a BIA or not have access to relevant update training.	BIA's employed by SCC and MPUFT will continue to be able to complete assessments either through the rota or through the additional hours. Training will continue to be provided to qualified BIA's

➤ **Health and Care Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Ability to meet statutory duties under the MCA - Deprivation of Liberty (Safeguards)</p>	<p>The proposed changes will enable the County Council to reduce risk of increase waiting times for people requiring a Best interest assessment under the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards legislation.</p> <p>This not only means that we as a council meet our statutory duty but that adults we support have appropriate safeguards in place..</p>	<p>There is a low risk that the staff will not provide the same level of quality service as they are not familiar with the Council's policies and processes.</p>	<p>The noted risk will be mitigated by all assessments being reviewed and authorised by a trained member of Staffordshire County Council staff.</p> <p>The requests for a best interest assessment are also initially reviewed by a member of Staffordshire County Council who will have prioritised it and ensure equality at this stage..</p>

Page 125

➤ **Communities Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
No impact - The service will be provided across all communities in Staffordshire.			

➤ **Economic Assessment**

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
No impact			

➤ **Climate Change Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
No impact			

Page 126

➤ **Environment Assessment**

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
No impact			

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2023

Staffordshire Bus Strategy



Councillor David Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport said,

“Through the Government’s National Bus Strategy, we have an opportunity to fulfil our role as the Local Transport Authority in shaping and supporting public transport provision in Staffordshire.

“By working with operators to bid for money to update old vehicles, improve passenger facilities and encourage bus companies to innovate for the future, we can encourage the development of a sustainable bus network for the benefit of Staffordshire residents.

“An ambitious Enhanced Partnership and Bus Service Improvement Plan should help provide equality of access to employment and key services whilst contributing towards achieving carbon net zero.”

Report Summary:

In June 2021, Cabinet received a report that outlined the governments approach to Bus Back Better, following the recent publication of the National Bus Strategy (NBS). The report detailed the implications and options for Staffordshire County Council and our local bus operators. The report followed strong messaging by central government that those Local Transport Authority’s (LTA) that are not fully engaging in the Enhanced Partnership (EP) / Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) agenda could find their funding streams for highway maintenance and bidding opportunities impacted.

Several actions were agreed at Cabinet including confirmation of a commitment to developing an EP, as outlined within the NBS. As a consequence of this, the Council was required to submit a BSIP to the Department for Transport (DfT) by the 31 October 2021 and Cabinet approved this on the 20th October 2021. Work on the EP documentation had stalled following the unsuccessful BSIP bid in October 2021, however this report provides an update and outlines the requirement to complete the process for the creation of an Enhanced Partnership as well as demonstrating the need to undertake a full review of the existing Staffordshire BSIP.

Although the County Council does not run buses, the authority has a role in shaping public transport provision in Staffordshire acting in its role as Local Transport Authority (LTA). This role is one of coordination to encourage the development of a sustainable bus network for the benefit of Staffordshire residents. Through undertaking innovative marketing, analysis of their markets and users to facilitate a growth in patronage, operators in Staffordshire must play their role in developing the Staffordshire bus network.

Recommendations

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Agrees to complete the process for the creation of an Enhanced Partnership (EP) that is to commence on the 1st August 2023 in line with the previously agreed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).
- b. Agrees to the undertaking of a full review of the previously agreed BSIP in line with Department for Transport (DfT) feedback to enable Staffordshire County Council a greater chance of success for future bids.

Cabinet – Wednesday 19 July 2023

Staffordshire Bus Strategy

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Agrees to complete the process for the creation of an Enhanced Partnership (EP) that is to commence on the 1st August 2023 in line with the previously agreed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).
- b. Agrees to the undertaking of a full review of the previously agreed BSIP in line with Department for Transport (DfT) feedback to enable Staffordshire County Council a greater chance of success for future bids.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Reasons for Recommendations:

Background

1. To recap, the BSIP provides the overarching framework for the EP and Enhanced Partnership Scheme (EP Scheme). The aim of BSIP's across England is to improve bus public transport recognising that a strong, successful, low emission bus network will help support the decarbonization of the transport sector, support the economy and minimise traffic congestion.
2. The Staffordshire BSIP was developed in partnership with the public bus providers operating in Staffordshire, to deliver outcomes which were shaped by a public engagement exercise and comments from the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on the 16 September 2021. The financial ask of the BSIP to the DfT was £106m which was to be delivered over 3 years and a further £7m to cover lifetime costs, however the Staffordshire BSIP bid was unsuccessful. A link to the current BSIP is available in the documents list on page 9 whilst the key items from the document are available in Appendix 1.
3. A full review of the existing BSIP is required based on the feedback received from the DfT. In addition, Midlands Connect have formed a

Regional Bus Forum with the aim of sharing EP/BSIP best practice for all LTAs in the West Midlands area and this opportunity will be maximised.

4. The EP Plan summarises the main themes of the BSIP in setting out an analysis of local bus services in Staffordshire, the objectives for the quality and effectiveness of bus services and how the EP Scheme or Schemes are intended to achieve these objectives. The EP Scheme describes the Facilities, Measures and Obligations to be implemented to meet those objectives and how the partnership is constituted and operates.
5. An EP is a formal agreement between the local authority and bus operators setting out what is expected of each party, and the standards that will be met. The basis for an EP is set out in the Bus Services Act 2017 and associated guidance. Franchising is not recommended for Staffordshire as it is very resource intensive, and it is felt that growth can be delivered by adopting the partnership model which retains the ability for our local bus operators to innovate without the significant market intervention that franchising entails.
6. During 2022/23, local buses in Staffordshire carried circa 8.3 million adult passenger journeys (based on concessionary returns from local operators), making the bus our most important means of public transport. The bus network in Staffordshire has seen a notable decline in patronage over the preceding decade, from 22 million passenger journeys made in 2009/10 to pre-pandemic levels of 12.6 million passengers in 2019/20.
7. Since the pandemic, an increased number of bus services have required support from the authority for them to remain viable. To date, this has been achieved through the authority supporting and maximising the government grants that have been issued for this purpose.
8. Partnership working with bus operators has prevented a significant level of service loss. Mitigation in this instance has been either through the use of S106 funds, transfer of entitled students from closed contracts to local bus, or a combination of both. Notwithstanding the substantial achievements arising from these mitigations, there remains a portion of the Staffordshire bus network that will still be lost, with consequent impact on our residents and the economy, unless this decline can be reversed. Growing patronage to enable the majority of services to operate on a commercial basis is vital to ensuring a sustainable bus network for Staffordshire.
9. A revised BSIP for Staffordshire would have wide ranging benefits for our urban and rural areas alike. It offers the opportunity to reverse the long-

term decline in bus passenger numbers that has occurred over the past decade; and through robust measures, a public transport network set on a strong and sustainable footing can be restored.

National Bus Strategy

10. On 15th March 2021, the government published its National Bus Strategy for England “Bus Back Better”. The Strategy set out a significant step change in the government’s approach to funding and delivering the bus network. Whilst the market remains deregulated, a more co-ordinated partnership approach between operators and local authorities is now required.
11. The Strategy represented a change for the delivery of bus services with the opportunity to develop and grow our bus network to benefit communities, the local economy, and the environment. Delivery of the measures contained within Bus Back Better strongly support many of Staffordshire County Council’s Strategic Plan priorities and principles.
12. There is a commitment within the Strategy for long term increased funding for bus services, both for local authorities and bus operators alike which is why the DfT, over the last 3 years has invested over £3bn in bus services in England outside of London. Most of this funding has been provided to support the sector following the COVID-19 pandemic focused on helping our bus network return to pre-pandemic levels.
13. The DfT has outlined that the existing funding model, reliant on funding from the Government, must adapt to changed travel patterns so bus services are sustainable in the long-term. On the 18th May 2023, a long-term approach (BSIP+) was announced with an additional £150 million provided between July 2023-April 2024 and another £150 million between April 2024-April 2025. This additional funding of which the authority was allocated £1,327,673 for the first year will help support and improve bus services for passengers, delivering on our priority to grow the local economy. However, to receive the full allocation, the DfT has announced in their BSIP and EP Bulletin dated the 18th May, that LTAs will need to have an up-to-date Enhanced Partnership (unless they are following the process for franchising). LTAs will be able to receive half of their 2023/24 allocation in advance of their EP being in place, to avoid gaps in funding. The remaining half of the allocation will be received once the EP has been formalised. To be eligible for funding in 2024/25, the DfT expect LTAs to have an up to date BSIP.
14. As part of this long-term approach, an EP will further demonstrate to the DfT that there is a clear and agreed plan for any funding applications in Staffordshire. The result of which will ensure that the bidding process is

easier and that we will be in a better position than those LTAs without an EP.

15. Local authorities may use this BSIP+ funding to support existing services, enhance these services, or provide new ones. Funding must be used in a way consistent with the DfT's guidance on BSIPs and is why a revised BSIP is required.

Staffordshire Approach

16. The existing Staffordshire Bus Operators' Forum (SBOF) has formed the basis of our partnership working in recent years. However, work on the EP documentation had stalled following our unsuccessful BSIP bid in October 2021. It should be noted that the following LTAs in the Midlands Connect area were also unsuccessful in their BSIP bids, Herefordshire, Leicester City, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire. Nationally, only 34 out of 79 applications for BSIP received funding (43%).
17. Meetings with bus operators have recently taken place to move the EP forward to create a partnership that builds on the work of the SBOF and provide a formal basis on which to expand collaborative working with our local operators. A 28-day formal consultation on the proposed EP with all local operators concluded on the 11th May and no objections were received.
18. A list of the elements that are proposed to be included within the EP are available in Appendix 2. Many of the elements are stipulated within the national guidance and the nature of their implementation would be guided by baseline data analysis and stakeholder consultation.
19. The proposed EP will apply during the period of 1 August 2023 to 31 July 2033 and will be reviewed by Staffordshire County Council in August 2024 and then every three years. In the years that it is reviewed, it will follow Staffordshire County Council's review of its BSIP in October of each year, starting in October 2023.
20. The authority engages in frequent dialogue with bordering LTAs to discuss cross-boundary transport issues. This engagement will continue throughout the EP period to ensure consistency and continuity of bus service provision across local authority boundaries.

Alignment with Strategic Plan

21. A high quality and sustainable bus network could support Staffordshire's economy, by providing access to employment, education and training

opportunities and increasing footfall in our town centres. A more reliable bus network could also encourage regular and new users, to consider public transport as a preferred travel option, increasing levels of sustainable travel across the county and supporting Staffordshire's climate change agenda.

Timescale

22. Key milestones are:

- a. Commit to an BSIP - complete.
- b. Publish BSIP – complete.
- c. Commit to an EP with all approvals in place – target July 2023
- d. Commence EP – target 1st August 2023
- e. Review of BSIP in line with DfT feedback – target end October 2023

Legal Implications

23. We note the following legal implications:

- a. Development of Enhanced Partnerships are governed by Bus Services Act 2017, which amended the Transport Act 2000. Under an EP, the Council is legally obliged to deliver those measures it commits to, however the authority may, in exceptional circumstances, exercise a veto over Board decisions which it may reasonably believe or suspect as having anti-competitive implications or being otherwise significantly against the public interest.
- b. Multi Operator Ticketing Schemes are governed by the Competition Act 1998 (Public Transport Ticketing Schemes Block Exemption) Order 2001 (as amended) and the Transport Act 2000.
- c. The DfT intend to review the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) 2000, by the end of 2023 (this will have a bearing on our Vacant Seat Policy in home to school transport).
- d. Traffic Management Act 2004 - Statutory traffic management guidance will be updated to "expect enhanced bus reliability as an integral part of the highway authorities' Network Management Duty".

Resource and Value for Money Implications

24. Staffing resource will be required across several key teams to support the development of an updated BSIP and implementation of our EP. The DfT have provided the authority with £874,538 towards the development costs of the BSIP and ongoing administration of the EP. This is a Capacity Grant and at the end of the 2022/23 financial year, £796,141 was still available to spend. The DfT has stipulated on how this grant funding can be spent and it is anticipated that any underspend will need to be repaid.

25. As the Capacity Grant cannot be used for capital improvements, we have been careful to make sure that the Council is not committed financially in any EP documentation. This is especially important as the EP document will be a legally binding commitment for all parties.
26. Creation of an EP will allow both the County Council and bus operators to benefit from increased levels of government funding to realise the objectives of the BSIP. If an EP is not created and implemented, the government could decide to not release funding.

Climate Change Implications

27. Buses are a key part of DfT's Road to Zero Strategy in decarbonising transport and addressing the Climate Emergency declared by the Council. Contraction of the bus network could increase individual car trips leading to increased traffic with resultant negative impact on air quality and carbon emissions. A piece of analysis will be undertaken to first gather baseline data and to then formalise targets regarding access to the bus network.

Risks Identified

28. The key risks and mitigating measures that have been identified at this early stage include:
 - a. Team capacity – our current teams do have sufficient capacity to develop and update our BSIP as well as to implement an EP. Teams do not have capacity to support the delivery of all of the elements within both documents although if future BSIP funding bids are successful they will include the resources necessary to implement them. In the short term this can be mitigated by utilising external support paid for from the DfT Capacity Grant.
 - b. Loss of funding – if Staffordshire does not enter into an EP and does not have an up-to-date BSIP, the authority will not receive the full allocation of BSIP+ funding and could potentially also receive reduced highway maintenance funding in the future. This can be mitigated by moving forward with the BSIP / EP.
 - c. Reputational – whilst bus services are largely operated on a commercial basis, our residents are aware that the Council has the power to intervene. Without a Staffordshire EP, there is likely to be significant reputational and political risk from bus services being withdrawn. We are aware that local members and MPs receive a significant amount of correspondence on local bus service matters and that they are politically important.

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee Feedback

29. A paper was presented at the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Thursday 6th July 2023. The Committee was asked to consider and provide comments on the proposal to complete the process for the creation of an EP and to undertake a full review of the previously agreed BSIP. Detailed discussions were held including questions regarding the rural bus network in Staffordshire, electric buses as well as concessionary pass holders. A recommendation regarding improving communications to Members specifically in relation to service deregistration and significant timetable changes was agreed and will be acted upon by Officers. Following this discussion, the Committee approved for the recommendation to be taken forward and presented to Cabinet.

Conclusion

30. For large counties such as Staffordshire, buses may not provide the solution to all sustainable transport issues. This paper is not suggesting that; however, buses do have a role to play in parts of Staffordshire. The role of the authority is one of coordination, and operators must undertake activities to develop the Staffordshire bus network. An ambitious EP and BSIP should help to encourage the development of a sustainable bus network that will play an invaluable role in our Strategic Plan, providing equality of access to employment and key services, and contributing towards achieving carbon net zero.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

- "Bus Back Better – National Bus Strategy for England" - [Bus back better - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/bus-back-better)
- "The Bus Services Act 2017: Enhanced Partnerships Guidance" - [Bus Services Act 2017: Enhanced Partnership creation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-bus-services-act-2017-enhanced-partnerships-guidance)
- [Staffordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan](#)

Appendix 1 - Key items from the original Staffordshire BSIP together along with the funding ask

Appendix 2 - Elements that are contained within the proposed EP.

Community Impact Assessment

Contact Details

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Appendix 1: Key items from the original Staffordshire BSIP together along with the funding ask

- i. Financial support for the introduction of zero emission buses in Staffordshire on core routes (with willing operators) combined with a strategy to increase frequencies to make the services more attractive – c£33m.
- ii. Financial support for implementation of bus priority measures to improve journey time reliability -c£7.5m.
- iii. Financial support for improving and maintaining on-street bus infrastructure including passenger information – c£21m.
- iv. Financial support for improvements at key bus station hubs across Staffordshire – c£23m.
- v. Financial support for the introduction of a discounted fare structure for younger people leading to a long term new commercial product for younger bus users – c£11m.
- vi. Financial Support to help the Staffordshire bus industry and community transport sector recover from the global covid 19 pandemic and assistance in shaping the new urban and rural Staffordshire bus network to ensure it is fit for the future. This will include targeted pump priming new evening and weekend services that are expected to become self-sustaining (commercial) - £16.5m.
- vii. Financial support the development of skills in the sector to ensure the delivery of aspirations of the Staffordshire BSIP and provide a coordinated approach to marketing and ticketing -£1m.

Appendix 2: Elements that are contained within the proposed EP.

- i. **Multi operator ticketing** – network wide, always offering the best value option for journeys with more than 1 operator. Inclusion of “tap on/tap off” or equivalent technology to capture proper origin/destination data would provide significant intelligence to inform network planning.
- ii. **Bus priority** – reliability is key to attracting passengers, we will identify hotspots for delays to buses and implement priority where space allows.
- iii. **“Whole route” audits** – identify all causes of delay on core routes and implement measures to address them. These may be individually small but can add considerably to schedules across routes – e.g., parked cars, bus stops difficult to get out of, junctions difficult to turn out of.
- iv. **High quality bus stop infrastructure:**
 - a. All stops to have timetable display – real time in urban areas or stops used by more than xx passengers per day.
 - b. Clean high-quality shelters at all stops used by more than xx passengers per day. Consider – CCTV, no use of polycarbonate (it clouds and deteriorates over time).
 - c. Raised kerbs at all stops.
 - d. Integrated with Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to consider walking routes to stops – identify where new pedestrian infrastructure / cut throughs could make network more accessible.
 - e. Maintenance of bus stop environment (not just shelters).
 - f. Upgraded town centre interchange. Consider – bus station ownership/operation town centre bus stand allocation.
- v. **Bus network:**
 - a. Core network of direct, frequent, high quality inter-urban services linking all of our key settlements.
 - b. 100% of urban residents within 350 metres walk of a frequent (every 15 minutes daytime) service to their nearest town centre.
 - c. xx% of rural residents within 800 metres walk of an hourly (daytime) or better bus service to their nearest town centre, or a demand responsive equivalent.
 - d. All key employment sites within 800 metres walk of a bus service.
 - e. Improved interchange at railway stations.
 - f. Core network of evening and Sunday services to support employment, retail, and leisure. Consider defining who would be included in core network.
 - g. Consider service stability agreement – service changes only on agreed dates.

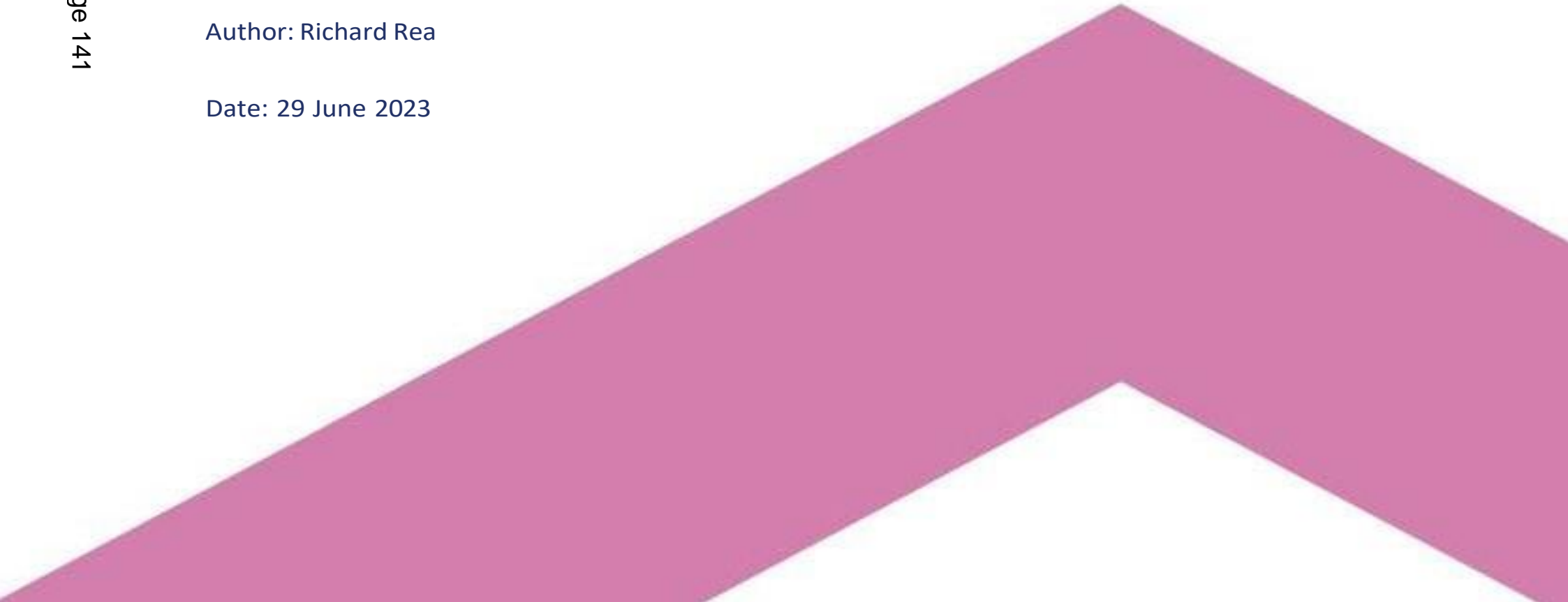
- vi. **Patronage growth** – in year 1, no further decline. Year 2 onwards, patronage growth of 5% year on year. A modal shift target and measure would underpin climate change and emissions targets. For example, xx% of bus passengers choosing to make their journey by bus instead of car.
- vii. **Customer satisfaction** – targets for satisfaction with journey experience, information, waiting facilities, personal security.
- viii. **Emissions** – define emission standards, linking with air quality strategy. Modal shift of itself generates significant environmental benefit.
- ix. **Development standards** – all residential and industrial developments subject to minimum design standards to accommodate bus services with parking restrictions as needed. Contributions strategy to ensure minimum 5 years of support for new/extended services backed with strict travel plan enforcement.
- x. **Marketing** – co-ordinated, consistent, sustained high profile marketing campaign to promote the network and support patronage growth.

Community Impact Assessment

Staffordshire Bus Strategy

Author: Richard Rea

Date: 29 June 2023



➤ Equality Assessment

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Age - older and younger people</p> <p>The overall expectation is that this proposal will lead to improvements for all who use bus services in Staffordshire, with wider benefits for all. However, it is acknowledged that bus travel may be used and relied upon by certain</p>	<p>Through additional BSIP funding (if allocated), it is anticipated that there will be more frequent services which will be</p>	<p>No specific risks relating to age have been identified at this stage.</p>	<p>When engaging with communities to encourage bus use, endeavour to do this in an accessible and inclusive way to residents who are elderly, particularly those who are digitally excluded.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>protected groups more than others. Older people are often particularly reliant on public transport and bus travel especially. Service frequency, safety, access to bus stops and the bus station, information availability, and concessional fares are all of particular relevance here. The same applies to young people, including school pupils and students.</p>	<p>especially helpful to both older people and young people. This will lead to increased perceptions of safety and, for the elderly mainly, greater comfort / minimised physical pain related to traditionally longer waiting times. A more reliable network of services will also increase connectivity and social inclusion, as well as easier access to a range of destinations.</p>		<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>
<p>Disability - people who are living with different conditions and disabilities, such as: mental illnesses, long term conditions, Autism and other neurodiverse conditions, learning disabilities, sensory impairment and physical disabilities.</p> <p>As above, people with disabilities are often reliant on public transport. Again, service frequency, safety, access to bus stops and the</p>	<p>As above, similar benefits will arise as for older people. In addition, the BSIP and Enhanced Partnership is expected to lead to more considerate and more responsive bus companies, through a greater understanding of the issues, which will be shared by the</p>	<p>No specific risks relating to disability have been identified at this stage.</p>	<p>When engaging with communities to encourage bus use, endeavour to make it accessible to all, including those with disabilities such as visual impairment or learning disabilities.</p> <p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
bus station, information availability, and concessional fares are all of particular relevance.	operators and the Council.		
Gender reassignment - those people in the process of transitioning from one sex to another	No specific impacts associated with this category.		Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.
Marriage & Civil Partnership - people who are married or in a civil partnership should not be treated differently at work	No specific impacts associated with this category.		Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.
Pregnancy & Maternity - women who are pregnant or who have recently had a baby, including breast feeding mothers There may be some specific impacts for this category, relating to access to healthcare and facilities for parents and also young children.	As above, more frequent, and reliable services through BSIP funding will improve safety (perceived and actual) especially for mothers of young children and young children themselves. Benefits will also be associated with better access to healthcare related destinations. Lower fare costs may well be of particular benefit here too.	No specific risks relating to pregnancy and maternity have been identified at this stage.	Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.
Race - people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins	Although it can be hard to demonstrate with empirical	No specific risks relating to race have	Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>On the whole we feel, there are no specific impacts here. However, there may be some cultural cultural/religious aspects which relate to the perceived and actual benefits or otherwise of public transport services and patronage.</p>	<p>evidence, certain cultural attitudes towards public transport do appear to be of particular relevance to certain ethnic and minority groups. Themes include actual and perceived safety on public transport and a preference for car ownership and travel combined with reluctance to travel on public transport for a variety of reasons (termed sometimes as 'car culture'). Improved bus services are expected to provide a more attractive, more efficient travel option for all, and hence the benefits here may be particularly attractive to certain groups within the community.</p>	<p>been identified at this stage.</p>	

Protected Characteristics	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Religion or Belief - people with any religious or philosophical belief, including a lack of belief. A belief should affect a person's life choices or the way they live for it to be considered.</p> <p>On the whole we feel, there are no specific impacts here. However, there may be some impacts, including better access to places of worship. Furthermore, as above, there may be some cultural/religious aspects which relate to the perceived and actual benefits or otherwise of public transport services and patronage.</p>	<p>More reliable bus services, reduced waiting times, and a better bus network are all likely to provide a more attractive travel option to those seeking to travel to places of worship across Staffordshire. In addition, there may also be some benefits in terms of safety – again, perceived, or actual – for members of certain religious groups who may generally feel vulnerable on public transport.</p>	<p>No specific risks relating to religion or belief have been identified at this stage.</p>	<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>
<p>Sex - men or women</p>	<p>No specific impacts associated with this category.</p>		<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes</p>	<p>No specific impacts associated with this category.</p>		<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>

➤ Workforce Assessment

Who will be affected – consider the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
All staff	Staff who live/work in Staffordshire will benefit from improved bus services in Staffordshire.	No specific risks to SCC staff.	Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.

➤ Health, Well-being and Social Care Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Key considerations for this area include mental health, support groups access, healthy lifestyles, independent living and safeguarding.</p>	<p>Work through the EP and with BSIP funding (if allocated) will increase bus usage, and some of the new passengers will be attracted from car travel and those staying at home. New bus passengers who currently stay at home will benefit from additional exercise as</p>	<p>No negative impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>they walk to/from stops. They will also gain mental health and quality of life benefits as they interact more with other people and become confident enough to participate in community activities and social groups. Since bus passengers walk to/from their stops, compared with car users who can often park close to their home and destination, those switching modes will benefit from taking additional exercise.</p>		

➤ Communities Assessment

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
<p>Key considerations include community development, education & training, leisure & culture, volunteering, and rural communities.</p>	<p>The BSIP is expected to make a positive contribution here. Public Transport plays a valuable role in Staffordshire and nationally, in providing greater mobility and accessibility to all members of the community. The BSIP contains a comprehensive list of measures and proposals designed to have the overall effect of improving connectivity within and across the county. This will be achieved through more frequent services, more reliable journeys, better value</p>	<p>No negative impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>with fares, and all associated benefits. All of these impacts are expected to be valued by the community, and specific community groups and will help support people to volunteer and access community groups.</p> <p>Through the EP and BSIP funding (if allocated) this will increase bus patronage. The numbers of bus passengers waiting at stops in town centres will increase, thereby raising natural surveillance and enhancing personal security of both passengers and pedestrians. The measures to improve pedestrian access to bus stops will also</p>		

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	enhance personal security.		

➤ Economic Assessment

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	Through increases in the number of services alongside increases in frequency, better, more reliable access to jobs, education and shopping areas will all be expected to lead to greater economic sustainability in relation to growth and also	No negative impacts are anticipated.	Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.

Key consideration	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	supporting new businesses to start up as there will be more access to the workforce, with positive implications for all within the various communities.		

➤ Climate Change Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>By improving bus services, the EP and potential BSIP funding will increase passenger numbers. Some of the new passengers will be attracted from car travel, thereby reducing car dependency therefore congestion and emissions from cars idling in traffic jams will be reduced. Since bus travel produces fewer carbon emissions per passenger-mile, greenhouse gas emissions from transport will be reduced. A bid for funding through the National Bus Strategy of which the EP forms a</p>	<p>No negative impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>part, could deliver new battery-electric buses to replace diesel powered buses on some of the busiest routes which would eliminate tail pipe emissions. As electricity is partly generated by renewal sources, this will increase the use of renewal energy in transport and thereby reduce greenhouse gas emissions from this sector.</p> <p>The expected benefits arising from the improved air quality, reduced carbon emissions, reduced congestion levels, will all be particularly valuable in terms of greater social and environmental sustainability.</p>		

➤ Environment Assessment

Key considerations	Benefits	Risks	Mitigations / Recommendations
	<p>The EP will complement and support regeneration strategies aimed at making places more attractive. These strategies could include the provision of green space and equipping bus shelters with green roofs to aid biodiversity or solar panels to generate renewable electricity.</p>	<p>No negative impacts are anticipated.</p>	<p>Mitigations/recommendations will be developed as impacts are identified.</p>

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2023

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 1, 2023/24



Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council said,

"We continue to do what is necessary to support our most vulnerable residents who need us most, while creating the right conditions for our economy and businesses to thrive.

"Our work to promote Staffordshire as a top location to live, work, invest in and visit continues. Our 'We are Staffordshire' team attended the UK Real Estate Infrastructure and Investment Conference in Leeds in May where they got the chance to promote the many investment opportunities available in the county. This, alongside supporting local businesses, helping attract new businesses with better quality jobs for people remains a priority.

"Our Household Support Fund continues to help thousands of local families with the ongoing cost of living pressures and during the May half term holiday provided supermarket vouchers to 27,000 families. Over Easter, the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme also saw its highest take up rate meaning more children and young people benefited from the scheme.

"Work to tackle climate change is ongoing, and since December 2022, the Staffordshire Warmer Homes scheme has installed 459 measures in 328 properties to make them more energy efficient.

"We continue to face challenges within Children's Services including the rising cost, number and complexity of Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures, however additional recruitment will help to ease this. We are also seeing increased demand for Children's Services and Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) for Education, Health, and Care Plans, but again, the recruitment of additional staffing capacity is underway.

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



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

“All council departments continue to deliver against their priorities, whilst progressing with activities in the organisation’s Delivery Plan.

“Like most local authorities, we do face rising costs across the organisation and high inflation which puts extra pressures on our finances. We also continue to face challenges around demand and capacity within Children’s services and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities teams.

“We continue to do what is necessary and to manage our finances effectively. The latest revenue forecast outturn shows an overspend of £9.5m (1.39%), compared to the balanced budget.

“We continue to keep our finances in as strong a position as possible and to ensure that we provide good value for money for local taxpayers. Well managed finances also mean we can invest in our future and continue to grow our economy.”

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 19 July 2023

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 1, 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 1 Summary

This report provides an update on Quarter 1 progress in relation to delivering the council's priorities and pledge as set out within the council's [Strategic Plan 2022-26](#).

Key highlights

- **We are Staffordshire:** The team led the Staffordshire at the UK Real Estate Infrastructure and Investment Conference (UKREiIF) in May, setting out why the county is a top location to live, work, invest in and visit.
- **Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme:** Project with Broad Oak properties 'highly commended' at the West Midlands Energy Efficiency Awards in June. Since December 2022, 459 measures have been installed in 328 properties.
- **Integrated Co-occurring Needs Pathway (ICoN):** The new ICoN initiative is being pioneered in Staffordshire to support people with both mental health issues and drug and alcohol use, in a holistic way. The programme will be used as a good practice model.
- **Household Support Fund:** In May half term over 27,000 families of children in receipt of Free Schools Meals were issued with supermarket vouchers.
- **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme:** The Easter HAF offered more places (almost 11,000) than any previous HAF and saw the highest take-up rate; meaning more children and young people benefit from the scheme.
- **Highways maintenance:** Delivery of major capital highways maintenance schemes continues, alongside Highways Transformation Programme.
- **Business support:** Procurement completed to extend the successful Staffordshire Start Up programme into 2023/24.
- **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** Cabinet approved the introduction of permits for vans and trailers at Staffordshire's HWRC sites.

Key challenges

- **Children in Care:** Continued pressures across Children's services, including the rising cost, number and complexity of Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures. Recruitment underway following investment.
- **SEND:** Increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans. Capacity continues to be a challenge; however, recruitment of additional Key Workers and Educational Psychologists is underway.
- **Adult Social Care Demand:** Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding requests remain high, with additional capacity being explored.

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

1. Financial Overview

2. The latest revenue forecast outturn shows an overspend of £9.5m (1.39%), compared to the balanced budget. There continues to be areas of financial risk in Children and Families, with further details included within this report and appendices 2-7.

3. Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

4. In Quarter 1, demand for Care Act Assessments stabilised but continues to be higher than before the pandemic (approximately 17% higher); there were 1,534 assessments initiated in May 2023, which is similar to May last year (1,532). The council continues to exceed its target for completed Care Act Assessments within 28 days (see Appendix 1).

5. The number of safeguarding contacts continues to fluctuate monthly; demand reduced in April 2023 (1,180) before increasing again in May 2023 (1,348). This increase impacts on the number of people waiting and these will begin to be prioritised. The council is securing additional resource from an external provider to support with the increased demand.

6. The number of reviews of people receiving services for 12 months or more has continued to remain high, with 84% reviewed in the previous 12 months in May 2023, exceeding the target of 80% (see Appendix 1). The best performance is in reviews of people receiving Mental Health services (87.7%).

7. 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) is an area of demand that continues to impact on resources. The council had 1,147 DoLs applications waiting to be completed at the end of May 2023, however the majority of these are low priority and over half are in progress. The possibility of procuring additional capacity to manage these applications is being explored.

8. Significant work is continuing in preparation for the new Care Quality Commissioning (CQC) assurance framework which will assess how the council is performing against duties under the Care Act 2014.

9.As part of the council’s objective to showcase technologies in care, Nexus are commencing a pilot of Fitbits with people in their reablement and home care services. These smart watches will monitor the biometrics of individuals and feedback the data to a central system. The central system will then compare this data to the individual’s usual state and highlight any deviation that might require intervention. Future updates will be provided on how this pilot progresses.

10.Staffordshire’s Warmer Homes Scheme were finalists in the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards 2023, in the category which recognises councils that are making the most of their role in public health. The Warmer Homes entry showcased how lifting people out of fuel poverty and helping households with rapidly increasing energy bills is a public health priority in Staffordshire. The Warmer Homes project with Broad Oak properties was also ‘highly commended’ at the West Midlands Energy Efficiency Awards in June. Latest figures from the Sustainable Warmth Competition show that since December 2022, there have been 459 measures installed within 328 properties. This brings the total number of measures installed through Staffordshire Warmer Homes to 1,220 within 964 properties. The council has also secured an additional £1m in funding for the extension of the scheme that specifically supports low-income households heated by mains gas, which runs until September 2023.

11.A new initiative to support people with both mental health issues and drug and alcohol use is being pioneered in Staffordshire. The new ICoN (Integrated Co-occurring Needs pathway) will bring together the local authority, NHS, voluntary and community sectors in a single approach. This pathway has a dedicated team of professionals including psychologists, mental health practitioners, and substance use coordinators, and will use phases of intervention to offer the right support, to the right people, at the right time. The service has been identified as national good practice.

12.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

13.Children in Care demand has continued to increase, with close monitoring of those past estimated exit dates continuing. A review of those in residential placements has also been completed with actions now in place to find suitable alternative placements where appropriate. Recruitment of additional capacity is progressing following the additional cabinet investment of £5.7m.

14. As at the 31st May 2023, there were 1,397 children and young people in the authority's care in Staffordshire, representing a slight increase compared to the previous quarter (1,385). This is a rate of 83 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 May 2023 was 687 down from a peak of 721 in April. This is a rate of 41 per 10,000 in Staffordshire compared to the most recent benchmarks from March 2022 of 42 nationally and 43 regionally.
15. The number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 7,103 at 31st May 2023 compared to 6,527 a year earlier. This increasing demand means that the number of EHCP's issued in time (within 20 weeks) remains low in Staffordshire; 31% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 49% (2022). Recruitment is underway to increase capacity, with eleven Senior Key Workers already in post and two due to start in September, as well as eight Key Worker positions recruited and due to be in post by September. Recruitment for Educational Psychologists continues with five roles secured, and a further recruitment round due to take place from September.
16. Work continues across the four main programmes of work within Children & Families; Children in Care, Children's Workforce, SEND Improvement and Embedding the Children & Families System. Progress has been made across several elements in the last quarter including the mapping of residential placements to ensure children and young people are in the most appropriate placement for them and work to review Children in Care to ensure predicted exit dates are realised and progressed wherever possible.
17. At the end of May 2023, 195 families have been confirmed as achieving a successful and sustained outcome through the Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme since 1st April 2023. Additional family cohorts are still being reviewed with final figures for Quarter 1 available in the following performance report. The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have increased this year's target number of families by 62% to 1,290, but as we strive to achieve more for our families in Staffordshire, we are hoping to achieve outcomes for 1,677 families (30% above DLUHC target).
18. Staffordshire's most vulnerable families will have access to a share of £11 million of funding received from the Department for Work and Pensions for 2023/24. The Household Support Fund (HSF) supports families and others who need it most, to pay for food and energy bills. In May half term over 27,000 families of children in receipt of Free Schools Meals were issued with supermarket vouchers and over 3,100 households benefited through the professionals' referral scheme.

19. Further support has also been 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. The Easter HAF offered more places (almost 11,000) than any previous HAF and saw the highest take-up rate; 71%. Meaning that more children and young people could benefit from the scheme.

20. 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 progress made during Quarter 1 in promoting the ‘We are Staffordshire’ place brand. A ‘Quality of Life’ campaign was launched advocating Staffordshire as a great place to live and work – the video launch reached over 45,000 people and was highlighted in local news outlets. The new ‘We Are Staffordshire’ website was launched with a fresh look, streamlined user experience, and a new toolkit of promotional materials available to download to help promote Staffordshire. Network events continued, and in April the council held its best attended Ambassador Event with over 100 attendees.

22. The ‘We are Staffordshire’ team also led Staffordshire’s presence and ‘Staffordshire: A Place to Prosper’ campaign and prospectus at the UK Real Estate Infrastructure and Investment Conference (UKREiIF) in May, setting out why the county is a top location to live, work, invest in and visit. Staffordshire showcased over £1bn worth of investment opportunities at the three-day event, where potential investors found out more about recent successes in Staffordshire and major projects underway. These included the Stafford Gateway project, regeneration of town centres, Chatterley Valley Enterprise Zone, i54 South Staffordshire, the A50/A500 Growth Corridor, and the West Midlands Interchange.

23. During Quarter 1, 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 May 2023, the council has supported 570 businesses through the Staffordshire Start Up Programme. Of these, almost half (269) have started trading following the programme. Procurement to extend the Start-Up Mentoring Scheme to June 2024 (which was due to end in June 2023), is now complete. Get Started and Grow has supported 167 business owners who have been trading up to 5 years with professional services support in marketing, finance, or digital marketing. Additionally, 98 businesses have been approved for the ‘My Own Boss’ programme.

24. The Ladder for Staffordshire is the leading multi-organisation champion for apprenticeships in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. There is a collaborative, joined-up approach to improving skills and enrichment opportunities for all, linking up employers, training providers and candidates. Up to the 30th April 2023, 55 apprentices had been recruited since its official launch in February 2023.

25. Fix more roads, and improve transport and digital connections

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

26. Funding has been awarded to the council which will help county councillors tackle potholes in their local area. The £2 million fund will be used to tackle defects already reported to the council by the public and gives county councillors the opportunity to prioritise local repairs above other non-urgent repairs. The money is part of the £4.8 million the county council received from the Department for Transport's pothole fund. This is on top of £5 million investment for road repairs, and a £30 million investment in the county's roads over the next two years. The scheme will run alongside the existing member's Divisional Highways Programme (DHP), where members work with communities, parish councils and other local organisations to identify improvements that can be made in their local areas. These improvements can be anything from addressing local concerns about road safety, to signage and other maintenance tasks. The scheme is now live, with work anticipated to start in July.

27. Following the winter period there has been an increase in the number of high-risk Category 1 and Category 2 defects identified in April and May, which are being prioritised. The additional 'pothole' funding is providing additional resources, together with the usual shift of core resources from Winter Operations (e.g. gritting), to carry out these repairs. Between April and mid-June, there has also been 750,000 square metres of carriageway pothole prevention resurfacing treatments delivered across the county, which equates to around 70 miles of carriageway and 50% completion of this year's planned programme.

28. The Highways Transformation Programme is also progressing well in Quarter 1, with a detailed programme of activity to implement the new operating model now emerging, focussing on developing the member and community offer. Alongside this transformation, the delivery of major capital highways maintenance schemes continues, with schemes progressing well at A34 Holmcroft, Stafford; A34 Walton Island, Stone;

and A522 Beamhurst (JCB), Uttoxeter. The scheme at A521 Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge is also now complete.

29. As part of Project Gigabit, which aims to provide gigabit-capable coverage to Staffordshire residents, there remain a high number of premises still under review for broadband intervention, which 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. Discussions are ongoing between the council and Building Digital UK (BDUK).

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

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

31. In Quarter 1, the council’s Cabinet approved the introduction of permits for vans and trailers at Staffordshire’s Household Waste Recycling Centre sites (HWRCs). The changes follow public consultation and now require Staffordshire residents with vans or trailers to apply for permits, which will allow them to make 12 visits per year to the sites. Staffordshire residents with cars will still be able to use the sites freely. The new scheme also means that people from outside Staffordshire with trade waste can no longer dispose of their waste at Staffordshire’s HWRCs. The changes are expected to help reduce queues and improve services for residents.

32. Membership of the Staffordshire Business Environment Network (SBEN) has now been extended for 2023/24 to businesses in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. SBEN is coordinated by the council and is now supported by Steelite International and Michelin Tyre PLC, whose backing means members can benefit for environmental legislation updates, events, networking, and a bespoke carbon tracker tool. SBEN has over 430 members and in the last year supported 33 businesses in cutting energy costs and improving energy use through Low Carbon Business Evolution project grants. It has also supported 68 businesses through carbon literacy training, and 315 businesses have attended events over the year.

33. A giant carbon bubble is going to be touring the county to help raise awareness of climate change as part of plans to help the county reduce its carbon footprint and achieve its target of net zero by 2050. The aim of this is to help people visualize the impact of their daily activities on carbon emissions. When visiting the bubble, people will also get the chance to meet staff for advice on the changes they can make to help

the environment. The tour will be visiting locations across the county up until August 2023.

34. **How we work**

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

35. To achieve the council's ambitions, we continue to challenge and change how we work.

36. Good progress can be seen during the quarter as part of the council's commitment to working with its communities. 'Green Libraries' month in May included 92 events in libraries to help promote the importance of caring for the environment. The programme included both online and in-person events and was developed in response to the Green Libraries Manifesto, hosted by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), in partnership with Arts Council England, British Library, Libraries Connected and Julie's Bicycle.

37. Work has continued on the Staffordshire History Centre, with construction remaining on track in Quarter 1. Rugeley Power Station exhibition also launched in May at the Museum of Cannock Chase, funded by Section 106 money.

38. Digital continues to be fundamental to the way the council works as an organisation, as well as how it will interact with partners, citizens, and communities. Good progress has been made across multiple priorities, such as the trialling of automation software in Health & Care and Finance to free up capacity for added-value work, with further opportunities being scoped. Work is continuing with Lichfield District Council (LDC) to progress a collaborative "Single Front Door" approach across Staffordshire. The Customer Service Waste and Recycling pilot is now live with a shared knowledge base in place for Customer Service Advisors. Two further pilots have also been agreed: Environmental Health and Disabled Facility Grant Information Advice and Guidance (IAG).

39. Work to deliver the council's refreshed internal People Strategy will continue during 2023/24. Benefits of the new applicant tracking system WeRecruit (a system that allows the council to attract, select and hire people more quickly and easily) are now being realised, with time to hire rate at 45 days or less.

40. There is a continued focus on absence across the council to help improve the number of days lost due to sickness absence; with a consistent

downward trajectory seen for the last nine months. This focus includes working directly with those teams experiencing the highest days lost to understand the root causes for absence and proactively supporting them. Across these teams the council has seen a 75% improvement in their absence in the last quarter. Additionally, absence related surgeries have been provided to the wider management teams to help them manage absence through their directorate absence reduction plans.

41.As a result of this work, long term absence now stands at 8.38 days lost per employee; similar position to last year (8.28 days) but represents an improvement from Q3 where performance was 8.7 days. Short-term absence now stands at 3.52 days lost per employee, again similar to last year (3.53 days). Over half of the workforce has had no sickness absences over the last year (49.2%, 2,105 people), with a further 24.2% (1,038 employees) having been absent for 5 days or fewer. Return to work in the last quarter is at 73% completed; an improvement from last year's 70%.

42.Live within our means and deliver value for money

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

43.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.

44.Work to refresh the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is on track, with an update due to be presented at Informal Cabinet in the Autumn. Development of a new online financial self-assessment portal to improve customer experience continues and is on track for a 'go-live' in October.

45. Inflation and rising demand for council services as living costs rise, requires the council to keep finding new, better, and lower cost ways of delivering services and achieving results. This requires further creativity and innovation across the council, finding new ways of working, trialling technology, and applying ideas from other councils, public and private organisations. The council has therefore launched a leadership development programme, supported by an internal staff engagement campaign to generate new and innovative ideas from across the organisation.

46.During 2023/24, the council aims to raise c.£13 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 May 2023, the council had delivered £788,500.

47. Work on the council's schools and corporate projects is ongoing. The Anna Seward Primary School (Lichfield) and the relocation/enlargement of St Leonards Primary School (Stafford) are on track, both to be completed early July ahead of a September opening. In addition, the Tamworth Library renovation is progressing and the relocation of Children's Services staff and reception facilities from Stafford Borough Council Civic offices to Staffordshire Place is complete and operational.

48. The council's 2023 Community Fund was launched on 9 May 2023 having been held back due to local elections in many districts and boroughs. To date the council has received 19 applications, six of which are retrospective applications linked to celebratory events for the King's Coronation. The council specifically allowed until 30 June for the submission of Coronation funding applications. A total of £155,000 is available and the council will look for matched funding either financial or in kind (for example volunteer hours which we 'value' at £10.42 per hour in line with the National Living Wage).

49. Legal Implications

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

50. Resource and Value for Money Implications

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

51. Climate Change Implications

There are no direct climate change implications of note.

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Performance Dashboard
- Appendix 2 - Finance Quarter 1 Summary
- Appendix 3 - Finance Quarter 1 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

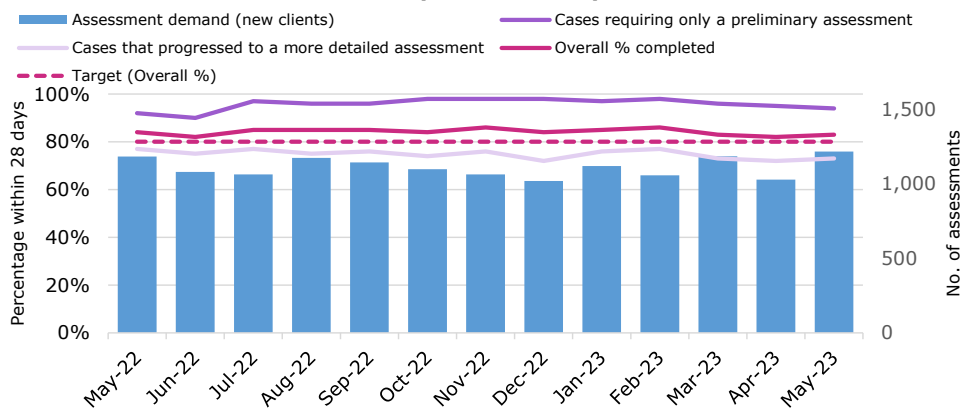
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Health, Wellbeing & Independence Dashboard

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

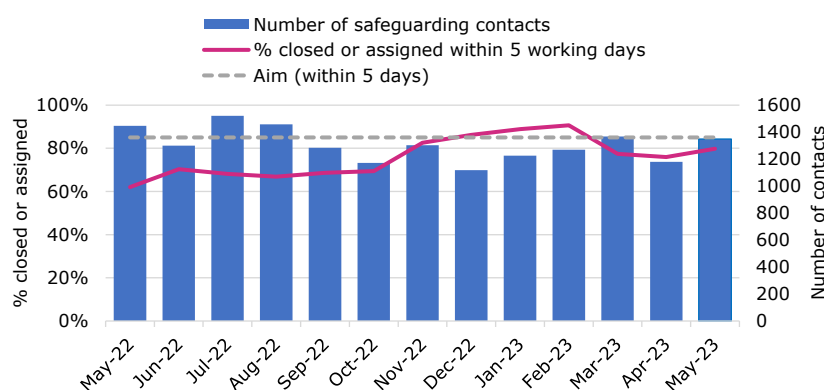


Performance remained above target in April and May 2023. Where assessments are not completed in 28 days, this is usually because they are more complex. The council tracks these individually to ensure that progress is being made to determine appropriate care and support arrangements, and that any risks are being mitigated.

Source: SCC

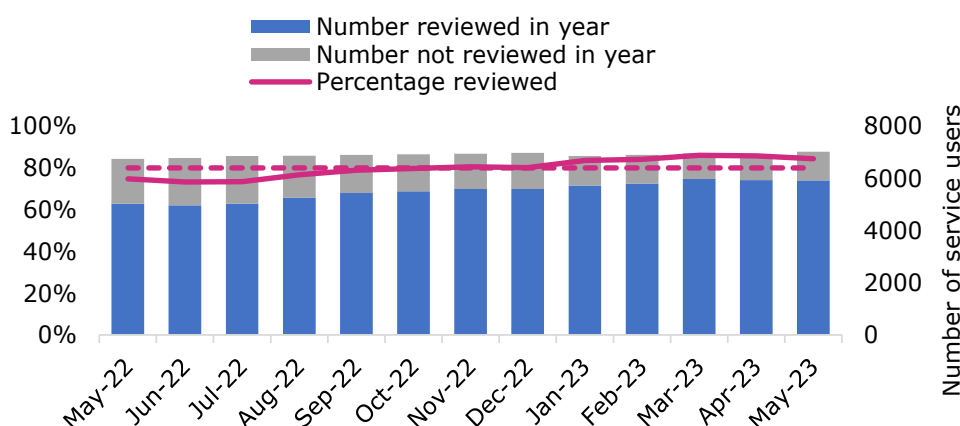
The number of safeguarding contacts increased in May 2023, which impacts on the number of people waiting and these will begin to be prioritised. The council is securing additional resource from an external provider to support with the increased demand.

% of safeguarding referrals closed or assigned within 5 working days



Source: SCC

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



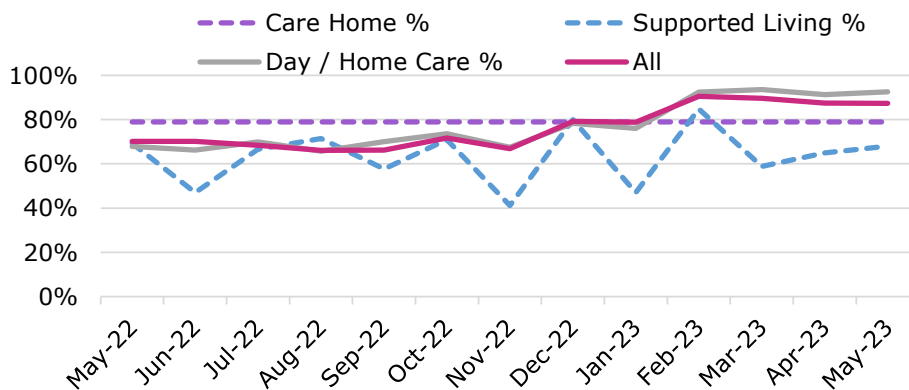
Performance has remained above target in Quarter 1. Where people have not been reviewed within 12 months this may be because they were unavailable (for example in hospital) or because of insufficient capacity, which is being addressed. However if overall demand increases, resource may need to be diverted to higher priority work.

Source: SCC

Health, Wellbeing & Independence Dashboard

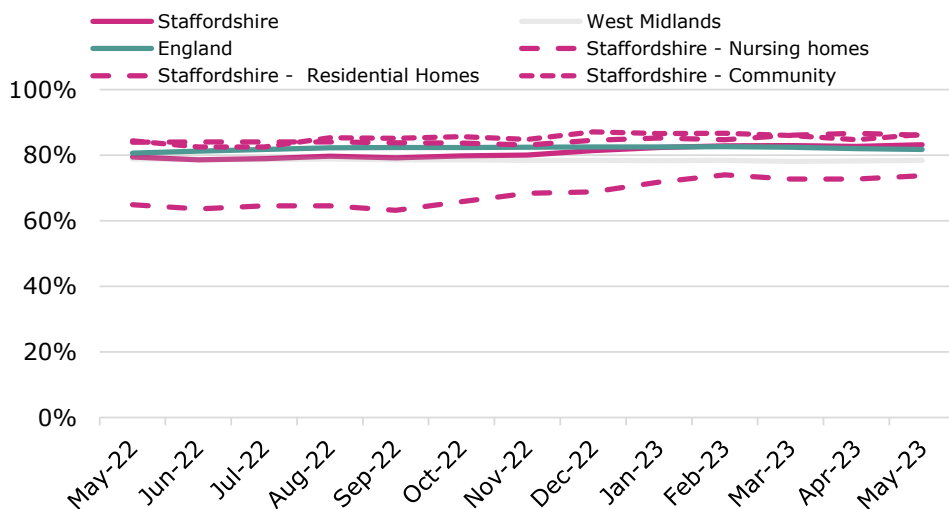
Timeliness of sourcing for brokerage (helping individuals to arrange care) has remained high in Quarter 1 with 87% receiving timely access to care, and performance remaining 'green' for the service.

% of brokerage sourced within agreed timescale by service type



Source: SCC

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

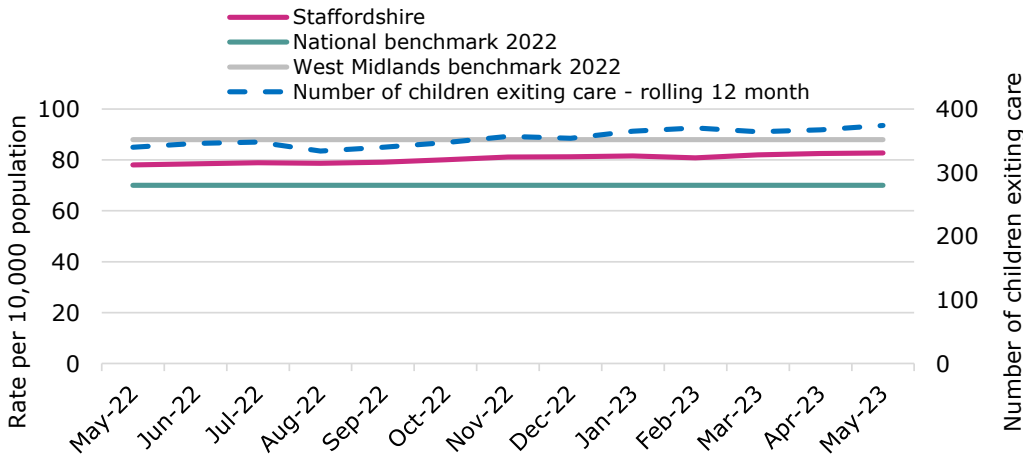


Source: SCC and Care Quality Commission

There have been improvements in the Care Quality Commission assessment ratings of Staffordshire's registered locations, with 83% Good or Outstanding in May 2023. The council has made additional investment in its quality teams over the last financial year, which is having a direct impact on driving improvements in care services.

Offer the Best Start in Life Dashboard

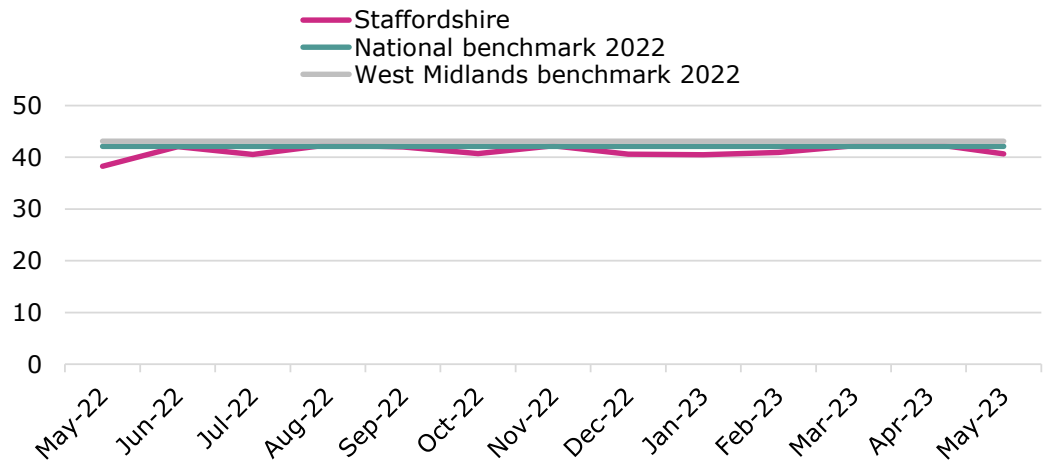
Rate of children in care (rate per 10,000 population) and number of children exiting care



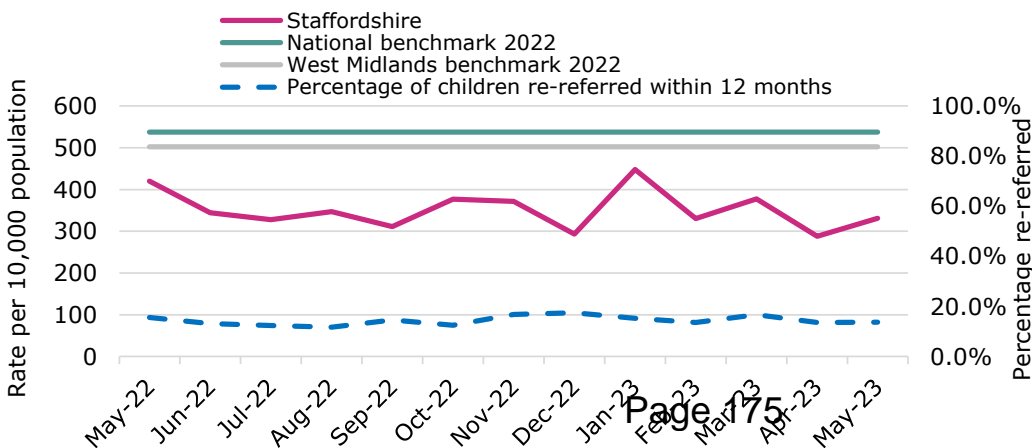
Children in Care demand has continued to increase, with close monitoring of those past estimated exit dates continuing. Recruitment of additional capacity is progressing following the additional cabinet investment of £5.7m.

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

There has been a slight reduction in the rate of children subject of a Child Protection Plan in May 2023 (40.7), dipping below national (42.1) and regional (43.1) benchmarks.



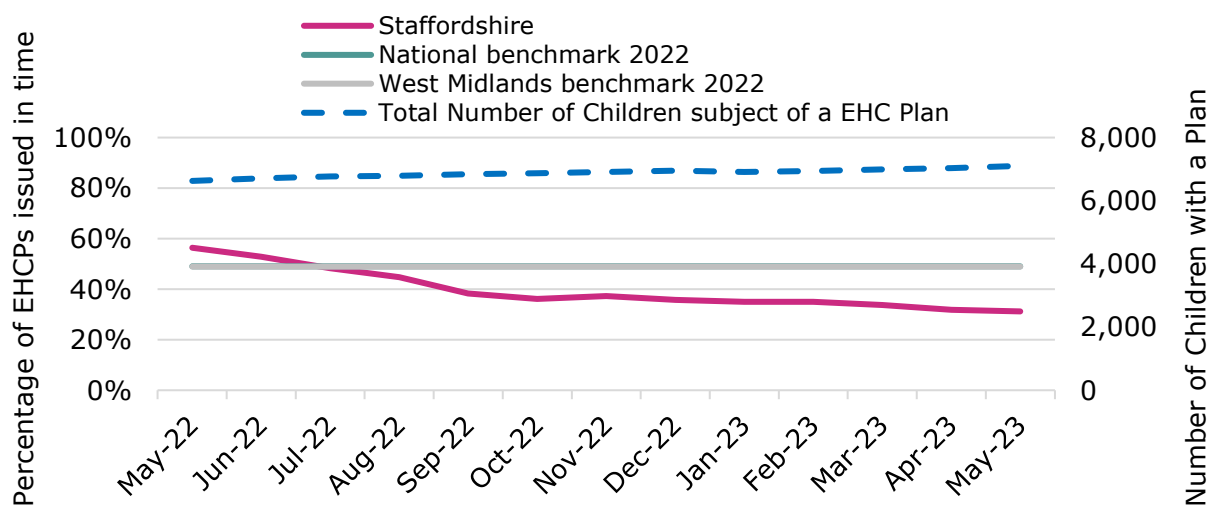
Rate of children referred, rolling 12 month average (per 10,000 population), and % re-referred within 12 months



Referrals continue to remain below both national and regional benchmarks.

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

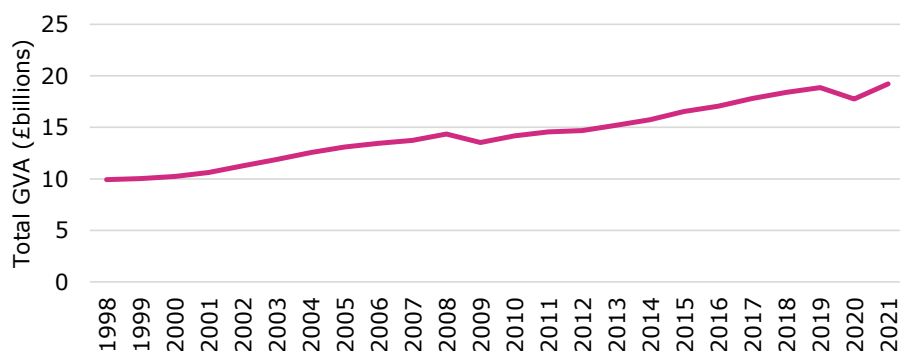


Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

The number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 7,103 at 31st May 2023 compared to 6,527 a year earlier. This increasing demand means that the number of EHCPs issued in time (within 20 weeks) remains low in Staffordshire; 31% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 49% (2022). Recruitment is underway to increase capacity.

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow Dashboard

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

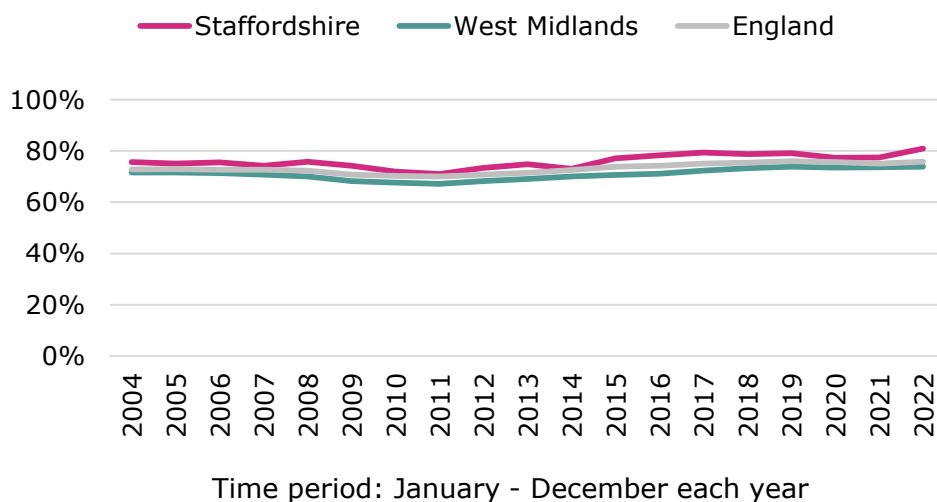


In 2021 (latest data) the Staffordshire economy was worth £19.2bn showing an increase of over £1.5bn between 2020-2021, equivalent to a 8.3% growth and greater than the growth seen for the West Midlands (6.9%) and England (7.1%).

Source: Office for National Statistics

Employment Rate (aged 16-64)

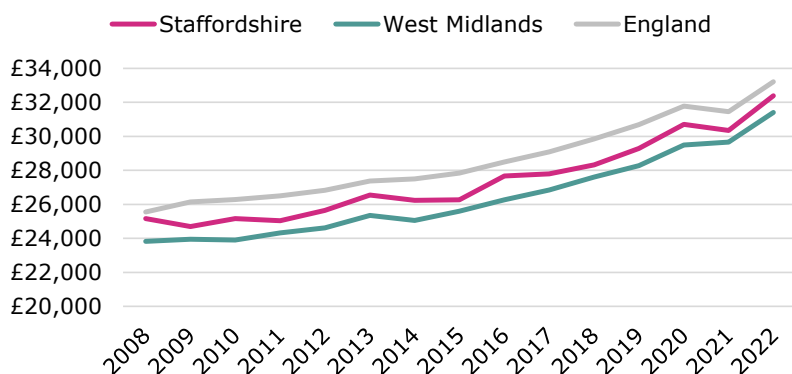
Latest employment figures for the period Jan 2022- Dec 2022 show that in Staffordshire there were an estimated 424,400 working age (aged 16-64) residents employed, with an employment rate of 80.9% well above the national and regional averages (75.8% and 73.8% respectively).



Source: ONS National Population Survey

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow Dashboard

Average (median) annual resident earnings

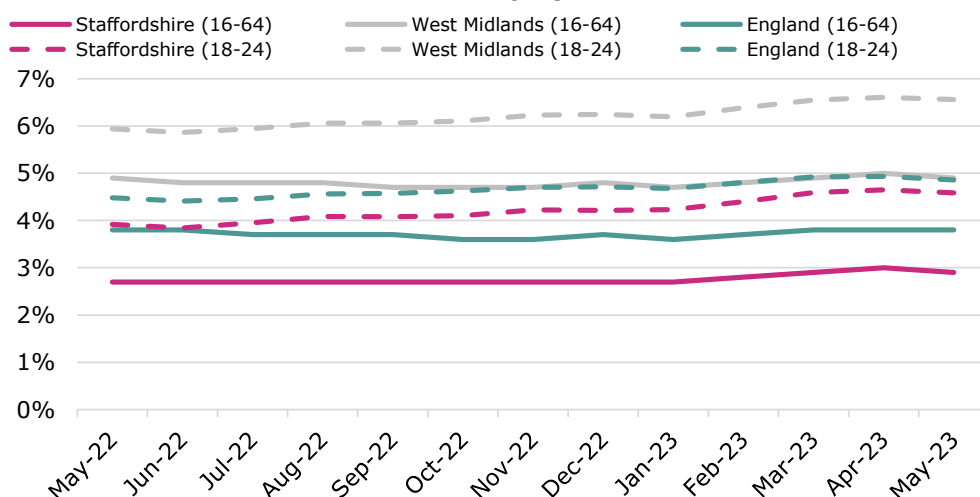


In 2022 average annual resident earnings for full-time workers in Staffordshire stood at £32,386 which was just below the England average of £33,208. Between 2017-22 Staffordshire saw faster improvement in resident earnings compared to national, with 16.5% growth compared to 14.2% for England.

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

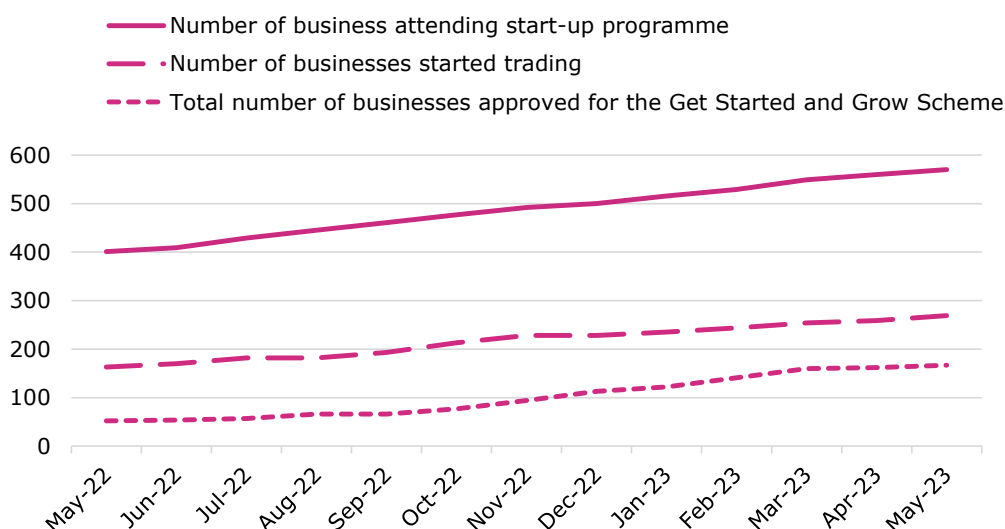
As of May 2023, there were 15,385 claimants in Staffordshire; a decrease of 330 claimants compared with the figures reported in the outturn report (March 2023). Staffordshire Moorlands records the lowest rate (2.0%), and Tamworth and Cannock record the highest at 3.5%, which is still just below the national position (3.8%).

Claimant Count rate by age



Source: Office for National Statistics

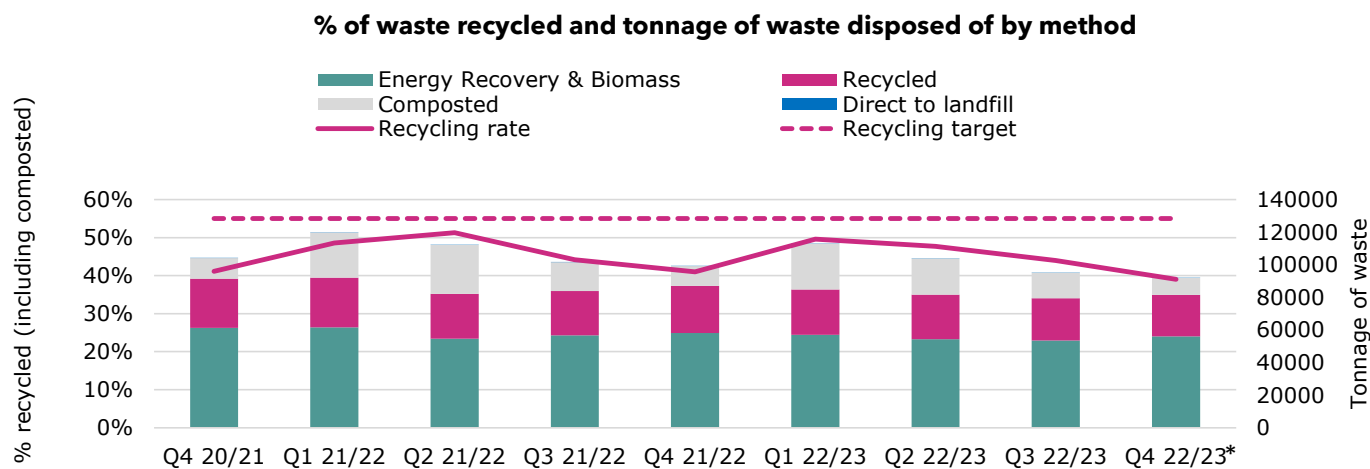
Number of start-up businesses supported by the council (cumulative)



The top sector for businesses attending the start-up programme is 'Retail, Leisure and Tourism, Accommodation'. The 'Get Started' scheme expanded in Quarter 3, 2022/23 to include 'Step up' support for businesses aged 2-5 years.

Source: SCC

Climate Change, Environment & Sustainability Dashboard



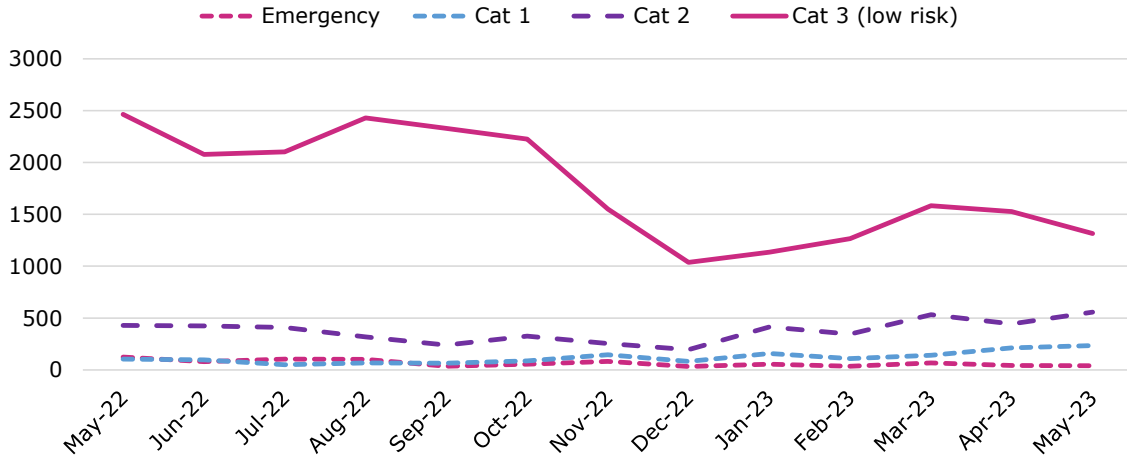
Source: SCC

* Provisional figures, subject to audit

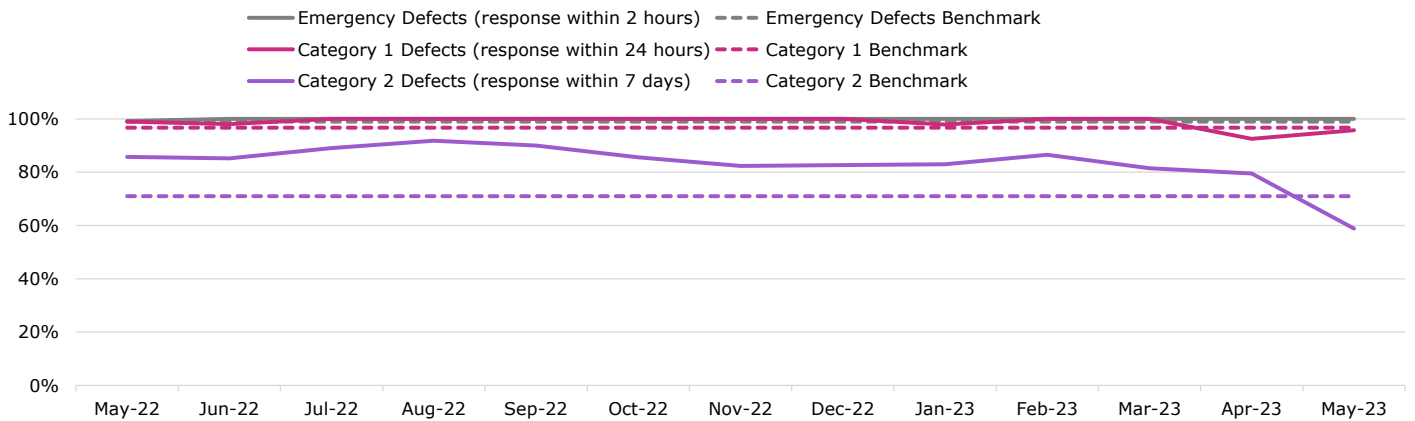
There was a reduction in the recycling rate in Quarter 4, which is not unusual during the winter due to less composted waste, however based on the provisional figures there was also less waste recycled (e.g., from kerbside recycling etc.) in Quarter 4 2022/23 compared with the same period in the previous year. Further analysis is going to be undertaken to understand this reduction. Staffordshire continues to send minimal waste directly to landfill.

Roads, Transport and Digital Connections Dashboard

Total number of safety defects identified



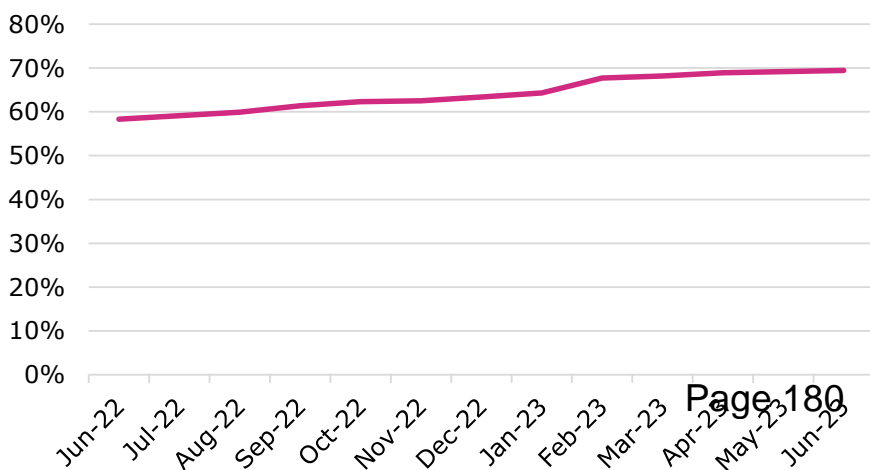
% of Emergency, Category 1 and Category 2 defects repaired in time



Source: Amey, Confirm

Following the winter period there has been an increase in the number of high-risk Category 1 and Category 2 defects identified in April and May, which are being prioritised. The additional 'pothole' funding is providing additional resources, together with the usual season shift of core resources from Winter Operations (e.g. gritting), to carry out these repairs.

% of premises with Gigabit capability

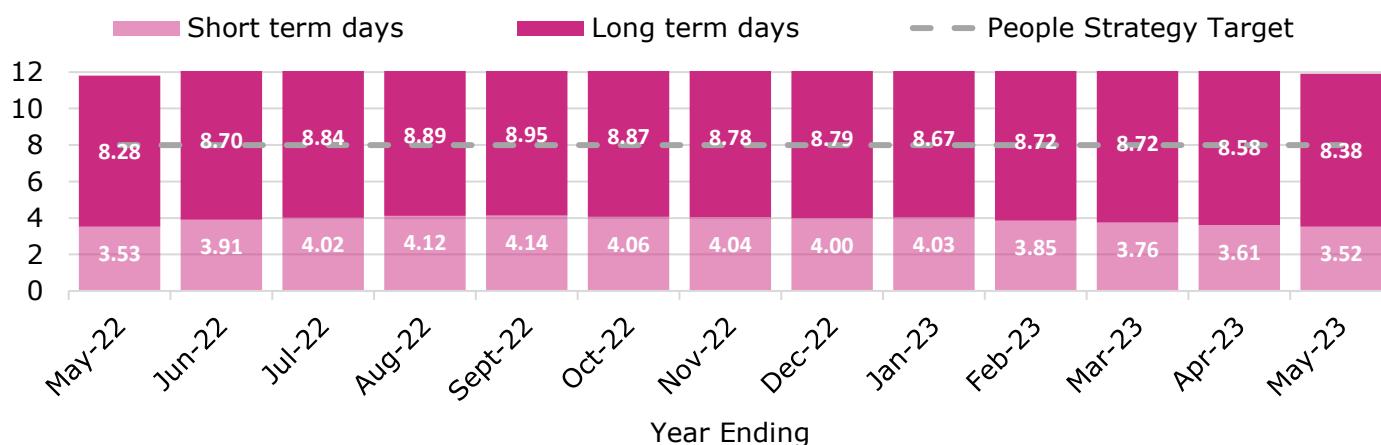


The percentage of premises with Gigabit capability continues to increase, with a target of 85% by the end of 2025 and close to 100% by 2030. It is not appropriate to benchmark against other areas due to differing approaches in rolling this out.

Source: Thinkbroadband.com

How we Work Dashboard

Average payroll days lost per employee

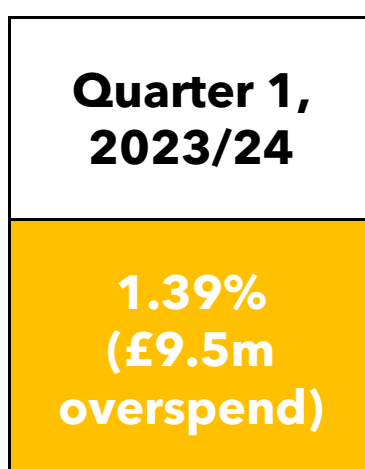


Source: SCC

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%)



A forecast 1.39% overspend is acceptable as it is within the council's Financial Health target of 2% variation on revenue budgets.

Latest Financial Summary

The following graphs summarise the financial performance of the council. Full details are contained in this report.

The graphs and charts are compiled using quarter 1 forecast information.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows an overspend of £9.5m (1.39%).

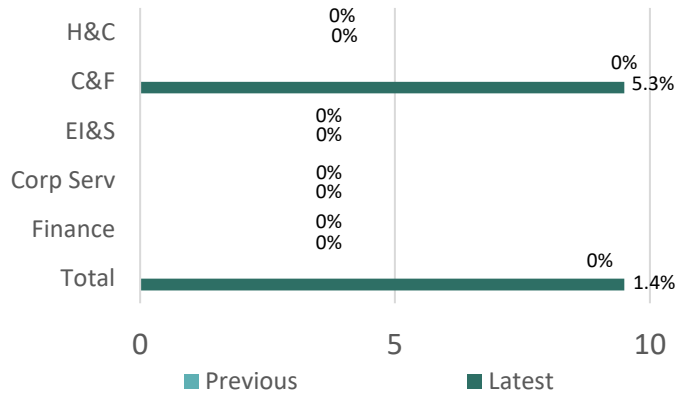
There is a forecast overspend of £8.2m for Children’s Services. This is a highly complex and volatile service and costs depend on the type of placements provided. The service is taking mitigating actions to address these pressures as far as possible.

Savings are categorised into confidence of delivery. There are £0.650m savings that are delivered as at quarter 1. 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 £126.0m, compared to the MTFs position of £110.9m, an increase of 13.6%. This projection is a fully funded position. There have been movements across the whole capital programme, however, there has been increased investment in Highways Schemes.

Within the national context, the latest consumer price index is 7.8%. Interest rates have increased to 4.5% making them the highest level in 15 years. GDP is estimated to have increased by 0.2% in April 2023, following a decrease of 0.3% in March 2023. Current unemployment figures show Staffordshire benefit claimant rate remains below that of the West Midlands and Great Britain.

Revenue Budget Variance



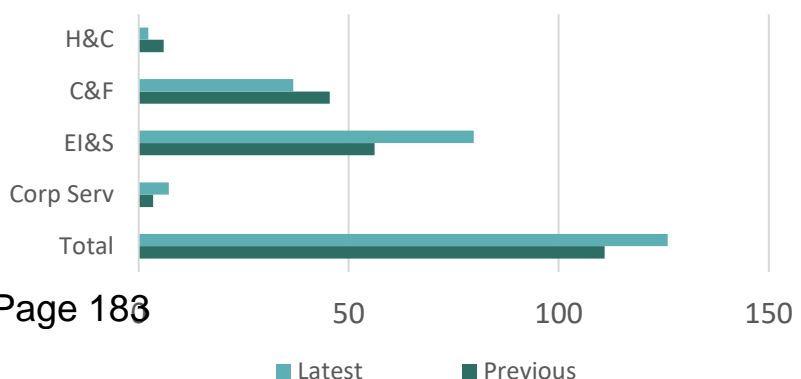
Savings Tracker – Target £11.176m

Quarter 1 - £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

1. The latest revenue forecast outturn (as provided in appendix 4) shows a forecast overspend of £9.5m (1.39%), compared to the balanced budget.
2. The following paragraphs consider the key financial issues in each of the council's portfolios.
3. **Health and Care** **Forecast – Breakeven**
4. *Public Health and Prevention* *Forecast – Breakeven*
5. The Public Health team are developing a longer-term plan for allocating the Public Health Ringfenced Grant (PHRFG) over the next 2-3 years. Discussions are taking place with Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPUFT) to determine the impact of the 2023/24 NHS pay award.
6. *Adults Social Care & Safeguarding* *Forecast - Breakeven*
7. There are a number of vacancies in the Adults Learning Disability Team (ALDT) which are planned to be filled during the year. Due to vacancies, it is likely that the budget will not be fully spent this year. There is a risk that the 2023/24 NHS pay award could lead to higher than budgeted costs for the Section 75 agreement with the MPUFT.
8. The restructure of the In-House Provider residential services has now been completed and planned savings have been achieved. A review of the day opportunities is planned to take place this year and the services are expected to operate within their approved budgets. This is the first full year of operation of the new Independence at Home (IAH) Homecare service. Costs will gradually increase as the service fully mobilises but are not expected to exceed the approved budget.
9. *Care Commissioning* *Forecast - Breakeven*
10. The upward trend in both the numbers of people receiving care and support and the price of each person is ongoing. The increase in numbers is slightly

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

below the forecast included in the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the increase in price is slightly above. The net effect is that we are forecasting a balanced position for 2023/24. We continue to see a rise in the price of care home placements over and above the annual fee uplift. This manifests as rising prices for new placements and in a number of incidents, care homes serving notice on existing placements in order to renegotiate prices. Mitigations include commissioning of block booked beds and consideration of development of Council owned nursing homes as an alternative to the independent market.

11. Growth was built into the MTFS in 2022/23 to take account of the high demand for home care that had arisen during the Covid pandemic. The growth in the number of hours of home care provided appears to have stabilised between 48,000 and 49,000 hours per week during quarter 1. In addition, the backlog of hours that had built up has been reduced to a much lower level (33 hours). As a result of the additional funding built into the home care budget for older people, we are forecasting break even for this financial year.
12. Additional funding has been build into the 2023/24 Physical Disabilities budget to take account of the forecast demographic changes and inflationary pressures. At this time, we are forecasting that this budget will breakeven in year.
13. There is a risk that the Learning Disability placement budget will be exceeded again this year. There is a risk that the £1.2m MTFS saving will not be fully achieved, and Commissioners are working to address this. There is also a risk that demographic growth and care price increases could exceed the budget assumptions, and these will be monitored as we move through the year.
14. The Mental Health budget is forecast to break even. The placement budget was increased in recognition of the growth in placements costs during the last few years but there remains a risk of further increases in referrals as we move through the year.
15. **Covid Funding**
16. The Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) quarter 4 2022/23 return has been submitted which contains a draft 2023/24 budget. £9.7m has been

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

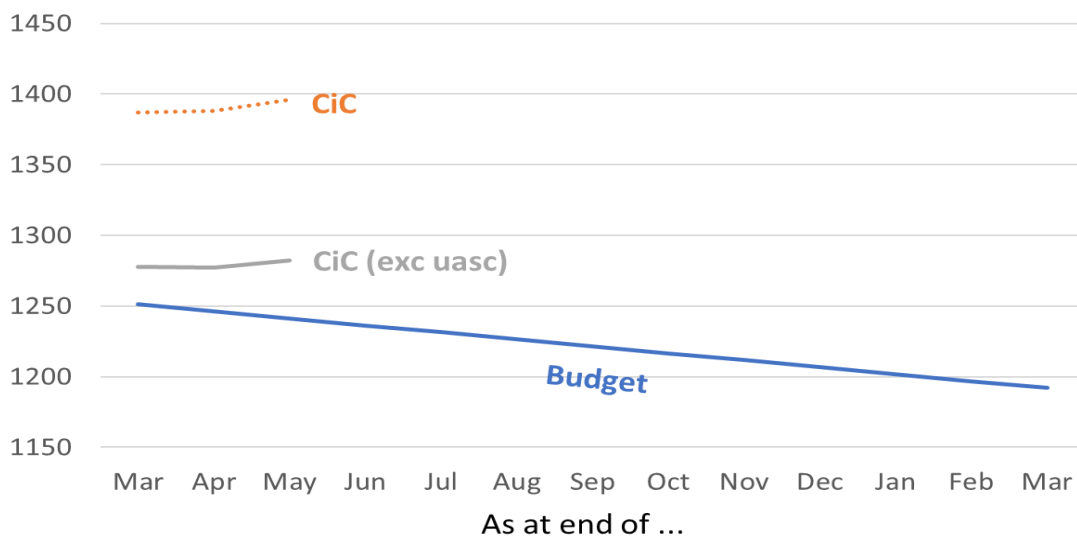
brought forward to 2023/24, against which we have estimated further commitments of £5.8m, leaving £3m uncommitted at this time.

17. A webinar recently took place with all local authorities who had unspent COMF funding carried forward into 2023/24, the aim of this was to work with those authorities to develop spend plans and share examples of how other authorities have spent their funding and a regional UK Health Security Agency representative will be assisting with this. It has been confirmed that COMF can be carried forward into 2024/25, however the request is that funding is allocated and spent as soon as possible as 2024/25 may be the final year we are able to carry forward COMF funding.

18. **Children & Families** **Forecast - £9.5m overspend**

19. *Children’s Services* *Forecast - £8.2m overspend*

20. The forecast for the service is an overspend of £8.2m. The number of Children in Care (CiC) has slightly increased from the start of the year (currently at 1,397) and – after allowing for increasing numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children for whom we receive additional government grant funding – is significantly removed from the approved business case and underlying assumptions that make up the existing budget and MTFS. If numbers do not reduce, then the gap will steadily increase and the CiC Placements budget and Section 17 support, exacerbated by rising costs of inflation, is forecast to be £10.2m overspent.

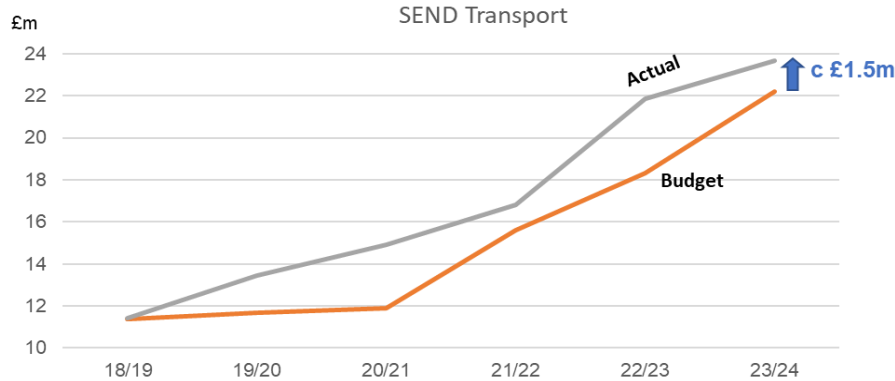


Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

21. The service is taking mitigating actions to address this pressure as far as possible, 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
 - Review and improve the reunification support offer
 - Review all existing children in care by cohort, considering areas working well and areas for potential improvement
 - Maximise income contributions from key partners
 - Eliminate the use of unregulated placements
 - Reduce placement breakdowns through innovative solutions, e.g. House Project
 - Engaging with the market to actively source quality placements and ensure a vibrant market so that costs of care are competitive
22. In recent times and following the transformation programme that was implemented from October 2021, the service has been hindered by on going recruitment and retention problems leading to inconsistent support and capacity.
23. This issue was recognised in the MTFs and significant additional resources were brought into the budget this year to address these concerns. The service is actively recruiting, 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 £1.7m across the district structure. This is offset by vacancy savings and one off saving due to the delayed implementation of the workforce review / restructure that is currently being worked through, saving £2.5m.
24. There are other savings of £1.2m, mainly additional unaccompanied asylum seeking children (uasc) grant, which leads to an overspend of £8.2m for Childrens Services.
25. *Education Services* *Forecast - £1.3m overspend*
26. The service is forecast to overspend by £1.3m. This is primarily due to pressures in SEND transport which in recent years has seen significant

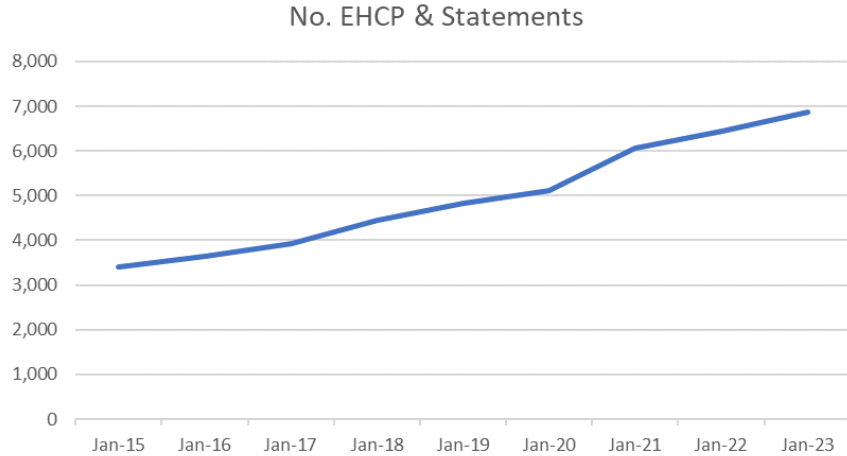
Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

increase in demand as a result of the rise in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). Costs increased significantly through 2022/23 due to the rising costs of inflation, and despite a further increase in budget this financial year it is forecast that there will be an overspend of £1.5m.

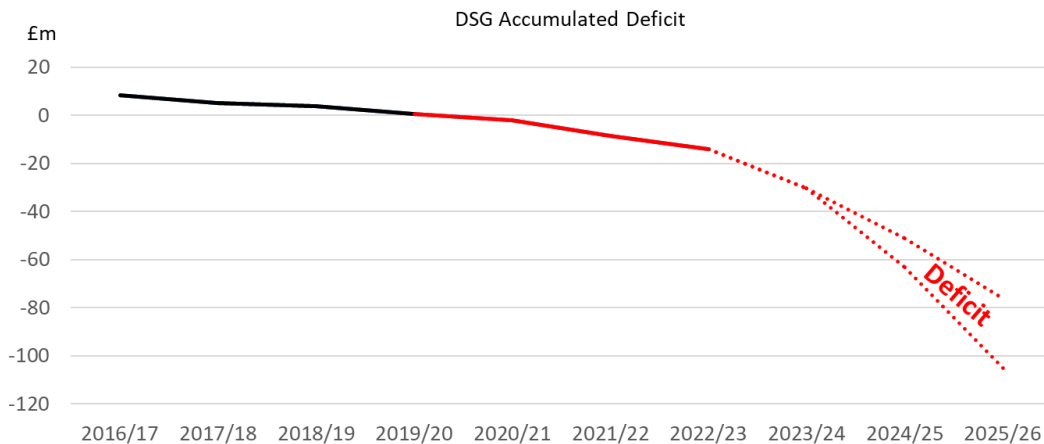


27. A review of SEND transport is being implemented to identify any actions that may be taken to mitigate the existing demand and costs as far as possible.
28. There are other small savings across the service, mainly historic teacher pension contributions) totalling £0.2m that lead to a total forecast overspend of £1.2m.
29. *SEND High Needs Block*
30. The High Needs Block is forecast to be overspent by £18m and reflects the 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 needs. This has now been in place for a year and as planned, is now being reviewed to ensure it is meeting intended objectives and to understand the impact on costs which appear to have increase significantly since its introduction.
31. There is also continuing growing demand to SEND support. This is impacting across all areas but especially the Independent sector with numbers now double what they were just three years ago. Given the more expensive placement costs, this is by some way the largest budget pressure in the High Needs Block.

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report



32. Staffordshire County Council is not alone in this difficult financial predicament – this is a position shared by the majority of Councils across the sector. The Government has put in place a ‘statutory override’ requiring that accumulated DSG deficits should remain ringfenced separate to the Councils other reserves and this has now been extended through to the end of 2025/26.
33. Accordingly, the final overspend will be charged against the DSG reserve which is currently £14.2m in deficit. The Councils Deficit Management Plan – that is consistent with the wider objectives outlined in the SEND Strategy – outlines the targeted interventions that will see to mitigate the existing shortfall. This will take time and at this stage, does not appear to have had any significant impact on what is a worsening position.



34. *Partnerships & Wellbeing*

Forecast - Breakeven

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

35. The forecast for the service is a breakeven position. There is a small saving of £0.1m which will be used to contribute towards one-off redundancy costs during the year which are associated with the Family Hubs restructure.
36. A large majority of the services budget is funded from government grants, including Resettlement funding of £10.9m, Household Support Fund of £11m and Holidays and Activities Fund of £2.4m. These programmes have Cabinet approved plans to utilise these allocations and to deliver national programmes of work for the benefit of local residents.
37. **Economy, Infrastructure & Skills** **Forecast – Breakeven**
38. *Business & Enterprise* *Forecast – Breakeven*
39. The service is forecast to breakeven at quarter 1. There is a potential budget shortfall due to loss of European Regional Development Funding however additional income is expected from planning fees and in the Farms and Enterprise Centre budget areas to offset this.
40. *Infrastructure & Highways* *Forecast - Breakeven*
41. The forecast for the service is a breakeven position, although there are various overspends and savings across the budget area.
42. This position assumes that any underspend of highways transformation monies from 2022/23 is used on priority work in the early part of this financial year. 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 as part of the usual budget monitoring process.
43. *Transport, Connectivity & Waste* *Forecast - Breakeven*
44. The Transport and Connectivity service is forecast to breakeven although there are several uncertainties in this area.
45. There are expected risks in the Concessionary Fares budget area as future government directives could change and the impact of the Department for Transport (DfT) Toolkit review is still unclear. There is provision to mitigate these risks in the MTFs, but the impact is still uncertain. Furthermore, any

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

savings in this area will need to be ringfenced to support the bus network in future years.

46. In other budget areas within Transport, the effect of inflationary pressures (including the rising fuel costs) has been felt through 2022/23. Terminated contracts that have had to be renewed at short notice are coming in at much higher costs and this trend is expected to continue into 2023/24. These pressures will need to be monitored closely to understand any impact in this and future financial years.
47. The Sustainability and Waste service is forecast to breakeven at quarter 1. This position assumes that the £0.565m MTFS saving in the Dry Mix Recycling Credits budget will be achieved.
48. The inflationary pressures in the Woodfuels area in 2022/23 are likely to continue but it is hoped that these can be offset by additional third party income across the Energy from Waste sites and additional electricity revenues.
49. *Skills* *Forecast - Breakeven*
50. The Skills service is forecast to breakeven. While there is a forecast saving due to vacancies in the team, this may be required to offset pressures following the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) of staff back into the service from Entrust.
51. *Culture, Rural & Communities* *Forecast – Breakeven*
52. The service is currently forecast to breakeven. There is a potential pressure in the Coroners areas which is hoped can be offset by savings elsewhere within the service. There is also a commitment to fund £50,000 towards Library Website developments included in this forecast.
53. **Corporate Services** **Forecast – Breakeven**
54. The service is forecast to breakeven. This position assumes the £0.220m property rationalisation MTFS saving will be achieved.

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

55. It is likely that there will be some additional income above budget in Registrars due to the higher number of weddings that are being booked now all Covid restrictions are lifted and the appointment of a dedicated events planner in this areas. This addition income will offset the annual leave purchase scheme pressure as much fewer staff are choosing to buy additional leave than previously forecast.
56. **Finance** **Forecast - Breakeven**
57. At quarter 1, the Finance directorate is forecast to achieve a break even position. There will be some small savings due to staffing vacancies but these savings will be needed to offset any capacity issue in the Adult Financial Services team.
58. **Centrally Controlled**
59. The forecast for centrally is to breakeven. This position assumes that the inflationary increases through the MTFS on energy budgets within Pooled Building are sufficient to meet the higher costs. This will be monitored regularly through the usual budget monitoring process.
60. There is a breakeven position forecast on Landlords Repairs and Maintenance and Insurances at quarter 1.
61. **Capital Forecast**
62. Appendix 5 compares the latest capital forecast outturn of £126.0m, an increase from the budgeted position of £110.9m. The key reasons for this increase of £15.1m are set out in the following paragraphs.
63. **Health and Care** **Forecast spend £2.269m**
64. There has been a reduction of £3.638m since the MTFS report. This is mainly due to the reprofiling of new build nursing home projects into future years.
65. **Children and Families** **Forecast spend £36.801m**
66. *Maintained Schools* *Forecast Spend £36.604m*

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

67. There has been a decrease of £8.670m since the MTFS. There has been rephasing of £10m of SEND Grant and £10m of Basic Needs into 2024/25 reflecting realistic spend and delivery profiles for projects in these areas.
68. There has been an increase of £2.9m in the Schools Capital Allocation for 2023/24 in addition to £4.5m of slippage from 2022/23.
69. Other increases include refining of budgets for large projects such as Netherstow High School of £0.197m, Deanslade Primary School of £0.617m, St Leonards Primary of £0.985m, Scienta Reach2 of £0.336m, new school at Parks Farm of £0.168m, Madeley High Academy of £0.177m.
70. The remaining change is made up of a number of other smaller instances of slippage into 2023/24 and budget refinements on projects across the whole programme.
71. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills** **Forecast spend £79.769m**
72. *Economic Planning & Future Prosperity* *Forecast spend £8.347m*
73. There has been a reduction of £0.317m since the MTFS. Included within this overall reduction are significant changes on projects – A50 contingency reduced and reprofiled by £1.630m, new Stafford Town Centre project contribution increase of £0.870m, cost increases at i54 Strategic Employment Site following a review of £0.404m and slippage of £0.690m into 2024/25 for Chatterly Valley. There have been smaller movements across a number of other projects within this service area.
74. *Highways Schemes* *Forecast spend £64.083m*
75. There has been an increase of £23.131m since the MTFS report. There has been significant increase in investment by the Council including £5m in minor carriageway maintenance and £10m in the overarching highways programme of £10m.
76. Additionally further grant resources have become available including Active Travel Fund of £0.743m, additional DfT resources of £2.210m and HS2 Road Safety Funds of £0.508m. There are also further developer contributions for IT and Third Party Contributions for IT and Bridges.

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

77. There has been a rephasing of the budget for Stafford Western Access Route in line with the latest forecast completion timescale of £1.891m.
78. *Connectivity* *Forecast Spend £0.808m*
79. There has been an increase of £87,000 since the MTFS, which is due to the reprofile of the Gigabyte voucher schemes due to delays, eligibility changes and voucher amounts in the process of being amended.
80. *Rural County* *Forecast Spend £0.388m*
81. There has been a reduction of £6,000 since the MTFS, due to small increase due to rephasing on Rights of Way Maintenance of £4,000, ongoing M6 Toll associated costs due to land ownership issues of £50,000 and additional grant of £9,000. There has been the introduction of a new project – Tamworth 4 Footpath resurfacing of £30,000. These additions have been offset by rephasing of Chasewater Section 106 into future years of £99,000.
82. *Waste & Sustainability* *Forecast Spend £1.290m*
83. The forecast spend has increased by £0.315m since the MTFS. This is due to the introduction of a new project to acquire a flare at Bemersley Recycling Centre of £45,000 and the introduction of a County wide 5 year investment plan starting in 2023/24 of £1.245m. These increases are offset by delays with Newcastle Household Waste Recycling Centre which is now in business planning phase and potentially set for works to start late in 2023/24, reducing this years forecast by £0.975m.
84. **Property, Finance and Resources & ICT** **Forecast spend £6.503m**
85. There has been an increase of £3.748m since the MTFS. This increase is mainly due to the introduction of a new project – Tamworth Library Refurbishment of £1.159m and further investment in District Property Rationalisation to support MTFS pressures of £1.350m.
86. **Financial Health**

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

87. Appendix 6 provides a forecast outturn performance against the key Financial Health Indicators approved as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.
88. 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.
89. The Debt Key Performance Indicator (KPI) has been refreshed, which reflects the following:
- The same KPI and targets have been in place since the commencement of 2019/20. Increased income and other changes over the intervening period mean that the previous target was out of date
 - The decision of Social Care Ombudsman to require bill for residential care to be issued by SCC rather than the provider has close to doubled the volume and value of social care invoices raised
 - The previous single KPI did not focus sufficient attention on debt recovery or risk
 - The Covid pandemic and the cost of living crisis have changed the collection environment.
90. Due to increasing income levels year on year (in particular in residential care) the target will need to be reviewed and revised annually.
91. The estimated level of outstanding sundry debt over 6 months old is £19.943m, this is under the revised target of £21.5m by £1.557m. This position is an increase of £0.896m since the outturn report. The debt recovery process involves chasing by a range of methods with the eventual escalation to the external collection agent or to Legal for the possibility of a court decision to recover the debt.
92. The level of CCG health debt over 6 months old is now £0.647m, £0.453m below the target figure.
93. Non-Residential Client debt now stands at £11.589m 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.

Appendix 3 – Quarter 1 Finance Report

Debtor Type	2023/24 Target	31/03/2023	30/06/2023	Increase / (Decrease)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health Bodies & CCGs	1.200	0.341	0.647	0.306
Other Govt. and Public Bodies	2.800	2.289	2.105	(0.184)
Other General Debtors (Individuals & Commercial)	5.200	5.018	5.224	0.206
H&C Non-Res Client Debt	11.000	11.399	11.589	0.190
H&C Residential Client Debt	1.300	-	0.378	0.378
TOTAL	21.500	19.047	19.943	0.896

94. Prudential Indicators

95. Appendix 7 provides a forecast outturn performance against the Prudential Indicators approved as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.
96. 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.
97. 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 1 £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Total Variation £m
<u>Health and Care</u>			
Public Health & Prevention	0.263	0.263	0.000
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	41.417	41.417	0.000
Care Commissioning	219.345	219.345	0.000
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	(0.263)	(0.263)	0.000
Health and Care Total	260.762	260.762	0.000
<u>Children and Families</u>			
Children's Services	131.507	139.707	8.200
Children's Public Health	0.000	0.000	0.000
Education Services	38.256	39.556	1.300
Wellbeing & Partnerships	8.574	8.574	0.000
Children and Families Total	178.337	187.837	9.500
<u>Economy, Infrastructure and Skills</u>			
Business & Enterprise	3.062	3.062	0.000
Infrastructure & Highways	40.225	40.225	0.000
Transport, Connectivity & Waste	45.847	45.847	0.000
Skills	2.715	2.715	0.000
Culture, Rural & Communities	13.258	13.258	0.000
EI&S Business Support	1.200	1.200	0.000
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	106.307	106.307	0.000
Corporate Services Total	38.908	38.908	0.000
Finance Total	10.977	10.977	0.000
Total Portfolio Budgets (Saving)/Overspend	595.291	604.791	9.500
<u>Centrally Controlled Items</u>			
Interest on Balances & Debt Charges	23.880	23.880	0.000
Pooled Buildings and Insurances	28.812	28.812	0.000
Pensions	1.706	1.706	0.000
Investment Fund	1.131	1.131	0.000
Care Market Pressures	15.000	15.000	0.000
Capital Investment Fund	2.500	2.500	0.000
Traded Services / Business Partner	(0.949)	(0.949)	0.000
Contingency	15.000	15.000	0.000
Net Revenue Budget (Saving)/Overspend	682.372	691.872	9.500

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Enhancements to Programme</u>	<u>1st Quarter Budget</u>
	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care			
Care and Independence	5.907	(3.638)	2.269
Health and Care Total	5.907	(3.638)	2.269
Children and Families			
Maintained Schools	45.274	(8.670)	36.604
Vulnerable Children's Projects	0.197	0.000	0.197
Children and Families Total	45.471	(8.670)	36.801
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Economic Planning & Future Prosperity	8.664	(0.317)	8.347
Highways Schemes	40.952	23.131	64.083
Connectivity	0.721	0.087	0.808
Rural County (Countryside)	0.394	(0.006)	0.388
Tourism and Culture	4.444	0.409	4.853
Waste & Sustainability Projects	0.975	0.315	1.290
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	56.150	23.619	79.769
Trading Services - County Fleet Care	0.630	0.000	0.630
Finance, Resources & ICT	0.450	0.425	0.875
Property	2.305	3.323	5.628
Total	110.913	15.059	125.972

Financial Health Indicators 2023/24

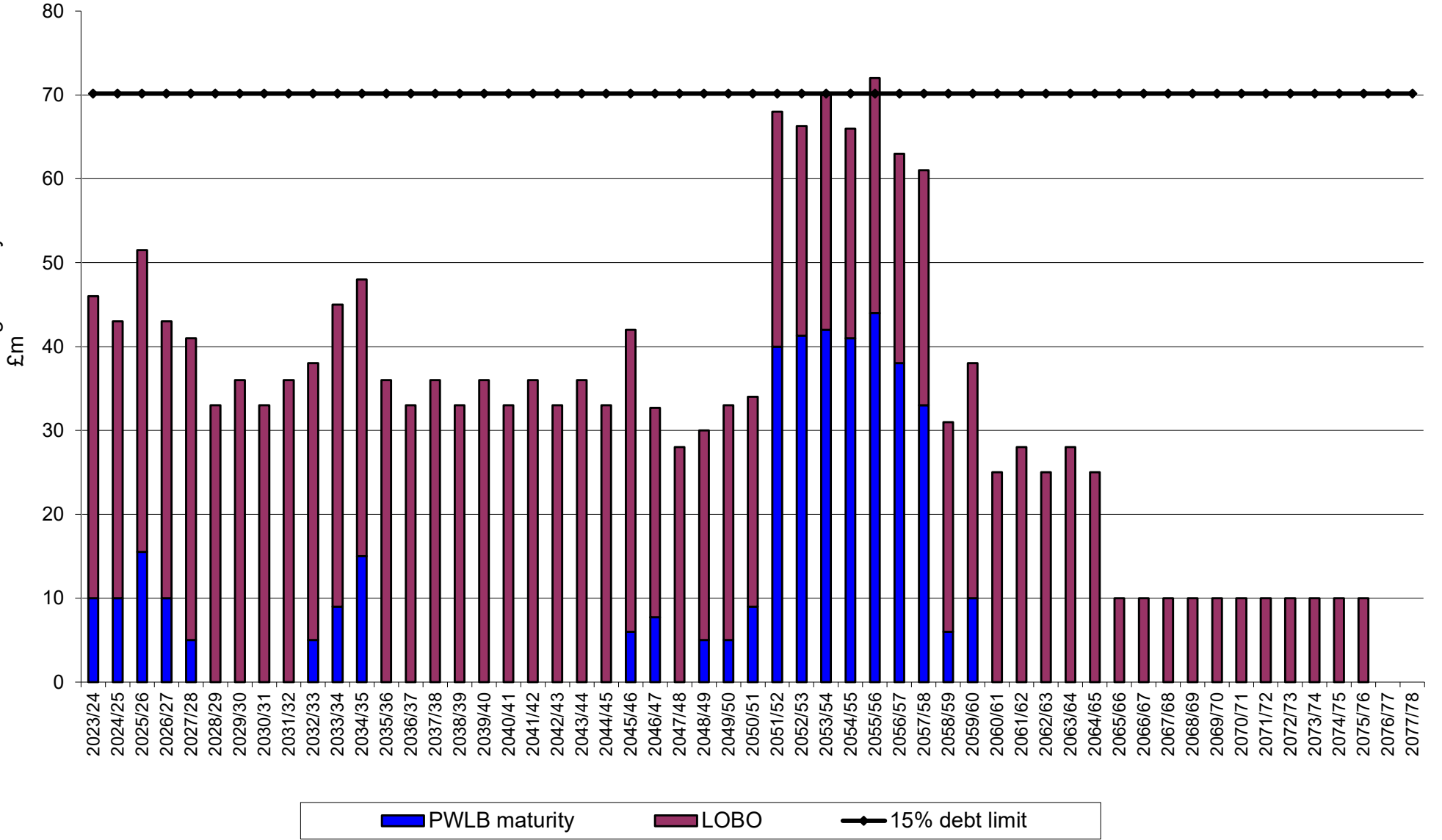
Appendix 6

Indicator		Current Performance
<p><u>Debtors</u> Level of outstanding general debtors more than 6 months old does not exceed £21.5m (Current Performance – £19.9m).</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	Q1 Estimate 2023/24
	£m	£m
External Debt – Authorised Limit for borrowing	621	459
External Debt – Authorised Limit for other liabilities	118	117
<i>Total</i>	<i>739</i>	<i>576</i>
External Debt – Operational Boundary for borrowing	525	459
External Debt – Operational Boundary for other liabilities	118	117
<i>Total</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>576</i>
External Debt - Loans	596.5	459
Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Fixed)	546.4	429
Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Variable)	(470.0)	(480.0)
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for longer than a year	245.0	30
Estimate of Capital Expenditure	111.9	136.0
Estimate of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	572.1	578.5
Gross Debt – External Loans (Should remain below CFR, except in the short term)	568.2	459
Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Financing Costs	22.9	41.7
Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Proportion of Net Revenue Stream - %	3.6%	6.45%

Debt Reaching Maturity



Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 19 July 2023

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23



Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Matters said,

“Staffordshire County Council is a well-run Council, and we continue to manage our finances prudently while doing and spending what is required. By using cash reserves rather than borrowing more, we have been able to achieve substantial savings in what remain challenging times. In addition to being prudent, our low-risk investment approach, which focuses on lending to low-risk institutions, means we have been well placed to deal with challenges arising from difficulties the current global economy presents. We remain committed to supporting local businesses along with providing access to funding, as we work to grow our economy. Like most Councils we face financial pressures, rising costs and uncertainty over the long-term funding of some services but we will continue to spend and invest where necessary, focusing our efforts and resources on where they are most needed.”

Report Summary:

1. This report describes the County Council’s investment and borrowing activity during 2022/23. It reflects both borrowing and investment decisions taken throughout the year considering the interest rates and economic conditions prevailing at the time.
2. Treasury management activities involve large sums of money and reflect the huge scale of the County Council’s operations. As at 31 March 2023, the County Council’s overall debt level stood at £459m, which reflects capital expenditure decisions made in the past. Investments totalled £425m. The County Council holds no commercial investments.
3. The County Council’s treasury management activities were carried out prudently during the year and the policy of funding new borrowing from internal cash balances continues to generate significant savings.

4. As well as being prudent, the County Council's low-risk investment strategy, which focuses on lending to low-risk institutions and the need for liquidity and diversification, has ensured the County Council has been strategically placed to deal with market challenges arising from global events such as the war in Ukraine and global inflationary pressures.

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- a. the treasury management activities for the year ended 31 March 2023, including the Prudential Indicators outturn detailed in **Appendix 4**, be noted.
- b. Cabinet note and approve the use of the Minimum Revenue Provision at 31 March 2023 for £20.441m as set out in **paragraphs 31 and 32**.

Local Members Interest			
If report is relevant to ALL Members, type 'N/A' into table and delete what is not required			
Insert Name	Members	Insert Division	Electoral

Cabinet – Wednesday 19 July 2023

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23

Recommendations of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Matters

I recommend that:

- a. the treasury management activities for the year ended 31 March 2023, including the Prudential Indicators outturn detailed in **Appendix 4**, be noted.
- b. Cabinet note and approve the use of the Minimum Revenue Provision at 31 March 2023 for £20.441m as set out in **paragraphs 31 and 32**.

Report of the Director of Finance

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. At their meeting on 18 January 2012, Cabinet adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code).
2. Treasury risk management at the County Council is conducted within the framework of the revised 2021 edition of the CIPFA Code. This requires the County Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, provide a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
3. This report provides a summary of the County Council's treasury management activities for 2022/23, in the context of the strategy for the year, which was agreed by Cabinet on 27 January 2022. It considers both the borrowing and investment decisions taken throughout the year in the light of the interest rates and economic conditions prevailing at the time.
4. Attached at **Appendix 6** of this report is a comprehensive glossary of treasury terms to provide definitions and background for treasury reports.
5. All implications considered for this report are shown at **Appendix 1**.

External context

6. Against a backdrop of stubborn inflationary pressures, the easing of Covid restrictions in most developed economies, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and a range of different UK Government policies, it is no surprise that UK interest rates have been volatile, from Bank Rate through to 50-year gilt yields, for all of 2022/23.
7. With the view that elevated global inflation was a temporary phenomenon giving way to concerns over persistent and embedded high inflation, bond markets were volatile during 2022/23. UK, Eurozone, and US 10-year yields all rose by over 2.0% in 2022. The table below provides a snapshot of the issues facing central banks in raising interest rates to combat inflation, with tight labour markets making it a matter of fine judgment as to how far they can raise interest rates without unduly damaging economies.

	UK	Eurozone	US
Bank Rate	5.00%	4%	5%-5.25%
GDP	+0.1% q/q	-0.1% q/q	1.3% q/q
Inflation	8.7%/y/y (April)	6.1%/y/y (May)	4.0%/y/y (May)
Unemployment Rate	3.8% (Apr)	6.5% (Apr)	3.7% (May)

As at June 2023.

8. Q2 of 2022 saw UK GDP deliver growth of +0.1% q/q, but this was reversed in Q3 with some of the fall in GDP attributed to the extra Bank Holiday in the wake of the Queen's passing. Q4 GDP was positive at 0.1% q/q. Most recently, January saw a 0.3% m/m increase in GDP as the number of strikes reduced compared to December. In addition, the resilience in activity at the end of 2022 was in part due to a 1.3% q/q rise in real household disposable incomes. This reflects the £5.7bn payments received by households from the government under the Energy Bills Support Scheme. The Council's Treasury Advisers, Link, expect real GDP to contract by around 0.2% q/q in Q1 and forecast a recession in 2023 involving a 1.0% peak-to-trough fall in real GDP.
9. CPI inflation peaked at 11.1% in October; significant falls from this level depend on the gas and electricity markets, as well as the supply-side factors impacting food prices. On balance, most commentators expect the CPI measure of inflation to drop back towards 4% by the end of 2023. As of March 2023, CPI was 10.1%. To combat this Bank Rate was increased steadily throughout 2022/23, starting at 0.75% and finishing at 4.25%.
10. In the US, markets are pricing in further interest rate increases of 0.25%-0.50%, on top of the current interest rate range of 4.75% - 5%. In addition, the Fed is expected to continue to reduce its balance sheet once the on-going concerns about some elements of niche banking provision have receded. US inflation in March 2023 is currently at c6% but with the economy expected to weaken during 2023, and wage data already falling back, there is the prospect that should the

economy slide into a recession there will be scope for rates to be cut at the end of 2023 or shortly after.

11. In the EU the Euro-zone inflation rate has fallen below 7%, the ECB is still aware that it has further work to do to reduce inflation and it is expected that interest rates could be raised to 4% to do so. Like in the UK, growth has remained more robust than anticipated but a recession in 2023 is still seen as likely by most commentators.

Long-term borrowing 2022/23

12. The Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2022/23, approved by Cabinet on 27 January 2022, outlined the long-term borrowing strategy for the year, which was:

“to use internal cash resources in lieu of borrowing.”

13. The ability to borrow new loans was authorised as it was recognised that cash balances could fall as a result of unexpected changes in;
 - the capital programme;
 - budget pressures (such as inflation);
 - changes in the County Council’s cash funding; and
 - the repayment of Lender Option Borrower Option loans (LOBOs).

The following table summarises the use of cash for 2022/23:

2022/23	£m
Balance funded from cash brought forward	99.294
New debt	18.309
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) *	(20.441)
Loan repayments at maturity	5.034
Loans taken out	0
Balance funded from cash carried forward	102.196

* £18.832m of the MRP is payable by the County Council, but the treasury team manage the entire position, including MRP for transferred services.

14. In 2022/23, the amount of debt funded from internal cash balances has increased from £99.294m at the start of the financial year to £102.196m by the end of the year. New debt created was less than MRP by £2.132m but there was a large loan amount maturing of £5m meaning that the overall use of cash increased as £2.868m required alternative funding.
15. The strategy of using cash continues to rely upon two main factors:
 - interest rates, and in particular the difference between short-term investment rates and longer-term borrowing rates; and
 - having cash available to fund the strategy.

Interest rates

16. The Bank of England's (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut Bank Rate from 0.75% to 0.25% on 11 March 2020 and immediately followed this with a cut to 0.10% on 19 March 2020. The BoE left Bank Rate unchanged at its subsequent meetings until raising it to 0.25% at its meeting on 16 December 2021, 0.50% at its meeting of 4 February 2022 and 0.75% on 17 March 2022. The following table shows Bank Rate during 2022/23, it can be seen that the Bank of England have raised it a number of times to tackle inflation.

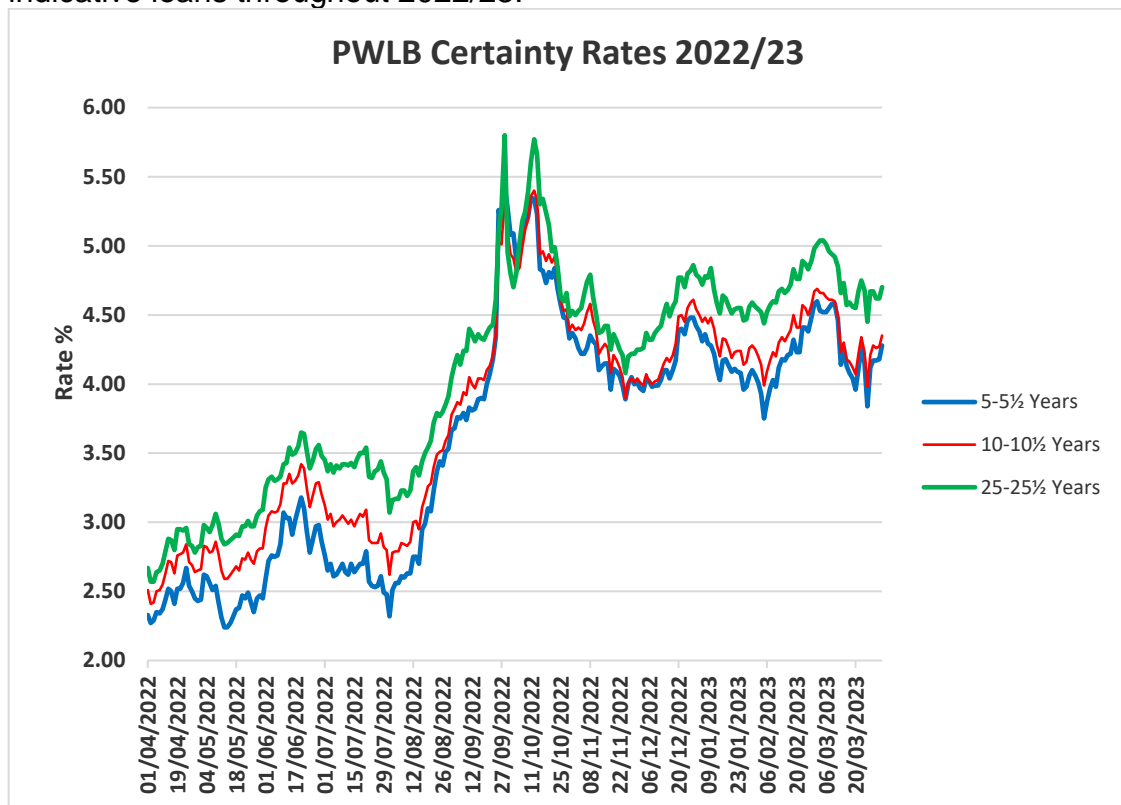
Date	Bank Rate %
5 May 2022	1.00
16 June 2022	1.25
4 August 2022	1.75
22 September 2022	2.25
3 November 2022	3.00
15 December 2022	3.50
2 February 2023	4.00
23 March 2023	4.25
11 May 2023	4.50
21 June 2023	5.00

The County Council's independent treasury advisers, Link, see interest rates rising to 5.50% in the second half of 2023/24 before reducing to 4.75% in September 2024 and 2.75% by September 2025.

Bank Rate	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25
26.06.23	5.00	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	2.75

17. Average inflation targeting was the major change adopted in 2021/22 by the BoE in terms of implementing its inflation target of 2%. The key addition to the Bank's forward guidance in August 2021 was the new phrase in the policy statement that "it does not intend to tighten monetary policy until there is clear evidence that significant progress is being made in eliminating spare capacity and **achieving the 2% target sustainably**". In effect this indicates, that even if inflation rises to 2%, this may not mean that action is taken by the MPC to raise Bank Rate. With inflation now significantly higher than the BoE forecast, due to supply side shortages, labour shortages, commodity price inflation, the impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent Western sanctions, all indications are that inflation will be elevated until well into 2024.
18. Whilst the economic future is not clear, a strategy of using cash remains supported by the current economic situation and the forecast for relatively low interest rates in the future to historical comparisons.
19. Longer term interest rates are more relevant when the County Council wants to take up a new loan; these are mainly sourced from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) whose loan interest rates vary daily reflecting changes in gilt yields in the UK Government bond market.

20. The following chart shows PWLB interest rates (at certainty rate) for three indicative loans throughout 2022/23:

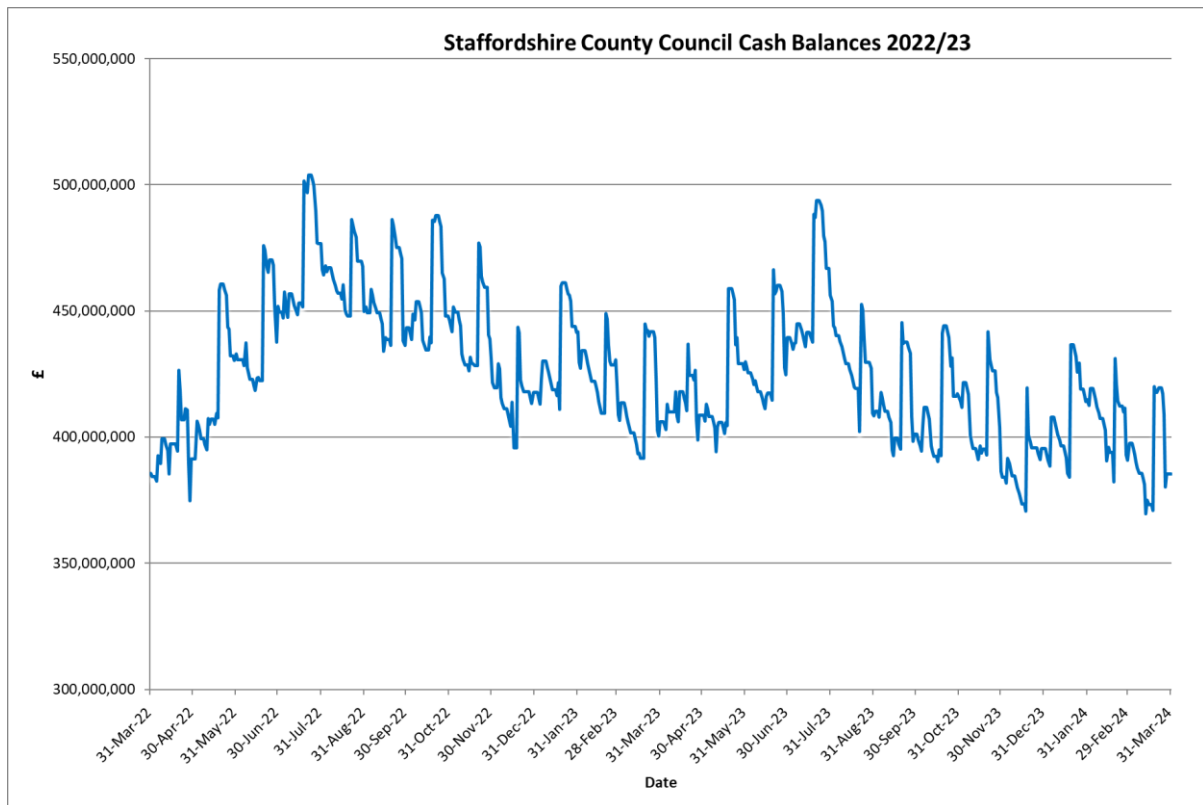


21. The chart shows rates rising steadily throughout the beginning of 2022/23 as global economic and political issues affected inflation and government borrowing levels. The UK cost of borrowing spiked in September as the then Prime Minister, Liz Truss announced the ‘fiscal event’ but eased as a new government took control.
22. During 2021/22, HM Treasury introduced measures to prevent public bodies using PWLB funding to finance commercial investments and established mechanisms to recall such funding. After consultation with Local Authorities the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) ratified the measures and they were incorporated into the latest CIPFA Prudential Code and legislation.
23. It is important to understand the current relationship between short-term investment rates and longer-term rates. If borrowing in the form of a loan is taken, the proceeds could only be invested at rates lower than the cost of the borrowing. At present this difference would be around 0.5% to 1% depending on the length of the loan, so avoiding raising new loans can result in significant savings (see **paragraph 26**).

Availability of Cash

24. An equally important consideration to support the policy of using cash in lieu of borrowing, is whether cash is available. The following graph shows the

investment balances for 2022/23, which were sufficient to fund the use of cash of £102.196m (see paragraph 13).



25. The following table shows the average interest rate incurred on the County Council's loan portfolio, and an adjustment to this to reflect the use of cash.

	2021/22 %	2022/23 %
Weighted average rate of interest for external loans	4.64%	4.58%
Adjusted for the use of cash	3.97%	4.27%

26. The average rate on external loans is slightly lower than last year as the loan maturity of £5m on 20 August 2022 was at a higher rate than the rest of the loan portfolio. On average, internally funding from cash balances in lieu of borrowing has saved the County Council £1.721m in interest payments this year. The interest rate adjusted for the use of cash was marginally higher in 2022/23 as rapidly rising interest rates meant the opportunity cost of using the cash in lieu of borrowing became higher and this portion of the County Council's debt was effectively funded at a higher cost.

27. A graph illustrating the maturity profile of the long-term debt at 31 March 2023 is provided at **Appendix 2**.

28. The financing of the County Council's long-term debt at 31 March 2023 is summarised in the following table.

	£m	% of Total
PWLB fixed maturity loans and other	407.516	73
Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans	51.000	9
Internal funding from cash	102.196	18
Total debt position	560.712	100

Loan rescheduling in 2022/23

29. Movements in interest rates over time may provide opportunities to restructure the loan portfolio in one of two ways:
- to replace existing loans with new loans at a lower rate (known as loan rescheduling); or
 - to repay loans early, without replacing the loans. This would increase the use of cash.
30. A combination of factors throughout 2022/23 meant that loan restructuring was not financially viable:
- gilt yields rose but on average were still lower than historical rates, which means a penalty would be payable to repay debt;
 - Government policy is to apply a margin to the early repayment of a PWLB loan, which further increases the penalty payable; and
 - the gap between short-term interest rates and longer-term interest rates meant that no LOBO loans were called.

Annual provision for principal repayments (Minimum Revenue Provision)

31. Under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2008, local authorities are given some flexibility in making an annual revenue provision for the repayment of debt.
32. In accordance with the approved policy, the Minimum Revenue Provision of £20.441m has been used to reduce the County Council's level of capital financing requirement.

Annual Investment Strategy - Approved Lending List

33. The Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) sets out the parameters for the parties the County Council will lend its money to. The AIS sets out the requirements of government guidance and the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management. Both documents set out two prime risk issues:
- the security of capital; and
 - the liquidity of investments.
34. The following characteristics underpin the AIS.

- the use of regulation investments and counterparties recommended by the treasury adviser (high level of security);
 - the use of diversified sterling “AAA” Money Market Funds (MMFs) and same day liquidity accounts (high level of security and liquidity); and
 - a maximum duration of 12 months for bank and building society investments (high level of security – minimum of A- rating).
35. The current approved lending list of County Council counterparties is attached as **Appendix 3**.
36. The County Council has the ability to place unlimited funds with the UK Government, including Local Authorities (LA’s) although investment in LA’s have been limited to £5m per counterparty by the Treasury Management Panel, to ensure investment diversification.

Treasury Management activity 2022/23

Treasury Management Panel

37. The treasury team monitor the financial markets to monitor and manage risk. Regular reports are provided to the Director of Finance, who chairs the Treasury Management Panel (‘the Panel’) which is attended by senior finance and treasury officers. The Panel is supported by Link, the County Council’s specialist independent specialist advisors.
38. The Panel discussed the high level of County Council cash balances throughout the year and agreed secure ways to hold monies in line with the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS). The AIS sets out clearly the parameters that the County Council uses to invest its money prescribing limits, time frames, institutions and types of investment officers can make. These are discussed monthly by the Panel and Director of Finance and all investments were made in compliance with these rules.
39. The Panel monitored geopolitical developments, such as implications of global inflation and supply issues, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on investments. The Panel ensured the County Council had access to the Government’s DMO deposit account facility with the flexibility to increase limits temporarily for UK domiciled MMFs to ensure security and liquidity. As the County Council’s investment strategy was viewed as cautious, no additional measures were required.
40. The Panel, in conjunction with the County Council’s treasury advisor, considered utilising Short Dated Bond Funds (SDBFs) as an investment vehicle. After a tender exercise and a full due diligence review two funds were selected and an initial deposit of £15 million invested into each.
41. During the year, the Panel discussed and adhered to the treasury reporting requirements following the revision of the CIPFA Codes of Practice on Treasury Management, the Prudential Code, and revised guidance on Local Government Investments and MRP from the DLUHC. In addition to the reports outlined in

paragraph 2, the Panel approved the Capital Strategy and the Commercial Investment Strategy.

42. The Commercial Investment Strategy covers the requirements of DLUHC Guidance, in relation to investments held for service purposes, or for commercial profit. Although commercial investments could be considered for 2022/23, the County Council's 2022/23 annual investment strategy remained low risk, with a focus on safeguarding assets by investing in low risk institutions, and with a view to liquidity and diversification. The Panel considered there was no need to change this strategy during 2022/23.
43. The Panel discussed the implications of the revision to the CIPFA Codes of Practice for Treasury Management and the Prudential Code and ensured that a work plan is in place to meet all requirements for the deadline of 2023/24.
44. The Panel agreed that Officers should continue to make investments via an Agency Treasury Service run by Link, the County Council's treasury advisor. This allows the County Council to deposit funds via a custodian account into approved counterparties through an intermediary, in this case Link. The advantages to using this are that investments are available to the County Council, at preferential rates in safe institutions which they may not normally have access to.

Credit risk management

45. The following table sets out the credit ratings awarded by credit rating agencies for the counterparties that the County Council has invested with at 31 March.

Credit Rating	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m
AAA	304.8	208.0
AA range (including AA+ and AA-)	32.0	85.5
A range (including A+ and A-)	18.8	71.1
Unrated Bond Funds	0	30.0
Local Authorities	30.0	30.0
Total investments	385.6	424.6

46. The 2022/23 AIS set the minimum credit-rating of a counterparty at a long-term rating of 'A - ', where available. Counterparties rated below this level were automatically precluded from being on the lending list. From the table above, the highest rating ('AAA') was that given to MMFs, whilst the bank investments were graded in the 'A' range.
47. Whilst most local authorities are unrated by credit rating agencies, both regulations (which list local authorities as acceptable bodies to invest in) and their status as tax raising bodies make them highly creditworthy.

48. During 2022/23 the County Council has invested in two Short Dated Bond Funds as permitted by the Treasury Management Strategy. Officers undertook a rigorous selection process from a shortlist of 12 funds in conjunction with the Council's independent advisers, Link to identify the most suitable funds. These funds are high performing but need to be held over a longer period to accrue returns. These funds are monitored on a regular basis and reported formally in the County Council's Statement of Accounts.

Treasury Management Investment transactions

49. Surplus cash is invested in money market instruments to earn interest in accordance with the AIS. All investments must comply with Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 which ensure authorities cannot 'speculate' with public funds, for example, authorities cannot invest surplus cash directly in the stock market.
50. Treasury Officers are authorised to invest in approved counterparties without further approval from the Panel or Members. These are called 'Standard Investments' and include the UK Government, short term Money Market funds and banks and building societies recommended by the County Council's treasury advisors.
51. In addition, the AIS allows investments in 'Non-Standard Investments' subject to approval from the Panel chaired by the Director of Finance. Collective Investment Schemes are a category within Non-Standard Investments which include Enhanced MMFs.
52. The County Council has an investment in the Royal London Cash Plus MMF; this Enhanced MMF has the same characteristics as same day liquidity MMFs but has a 3-day notice period and recommended investment duration of at least 6 months, due to a longer average maturity of the underlying investments. The Royal London Cash Plus MMF has allowed the County Council to earn an increased yield in a low interest rate environment.
53. The County Council's same day notice MMFs converted from a Constant Net Asset Value (CNAV) to a Low Volatility Net Asset Value (LVNAV) structure in January 2019. The assets of LVNAV MMFs are marked to market, meaning the dealing NAV (unit price) may fluctuate. However, the regulations confirm they will be allowed to maintain a constant dealing NAV provided they meet strict criteria and minimum liquidity requirements.
54. The County Council now holds investments in two Short Dated Bond Funds, these are diversified pooled investment vehicles with an extended investment horizon over MMFs and Enhanced MMFs. There is a risk that these investments may suffer diminishing capital in certain economic conditions but may also enhance capital investment in the favourable conditions whilst earning enhanced interest returns. After a comprehensive due diligence review the two funds invested into in 2022/23 met the County Councils investment criteria.

55. The following table summarises some key facts about the County Council's investments over the last two years.

	2021/22	2022/23
Total Interest receipts	£1.447 million	£9.329 million
Average return on investments	0.41%	2.21%
7-day LIBID* (benchmark)	(0.04%)	N/A
SONIA** rate	N/A	2.26%
Differential to Benchmark	0.37%	-0.05%
Adjusted without long-term local authority investments	0.08%	2.07%

* *London Interbank BID interest rate*

** *Daily Sterling Overnight Index Average*

56. The table above shows that the level of total interest receipts in 2022/23 was far higher than in the previous year. This reflects the impact of the rising interest rate environment that has occurred over the last 12 months. The Council's return is slightly less than the SONIA benchmark as this rate rises immediately in line with rising rates whereas the physical investments are placed in a market where the rates are slower to react. The opposite would be true in a falling interest rate environment. The total interest receipts figure includes interest receipts from £30m of long-term local authority investments. These were made at an average rate of 4.02% in 2013, significantly higher than current market interest rates at that time.
57. The long-term local authority investments were originally approved by Cabinet in 2013, for a maximum of £45m and the County Council has used £30m of the allocation. No further long-term investments have been made due to a lack of demand from borrowers.
58. Approved investments at 31 March 2023 stood at £424.596m (£385.595m at 31 March 2022) and these can be analysed as follows:

Long-term local authority	£m	Term
Derby City Council	7.500	28/11/2030
Derby City Council	7.500	28/11/2031
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	7.500	29/11/2032
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	7.500	29/11/2033
Debt Management Office		
Debt Management Office	10.000	09/06/2023
Debt Management Office	11.000	28/04/2023

Debt Management Office	9.000	22/05/2023
Debt Management Office	9.000	24/05/2023
Debt Management Office	5.000	01/09/2023
Debt Management Office	4.000	07/06/2023
Debt Management Office	5.000	08/09/2023
Debt Management Office	3.000	10/08/2023
Debt Management Office	6.000	15/06/2023
Debt Management Office	4.500	15/06/2023
Debt Management Office	10.000	15/09/2023
Debt Management Office	2.000	19/07/2023
Debt Management Office	7.000	21/08/2023
<i>Banks and building societies</i>		
Lloyds (as banking provider)	1.096	Instant Access
Goldman Sachs International	5.000	19/04/2023
Goldman Sachs International	5.000	24/04/2023
Goldman Sachs International	5.000	30/05/2023
Landesbanken Hessen Thueringen Girozentrale	5.000	11/04/2023
Landesbanken Hessen Thueringen Girozentrale	5.000	20/06/2023
Lloyds Bank Corporate Markets	5.000	18/04/2023
NatWest Markets	10.000	26/04/2023
SMBC Bank International	5.000	05/04/2023
SMBC Bank International	5.000	20/06/2023
SMBC Bank International	5.000	21/06/2023
Standard Chartered Bank	5.000	05/05/2023
Standard Chartered Bank	5.000	15/05/2023
Standard Chartered Bank	5.000	24/07/2023
<i>Money Market Funds</i>		
Black Rock	84.050	Instant Access
Insight	4.000	Instant Access
Federated	18.050	Instant Access
Aberdeen	57.900	Instant Access
State Street	24.000	Instant Access
<i>Bond Funds</i>		
AXA Sterling Credit Short Duration Bond Fund	15.000	3-day notice
Royal London Investment Grade Short Dated Credit Fund	15.000	3-day notice
<i>Enhanced Money Market Funds</i>		
Royal London Cash Plus Fund	20.000	2-day notice
TOTAL	424.596	

Of the total funds invested, £14.7m are held on behalf of third parties such as the Midland Engine and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

59. The County Council approved the use of Non-Standard Investments, with increased limits agreed by Cabinet on the 20 July 2022 as set out in the Treasury Management Outturn Statement 2021/22. Non-Standard investments are all other types of approved investment counterparties that are not UK government, Banks and Building Societies, Local Authorities and MMFs i.e., those investments that are used less frequently and may require further approval from the Treasury Management Panel or Members. The use of these has been discussed in **paragraph 54**.
60. Currently, Non-Standard Investments have an individual investment limit per asset class of £100m and £200m for this group in total. Non-Standard Investments may be considered more widely by the Treasury Management Panel where there are suitable opportunities, as has been the case during 2022/23 in setting up Short Dated Bond Funds.

Compliance with other matters

61. The following other matters can be confirmed:
- (i) In accordance with financial regulations, the Treasury Management Panel, chaired by the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and comprising other senior finance and treasury officers, met regularly to consider treasury matters;
 - (ii) All treasury related transactions were undertaken by authorised officers and within the limits approved by the County Council;
 - (iii) All investments were to counterparties on the approved lending list current at the time and fully met the requirements of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2008;
 - (iv) As part of the County Council's Strategic Internal Audit Plan, the Treasury Management section is subject to regular audit. The outcome of the audit performed during 2022/23 was that a Substantial Assurance rating was provided by Staffordshire Internal Audit Services indicating the areas reviewed were adequately controlled and that internal controls were in place and operating effectively. The next audit will be performed during 2024/25; and
 - (v) 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 the year but has been surpassed due to the levels of cash that have been held in grants, CCG prepayments and reserves over the last 3 years. This was discussed by the Treasury Management Panel during the year and arrangements made for the secure deposit of funds in line with the AIS. The outturn for all Prudential Indicators is shown in **Appendix 4**.

(vi) Treasury activity is reported regularly to Cabinet.

List of Background Documents

1. Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (CIPFA) (2021)
2. Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (CIPFA) (2021)
3. The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003
4. Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments – Issued under Section 15(1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003 (2018)
5. Statutory Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision – Issued under section 21 (1A) of the Local Government Act 2003 (2018)
6. Localism Act 2011 – Guidance on the General Power of Competence in sections 1 to 6.

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Cabinet 19 July 2023

Equalities implications – There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Legal implications – There are no legal implications arising from this report.

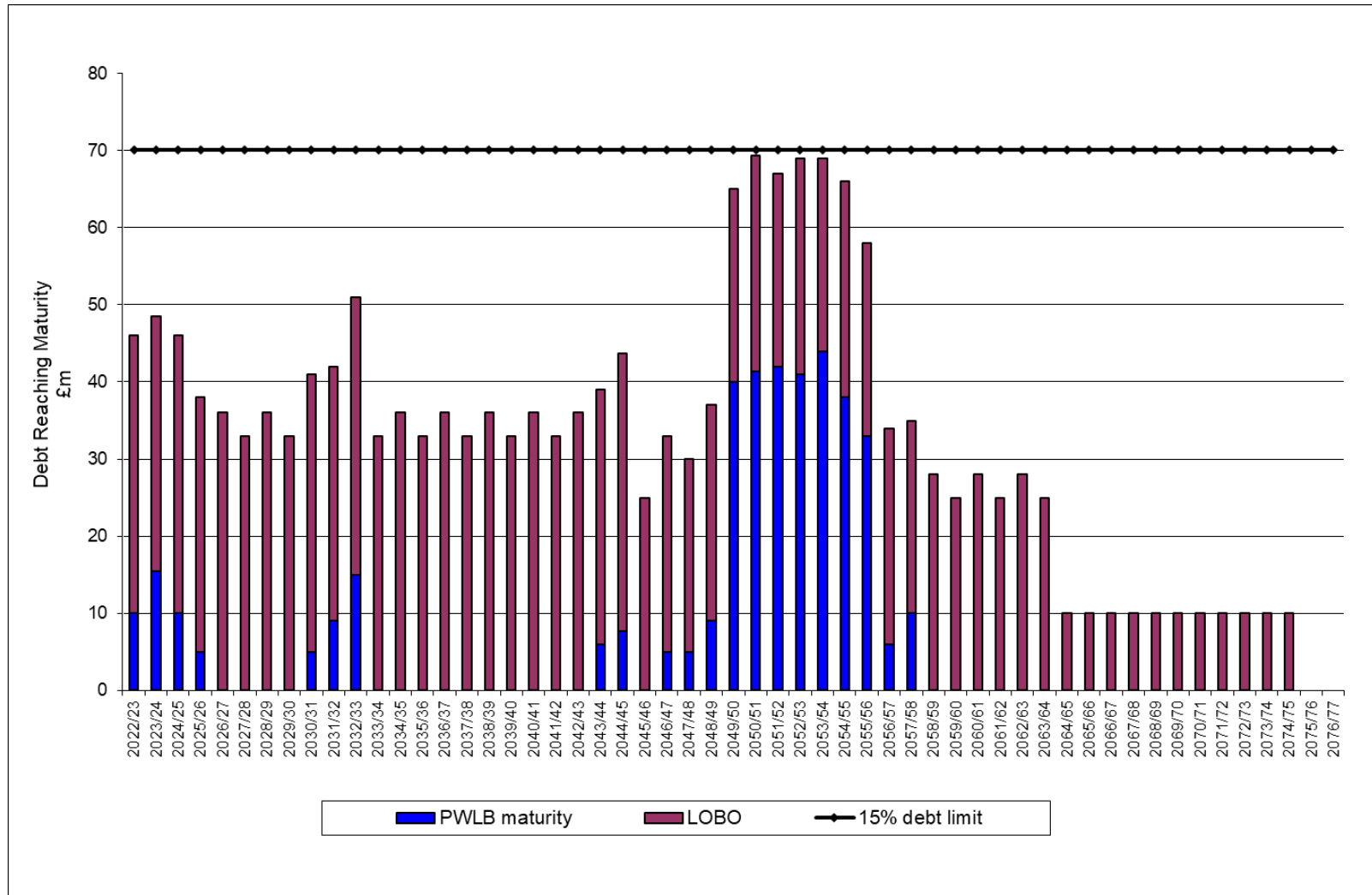
Resource and value for money implications – The resource and value for money implications are contained within the body of the report.

Risk implications – Counterparty, interest rate and refinancing risk arising because of treasury management activity have been considered in the body of this report.

Climate change and sustainability implications – There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report. Counterparties invested in by the County Council have ESG policies in place.

Health impact assessment screening – There are no health impact assessment implications arising from this report.

Cabinet 19 July 2023
County Council Debt Maturity Profile



Cabinet 19 July 2023

Approved lending list – 31 March 2023	
	Current time limit
<i>Regulation investments</i>	
DMADF account	6 months
UK Government Treasury Bills	6 months
UK local authority	12 months
<i>Banks and building societies</i>	
Barclays	6 Months
Lloyds	6 Months
Nationwide	6 Months
NatWest	6 Months
Standard Chartered	6 Months
HSBC	12 Months
SMBC	6 Months
Goldman Sachs	6 Months
Landesbanken Hessen- Thueringen Girozentrale	6 Months
Santander	6 Months
<i>MMF's</i>	
Black Rock	same day
Insight	same day
Federated	same day
Aberdeen	same day
State Street	same day
<i>Enhanced MMF's</i>	
Royal London Cash Plus	2-day notice
<i>Bond Funds</i>	
AXA Sterling Credit Short Duration	
Bond Z Gross Inc	3-day notice
Royal London Investment Grade	
Short Dated Credit Fund	3-day notice

Cabinet 19 July 2023

Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management

Indicator	Estimate 2022/23	Actual Position at 31/03/23
1. External debt		
Authorised Limit for borrowing	£662m	£459m
Authorised Limit for other liabilities	£258m	£223m
TOTAL	£920m	£682m
Operational Boundary for borrowing	£515m	£459m
Operational Boundary for other liabilities	£258m	£223m
TOTAL	£773m	£682m
External loans	£721.6m	£459m
<p><i>The Authorised Limit is the maximum level of external borrowing which should not be exceeded. It is linked to the estimated level of borrowing assumed in the capital programme.</i></p> <p><i>The Operational Boundary represents an estimate of the day-to-day limit for treasury management borrowing activity based on the most likely i.e. prudent but not worst-case scenario.</i></p> <p><i>“Other liabilities” relate to PFI schemes which are recorded in the County Council’s accounts.</i></p>		
2. Interest rate exposures		
a. Upper Limit (Fixed)	£543m	£429m
b. Upper Limit (Variable)	(£316m)	(£424m)
<p><i>The County Council has set upper limits of fixed and variable borrowing and investments. The effect of setting these upper limits is to provide ranges within which the County Council will manage its exposure to fixed and variable rates of interest. Negative figures are shown in brackets; these relate to the ‘high- point’ of investments at a variable rate which are not offset by variable borrowings. The exposure to variable rate movements has been reduced by using cash in lieu of borrowing.</i></p>		
3. Maturity structure of borrowing		
See Graph at Appendix 2		
<p><i>This indicator relates to the amount of loans maturing in specified periods. The overarching principle is that steps should be taken from a risk management point of view to limit exposure to significant refinancing risk in any short period of time. The County Council currently applies the practice of ensuring that no more than 15% of its total gross fixed rate loans mature in any one financial year.</i></p> <p><i>Because this is a complex situation for the County Council, involving PWLB loans, LOBO loans with uncertain call dates and the use of internal cash, specific indicators have not been set. Instead, the County Council will manage its exposures within the limits shown in the graph at Appendix 2. This graph shows all LOBO call options on a cumulative basis; in fact, the actual pattern of repayment, although uncertain, will not be of this magnitude.</i></p>		
4. Upper limit for total principal sums invested for longer than a year (from maturity)		
<i>This limit has been set at the total amount that could be invested in non-standard investments as per the County Council’s policy which is the maximum that could be invested for 1 year or over.</i>	£95m	£30m

Cabinet 19 July 2023
Investment categories authorised for use 2022/23

Investment	Standard	Non-standard	Comments
UK Government - Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) (regulation investment)	unlimited	x	6 months maximum available
UK Government - Treasury Bills (T-Bills) (regulation investment)	unlimited	x	6 months maximum available
UK local authorities term deposits (regulation investment) *	unlimited	£45m across these categories	Up to 40 years in duration (non-standard)
UK Government – Gilts	unlimited		
Money Market Funds	✓	x	100% of total investments in this category. Individual MMF - Lower of 0.50% of individual MMF size or 25% of total forecast cash balances per MMF
Term deposits with banks and building societies	✓	x	50% of total investments in this category. Lower of 5% (unsecured) or 10% (secured) of total forecast cash balances or £30m per counterparty
Certificates of deposit (banks / building societies)	x	Maximum £100m per investment category and £200m in total across all categories	Up to 10 years in duration (non-standard)
Bonds issued by Multilateral Development Banks	x		
Collective Investment Schemes	x		
Covered Bonds	x		
Real Estate Investment Trusts	x		
Repos (repurchase agreement)	x		

* Up to 12 months

Cabinet 19 July 2023

Treasury Management Glossary

CFR: capital financing requirement - the council's annual underlying borrowing need to finance capital expenditure and a measure of the council's total outstanding indebtedness.

CIPFA: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – the professional accounting body that oversees and sets standards in local authority finance and treasury management.

CPI: consumer price index – the official measure of inflation adopted as a common standard by countries in the EU. It is a measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services, such as transportation, food and medical care. It is calculated by taking price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods and averaging them.

DLUHC: the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - the Government department that directs local authorities in England

ECB: European Central Bank - the central bank for the Eurozone

EU: European Union

EZ: Eurozone -those countries in the EU which use the euro as their currency

Fed: the Federal Reserve System, often referred to simply as "the Fed," is the central bank of the United States. It was created by the Congress to provide the nation with a stable monetary and financial system.

FOMC: the Federal Open Market Committee – this is the branch of the Federal Reserve Board which determines monetary policy in the USA by setting interest rates and determining quantitative easing policy. It is composed of 12 members--the seven members of the Board of Governors and five of the 12 Reserve Bank presidents.

GDP: gross domestic product – a measure of the growth and total size of an economy.

G7: the group of seven countries that form an informal bloc of industrialised democracies--the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom--who meet annually to discuss issues such as global economic governance, international security, and energy policy.

Gilts: gilts are bonds issued by the UK Government to borrow money on the financial markets. Interest paid by the Government on gilts is called a coupon and is at a rate that is fixed for the duration until maturity of the gilt, (unless a gilt is index linked to inflation); while the coupon rate is fixed, the yields will change inversely to the price of gilts i.e., a rise in the price of a gilt will mean that its yield will fall.

IMF: International Monetary Fund - the lender of last resort for national governments which get into financial difficulties.

LIBID: the London Interbank Bid Rate is the rate bid by banks on deposits i.e., the rate at which a bank is willing to borrow from other banks. This benchmark ceased on 31st December 2021 and have, generally, been replaced by SONIA, the Sterling Overnight Index Average.

MPC: the Monetary Policy Committee is a committee of the Bank of England, which meets for one and a half days, eight times a year, to determine monetary policy by setting the official interest rate in the United Kingdom, (the Bank of England Base Rate, commonly called Bank Rate), and by making decisions on quantitative easing.

MRP: minimum revenue provision - a statutory annual minimum revenue charge to reduce the total outstanding CFR, (the total indebtedness of a local authority).

PFI: Private Finance Initiative – capital expenditure financed by the private sector i.e., not by direct borrowing by a local authority.

PWLB: Public Works Loan Board – this is the part of H.M. Treasury which provides loans to local authorities to finance capital expenditure.

QE: quantitative easing – is a form of monetary policy where a central bank creates new money electronically to buy financial assets, such as government bonds, (but may also include corporate bonds). This process aims to stimulate economic growth through increased private sector spending in the economy and also aims to return inflation to target. These purchases increase the supply of liquidity to the economy and this policy is employed when lowering interest rates has failed to stimulate economic growth to an acceptable level and to lift inflation to target. QE is reversed by selling the bonds the central bank had previously purchased, or by not replacing debt that it held which matures.

RPI: the Retail Price Index is a measure of inflation that measures the change in the cost of a representative sample of retail goods and services. It was the UK standard for measurement of inflation until the UK changed to using the EU standard measure of inflation – Consumer Price Index. The main differences between RPI and CPI is in the way that housing costs are treated and that the former is an arithmetical mean whereas the latter is a geometric mean. RPI is often higher than CPI for these reasons.

SONIA: the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Generally, a replacement set of indices (for LIBID) for those benchmarking their investments. The benchmarking options include using a forward-looking (term) set of reference rates and/or a backward-looking set of reference rates that reflect the investment yield curve at the time an investment decision was taken.

TMSS: the annual treasury management strategy statement reports that all local authorities are required to submit for approval by the full council before the start of each financial year.

VRP: a voluntary revenue provision to repay debt, in the annual budget, which is additional to the annual MRP charge, (see above definition).

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 16 August 2023 - 13 December 2023

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions is prepared on a monthly basis and published at least 28 days before the start of the period covered. Key Decisions are defined as those Executive decisions which are likely:

- a. to result in the County Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- b. to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral divisions in the County's area.

The Forward Plan will contain **all** matters which the Leader of the Council has reason to believe will be the subject of a Key Decision to be taken by the Cabinet. It may also include decisions that are not key decisions but are intended to be determined by the Cabinet. Part of the Cabinet meetings listed in this Forward Plan may be held in private where a report for the meeting contains exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended) and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it. If you would like to make representations about any particular decision to be conducted in private then please email: michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk. Such representations must be received in advance 6 clear working days before the date on which the decision is scheduled to be taken.

The Membership of the Cabinet consists of:

Leader of the County Council – Alan White
 Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills – Philip White
 Cabinet Member for Health and Care – Julia Jessel
 Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change – Simon Tagg
 Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters – Mark Deaville
 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport – David Williams
 Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources – Ian Parry
 Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture – Victoria Wilson
 Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Mark Sutton
 Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) – Jonathan Price
 Cabinet Support Member for Highways – Robert Pritchard
 Cabinet Support Member for Public Health and Integrated Care – Paul Northcott

A copy of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions may be inspected, free of charge, at the Member and Democratic Services office, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford, during normal office hours Monday to Friday. A copy of the notice will also be available on Staffordshire County Council's Website at <https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/>.

Documents submitted for decision will be a formal report which will be available on the County Council's website at least 5 clear working days before the date the decision is to be made, unless that report is subject to any prohibition or restriction on its disclosure. Other relevant background documents used in compiling the report will also be made available in the same way unless they are subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure. Minutes of Cabinet meetings will be published within three working days and will be subject to call-in. The call-in period lasts for three working days. If the decision is not called-in it will be implemented on the fourth working day. Special urgency items are exempt from call-in.

Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 16 August 2023 - 13 December 2023

Note:

1. The Forward Plan of Key Decisions sets out all Key Decisions intended to be made by Cabinet during the above period.
2. The Cabinet date can be provisional and items may move/roll forward to another meeting date but this will be monitored.
3. Items should remain on the Notice until a decision is made by Cabinet or is formally removed.
4. Where there is an intention to make a decision in private the exemption paragraph relied upon will be included within this notice

Predicted Date of Decision	Public or Private Decision	Title and Description	Consultation	Contact Officer
20 September 2023	Public	<p>Strategy for Special Provision Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) (Jonathan Price)</p> <p>Staffordshire County Council has worked with their partners to develop a Strategy for Special Provision that ensures equality of access to education which meets the individual needs of our children and young people in their local community to give them the best start in life and a chance to achieve their potential. It has been informed by the conclusions drawn from a detailed gap analysis of current need and existing provision and the views and ideas of representatives from Health, Social Care, educational settings including Pupil Referral Units, The Virtual School, and parents and carers. The Strategy comprises two major components, the creation of additional provision in Staffordshire special schools based on a detailed analysis of need and a pre-statutory Staffordshire Enhanced District Inclusion Support Model (SEDIS) to provide mainstream educational settings with the resources and support to deliver the graduated response.</p>	Educational settings, Health and Social Care professionals, parent/carers and children and young people.	Tim Moss (Tel: 01785 277963) Service Area: SEND

20 September 2023	Private	<p>Burton Regeneration Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture (Victoria Wilson)</p> <p>Item relating to the Burton Regeneration works.</p>	N/A at this stage	Ian Turner (Tel: 01785 277228) Service Area: Communities and culture
20 September 2023	Public	<p>Staffordshire Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change (Simon Tagg)</p> <p>Update on Staffordshire Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and how this and the Councils Adaptation Plan, could be delivered across the Authority.</p>	NA	Tim Cooper (Tel: 01785 276204) Service Area: Sustainability Team
20 September 2023	Public	<p>The Recommission of Shared Lives Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel)</p> <p>Shared Lives is a service where people with assessed eligible social care needs share the home of a specially recruited and trained carer and their family. The Council's current contract for the Shared Lives service is due to expire on 31st March 2024. The recommendation is to recommission the service to provide continuity of care for individuals and ensure continued delivery of a good quality service which is value for money.</p>	Adult social care workforce, procurement and contract management.	Andrew Jepps (Tel: 01785 278557) Service Area: Learning Disability, Mental Health, Autism and Carers Commissioning Team - Care Commissioning.
20 September 2023	Public	<p>Children & Young People's Programme Framework Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton)</p> <p>The Children & Young People's Programme Framework sets out our vision and priorities to ensure that children have the best start in life and the best health. There is a shared ambition and commitment across the system to improve the health and wellbeing of our children and young people. This document details our shared priorities over the coming years and will be presented to the Cabinet for endorsement .</p>	N/A	Natasha Moody (Tel: 07976191079) Service Area: Children & Young People

18 October 2023	Public	<p>Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24 Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry), Leader of the Council (Alan White)</p> <p>This quarterly Integrated Performance Report provides an overview of Staffordshire County Council's progress and performance in delivering against our Strategic Plan and Corporate Delivery Plan, and our financial position in relation to our Medium Term Financial Strategy.</p>	n/a	Rachel Spain, Wendy Tompson (Tel: 01785 854455, Tel: (01785) 85 4267) Service Area: Strategy Team and Finance
18 October 2023	Private	<p>Nexus Care (Nexus Trading Services Limited) Annual Report 2022/23 Cabinet Member for Commercial Matters (Mark Deaville), Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel)</p> <p>To consider the Annual Report as sole shareholder of the company (Staffordshire County Council), review performance for the year and make any comments regarding its future strategic direction, as necessary.</p>	None	Dr Richard Harling MBE, John Tradewell (Tel: 01785 278700, Tel: (01785) 27 6102) Service Area: Health and Care
15 November 2023	Public	<p>Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030 Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills (Philip White)</p> <p>The new Employment and Skills Strategy for Staffordshire puts in place the shared vision and priorities to help deliver our united economic vision for the Staffordshire economy and inform the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.</p>	The draft strategy has gone through partner consultation and is currently going through full public consultation via the SCC website.	Anthony Baines (Tel: 01785 895984) Service Area: Skills and Employability Team