

Cabinet

Wednesday 18 October 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
10 October 2023

Agenda

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16**
- 3. Decision notice of the meeting held on 20 September 2023** (Pages 1 - 10)
- 4. Leader's Update**
Oral report of the Leader of the Council
- 5. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 4 October 2023** (Pages 11 - 12)
- 6. Staffordshire Means Back to Business** (Verbal Report)
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills
- 7. Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24** (Pages 13 - 62)
Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

8. **Forward Plan of Key Decisions** (Pages 63 - 68)

9. **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)

10. **Nexus Care (Nexus Trading Services Limited) Annual Report 2022/23** (Pages 69 - 88)

(Exemption paragraph 3)

Leader of the Council

11. **Unregulated Placements - Update** (Pages 89 - 94)

(Exemption paragraph 3)

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

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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Recording by Press and Public

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



Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 20 September 2023

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

Cabinet Support Members in attendance: Paul Northcott and Robert Pritchard

Apologies: Philip White and Victoria Wilson

Part One

25. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

26. Decision notice of the meeting held on 19 July 2023

Decision – That the notes of the meeting held on 19 July 2023 be approved.

27. Leader's Update

Decision – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including the Council’s extra investment in Staffordshire’s roads with an extra £5m on pothole repairs this year, and an extra £30m in large repairs, resurfacing and junction upgrades over the next two years including improvement of the A5121 Claymills interchange and Derby Road in Burton, the new roundabout on the A34 outside Stafford for the Pets At Home facility, a scheme to resurface a busy junction, install new traffic lights and upgrade pedestrian crossings in Lichfield and new drainage on the A34 in Stone; securing £5m of Government funding earlier this month for electric vehicle charging points across Staffordshire; the Authority’s rapid response to national issues with reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete, with every school that the county council is responsible for remaining open; the need for more foster carers to come forwards and provide stable homes for vulnerable children; and the emergence of a new variant of Covid-19 with all vulnerable residents being encouraged to get their Covid booster and flu jab; be noted.

28. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 6 September 2023

Decision – That the minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 6 September 2023 be received.

29. Staffordshire Means Back to Business


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 decline of 90 claimants in Staffordshire which contrasted with an increase seen nationally. The total number of claimants in the county now stands at 14,955 or 2.8% of the working age population. 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%.
- The youth claimant count in Staffordshire saw an increase of 65 claimants to a total of 2,885 young people. The proportion of young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 that are claiming work-related Universal Credit now stands at 4.6%. This is lower than the national rate of 5.0% and far lower than the regional rate of 6.7%. The continued increase in the youth claimant count highlights the importance of continuing to engage with our younger residents and support them to find employment or continue in some form of education or training.
- Our Staffordshire Jobs and Careers Service has been focusing on results day recently for both GCSE’s and A-Level students, promoting the support the team can offer with advice and signposting. Our Employment Brokers have been supporting people across the county, whether they have received their grades in order to follow their favoured path, or maybe need some advice on where to turn next and consider other avenues such as employment, apprenticeships or alternative training.
- I am also pleased to report that two members of the Jobs and Careers Service team recently had a visit with the Minister for Social Mobility, Youth and Progression Mims Davis to discuss how they support candidates with challenges in accessing the employment market and our support for ex-service men and women. I’m pleased to say that the Minister was very impressed in our success to date and the companies we work in partnership with to support people into employment.
- In terms of job vacancies, there was a 15% increase in across Staffordshire compared to a 13% increase nationally between July

and August. Demand for labour and skills remains high, with there currently being 1.6 jobs available for every claimant within the county, and therefore our focus continues to be to support those who find themselves unemployed to secure one of those jobs.

- Unfortunately, we have recently heard the news of the Wilko insolvency, which is due to the continued impact of the shift in shopping habits across the country. We have convened a taskforce comprised of senior representatives of the County Council, Borough and District Councils, Department for Work & Pensions and the National Careers Service to exchange information and consider our support offer, including the deployment of our Jobs & Careers Services if and when appropriate. Positively, there are currently around 1,000 retail jobs being advertised within the county, and we will work with any former Wilko staff to help them secure one of these jobs or to move into a different area of work.
- The construction of the West Midlands Interchange development is expected to begin before the end of the year. A key aspect of the project will be supporting our residents to take advantage of employment opportunities through both the construction and operational phases, and we were successful in securing a significant amount of funding from the development for employment and skills programmes. Due to the scale of the development, we have a dedicated Employment Broker for the project who has now met with the first sub-contractor to begin recruitment for the first phase of the build.
- The upgrade of the A38 Branston Interchange is a key component of our successful £20m bid from round two of the Levelling Up Fund. This will provide Burtonians with safer and easier access to and from the A38. Legal agreements with the developer of the nearby Branston Locks development and National Highways are also close to being agreed and it is expected will be signed shortly. There is a three-month lead in before construction can start, and we're therefore expecting works on improving the junction to commence in early 2024. The Levelling Up Fund is also paying for the upgrade of several major roads in Cannock and Stafford and the purchase of a new fleet of low emission buses to improve our public transport network.
- The nominations for the Enjoy Staffordshire tourism awards closed last week, with judging taking place over the next few months and the awards ceremony set for March 2024. The awards give us the chance to celebrate our best tourism and hospitality business and the valuable contribution they make to the local economy.

30. SEND Accelerated Progress Plan: Enhanced Assess-Plan-Do-Review Pathway, Strategy for Special Provision and the Staffordshire Children and Young People's Framework

	<p>"Our goal is to provide every child and young person in Staffordshire with the best start in life and the opportunity to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>These proposals mark a significant step towards achieving that vision. By increasing support within mainstream schools and creating additional provision in special schools, we are working to ensure that children with SEND receive the tailored support they need in their local communities.</p> <p>We carefully considered the valuable feedback received during the public consultation and are confident that these initiatives will result in positive outcomes for our children and their families."</p> <p>Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)</p>
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider the proposed Strategy for Special Provision and the creation of a Staffordshire Children and Young People's Framework, two major strategies designed to deliver outcomes related to the SEND Accelerated Progress Plan.

Decision – (a) That the actions set out in the Accelerated Progress Plan continue to be endorsed.

(b) That the proposed Enhanced Assess-Plan-Do-Review (EAPDR) Pathway and Strategy for Special Provision be endorsed.

(c) That delegated authority be given to the Director for Children and Families for allocating funding for the 8 Staffordshire Enhanced District Inclusion Support Teams (SEDIS).

(d) That Authority be given to enter into contractual agreements with schools to deliver the SEDIS Model.

(e) That the proposal to develop a Children & Young People's Framework to enable Officer's to procure timely, value for money pre-statutory support where required, be endorsed:

- (i) Approval be given to conduct an open tender process in line with Staffordshire County Council's Procurement Regulations and the Public Contract Regulations.
- (ii) That the award of the Staffordshire Children and Young Peoples Framework be delegated to the Director for Children and Families and that the award of call-off contracts under the Framework be sub-delegated in line with the Council's procurement Regulations.
- (iii) If appropriate, delegated authority for alternative approval of 'high' volumes of call-off contracts will be sought as per D13.5 of the Council's Procurement Regulations.

31. Staffordshire Climate Change Adaptation Strategy



"Adapting to the impacts of climate change is just as important as reducing our carbon emissions and striving for net-zero.

Even if we cut our carbon emissions to zero overnight, the climate will continue to warm up and more extreme weather conditions will become commonplace. This means we need to start thinking widely and putting measures in place now that protect our communities, buildings, roads, environment, and economy.

The Staffordshire Adaptation Strategy is an important first step in this process. Now, the task is to work together to better prepare ourselves to respond and adapt to the changing climate in the future."

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

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Staffordshire Adaptation Strategy which will provide a suitable framework to allow individual councils to develop their own Adaptation delivery plans, encouraging consistency and partnership working across the councils and other partners in a collaborative nature.

Decision – (a) That the Staffordshire Adaptation Strategy be noted and approved.

(b) That the development of a Staffordshire County Council Adaptation Plan, that ensures all services and portfolios consider adaptation in their day-to-day work and decision making, be approved.

32. The Recommission of Shared Lives



"We want everyone in Staffordshire to lead the best and happiest lives they can.

For some adults requiring a helping hand, the Shared Lives service offers them the chance to get the care they need while sharing the home of specially trained carers and their families.

With the existing contract due for renewal, we want to recommission this important service to ensure people continue to receive the care they need and we continue to provide best value for the public purse."

Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the recommissioning of the Shared Lives service to provide continuity of care for individuals and ensure an ongoing good quality service that offers value for money.

Decision – (a) That the procurement of the Staffordshire Shared Lives service contract via a competitive tender, in order to appoint a suitable provider who can offer a good quality service and value for money, be approved.

(b) That approval for the contract to be awarded to the successful provider be delegated to the Director of Health and Care.

(c) That the extension of the current Shared Lives service contract for up to 12 months, in the event of an unsuccessful procurement, to enable the Council to consider alternative options, be approved.

33. Staffordshire Warmer Homes - Approval of the spend plans for the Home Upgrade Grant (Phase 2)



"Lifting people out of fuel poverty and helping households with energy bills is a public health priority in Staffordshire. We are proud of our success to date, saving £1.5m in total for thousands of households.

Our work in linking Government grants with those in need of support is a vital step towards improving health and well-being in the county. The Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 will benefit predominantly rural areas as eligibility is focused on off-grid homes with low energy performance ratings in the most deprived areas."

Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care



"We are on a mission to make Staffordshire more sustainable. A quarter of carbon emissions in our county come from residential homes.

Staffordshire Warmer Homes is helping cut carbon emissions by reducing the amount of energy needed to heat properties. The Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 will build on our success allowing another 530 homes to improve insulation and heating and creating local jobs."

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

Reasons for the Decision – To consider approving expenditure of the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 and the subsequent procurements to secure providers for services to make thermal improvements to people's homes, in line with the conditions of the Grant.

Decision – (a) That the award to the Council of the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 of £10.5m be noted.

(b) That expenditure of the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report, be approved.

(c) That authority be delegated to the Director of Health and Care to complete a compliant procurement process and appoint providers to oversee and install thermal efficiency measures in people's homes, in-line with the Grant conditions and approved expenditure.

34. Decisions taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers

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

Cabinet Member	Decision
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)	In approving the award of compensation following an investigation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman into a complaint against the County Council.
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)	In approving the award of compensation following an investigation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman into a complaint against the County Council.
Cabinet Member for Health and Care	In approving the grant award of £10.5m to be awarded by the Government Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), following their approval of the Council’s outline (Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2) spend plan on 10 July 2023.
Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)	In approving options to extend the current Independent Special School contract with amended contract value.

35. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 18 October 2023 to 20 March 2024, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

Subject Matter	Contact
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24	Name: Rachel Spain/ Wendy Tompson Tel: (01785) 854455/ (01785) 854267
Nexus Care (Nexus Trading Services Limited) Annual Report 2022/23	Name: Richard Harling MBE, / John Tradewell Tel: (01785) 278700 / 276102
Unregulated Placement Update	Name: Nisha Gupta Tel: 07890 402088
Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030	Name: Anthony Baines Tel: (01785) 895984
Climate Change Action Plan Review and Climate Change Annual Report	Name: Darryl Evers Tel: (01785) 854265
Strategic Vision for Early Years	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079

Half Yearly Treasury Management Report	Name: Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
Families Health & Wellbeing (0-19) Service	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079
Additional Nursing Capacity	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Provision of a Waste Transfer Facility	Name: Darryl Evers Tel: (01785) 854265
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029	Name: Rachel Spain Tel: (01785) 854455
Older People Commissioning Strategy	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Provision of Services for Children and Young People	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079
Unregulated Placements	Name: Nisha Gupta Tel: 07890 402088
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2023/24	Name: Rachel Spain/ Wendy Tompson Tel: (01785) 854455/ (01785) 854267
Burton Regeneration	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228

Alan White
Leader of the Council

Minutes of the Property Sub-Committee Meeting held on 4 October 2023

Present: Alan White (Chair)

Attendance	
Ian Parry	Philip White (Vice-Chair)

Apologies: Mark Deaville and Jonathan Price

Part One

33. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

34. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th September 2023

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

35. New lease for Stone Youth Centre

Details were submitted for the proposed 15-year lease of Stone Youth Centre, Station Road, Stone, ST15 8ER to Rising Brook Baptist Church.

Resolved - That approval be given of a new 15-year lease on the terms indicated in the report; any amendments to the proposed lease be delegated to the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets to approve.

36. Lease of land to Community Link Stafford and District at Doxey

Details were submitted for the proposed lease of land at Doxey Road Stafford to Community Link Stafford & District.

Resolved – That approval be given for the lease of land at Doxey Road to Community Link Stafford and District at Doxey on the terms indicated in the report; delegated authority be given to the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills and the Director of Corporate Services to enter into relevant contractual and other arrangements pursuant to the delivery of this lease.

37. Exclusion of the Public

Resolved - That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information

as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated below.

38. Child care Centre Leases (Newcastle under Lyme & Staffordshire Moorlands) (Exemption Paragraph 3)

Details were submitted for the proposed lease of Nursery accommodation at Staffordshire Moorlands Children's Centre and Newcastle Children's Centre to Kindergarten Group Ltd.

Resolved - That approval be given to lease the Nursery accommodation at Staffordshire Moorlands Children's Centre and Newcastle Children's Centre to Kindergarten Group Ltd on the terms indicated in the report; the Assistant Director for Commercial and Assets be delegated the authority to agree the final terms for the lease.

Chair

Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 18 October 2023

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24



Cllr Alan White, Leader of Staffordshire County Council said,

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

"Our work by the 'We Are Staffordshire' team to promote the county as a top location to live, work, invest in and visit continues. During the quarter, the team got the chance to showcase the county at a national online conference with 600+ attendees and are now busy planning for next year's UK Real

Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF). This, along with supporting local businesses, helping attract new businesses with better quality jobs to grow our economy remains a priority.

"We continue to support vulnerable families through the Household Support Fund and over the summer almost 28,000 families of children in receipt of Free School Meals were issued with supermarket e-vouchers. Alongside this, the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme which also ran over the summer holidays offered more than 49,000 places and targeted some of our most vulnerable children and young people.

"Work to tackle climate change is ongoing. The Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme and an extra £10.5m funding will bring eco-friendly heating solutions to rural properties that are situated away from the gas network. A new permit scheme introduced at our Household Waste Recycling Centres is also helping promote sustainable waste disposal, while improving services for customers.

"The council continues to face challenges within Children's services including the rising cost, higher than anticipated numbers and complexity of Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures, however additional recruitment is helping ease this. We are also seeing increased demand for Education Health and Care Plans for children with special educational needs, however, additional Key Workers are now in post.

"Demand for adult social care also remains high with additional capacity being sourced and further options to streamline processes being explored. Despite the many pressures we face, 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, and we continue to manage our finances effectively.

“We continue to keep 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.

“Like many other councils, we do face rising costs across the organisation and high inflation which puts additional pressures on finances. We also continue to face challenges around demand and capacity within Children’s services, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities teams and in adult social care.

“The latest revenue forecast outturn for the council shows a forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.1), compared to the quarter 1 forecast overspend of £9.5m (1.39%).”

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 18 October 2023

Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 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 2 Summary

This report provides an update on Quarter 2 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:** Staffordshire's place brand highlighted at national online conference with 600+ attendees. Planning started for UK Real Estate Infrastructure and Investment Conference (UKREiiF) in 2024.
- **Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme:** £10.5m funding secured to bring eco-friendly heating solutions to rural properties that are situated away from the gas network. Since December 2022, 473 measures have been installed in 334 properties.
- **Supportive Communities Programme:** New community resource called 'Bag of Trix' launched, which provides assistive technology and daily living aids to promote independent living.
- **Household Support Fund:** During the summer holidays almost 28,000 families of children in receipt of Free Schools Meals were issued with supermarket vouchers.
- **Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme:** The Summer HAF offered more than 49,000 places; focus on encouraging take-up by the most vulnerable children and young people. Inclusion high on the agenda, with clubs to cater for all children.
- **Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs):** Permit scheme launched in September 2023 to improve services and reduce queues for residents while promoting sustainable waste disposal within the county.

Key challenges

- **Children in Care:** Continued pressures across Children's services, including the rising cost, higher than anticipated numbers and complexity of Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures. New Discharge Planning Team, went live in August, will help progress exit activity.
- **SEND:** Increased demand for Education, Health and Care Plans. Capacity continues to be a challenge; however, all additional Senior Key Workers are now in post.
- **Adult Social Care Demand:** Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLs) requests remain high, with additional capacity being sourced and further options to streamline DoLs process being explored.
- **Highways Performance:** Levels of demand were high in Quarter 2, particularly in relation to high-risk defects, however timeliness of repairs is back on track following a dip in Quarter 1, and the council is continuing to deliver its Highways Maintenance and Transformation Programmes.

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 a forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.1%), compared to the quarter 1 forecast overspend of £9.5m (1.39%). 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 2, demand for Care Act Assessments for new clients was slightly higher than last year, with 2,301 assessments initiated in July and August 2023, compared to 2,238 in July and August 2022. However, positively the council continues to exceed its target for completed Care Act Assessments within 28 days (see Appendix 1). There has been a substantial rise in new assessments and a slow increase in unplanned re-assessments, e.g. someone's needs have escalated and they may require different support. Most of the demand usually relates to older people.

5. The number of monthly safeguarding contacts has increased since June 2023 to 1,372 in August 2023, but remains lower than the peak of 1,457 in August 2022. Initial analysis indicates that this is partly due to an increase in contacts which are lower in risk; it is not apparent that there has been an increase in risk of abuse or neglect to adults within Staffordshire. Recognising the priority of safeguarding, the council has allocated additional temporary resource to the service and is reviewing its pathways to identify any further improvements that can be made.

6. The number of reviews of people receiving services for 12 months or more has continued to remain high, with 89.7% reviewed in the previous 12 months in August 2023, exceeding the target of 80% (see Appendix 1), and recording the best performance over the last two years.

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. At the end of August 2023, the council had 356 people waiting for their DoLs assessment to commence and 542 who were in the process of being assessed. Additional capacity to help reduce the number of outstanding DoLs applications was approved by the council's Cabinet in Quarter 2. Options to further streamline the process will be explored.

8. Significant work has continued during Quarter 2 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. CQC have communicated that inspections will commence later in 2023.
9. The council continues to support its most vulnerable residents through the Warmer Homes Programme. Latest figures from the Sustainable Warmth Competition show that since December 2022, there have been 473 measures installed within 334 properties. This brings the total number of measures installed through Staffordshire Warmer Homes to 1,234 within 970 properties as of 14th September 2023. The council has also secured an additional £10.5m to bring eco-friendly heating solutions to rural residences (situated away from the gas network).
10. A new community resource called 'Bag of Trix' has been launched in Quarter 2 which provides assistive technology and daily living aids to promote independent living. This has been produced as part of the council's Supportive Communities programme and is available at every Community Help Point across the county. Community Help Points are trusted locations within communities, including libraries, voluntary organisations and community centres, which have become a reliable source of local information and guidance for many residents, particularly those at risk of social isolation.
11. During Quarter 2 a new variant of Covid was detected in the UK. As a precautionary measure this year's national autumn Covid vaccine programme has been brought forward by three weeks, with 25,000 vaccines already administered (up to 20th September) in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. This was the highest in the Midlands region. The council is providing dedicated Covid-19 information, advice and guidance on its webpages and in regular briefings to care providers. In addition, support is being given to care providers in vaccine promotion to ensure protection is given to Staffordshire's most vulnerable residents, as well as providing business continuity planning support to care providers in the event of staff absences.

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. The Council continues to face challenges within Children's Services, including the rising cost, higher than anticipated numbers and complexity of Children in Care. To help address demand those past exit dates are

- regularly reviewed to understand any barriers to exiting care and agree actions that might be required. In addition, a new Discharge Planning Team is now in place, who will work to further progress exit activity. A review of those in residential placements has been completed with 14 of 18 identified children now moved into semi-independent living.
14. Recruitment of additional capacity is also continuing following the additional cabinet investment of £5.7m, with all existing posts being filled and recruitment for new posts due to begin as planned in Quarter 3.
 15. As at the 31st August 2023, there were 1,375 children and young people in the authority's care in Staffordshire, representing a slight decrease compared to the previous quarter (1,397). This is a rate of 81 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 August 2023 was 694 down from a peak of 716 in April but an increase from a more recent low of 649 in June. 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.
 16. The number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 7,227 at 31st August 2023 compared to 6,792 a year earlier. This increasing demand means that the number of EHCP's issued in time (within 20 weeks) remains low in Staffordshire; 27% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (2023). Recruitment is complete for the additional Senior Key Workers, and continues for the remaining Key Worker posts. Five Educational Psychologists have also been recruited and another recruitment drive with an active advert is out now and on the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP). These appointments will assist in improving timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans, and support early intervention.
 17. Staffordshire has been chosen by the Department for Education (DfE) as one of 10 local areas to deliver a major government pilot scheme aimed at transforming children's social care. The Family Network pilot will be rolled out locally by our Children's Services in Spring 2024. It will look to find transformative ways to involve wider family members in supporting parents, so that children can stay at home with their families.
 18. 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. A key highlight was the consultation closing on the career progression scheme for social workers in District Teams, with feedback and amendments being considered by the project team to take this work forward. A session also took place with Senior Leaders and Cabinet Members on 27th

September to look in more detail at the elements that make up the current programme.

19. Final figures for Quarter 1 have confirmed that 438 families have achieved a successful and sustained outcome through the Building Resilient Families and Communities Programme since 1st April 2023. The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have increased this year’s target number of families by 62% to 1,290, but as the council strives to achieve more for families in Staffordshire, it is hoping to achieve outcomes for 1,677 families (30% above DLUHC target). At the end of Quarter 1, 34% of DLUHC’s annual target has been achieved.

20. The Household Support Fund (HSF) supports families and others who need it most, to pay for food and energy bills. During the summer holidays almost 28,000 families of children in receipt of Free Schools Meals were issued with supermarket vouchers and over 5,600 households have benefited through the professionals’ referral scheme since April. Care leavers also received the first of four £50 voucher payments at the end of August. Through the Winter Warmth Project, eligible residents have started to receive their first payment of £300 towards help with their energy bills.

21. 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 Summer HAF offered over 49,000 places, with final take-up to be confirmed later in the quarter.

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

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

23. A key driver for further investment in Staffordshire is the council’s Place Marketing campaign, with progress made during Quarter 2 in promoting the ‘We are Staffordshire’ place brand, which was highlighted at a national online conference with 600+ attendees. There was also a successful Ambassador Event in collaboration with Lichfield District Council in July with over 80 attendees. Also, planning has started for the UK’s Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) 2024 to market Staffordshire nationally following a successful event in Quarter 1.

24. 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 August 2023, the council has supported 591 businesses through the Staffordshire Start Up Programme. Of these, almost half (277) have started trading following the programme. Get Started and Grow has supported 187 business owners who have been trading up to 5 years with professional services support. New consultants have been appointed for the scheme and they have started work on providing bespoke accountancy, marketing, web site creation, legal and human resources services with startup businesses.

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

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
AMBER	GREEN

26. There were demand challenges in relation to the volume of high risk 'Emergency' and 'Category 1' highways defects identified in Quarter 2, with a 39% increase from 213 defects identified in July and August 2022 to 296 in July and August 2023. The timeliness of repairing these higher risk defects has improved following the post-Winter dip in Quarter 1, where performance has returned to levels above benchmarks (see Appendix 1).

27. To help tackle levels of highways demand, the council continues to successfully deliver its 2023/24 Highways Maintenance Programme, with thirteen sites completed, one currently on site and four due to start in Quarter 4. The preventative maintenance programme remains on track despite unseasonably wet weather during July and August 2023. By the end of August over 1.2 million square metres of the surface treatments programme had been completed, which equates to around 120 miles of carriageway and 81% of the total programme. Alongside this, progress also continues to be made on delivering the council's Highways Transformation Programme.

28. As part of Project Gigabit, which aims to provide gigabit-capable coverage to Staffordshire residents, there remains a high number of premises still under review for broadband intervention. These are being monitored by a Rolling Open Market review, which confirms where gigabit capable broadband infrastructure currently exists or is planned to be built and identifies eligible target areas for intervention. Plans to deliver to these premises are still on track to reach 85% coverage by 2025.

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

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

30. Staffordshire’s Climate Action Fund offers funding assistance to local communities to build resilience and reduce Staffordshire’s contributions to climate change. The funding is open to constituted, not-for profit organisations, including charities, societies, voluntary and community groups, parish councils and schools. The application process was open during Quarter 2 with a Phase One deadline of 29th September and Phase Two deadline of 22nd December 2023.

31. Over 350 Staffordshire businesses are having a positive impact on climate change following funding worth £1.1 million, which has helped them reduce their carbon emissions. The council’s Low Carbon Evolution Programme (LCBEP) in partnership with Staffordshire Business and Environment Network (SBEN) has supported the businesses with free energy efficiency reviews and provided grants to over 145 companies. The programme which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund and Midlands Engine is estimated to reduce carbon emissions by over 2,250 tonnes annually.

32. Finding new and innovative ways to cut carbon emissions is essential if the council is to reach its goal of net zero by 2050 and one of the ways is using hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as a replacement for diesel in some of the council’s mobile libraries, fuel site diggers and fleet vehicles. The Mobile Library Service is now using HVO fuel in four of the library transport vehicles. This will effectively reduce library transport emissions by up to 90%. HVO is also being trialled in one of Staffordshire’s Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs), and if successful could be used in other vehicles across all 14 sites.

33. The council undertook a Climate Change consultation between May and September 2023, with 3,407 responses received. The consultation was undertaken to understand attitudes towards climate change, what steps residents have taken to mitigate climate change and what barriers are preventing them from taking further steps. Analysis is currently being undertaken and findings will inform future climate change planning and strategy, as well as delivery of the current plan.

34. The new Household Waste Recycling Centre permit scheme was launched in September 2023, which aims to improve services and reduce queues for residents while promoting sustainable waste disposal within the county. The e-permits are free of charge for Staffordshire residents, are valid for 12 months and allow up to 12 visits each

year. Under the scheme, vehicles such as vans, pick-up trucks, tipper trucks, minibuses with seats removed and campervans with fixtures and fittings removed all require a permit.

35. Workers at all 14 household waste recycling centres across Staffordshire have been shortlisted for Best Team of the Year at the 2023 UK LARAC (Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee) Conference and Celebration Awards that are due to take place in October 2023.

36. How we work

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

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

38. Good progress can be seen during the quarter as part of the council's commitment to working with its communities. The newly reconfigured Tamworth Library re-opened with refurbished equipment by the library designers. In July, the council handed over the running of Loggerheads Library to Loggerheads Parish Council. The council's Libraries and Arts service, in partnership with The Reading Agency, and funded by Arts Council England also delivered this year's Summer Reading Challenge which ran throughout the summer holidays. Early indications suggest the council has exceeded its target of starters, but the final figures will be reported in Quarter 3 when all evaluations are complete.

39. Work to deliver the Staffordshire History Centre project continues, with listed building consent approved for additional works in the Grade II* William Salt Library building. Volunteer support has been ongoing, throughout June and July 764 hours were provided by volunteers, valuing £15,300. There have been high levels of engagement over the summer holidays with events at libraries, outreach days and focus groups taking place.

40. 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. 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. Work is continuing with Lichfield District Council (LDC) to progress a collaborative "Single Front Door" approach across Staffordshire. The Customer Service Waste and Recycling pilots are now live and two further pilots have also been agreed: Environmental Health and Disabled Facility Grant Information Advice and Guidance (IAG).

41. Work is ongoing to deliver the council’s refreshed internal People Strategy and will continue throughout 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) continue to be realised, with time to hire rate remaining at 45 days or less.

42. There is a continued focus on absence across the council to help improve the number of days lost due to sickness absence; evidenced by a consistent downward trajectory for the last twelve months. The People Operations Team are working directly with those services with the highest days lost to understand the root causes for absence and proactively supporting them with short and medium-term actions. Additionally, absence related surgeries have continued to be provided to wider management teams to help them manage absence.

43. As a result of this work, long term absence now stands at 7.96 days lost per employee, compared to 9.00 days at the same point last year and an improvement from Q1 where performance was 8.15 days. Short-term absence now stands at 3.20 days lost per employee compared to 4.15 days at the same point last year. Over half of the workforce has had no sickness absences over the last year (51%, 2,254 people), with a further 24.1% (1,056 employees) having been absent for 5 days or fewer. Return to work in the last quarter is at 73%; an improvement from last year at 72%.

44. Live within our means and deliver value for money

Delivery Performance Assessment	Finance Performance Assessment
GREEN	GREEN

45. 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.

46. Work is ongoing to refresh the council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy and remains on track, with an update due to be presented to Cabinet in October. Development of a new online financial self-assessment portal to improve customer experience continues. Recent software testing has highlighted several elements that need to be resolved before the system can go-live and consequently the go-live has been revised to March 2024.

47. Inflation and rising demand for council services requires the council to find new, better, and lower cost ways of delivering services and achieving results. This requires creativity and innovation across the council, finding new ways of working, trialling technology, and applying best practice from other organisations. The council therefore launched the

Staffordshire Innovation Challenge in August, a cross-organisation approach to discuss and generate innovative ideas and solutions. The initial focus of this taskforce is to improve fostering uptake in the county.

48. 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 August 2023, the council had delivered £2,191,658.

49. 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 now complete, with both opening in September. All three new primary schools set to open in September 2024 have full planning permission. Beaconfields (Stafford), Amington (Tamworth) and Dunstall Farm (Tamworth) Primary Schools have all started on site as scheduled. In addition, the Tamworth Library renovation works are now complete with services being delivered from the site.

50. The council's 2023 Community Fund was launched on 9th May 2023 and is progressing well. To date 106 applications have been processed with £44,723 spent and a further £9,234 allocated. Match funding of at least £283,494 has been generated. Turnaround time for the processing of applications has been significantly reduced with a typical application taking four weeks in total. The closing date for applications is 31st October 2023 and it is hoped all will be processed by Christmas 2023.

51. The council's Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Capacity Building Framework continues to promote social action in local communities and build capacity in the voluntary and community sector. During the first year of the Framework (August 2022-July 2023) over 500 organisations were provided with development support, such as planning, developing policies and safeguarding. In addition, local VCSE representatives have accessed 500 training places, with a priority focus on groups that provide support on health and care and work with children, young people and families. Local VCSE organisations also continue to be supported to access additional funding, helping them to sustain and grow.

52. Legal Implications

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

53. Resource and Value for Money Implications

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

54. Climate Change Implications

There are no direct climate change implications of note.

List of Appendices:

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

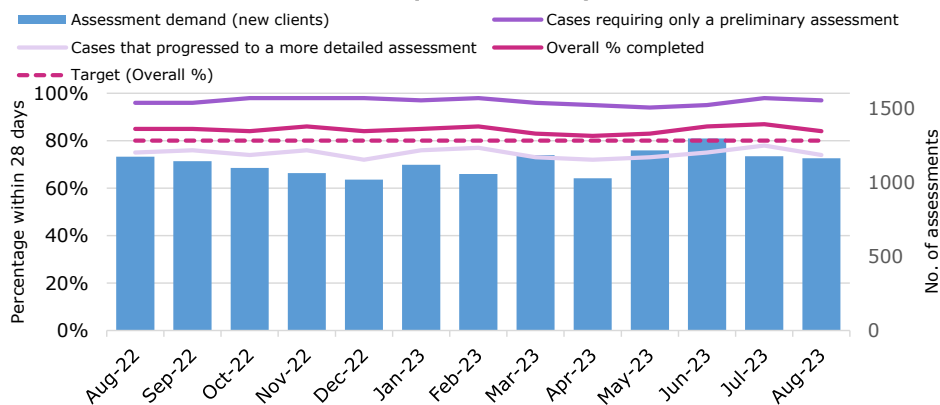
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Health, Wellbeing & Independence Dashboard

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

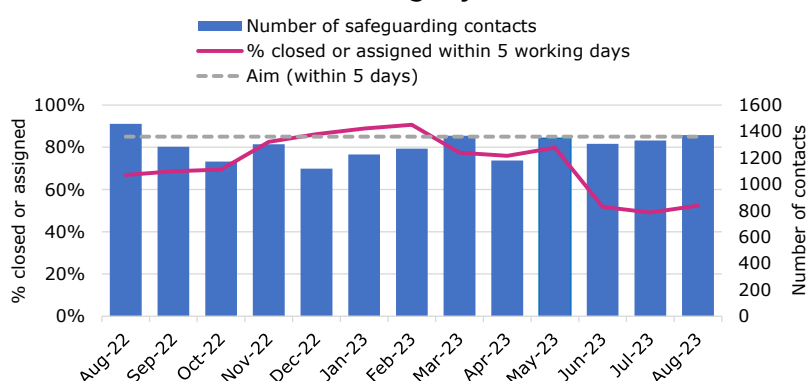


Performance remained above target in July and August 2023. Where assessments are not completed in 28 days, this is usually because they are more complex. The council tracks these individually to ensure that progress is being made to determine appropriate care and support arrangements, and that any risks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

Source: SCC

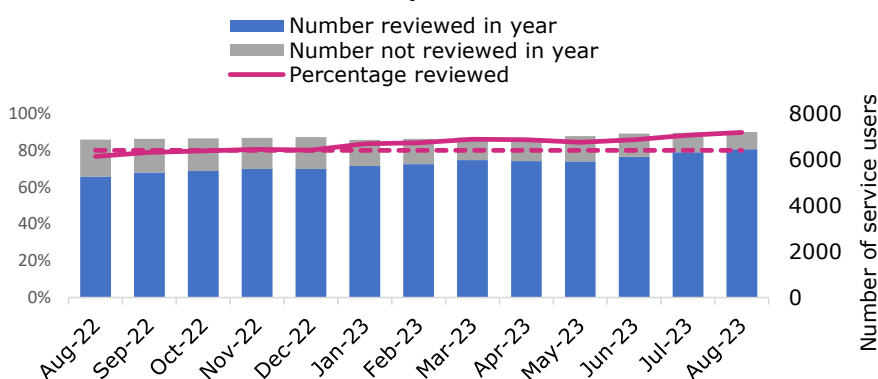
The number of safeguarding contacts has increased, and initial analysis indicates that this is partly due to an increase in lower risk contacts. It is not apparent that there has been an increase in risk of abuse or neglect to adults within Staffordshire. Additional temporary resource has been allocated to the service and pathways are being reviewed to identify any further improvements that can be made.

% 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



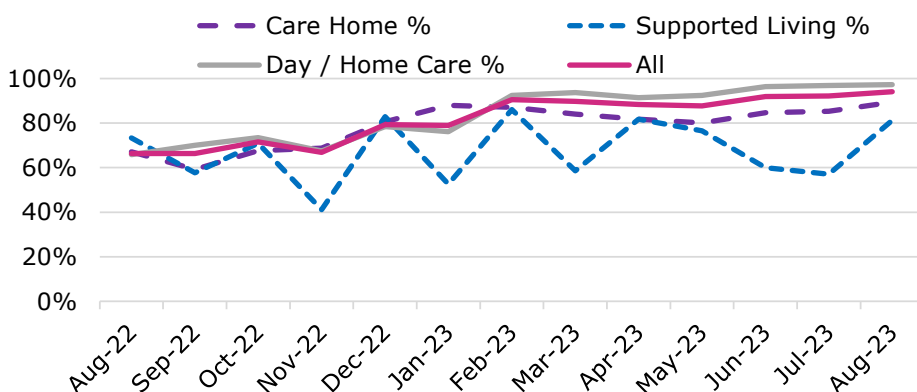
Performance has remained above target in Quarter 2. Where people have not been reviewed within 12 months this may be because they were unavailable (for example in hospital) or because of insufficient capacity, which is being addressed. However if overall demand increases, resource may need to be diverted to higher priority work.

Source: SCC

Health, Wellbeing & Independence Dashboard

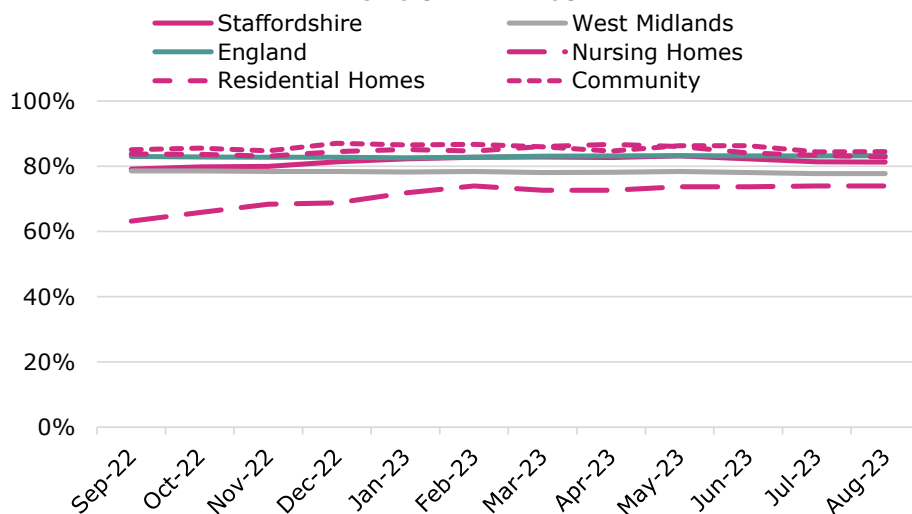
Timeliness of sourcing for brokerage (helping individuals to arrange care) has remained high in Quarter 2 with 94.1% receiving timely access to care in August 2023, and performance remaining 'green' for the service. This is the best performance for 3 years.

% of brokerage sourced within agreed timescale by service type



Source: SCC

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

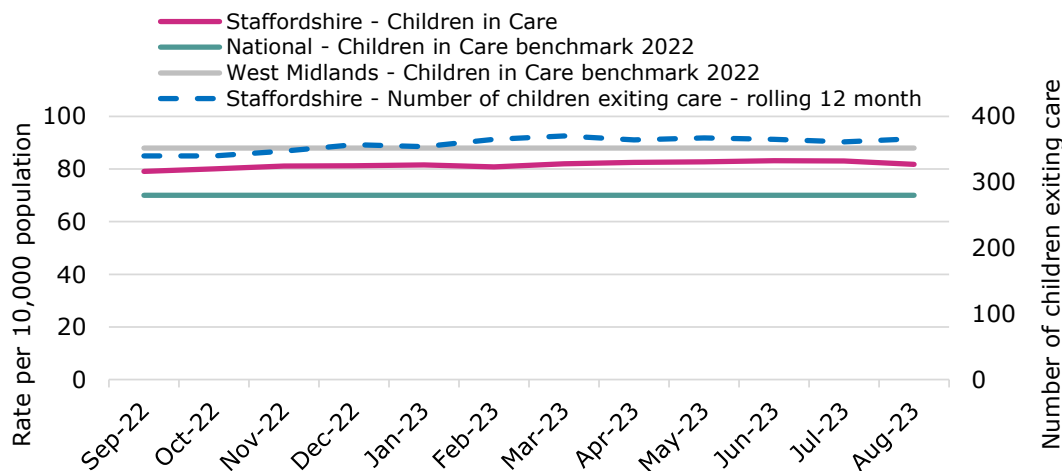


There has been a slight decrease in Quarter 2 of Care Quality Commission Good or Outstanding assessment ratings of Staffordshire's registered locations, with 81.3% Good or Outstanding in August 2023 (81.3%), however this remains above the regional average (77.8%).

Source: SCC and Care Quality Commission

Offer the Best Start in Life Dashboard

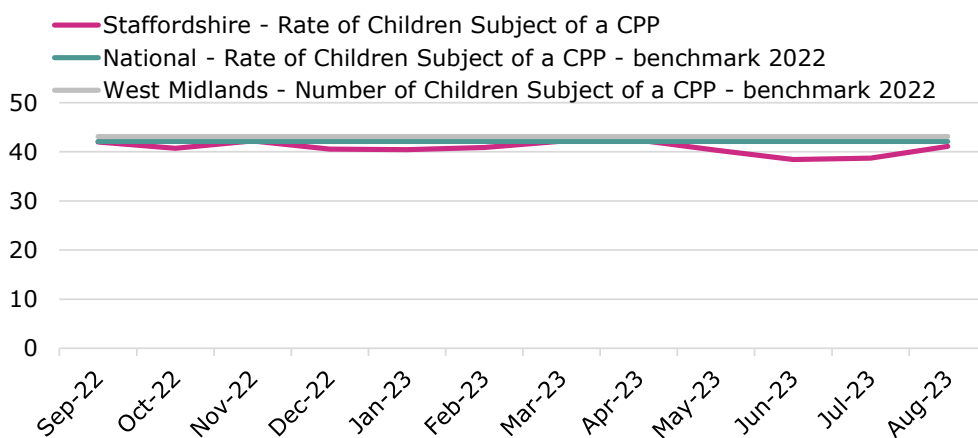
Rate of children in care (rate per 10,000 population) and number of children exiting care



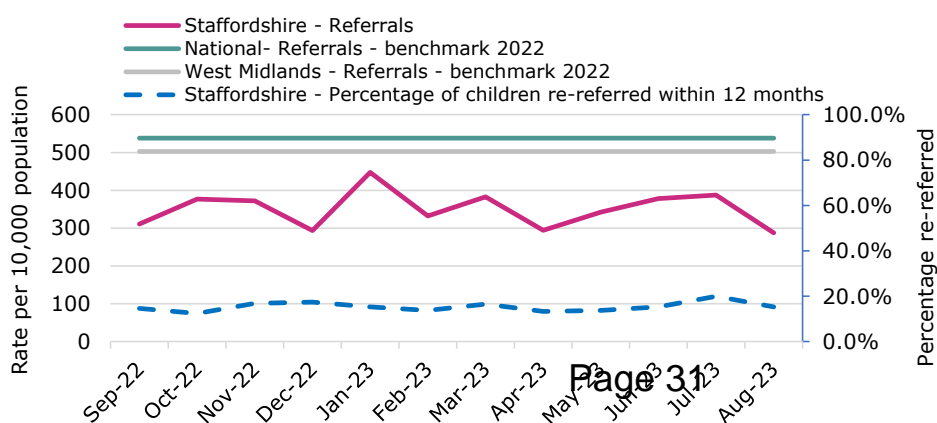
As at the 31st August 2023, there were 1,375 children and young people in the authority's care; a slight decrease compared to the previous quarter (1,397). To help address demand those past exit dates are regularly reviewed to understand any barriers to exiting care and agree any action that might be required.

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

The number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan at the 31st August 2023 was 694, down from a peak of 716 in April but an increase from a more recent low of 649 in June.



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

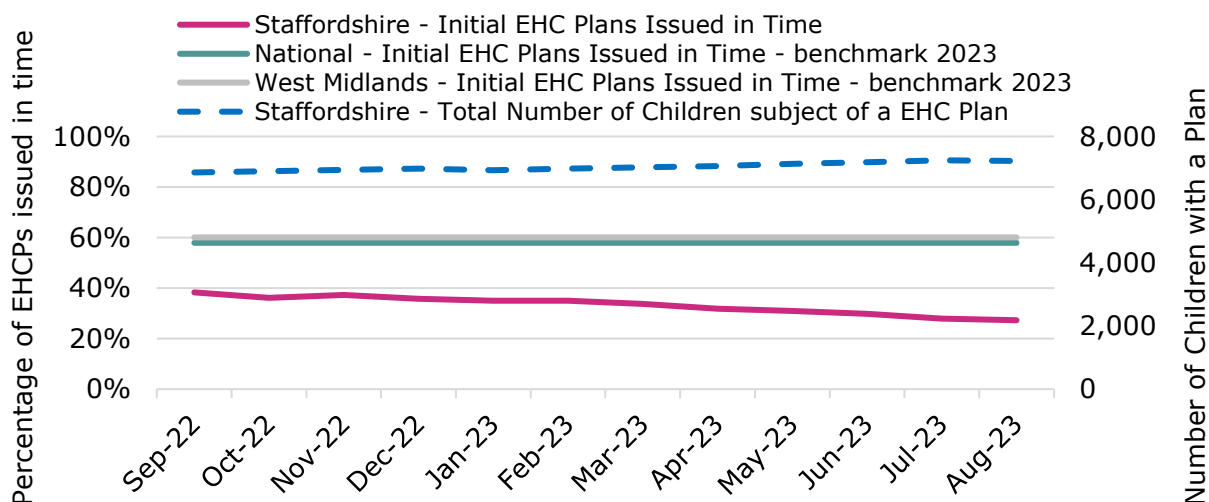


Referrals continue to remain below both national and regional benchmarks. In Staffordshire, 15.3% of children have been re-referred within 12 months as of August 2023 (compared to latest national benchmark of 21.5% in 2022).

Source for page: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

Offer the Best Start in Life Dashboard

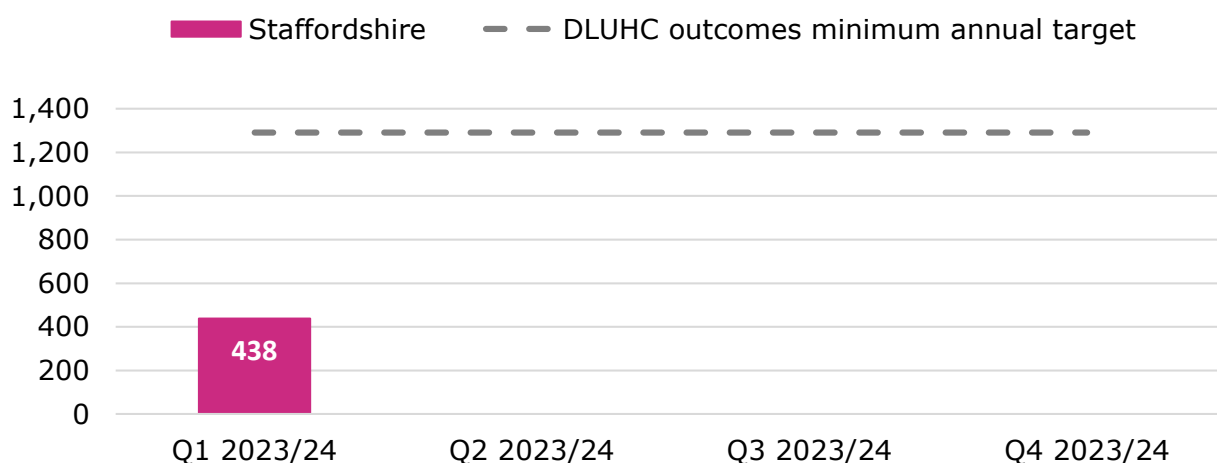
% of Education, Health and Care Plans issued in time (12 month rolling avg), and total number of children with a plan



Source: SCC and Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT)

The number of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) was 7,227 at 31st August 2023 compared to 6,792 a year earlier. This increasing demand means that the number of EHCP's issued in time (within 20 weeks) remains low in Staffordshire; 27% compared to the most recent national benchmark of 58% (2023). Recruitment has been taking place to assist in improving timeliness of EHCPs and support early intervention.

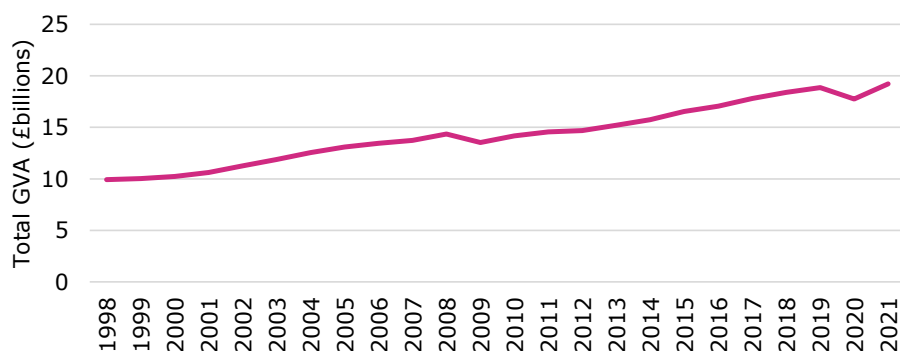
Supporting Families Programme - Reported successful family outcomes in 2023/24 (Cumulative)



At the end of Quarter 1, 34% of the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC's) annual target has been achieved.

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow Dashboard

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



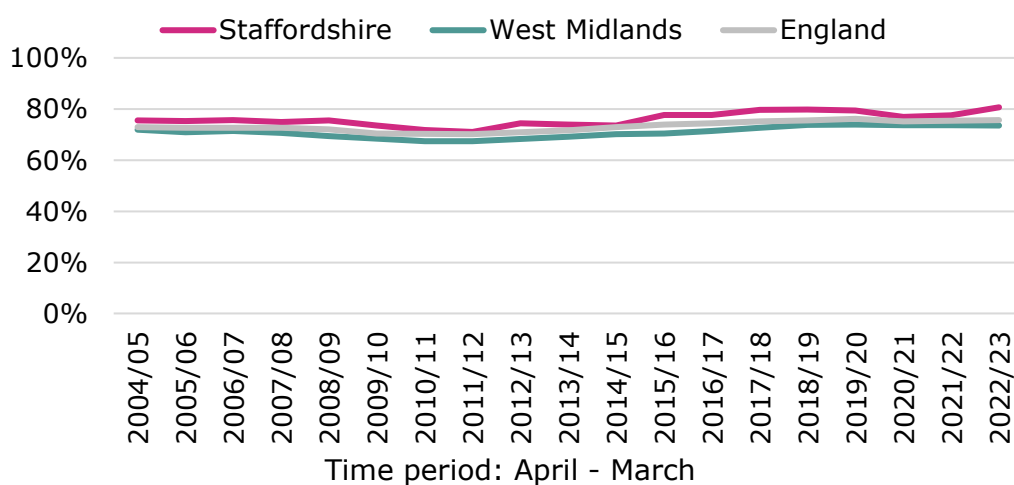
In 2021 (latest data) the Staffordshire economy was worth £19.2bn showing an increase of over £1.5bn between 2020-2021, equivalent to a 8.3% growth and greater than the growth seen for the West Midlands (6.9%) and England (7.1%).

Source: Office for National Statistics

NO UPDATE SINCE QUARTER 1

Latest employment figures for the period April 2022–March 2023 show that in Staffordshire there were an estimated 422,900 working age (aged 16-64) residents employed, with an employment rate of 80.7% which was above the national and regional averages (75.7% and 73.6% respectively).

Employment Rate (aged 16-64)

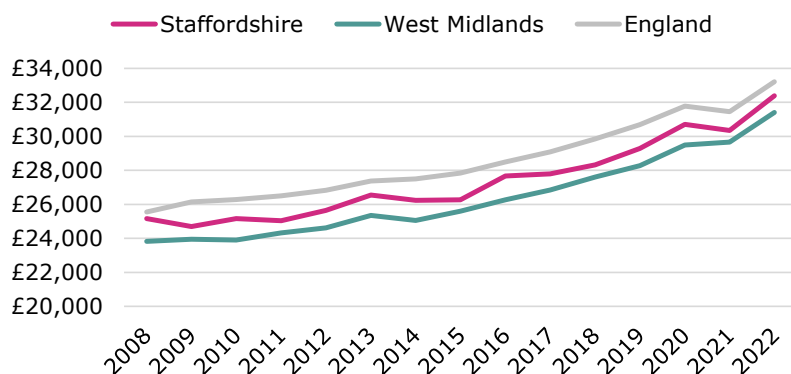


Source: ONS National Population Survey

Supporting Staffordshire's Economy to Grow

Dashboard

Average (median) annual resident earnings



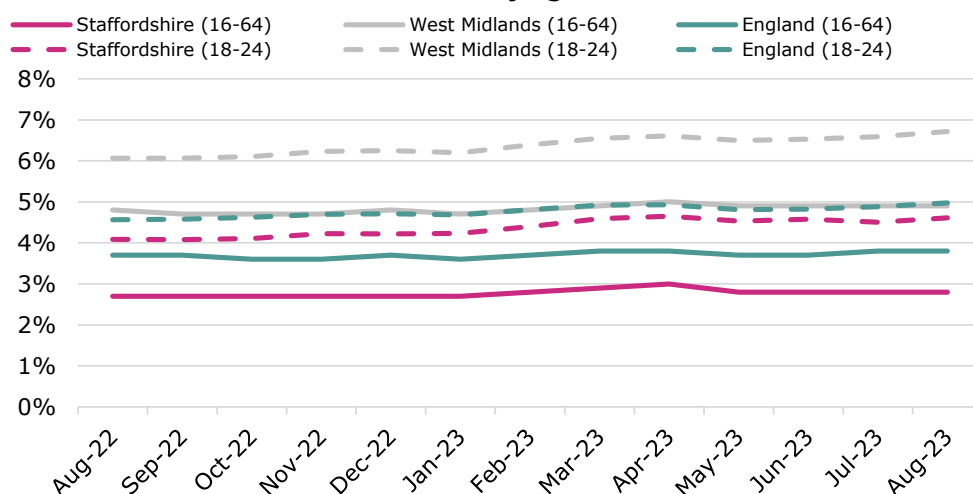
In 2022 average annual resident earnings for full-time workers in Staffordshire stood at £32,386 which was just below the England average of £33,208. Between 2017-22 Staffordshire saw faster improvement in resident earnings compared to national, with 16.5% growth compared to 14.2% for England.

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

NO UPDATE SINCE QUARTER 1

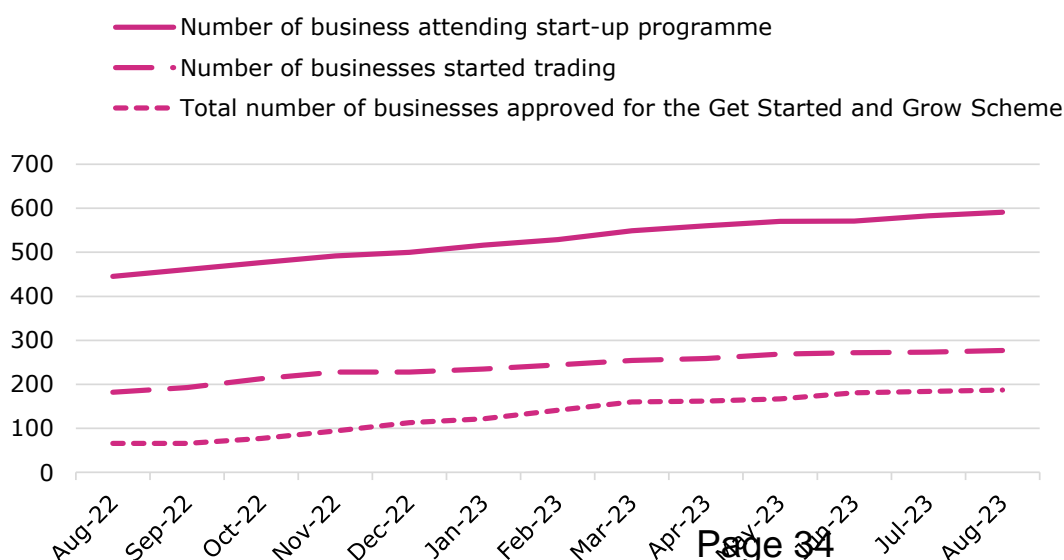
As of August 2023, there were 14,955 claimants in Staffordshire; a decrease of 430 claimants compared with the figures reported in Quarter 1 (15,385). Staffordshire Moorlands records the lowest rate (1.9%), and Tamworth. East Staffs and Cannock record the highest at 3.4%, which is still just below the national position (3.8%).

Claimant Count rate by age



Source: Office for National Statistics

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

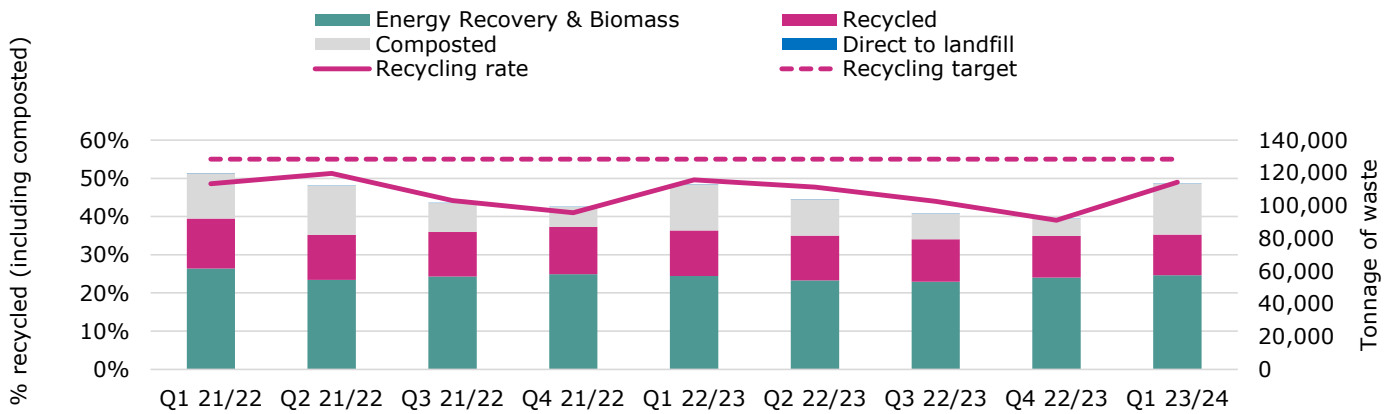


The top sector for businesses attending the start-up programme is 'Professional Services' (digital, financial, marketing, training, science and tech). The 'Get Started' scheme expanded in Quarter 3, 2022/23 to include 'Step up' support for businesses aged 2-5 years.

Source: SCC

Climate Change, Environment & Sustainability Dashboard

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

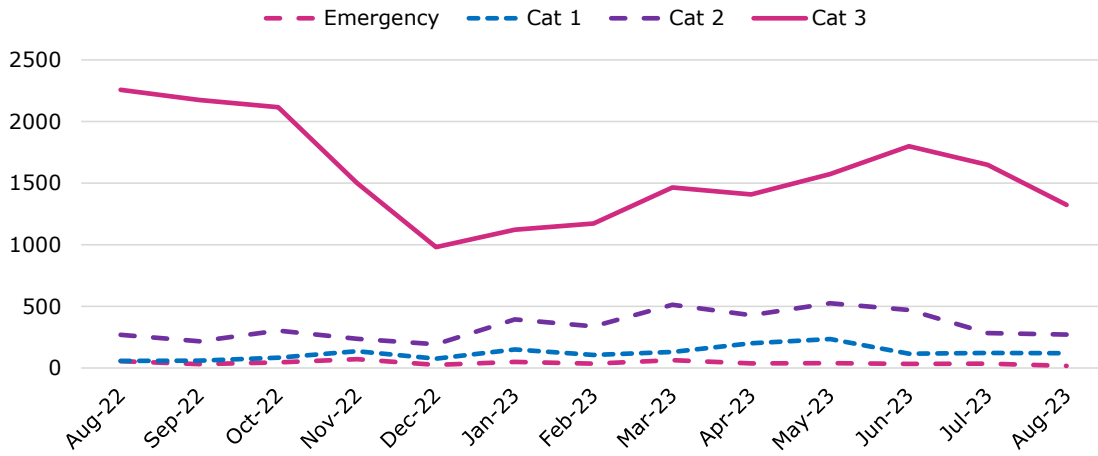


Source: SCC

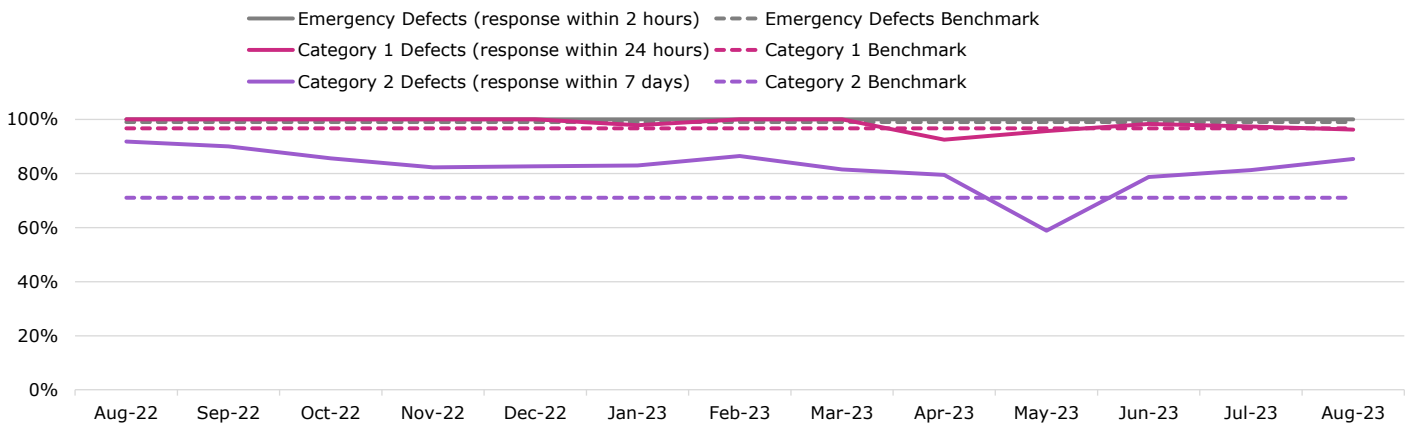
The recycling rate increased again in Quarter 1 following the usual reduction during the winter, partly due to less composted waste in the winter months. Staffordshire continues to send minimal waste directly to landfill.

Roads, Transport and Digital Connections Dashboard

Number of safety defects identified each month



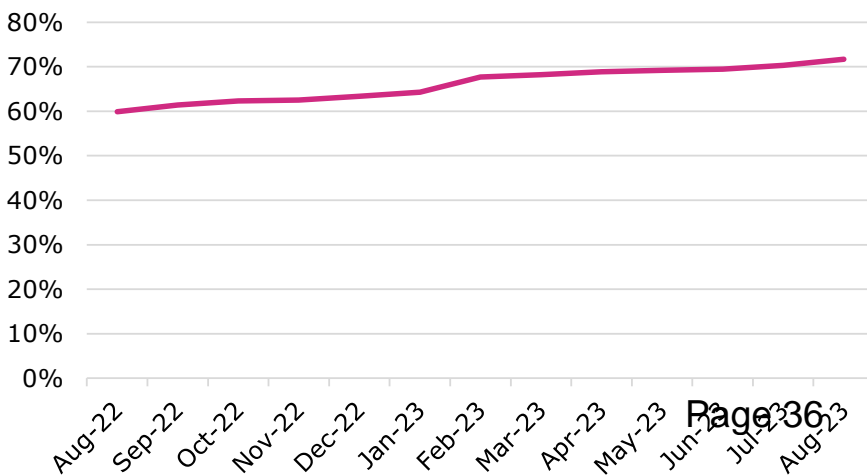
% of Emergency, Category 1 and Category 2 defects repaired in time



Source: Amey, Confirm

There were demand challenges in relation to the volume of high risk 'Emergency' and 'Category 1' highways defects identified in Quarter 2, with a 39% increase from 213 defects identified in July and August 2022 to 296 in July and August 2023. The timeliness of repairing these higher risk defects has improved following the post-Winter dip in Quarter 1, where performance has returned to levels above benchmarks.

% of premises with Gigabit capability

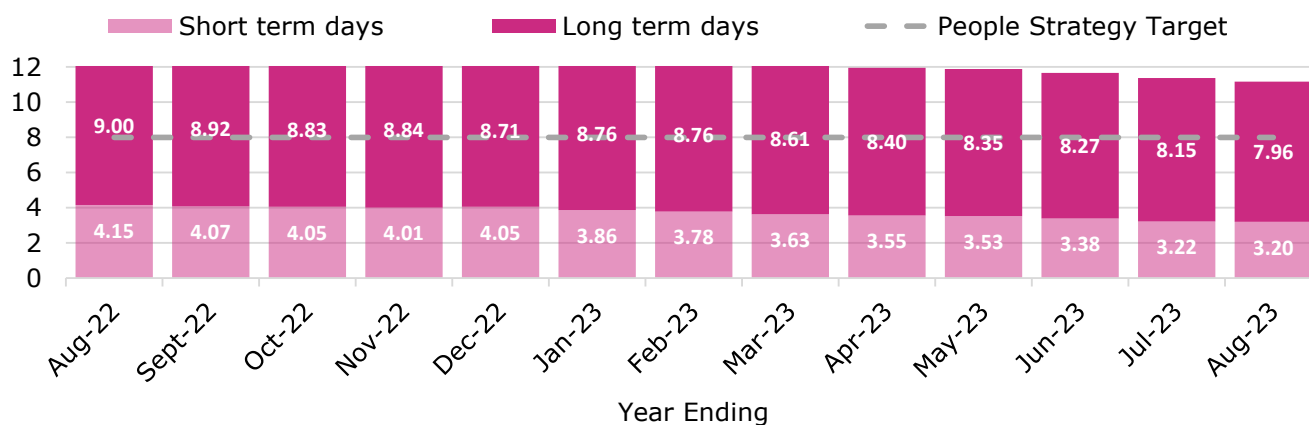


The percentage of premises with Gigabit capability continues to increase, with a target of 85% by the end of 2025 and close to 100% by 2030. It is not appropriate to benchmark against other areas due to differing approaches in rolling this out.

Source: Thinkbroadband.com

How we Work Dashboard

Average payroll days lost per employee



Source: SCC

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

Live Within Our Means Dashboard

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

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

A forecast 1.13% overspend is acceptable as it is within the council's Financial Health target of 2% variation on revenue budgets.

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

The graphs and charts are compiled using quarter 2 forecast information.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows an overspend of £7.7m (1.13%), compared to the quarter 1 forecast overspend of £9.5m (1.39%).

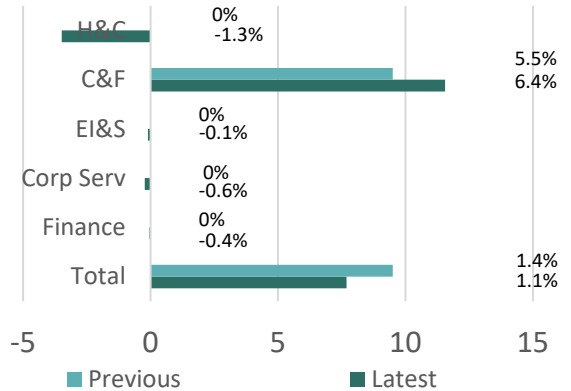
There is a forecast overspend of £8.8m for Children’s Services. This is a highly complex and volatile service and costs depend on the type of placements provided. The service is taking mitigating actions to address these pressures as far as possible.

Savings are categorised into confidence of delivery. There are £0.650m savings that are delivered as at quarter 2. 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.

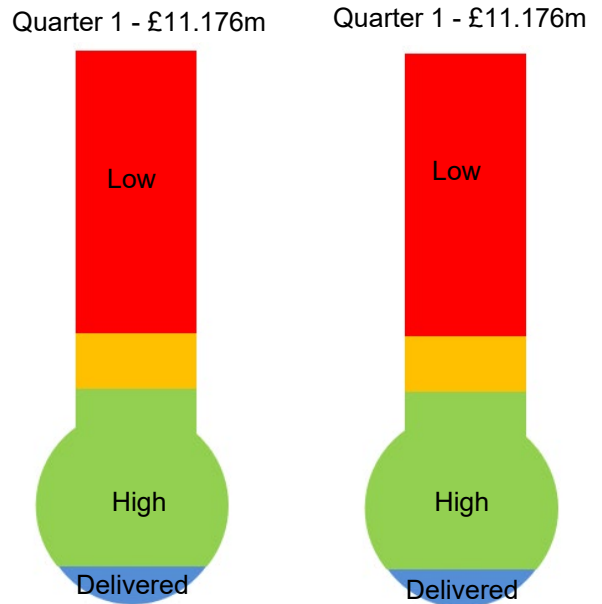
The latest capital outturn projection is £136.0m, compared to the quarter 1 position of £126.0m, an increase of 7.9%. This projection is a fully funded position. There have been movements across the whole capital programme, however, there has been increased investment in Highways Schemes.

Within the national context, the latest consumer price index is 6.4%. Interest rates have increased to 5.25% making them the highest level in 15 years. GDP is estimated to have decreased by 0.5% in July 2023, following an increase of 0.5% in June 2023. Current unemployment figures show Staffordshire benefit claimant rate remains below that of the West Midlands and Great Britain.

Revenue Budget Variance

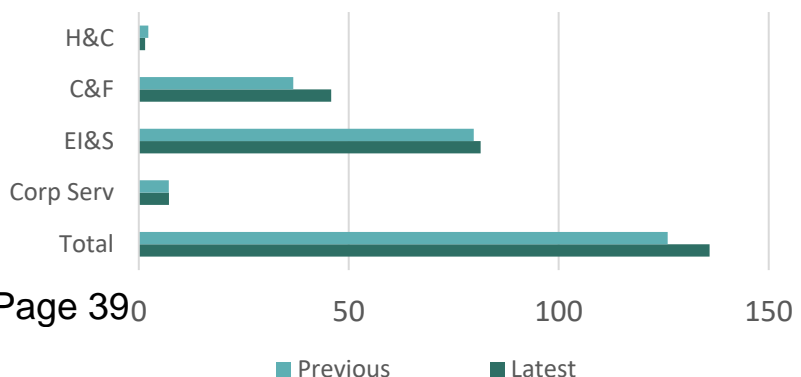


Savings Tracker – Target £11.176m



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 £7.7m (1.1%), compared to the quarter 1 forecast overspend of £9.5m (1.39%).
2. The following paragraphs consider the key financial issues in each of the council's portfolios.
3. **Health and Care** **Forecast – £3.487m saving**
4. *Public Health and Prevention* *Forecast – Breakeven*
5. The Public Health and Prevention budget is forecast to break even in year. However, discussions with Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (MPUFT) are ongoing, to determine the impact of the 2023/24 NHS Pay award, which could create a significant pressure in future years. Moving forward, the Public Health Reserve will also be used to mitigate possible risks regarding the uncertain future of the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant allocation.
6. *Adults Social Care & Safeguarding* *Forecast - £2.304m saving*
7. There remain a number of vacancies in the Adults Learning Disability Team (ALDT) which has led to a forecast saving of £0.972m. The vacancies are planned to be filled during the year. The Adult Social Care team is currently being supported by some temporary external capacity which is being funded from reserves. There is also a risk that the budget reprofile for the delayed implementation of Adult Social Care Reform will result in a budget pressure of £0.750m. There is a forecast pressure of £0.288m to secure some additional temporary resource to tackle a backlog of best interest assessments. Approval has been given to fund this pressure from Health and Care reserves and the necessary accounting adjustments will be made at the end of the financial year. There is a small £0.181m forecast overspend for the Section 75 contract with the MPUFT due to the 2023/24 NHS pay award being slightly higher than budgeted. Other variances in the Adult Social Care and Safeguarding budget amount to a forecast saving of £0.161m.

Appendix 3 – Quarter 2 Finance Report

8. The Learning Disability In-House services are forecast to save £0.239m. This is largely due to vacancies in the residential services offset by a small overspend in the Complex Needs Services. This is the first full year of operation for the new Independence at Home homecare service. The cost of this service is being met in the current financial year by the Adult Social Care Discharge Grant which creates non-recurrent forecast saving of £2.151m.
9. *Care Commissioning* *Forecast - £1.182m saving*
10. The Older Peoples budget is forecast to save £3.212m. The on-going management of demand and prices continues to have a positive impact on the financial position.
11. The position is a consequences of the home care budget for older people which is forecast to save £3.290m, mainly due to some non-recurrent funding available in year. There is also a forecast saving of £0.483m on direct payments for older people as the number of people in receipt of a direct payment during the year has been lower than anticipated. Additionally, there is a forecast saving of £0.219m on the older people day care budget resulting from lower than anticipated activity in the early part of the year. There is a forecast pressure of £0.259m on the residential and nursing budget for older people, having adjusted for assumed activity and price pressures for the remainder of the financial year. Other variances in older people's expenditure result in a small forecast overspend of £0.476m.
12. The Physical Disabilities placement budget is forecast to save £1.149m. The Physical Disabilities home care budget is forecast to save £0.699m due to some non-recurrent funding available in the current year. There is also a forecast saving of £0.454m on direct payments as the number of people in receipt of a direct payment during the year has been lower than anticipated. Other variances in Physical Disabilities expenditure result in a small forecast overspend of £4,000.
13. The Learning Disability placement budget is forecast to overspend by £1.647m. This is mainly due to an increase in the number and price of supported living placements and because the £1.2m Medium Term Finance Strategy (MTFS) saving is not expected to be fully achieved. There is a risk of further increases in demand and price and commissioners will explore actions to mitigate these and bring expenditure back within budget.

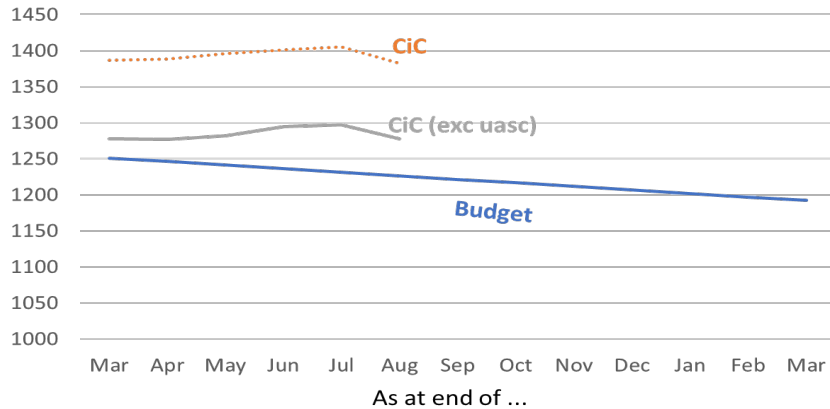
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14. The Mental Health budget is forecast to overspend by £1.618m. This is mainly due to an increase in the number and price of supported living placements over and above the additional budget in the 2023/24 MTFS. There remains a risk of further increases in demand and price and commissioners will explore actions to mitigate these to bring expenditure back within budget.
15. There is a £0.335m forecast saving on the Carers budget and also a £85,000 forecast saving on the Advocacy contract both due to lower activity than assumed in the budget. These are partially offset by some additional temporary commissioning costs forecast to be £0.211m. Other variances in the Care Commissioning budget amount to a forecast pressure of £0.122m.
16. **Covid Funding**
17. The Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) of £9.703m has been brought forward to 2023/24, of which £3.430m is committed by previous Cabinet decisions leaving £6.281m. Grant conditions require that this must be spent on Covid related activities and there is a final cut-off date where all the funds must be utilised – 30 September 2024 – or any remaining grant will need to be returned.
18. Proposals for the remaining funds are as follows:
 - £2.6m on Health Inequalities work in the districts and boroughs on behalf of the Leader's Board
 - £0.736m for an expansion of the Warmer Homes programme
 - £1.250m for a Health Visitor Transformation Fund
 - £1m on a Drug and Alcohol / complex needs multi-service building purchase in Cannock
 - £0.4m on Childrens Public Health in Pupil Referral Units
 - £50,000 as a contribution to the Saplings Project.
 - £0.245m on the Emotionally Based School Avoidance Project.
19. Cabinet is asked to note the use of the COMF in line with the grant conditions as outlined above.

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20. **Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund (MSIF) – Workforce Fund**
21. At the end of July 2023 the government allocated a further £570m of ringfenced funding across the 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years to local authorities to improve and increase adult social care provision. £365m has been made available in the current financial year with £205m available for 2024/25.
22. The funding can be used to:
- Increase fee rates paid to adult social care providers
 - Increase adult social care workforce capacity and retention, or
 - Reduce adult social care waiting times
23. Under the grant conditions, the Council will need to:
- Allocate the full allocation made to the Council of £5.387m in 2023/24 to adult social care and confirm that it has been added to existing budgets
 - Evidence improvement in at least one of the target areas using Department for Health and Social Care performance metrics and
 - Provide a final report in May 2024 on spend and progress.
24. **Children & Families** **Forecast - £11.550m overspend**
25. *Children’s Services* *Forecast - £8.791m overspend*
26. The forecast for the service is an overspend of £8.791m. The number of Children in Care (CiC) remains largely unchanged from the start of the year (currently at 1,382) and after allowing for increasing numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children for whom we receive additional central government grant funding, this number is still significantly removed from the approved business case and underlying assumptions that make up the existing MTFs. If numbers do not reduce, then the pressure on the service will steadily increase. The CiC Placement and Section 17 budgets, exacerbated by the rising cost of inflation is forecast to be £9.7m overspent.

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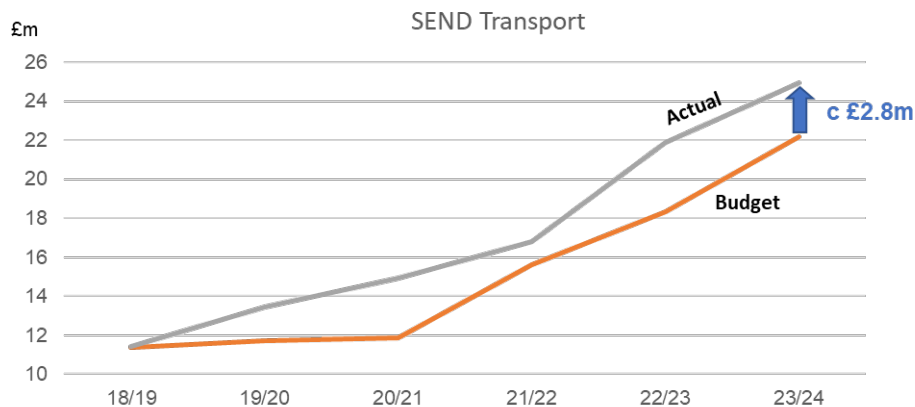


27. The service is taking mitigating actions to address as far as possible pressures for CiC placements, including:
- Continuously monitoring thresholds for children entering care, especially those requiring residential provision
 - Review and expand Edge of Care provision to mitigate and avoid escalation
 - Review and improve the reunification support offer
 - Review all existing CiC by cohort, considering areas working well and areas for potential improvement
 - Maximise income contributions from key partners
 - 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
 - The West Midlands have submitted a bid to become a Regional Care Collaborative which will see greater co-ordination of children's places leading to reduced costs and better relationships with the market.
28. In recent times, the service has been hindered by on-going recruitment and retention problems leading to inconsistent support and capacity. This was recognised in the MTFs and significant additional resource was brought into the budget to address these concerns. The service has secured people within several roles and is actively recruiting to others, planning to realign services and apportioning 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. This leads to a forecast overspend of £1.7m across the service. This is offset by vacancy savings and one off savings due to the

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delayed implementation of the workforce review and restructure that is currently being worked through, forecast to save £2.1m.

29. There are also other mitigating saving of £0.6m, mainly additional unaccompanied asylum seeking children (uasc) grant, to provide the overall forecast overspend of £8.7m.
30. *Education Services* *Forecast - £2.877m overspend*
31. The service is forecast to overspend by £2.877m. This is primarily due to pressures in SEND transport which in recent years has seen a significant increase in demand as a result of the rise in Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs). Costs increased significantly last financial year as a result of the rising costs of inflation, exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine, and despite a further increase in budget this year it is likely that a further overspend of £2.8m will arise in 23/24.



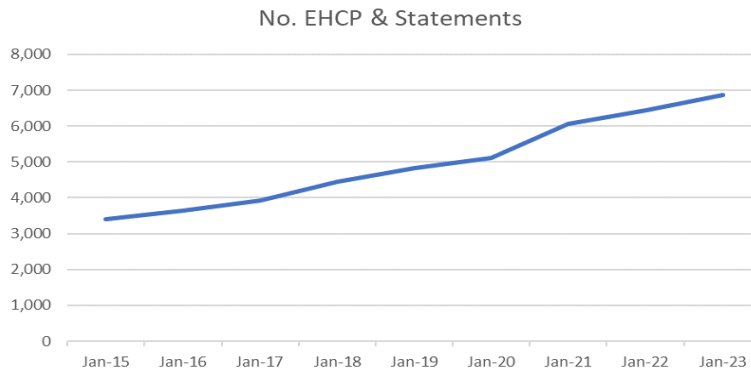
32. A review of SEND transport is being implemented to identify any action that may be taken to mitigate the existing demand and costs as far as possible.
33. There is an additional pressure within the Educational Psychology service which is now forecast to overspend by £0.3m. This is a result of additional locum costs arising as a result of the increasing demands for EHCP assessments.
34. There are other small forecast savings across the service, including historic pension contributions, and provision for school deficit converters, totalling £0.2m that provide for a forecast overspend of £2.9m in year.

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35. SEND High Needs Block

36. The High Needs Block (HNB) is forecast to overspend by £20m. This reflects the continuing growing demand for SEND Support which is impacting across all areas but especially the Independent Sector with numbers now double what they were four years ago, and given the more expensive placement cost, this is by some way the largest budget pressure in the HNB. There is increasing complexity of need and costs impacting all areas.

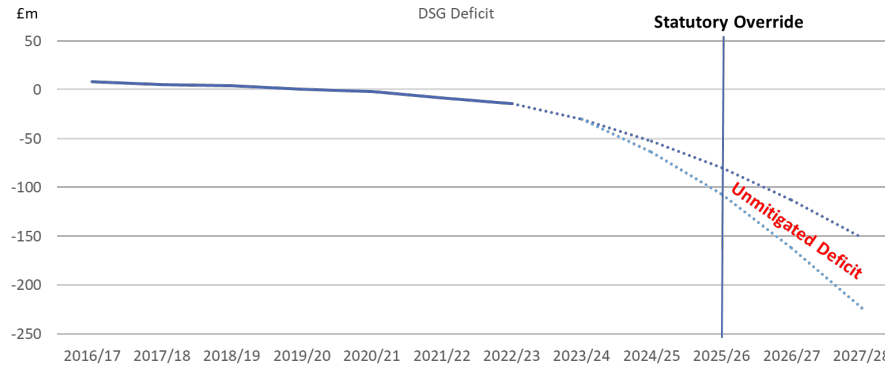
37. From April 2022 the Council implemented a new 'Education Banding Tool' for assessing a child's EHCP. Following concerns of increasing costs, this has been temporarily suspended while further consideration is undertaken.



38. Staffordshire County Council is not alone in this difficult financial predicament, it is a position shared by the majority of Councils across the sector. The Government has put in place a 'statutory override' requiring that accumulation DSG deficits should remain ring-fenced separate to the Council's other reserves, and this has been extended through to the end of 2025/26

39. Accordingly, this overspend will be charged against the DSG reserve which, at the end of 2022/23 was already £14.2m in deficit. Given the current forecast overspend this will likely be over £30m in deficit at the end of the current year. The Council's deficit management plan, that is consistent with the wider objectives outlined in the SEND Strategy, outlines the targeted interventions that will seek to mitigate the exiting shortfall. This will take time and at this stage, does not appear to have had any significant impact on what is a worsening position.

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40. *Partnerships & Wellbeing* *Forecast - £0.118m saving*

41. The forecast for the service is a saving of £0.118m, which is mainly due to one off staffing savings and a reduction in the short breaks provision take up.

42. A large majority of the Wellbeing and Partnerships budget is funded from government grants, including Resettlement grants of £10.9m, Household Support Fund of £11m, Holidays and Activities Fund of £2.4m and Supporting Families of £2.6m. The programmes included in the service have Cabinet approved plans to utilise the allocations and to deliver national programmes of work for the benefit of local residents.

43. **Economy, Infrastructure & Skills** **Forecast – £0.102m saving**

44. *Business & Enterprise* *Forecast – £8,000 saving*

45. The service is forecast to achieve a very small saving of £8,000 in 2023/24 with some uncertainty related to project costs, income generation and key decisions. The Shire Hall Business Centre is expected to have a shortfall of income compared to costs, but this should be subsidised by surpluses at the other Enterprise Centres, in particular Cannock Chase, Lymedale and Waterside Court.

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

47. The forecast for the service is a breakeven position although there are various savings and overspends forecast across the service.

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48. This position assumes that additional network management income will be used to offset a budget pressure in the traffic signals energy cost area and that staffing vacancies in the school crossing patrol teams are used to offset the land charges budget pressure and the reduced Section 38 income.
49. This forecast position also assumed that new priority work in the first part of this financial year can be delivered through the carry forward of unspent highways transformation monies from 2022/23. 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.
50. *Transport, Connectivity & Waste* *Forecast - £0.137m saving*
51. The Transport and Connectivity service is forecast to have a saving of £0.148m in year. 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, but the impact remains uncertain. Furthermore, any savings in this area will need to be ringfenced to support the bus network in future years.
52. The Sustainability and Waste service is forecast to have a small overspend of £10,000 in year. This assumes that the £0.565m MTFs saving in the Dry Mix Recycling Credits budget area has been achieved.
53. There is forecast to be further one-off additional third party income and further electricity revenues generated at the Energy from Waste W2R plant which is being utilised to fund further capital works on the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) sites.
54. The overall position for the service also includes moving £0.253m into reserves to cover the remaining amount of the £1m necessary for the next 4 years of Local Transport Assessment Works.
55. *Skills* *Forecast - Breakeven*
56. The Skills service is forecast to save £82,000 in year, due to some retirement vacancies which remain partially unfilled at quarter 2. This saving is netted

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down by funding for an extension to the Ignite Student Start up scheme in the current year.

57. *Culture, Rural & Communities* *Forecast – £0.130m overspend*

58. The service is forecast to overspend by £0.130m, which is largely made up of a continued significant pressure in the Trading Standards service. The County Council is incurring costs for cattle in our care due to delays in the court system. These costs include legal fees, feed, vet, and housing costs for the seized cattle. This pressure is offset somewhat by one-off staffing vacancies in the Libraries service and will continue to be monitored as we move through the financial year.

59. **Corporate Services** **Forecast – £0.230m saving**

60. The service is forecast to save £0.230m, and this position assumes the £0.220m property rationalisation MTFS saving has been achieved.

61. It is likely that there will be some significant additional income above budget in Registrars due to the higher number of weddings that are being booked after all Covid restrictions are now lifted and the appointment of a dedicated events planner in this area. This additional income will offset the annual leave purchase scheme pressure and also allows provision for additional ICT hardware and additional capacity in the Business Support area in future years.

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

63. At quarter 2, the Finance directorate is forecast to achieve a saving of £46,000, which includes provision for future capacity in the Adult Financial Services team, offset by temporary staffing vacancies.

64. **Centrally Controlled**

65. The forecast for this area is breakeven, which assume that the inflationary increases through the MTFS on the energy budgets within Pooled Buildings are sufficient to meet the higher costs. This will be monitored regularly through the usual budget monitoring process.

66. **Nexus Trading Services Ltd**

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67. Nexus, like many Adult Social Care providers, continues to face difficult trading conditions, particularly around recruitment and retention of staff. Despite challenges the company is forecasting a small profit for the 2023/24 financial year. A governance review is currently underway, the outcome of which will be implemented in Autumn 2023.

68. **Capital Forecast**

69. Appendix 5 compares the latest capital forecast outturn of £136.0m, an increase from the quarter 1 position of £126.0m. The key reasons for this increase of £10m are set out in the following paragraphs.

70. **Health and Care** **Forecast spend £1.526m**

71. There has been a reduction of £0.743m since the quarter 1 report. There has been reprofiling into 2024/25 for Hawthorne House Extension and Refurb project of £1.543m offset by the introduction of Brackenberry Renovation project of £0.8m.

72. **Children and Families** **Forecast spend £45.832m**

73. *Maintained Schools* *Forecast Spend £45.635m*

74. There has been an increase of £9.030m since the quarter 1 report. There has been programme development and budget finalisations, including the introduction of developer contributions which has led to the increase in forecast spend. Increased forecasts in projects include – Madeley High School expansion of £1.153, Colwich Primary School of £0.180m, Winshill Primary of £21,000, New Primary School North of Stafford of £5.514m, Dunstall Farm Primary of £3.842m and a new Primary school at Tamworth golf course of £1.445m.

75. There have been some reductions to projects such as reduction in basic needs forecast of £1.041m and West Hill Primary of £80,000.

76. **Economy, Infrastructure and Skills** **Forecast spend £81.400m**

77. *Economic Planning & Future Prosperity* *Forecast spend £6.242m*

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78. There has been a reduction of £2.105m since the quarter 1 report. This decrease is due to uncertainty over cash flows for Chatterly Valley project as the contractor has gone into administration, we have adopted a prudent stance and rephased the budget of £0.516m into 2024/25. There has also been some reprofiling of budgets including Newcastle Enterprise Centre Extension and Refurb of £1.082m due to delays in planning, and Stafford Future High Street project of £0.220m in line with anticipated Stafford Borough Council works plan.
79. There have been some smaller rephasing of budgets into 2024/25 on Farms general budget of £54,000 and Farms Reinvestments budgets of £0.109m.
80. *Highways Schemes* *Forecast spend £68.155m*
81. There has been an increase of £4.072m since the quarter 1 report, due to the introduction of new Levelling Up Fund funding to the programme of £5m, offset by refinements on budgets for Stafford Western Access Route of £0.364m, Lichfield Southern Bypass of £0.125m, and other smaller projects totalling £0.439m.
82. *Connectivity* *Forecast Spend £0.4m*
83. There has been a decrease of £0.408m since the quarter 1 report, which is due to reprofiling of the total service budget in line with the latest project delivery plan and anticipated cash flow.
84. *Rural County* *Forecast Spend £0.590m*
85. There has been an increase of £0.202m since the quarter 1 report due to the introduction of the Rights of Way Improvements budget line previously reported within Highways.
86. **Property, Finance and Resources & ICT** **Forecast spend £7.193m**
87. There has been an increase of £60,000 since the quarter 1 report, this is mainly due the acquisition of a replacement gritter of £82,000, increase of £10,000 for the Data Centre Network Refresh project and a reduction of £32,000 for the Seasbridge Centre Demolition project.
88. **Financial Health**

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89. Appendix 6 provides a forecast outturn performance against the key Financial Health Indicators approved as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.
90. There have been 97.9% of invoices paid within 30 days of receiving them at the end of May, exceeding the financial health indicator target.
91. The Debt Key Performance Indicator (KPI) has been amended, 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.
92. Due to increasing income levels year on year (in particular in residential care) the target will need to be reviewed and revised annually.
93. The estimated level of outstanding sundry debt over 6 months old is £20.504m, this is under the revised target of £21.5m by £0.996m. This position is an increase of £0.561m since the quarter 1 report. The debt recovery process involves chasing by a range of methods with the eventual escalation to the external collection agent or to Legal for the possibility of a court decision to recover the debt.
94. The level of CCG health debt over 6 months old is now £0.876m, £0.324m below the target figure.
95. Non-Residential Client debt now stands at £12.474m 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.

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Debtor Type	2023/24 Target	30/06/2023	30/09/2023	Increase / (Decrease)
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health Bodies & CCGs	1.200	0.647	0.876	0.229
Other Govt. and Public Bodies	2.800	2.105	1.977	(0.128)
Other General Debtors (Individuals & Commercial)	5.200	5.224	4.527	(0.697)
H&C Non-Res Client Debt	11.000	11.589	12.474	0.885
H&C Residential Client Debt	1.300	0.378	0.650	0.272
TOTAL	21.500	19.943	20.504	0.561

96. Prudential Indicators

97. Appendix 7 provides a forecast outturn performance against the Prudential Indicators approved as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process.
98. 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.
99. 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 2 £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Total Variation £m
Health and Care			
Public Health & Prevention	0.263	0.263	0.000
Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	41.454	39.150	(2.304)
Care Commissioning	218.047	216.865	(1.182)
Specific Grant Allocation (Public Health)	(0.263)	(0.263)	0.000
Health and Care Total	259.501	256.015	(3.486)
Children and Families			
Children's Services	131.364	140.155	8.791
Children's Public Health	0.000	0.000	0.000
Education Services	40.154	43.031	2.877
Wellbeing & Partnerships	8.574	8.456	(0.118)
Children and Families Total	180.092	191.642	11.550
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Business & Enterprise	3.062	3.054	(0.008)
Infrastructure & Highways	40.225	40.225	0.000
Transport, Connectivity & Waste	45.847	45.710	(0.137)
Skills	2.714	2.633	(0.081)
Culture, Rural & Communities	13.258	13.388	0.130
EI&S Business Support	1.200	1.194	(0.006)
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	106.306	106.204	(0.102)
Corporate Services Total	38.289	38.059	(0.230)
Finance Total	11.989	11.943	(0.046)
Total Portfolio Budgets (Saving)/Overspend	596.177	603.863	7.686
Centrally Controlled Items			
Interest on Balances & Debt Charges	23.881	23.881	0.000
Pooled Buildings and Insurances	27.924	27.924	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	682.370	690.056	7.686

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24

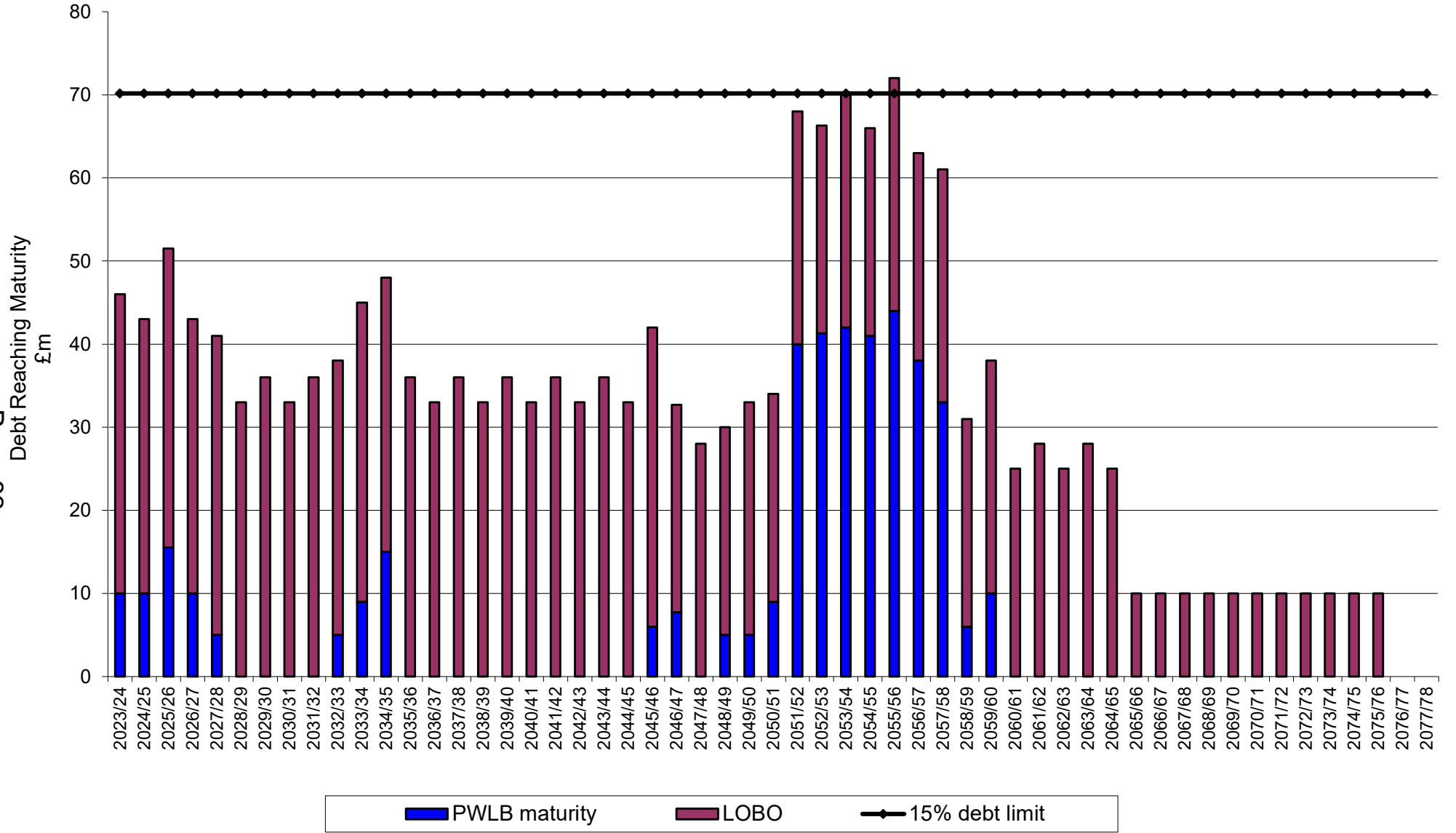
	1st Quarter Budget	Enhancements to Programme	2nd Quarter Budget
	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care			
Care and Independence	2.269	(0.743)	1.526
Health and Care Total	2.269	(0.743)	1.526
Children and Families			
Maintained Schools	36.604	9.031	45.635
Vulnerable Children's Projects	0.197	0.000	0.197
Children and Families Total	36.801	9.031	45.832
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills			
Economic Planning & Future Prosperity	8.347	(2.105)	6.242
Highways Schemes	64.083	4.072	68.155
Connectivity	0.808	(0.408)	0.400
Rural County (Countryside)	0.388	0.202	0.590
Tourism and Culture	4.853	(0.117)	4.736
Waste & Sustainability Projects	1.290	(0.013)	1.277
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Total	79.769	1.631	81.400
Trading Services - County Fleet Care	0.630	0.082	0.712
Finance, Resources & ICT	0.875	0.010	0.885
Property	5.628	(0.032)	5.596
Total	125.972	9.979	135.951

Financial Health Indicators 2023/24

Indicator		Current Performance
<u>Debtors</u> Level of outstanding general debtors more than 6 months old does not exceed £21.5m (Current Performance – £20.5m).		
<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 – 97.9%).		
<u>Monitoring</u> Quarterly financial monitoring reports have been issued to Cabinet during the last 12 months.		
The council's most recent revenue outturn forecast did not vary by more than +/-2% when compared to the overall revenue budget.		
Quarterly monitoring reports of progress against MTFS savings have been produced for the Senior Leadership Team during the last 12 months.		
 Indicator not met	 Indicator not met by small margin	 Indicator met

Prudential Indicators 2023/24

Indicator	Budget 2023/24	Q2 Estimate 2023/24
	£m	£m
External Debt – Authorised Limit for borrowing	621	399
External Debt – Authorised Limit for other liabilities	118	117
<i>Total</i>	<i>739</i>	<i>516</i>
External Debt – Operational Boundary for borrowing	525	399
External Debt – Operational Boundary for other liabilities	118	117
<i>Total</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>516</i>
External Debt - Loans	596.5	399
Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Fixed)	546.4	399
Interest Rate Exposures – Upper Limit (Variable)	(470.0)	(376.6)
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	565.5
Gross Debt – External Loans (Should remain below CFR, except in the short term)	568.2	399
Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Financing Costs	22.9	15.6
Proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream – Proportion of Net Revenue Stream - %	3.6%	2.42%



Forward Plan of Key Decisions - 15 November 2023 - 20 March 2024

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 - 15 November 2023 - 20 March 2024

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
15 November 2023	Public	Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030 Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills (Philip White)	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
		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.		
15 November 2023	Public	Climate Change Action Plan Review and Climate Change Annual Report Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change (Simon Tagg)	NA	Darryl Evers (Tel: 01785 854265) Service Area: Sustainability and Waste Management
		Review of CCAP and annual report		
15 November 2023	Public	Strategic Vision for Early Years Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton)	N/A	Natasha Moody (Tel: 07976 191079) Service Area: Early Years
		The report will provide an overview of the national and local contexts that impact on early years service delivery, current priorities and how the service needs to respond. This report is to		

		seek endorsement from the Cabinet to progress further with service development and priorities to ensure children in Staffordshire get the best possible start in life.		
15 November 2023	Public	<p>Half Yearly Treasury Management Report Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry)</p> <p>The report provides a summary of the County Council's borrowing and investment activities during the first six months of the year.</p>	None	Rob Salmon (Tel: 01785 276354) Service Area: Pensions and Treasury Management
15 November 2023	Private	<p>Additional Nursing Capacity Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel)</p> <p>Due to growing demand for nursing homes within Staffordshire there is a need to create more capacity to provide good quality, affordable nursing care to the people of Staffordshire. Demand analysis shows the biggest need is within the Tamworth/Lichfield area. This proposal is to build 2 nursing homes within this area.</p>	None	Andrew Jepps (Tel: 01785 278557) Service Area: Care Commissioning, Health & Care
15 November 2023	Private	<p>Provision of a Waste Transfer Facility Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change (Simon Tagg)</p> <p>Proposal for the re-procurement of a waste transfer facility to receive, manage and transfer waste.</p>	None at this time	Darryl Eyers (Tel: 01785 854265) Service Area: Waste and Sustainability
13 December 2023	Public	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029 Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry)</p> <p>To update Cabinet on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2024 to 2029.</p>	In addition to the general budget consultation, any specific consultation, if appropriate, will be determined by the nature of any issues raised in the Strategic Plan and MTFS	Rachel Spain (Tel: 01785 854455) Service Area: Finance

13 December 2023	Public	Older People Commissioning Strategy Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel)	We have engaged with a range of partners including a citizen survey, focus groups, care providers, MPFT, carers groups, voluntary sector	Andrew Jepps (Tel: 01785 278557) Service Area: Health and Care
		Older People Commissioning Strategy - Healthy aging and support for Older People in Staffordshire		
13 December 2023	Public	Provision of Services for Children and Young People Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton)	none currently	Natasha Moody (Tel: 07976 191079) Service Area: Placement Service - Wellbeing and Partnerships
		The West Midlands Framework is for residential children's homes for children and young people for access to local authorities and trusts in the West Midlands. It is to provide a safe, stable and nurturing homes for vulnerable children that require residential care.		
13 December 2023	Private	Families Health & Wellbeing (0-19) Service Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton)	n/a	Natasha Moody (Tel: 07976 191079) Service Area: Wellbeing & Partnerships
		Recommendations regarding the Families Health & Wellbeing (0-19) Service from 1st April 2024		
13 December 2023	Private	Drug and Alcohol Services Cabinet Member for Health and Care (Julia Jessel)	Various	Anthony Bullock (Tel: 01785 276649) Service Area: Public Health and Prevention
		Contract considerations		
17 January 2024	Private	Unregulated Placements Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton)	n/a	Nisha Gupta (Tel: 07890 402088) Service Area: Children and
		Update on the young people in unregulated placements		

				Families
24 January 2024	Public	<p>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029 Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources (Ian Parry)</p> <p>To update Cabinet with the draft budget for 2024/25, the proposed council tax and the MTFs for 2024-2029.</p>	Consultation as appropriate for each service area. Overall Community Impact Assessment included within report.	Rachel Spain (Tel: 01785 854455) Service Area: All
21 February 2024	Public	<p>Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 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	Wendy Tompson, Rachel Spain (Tel: 01785 854267, Tel: 01785 854455) Service Area: Strategy Team and Finance
20 March 2024	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 March 2024	Public	<p>Capital Programme for Schools 2024/ 25 Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) (Jonathan Price)</p> <p>The Capital Programme for Schools 2024/ 2025 consists of SCC's Statement of Priorities for its schools and associated appendices for major projects and maintenance projects. Programme to be approved by Cabinet for commencement/ completion in 2024/ 2025.</p>	None at this stage	Ian Turner (Tel: 01785 277228) Service Area: Strategic Property
20 March	Public	Children and Young People's Emotional Health and	Not sure yet	Natasha Moody

2024		<p>Wellbeing Service Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton)</p> <p>The options paper will outline the current children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing service in Staffordshire and provide potential options for the future of a children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing service, along with a preferred option / recommendation.</p>		<p>(Tel: 07976 191079) Service Area: Families and Communities Commissioning Team</p>
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