

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 28 March 2024

10:00

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
20 March 2024

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of meeting held on 2 February 2024** (Pages 5 - 10)
4. **Household Waste Recycling Centres Update** (Pages 11 - 28)

Report of Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change
5. **HS2 Impact on Staffordshire - Update**

Oral report/presentation of HS2

NB. The Chairman requests that Members confine their debate to matters relating to Education, Skills and Prosperity only.
6. **Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) - Annual Report 2022/23** (Pages 29 - 54)

Report of Chairman of SACRE
7. **Work Programme** (Pages 55 - 84)

- (a) 2023/24;
- (b) 2024/25 (draft).

8. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 30 May 2024 at 10.00 am, County Buildings, Stafford

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 the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

Nil.

Membership	
Charlotte Atkins	Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf
Tina Clements (Chair)	David Smith
Philippa Haden	Samantha Thompson
Philip Hudson	Ross Ward (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))
Graham Hutton	Bernard Williams
Peter Kruskonjic (Vice-Chair (Overview))	

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 Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 2 February 2024

Present: Tina Clements (Chair)

Attendance	
Charlotte Atkins	Peter Kruskonjic (Vice-Chair (Overview))
Philippa Haden	David Smith
Philip Hudson	Samantha Thompson
Graham Hutton	Ross Ward (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))

Also in attendance: Jonathan Lindop and David Williams

Apologies: Darryl Eyers, Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf and Bernard Williams

Part One

52. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

53. Minutes of meeting held on 11 January 2024

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

54. Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership

The Committee considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport regarding the governance arrangements, operating model and performance of the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) (schedule 1 to the signed minutes).

The SSRP was established in 2011 with the aim of increasing collaboration between partner organisations including:- (i) Staffordshire County Council; (ii) Stoke-on-Trent City Council; (iii) Staffordshire Police; (iv) Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and; (v) Highways England, in order to reduce road casualties in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent areas. Their vision was, "Working Together to Improve Road Safety in Partnership with our Communities" supporting which were the following Strategic Objectives:- (i) To achieve long term sustained reductions in road traffic collisions across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent; (ii) To ensure education and training initiatives are used effectively to reduce the risk of being involved in a road traffic collision; (iii) To agree a considered

approach to engineering and enforcement based on evidence and making best use of sustainable but limited resources; (iv) To engage and support our communities to take responsibility for improving road safety and; (v) To improve public confidence in the safety of Staffordshire's and Stoke-on-Trent's roads.

In 2016, The Partnership agreed to strengthen their governance structure so as to ensure their work continued to receive appropriate direction and scrutiny. Therefore, they established:- (i) a Strategic Board to oversee strategy and take responsibility for key financial decisions and scrutiny and; (ii) an Operational Board to review current local road safety issues and make recommendations to the Strategic Board.

Members heard that recorded road traffic casualties in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent had seen a significant decline from 370 Killed or Serious Injuries (KSI) and 3197 Slight Injuries in 2016 to 261 and 955 respectively during the year. However, they noted that some of this variation was attributed to changes in collision reporting and recording processes over recent years.

However, work was ongoing to ensure resources were directed appropriately based on detailed analysis of casualty numbers and trends which had confirmed a need to continue the focus on children, young drivers and motorcyclists. Evidence also supported the development of initiatives in relation to cyclists, older drivers and commercial vehicles.

Current initiatives included:- (i) the development of the Community Speed Watch scheme to further support communities who were concerned about the speed of traffic; (ii) identification of a dedicated resource to promote road safety information and education through communication and media channels and schools; (iii) upgrading some of the older fixed camera sites through a phased approach; (iv) modernisation of the camera van fleet; (v) continued delivery of the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme courses, such as the Speed Awareness Course and; (vi) a new Councillor led Neighbourhood Speed Check scheme to fast track access to speeding concern assessments.

During the full and wide-ranging discussion which ensued, Members gave detailed scrutiny to the work of the Partnership since their previous update in March 2023, asking questions, seeking clarification and raising areas of concern as necessary including:- (i) possible reasons for the significant reduction achieved in the Slight Injury category compared to the modest reduction in the KSI category; (ii) the dangers arising from pavement parking; (iii) the need for better engagement with parents in respect of deterring parking outside schools; (iv) how the SSRP can help identify and remove uninsured drivers from the Highway network; (v) the need for greater co-operation with neighbouring Authorities in respect of

cross boarder accident blackspots; (vi) the success achieved by Driver Awareness Training courses in changing driving behaviour and; (vii) the various initiatives being aimed at newly qualified drivers.

In conclusion, Members welcomed the reductions in accident casualty statistics which had been achieved. However, they noted that the most recent data included in the report related to 2021 and expressed concern that without more up-to-date figures, the SSRP were unable to employ an evidence-based approach to their work. Therefore, the Chairman proposed that she writes to the Chief Constable, highlighting their concerns and asking whether there was any further assistance the Committee could give aimed at making more recent data available to the Partnership.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That the trends illustrated by the Road Accident Casualty Statistics in the report and the work of the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership be welcomed.

(c) That the performance of the Partnership continue to be monitored closely and further updates be brought to the Committee, as required.

(d) That the Chairman write to Staffordshire Police expressing the Committee's concern over the absence of more recent accident casualty statistics and offering any support and assistance they could give in making the required data available in a timely manner.

55. Highways Transformation Progress and Performance - Quarterly update

The Committee considered an oral report and PowerPoint presentation (slides attached at Appendix 2 to the signed minutes) of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport updating them on the progress made with regard to the Highways Transformation Programme.

Following his written request for the Committee to scrutinise the Authority's recent performance in completing Highway structural maintenance schemes, County Councillor Conor Wileman attended the meeting and spoke on this item in accordance with the provisions of the County Council's Constitution.

During his report and presentation the Cabinet Member highlighted:- (i) progress with regard to the Highways Investment Programme; (ii) the completion of a structural maintenance scheme (A38 Claymills/A5121 Derby Road Junction) in Burton-upon-Trent; (iii) completion of a carriageway and footway improvement scheme (Mill Street) in Cannock; (iv) completion of a resurfacing and repairs scheme (A518 Bamford Bridge

and Bridge Street) in Uttoxeter; (v) completion of refurbishment scheme (A53) in Leek; (vi) progress with regard to twelve other schemes throughout the County; (vii) the contribution made by the use of new technology (eg JCB Pothole Pro) in repairing the Highway network; (viii) the Authority's performance against various Operational Performance Metrics; (ix) the 2024/25 Investment Programme; (x) progress with regard to Highways Functional Plans; (xi) results of recent Customer Satisfaction surveys undertaken; (xii) the progress made in improving Information, IT and Digital Systems including the on-line Customer Portal and; (xiii) the progress made towards providing an effective and efficient member response capability within the Highway service.

In the full and wide-ranging discussion which ensued, Members gave feedback/their views and spoke of their experiences with regard to the Transformation Programme to date, asking questions, seeking clarification and raising areas of concern as necessary, including:- (i) the use of recycled materials in Highway maintenance works; (ii) recent adverse media coverage in respect of certain Highway Improvement Works; (iii) the need to minimise the impact of pollution from the Highway network on watercourses and; (iv) how future Highways Updates can be better configured so as to assist local Members in communicating with their constituents.

In conclusion, whilst the Committee welcomed news of the progress which had been made in the Transformation Programme, they requested that the Cabinet Member's next quarterly update to the Committee included additional empirical data/performance metrics enabling them to better identify issues of concern, having regard to the matters highlighted by Councillor Wileman and recent press reports.

RESOLVED – (i) That the report be received and noted.

(b) That the progress made in the Highways Transformation Programme to date be welcomed,

(c) That additional empirical data/performance metrics be included in the Cabinet Member's next quarterly update.

(d) That the Cabinet Member be urged to have regard to the Committee's comments in his work to implement the new future delivery model for Staffordshire Highways.

56. Work Programme

The Chairman reported that, with advice from the relevant Cabinet Members and Director of Economy Infrastructure and Skills, the following items had been provisionally prioritised for consideration at their May

2024 meeting:-

- Review of Job and Careers Brokerage Service Performance
- Employment and Skills Strategy – Progress Update;
- Cultural Strategy.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above-mentioned changes, the Work Programme (schedule 3 to the signed minutes) be approved.

57. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 28 March 2024 at 10.00 am, County Buildings, Stafford

RESOLVED – That the date, time and venue of the next meeting be noted.

Chair

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee Thursday 28 March 2024

Household Waste Recycling Centres Update

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- a. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee review and make comment on the implementation of a van & trailer permit and commercial (trade) waste Policy changes including the introduction of a short application process to allow local groups such as Scouts, litter picking, voluntary, Village / Church Hall to use the HWRC Network to recycle materials.
- b. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review and make comment on investment to date and further improvements required on the HWRC Network.
- c. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee to review progress on the provision of an outlet for re-use across the HWRC Network.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of Councillor Simon Tagg, Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change

Summary

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

1. At its meeting on 10 November 2022, Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report which outlined future significant financial investment required on the HWRC Network over the next five years and the opportunities to self-fund the investment from within existing budgets and modifications to Policies.
2. At its meeting on 23 April 2023, Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on the results from the HWRC public consultation for the introduction of van & trailer permits and the restrictions of commercial (trade) waste Policy changes. The report included a proposal to introduce a short application process for local

community and voluntary groups to use the HWRC Network as an extension to the existing charity arrangements.

3. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review and make comment on the outcome of the Policy changes and operational impact on the HWRC Network and service users.
4. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review and make comment on HWRC Network improvements to date.
5. Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review and make comment progress on the provision of an outlet for re-use across the HWRC Network.

Report

Background

6. In March 2022, the HWRC operational network was transferred from an outsourced to an 'in-house' service delivery model. Since March 2022, numerous reports have been presented to Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee to update and seek support for changes to operational practices and procedures across the network.
7. Recommendations were considered by Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee namely to introduce HWRC Policy changes including a van and trailer permitting system, restricting commercial (trade) waste to Staffordshire businesses only and a scheme for voluntary / charitable groups to have easier access to Staffordshire HWRCs.
8. These were considered and approved by Cabinet on 17 May 2023.
9. The Council currently provides a network of 14 HWRCs geographically spread across the county and Staffordshire County Council residents also have access to the jointly funded site at Lower House Farm in Warwickshire. The service is well utilised by residents, with approximately 1.6 million visits per annum across the sites in Staffordshire. The service is also used by traders with 3,047 recorded visits being made by registered traders in 2023 (January – December). Compared to 8,366 in 2022.
10. Currently 42 material streams are accepted at the majority of HWRC sites and the current recycling rate of c65%
11. It should be noted that the primary function of the HWRC service is to receive household waste from Staffordshire County Council residents

and the Council has no statutory duty to provide for the provision of the tipping and disposal of commercial (trade) waste.

Commercial (Trade) Waste Policy Changes

12. On 5 June 2023, restrictions on the disposal of commercial (trade) waste from businesses outside of Staffordshire was introduced (a 2-month amnesty period was applied to allow businesses to find alternative legal disposal routes to reduce fly tipping concerns).
13. In November 2022, the report to Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee contained appendices (Appendix 1), which showed the increase in tonnages of the disposal of commercial (trade) and bulky waste. The report stated that *'As an example, bulky tonnage from Cannock (the largest site across the Network) has increased from 1,505 tonnes in 2017/18 to 8,826 tonnes in 2021/22. This increase of 7,321 tonnes has increased disposal costs by £746,742.'*
14. Since the introduction of Policy changes in restricting the disposal of commercial (trade) waste to Staffordshire businesses only, there has not been an operational requirement for designated commercial (trade) waste containers.
15. Appendix 2 shows the combined tonnages for the disposal of bulky / commercial (trade) waste from January to December 2023. The impact of Policy changes during the year are highlighted (a) April 2023 - price increase for commercial (trade) waste, (b) June 2023 – implementation of Staffordshire businesses only (c) August 2023 - end of 2-month amnesty and (d) September 2023 – the introduction of van and trailer permits for Staffordshire residents.
16. From January 2023 to December 2023, bulky waste tonnage at Cannock HWRC was 3,057 which is a reduction from the 2021/22 tonnage of 8,826 (paragraph 13 above), of 5,769 tonnes. This equates to a reduction in disposal costs of approximately c£718k and a reduction of c700 containers being transported on the public highway.
17. Appendix 3 show the reduction in bulky / commercial (trade) waste tonnages for January 2022 to December 2022 compared to January 2023 to December 2023.
18. By restricting the disposal of commercial (trade) waste to Staffordshire businesses only, the number of traders visiting site has reduced by 63.58%

Van & Trailer Permits

19. On 4 September 2023, an online van and trailer permit system was introduced for the use of Staffordshire residents only to dispose of their household waste when using a van and / or trailer.
20. As per the outcome of the consultation, residents are allocated with 12 visits per household per annum. Permits are not restricted to any one site.
21. As at 6 February 2024, 13,826 van and trailer permits have been issued to Staffordshire residents and 17,865 permits have been used on the HWRC Network. Appendix 4 shows site usage of permits.
22. The introduction of a van and trailer permit has been well received by site staff as it is a simple system to use and enables staff to challenge individuals who try to abuse the commercial (trade) waste scheme.

Fly Tipping Concerns

23. At the time of the changes, amnesty periods were given for commercial (trade) waste and van and trailer permits to mitigate concerns regarding increased fly tipping.
24. Since the introduction of these Policy changes, Staffordshire County Council has not been made aware of a significant increase in fly tipping across the County from District and Borough Council's.
25. Evidence from District and Borough Council's has shown no peaks in reported fly tipping incidents.

Schools, Village Halls, Charities and Community Groups

26. On 17 May 2023, Cabinet approved changes to the Schools, Village Halls, Charities and Community Groups HWRC Policy to reflect easier access to voluntary / charitable organisations and individuals to Staffordshire County Council's HWRCs.
27. Following this approval, the Council contacted existing Charities registered to use the HWRC Network to ensure that access requirements was still relevant.
28. Since the Policy change, there has been 7 additional voluntary, charity and community groups registered to the scheme to enable participants to dispose of waste arising from community and voluntary initiatives

without commercial (trade) waste charges being applied or using their household van and trailer permits.

Customer Feedback on HWRC Policy Changes

29. Following the introduction of the HWRC Policy changes the service experienced an increase in customer queries and complaints mainly because of service users challenging the need to apply for a van and / or trailer permit. These were dealt with on an individual case by case basis and subsequently the number of queries and complaints regarding Policy changes have reduced significantly.

Capital Investment Programme

30. In November 2022, Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report advising of the proposed investment and improvement programme for the Staffordshire HWRC Network. To date, the following works and investment has been carried out:

JCB Replacement Programme

31. The Network is proposing to replace its aging JCB plant. Four new machines have been purchased and will be on sites from February 2024. Approval is being sought from Cabinet for the purchase of additional JCB's to replace existing aging stock. These will be purchased from within existing budgets. The existing stock will be evaluated to determine those machines which will remain within the Network to use as 'spare' machines and / or hired out to other authorities. Machines which are deemed to be 'non-essential' will be sold.

Container Programme

32. An additional 14 x 15.3 m³ containers have been purchased from within existing budgets to assist in the potential increase in demand for inert rubble waste following the removal of charges for said items.
33. An ongoing programme of container maintenance is being undertaken following the procurement of a framework agreement for welding and fabrication works.
34. An order has been placed for the 2024/25 financial year to purchase additional containers within the maximum financial value allowed within the contract.

Leek Waste Transfer Station

35. The site closed on 8 January 2024 for significant maintenance and is scheduled to be closed for 13 weeks. Works include:
- a. Electrical overhaul
 - b. New / improved lighting
 - c. Major door replacement
 - d. Bay walls replacement
 - e. Flooring repairs
 - f. Roofing repairs and welfare facilities improvements

Site Improvements

36. Improvements have been carried out on a number of sites including floor repairs at Burton and improved welfare facilities at Newcastle, Cannock and Biddulph. New fuel storage tanks and a telemetry system is being installed at all sites ready for the transfer of diesel to HVO which will be used by on-site plant, the haulage contractor (for the HWRC Network) and Staffordshire County Council's Mobile Library Service.

CCTV and Webcam

37. New CCTV has been installed on all sites which can be monitored centrally for agreed usage, i.e. insurance claims, health and safety incidents and HR related issues.
38. Proposals to introduce webcams has been delayed. However, it is envisaged that this will be 'live' during the 2024/25 financial year. Availability of webcams will provide Staffordshire residents with 'live' time visibility of each site to be able to plan their visit, i.e. is the site busy, site queuing, etc.

Site Staffing

39. The network now has a full complement of budgeted staff which has led to an improvement in communications and morale. As an example, reported sick days has reduced significantly. The HWRC operation is active in training and promoting site staff.

Defibrillators

40. Defibrillators have been installed on all Staffordshire HWRC's sites. To date, there has been no incidents on sites where these have been required to be used.

Re-use Facility at Cannock HWRC

41. A concessions tender has recently been advertised. At the time of writing this report, the outcome is not known. A verbal update will be provided to Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting.
42. Subject to a successful procurement process, a new agreement will be in place for the incoming supplier from 1 April 2024.

Link to Strategic Plan

43. The provision of suitable waste disposal arrangements is key to a number of the Outcomes in Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Plan namely to be healthier and happier.
44. The proposals in this report link to the principles contained in the Strategic Plan including ensuring that Climate Change is considered in all

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

45. The Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an Insourcing Update and Potential Changes to the Management of Re-use Items on 16 September 2021.

Community Impact

N/A

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Commercial (trade) and bulky waste tonnages reported in November 2022

Appendix 2 - Impact of Policy changes on the tonnages of bulky / commercial (trade) waste now being disposed of across the HWRC network

Appendix 3 – Reduction in bulky / commercial (trade) waste tonnages for January 2022 to December 2022 compared to January 2023 to December 2023

Appendix 4 - Van and trailer permit usage by site

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 10 November 2022

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 27 April 2023

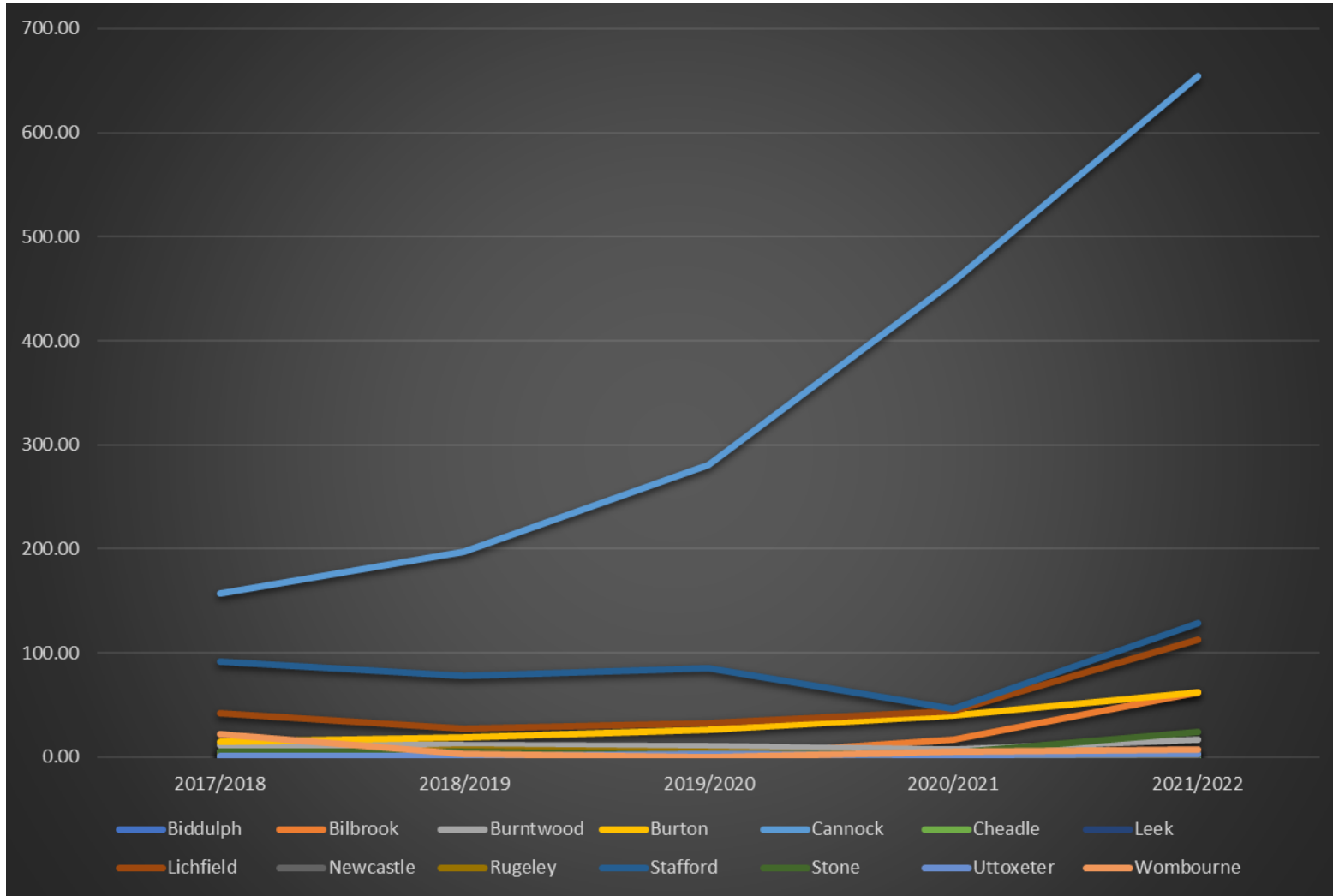
Cabinet – 17 May 2023

HWRC Equipment Replacement - Cabinet – 21 February 2024

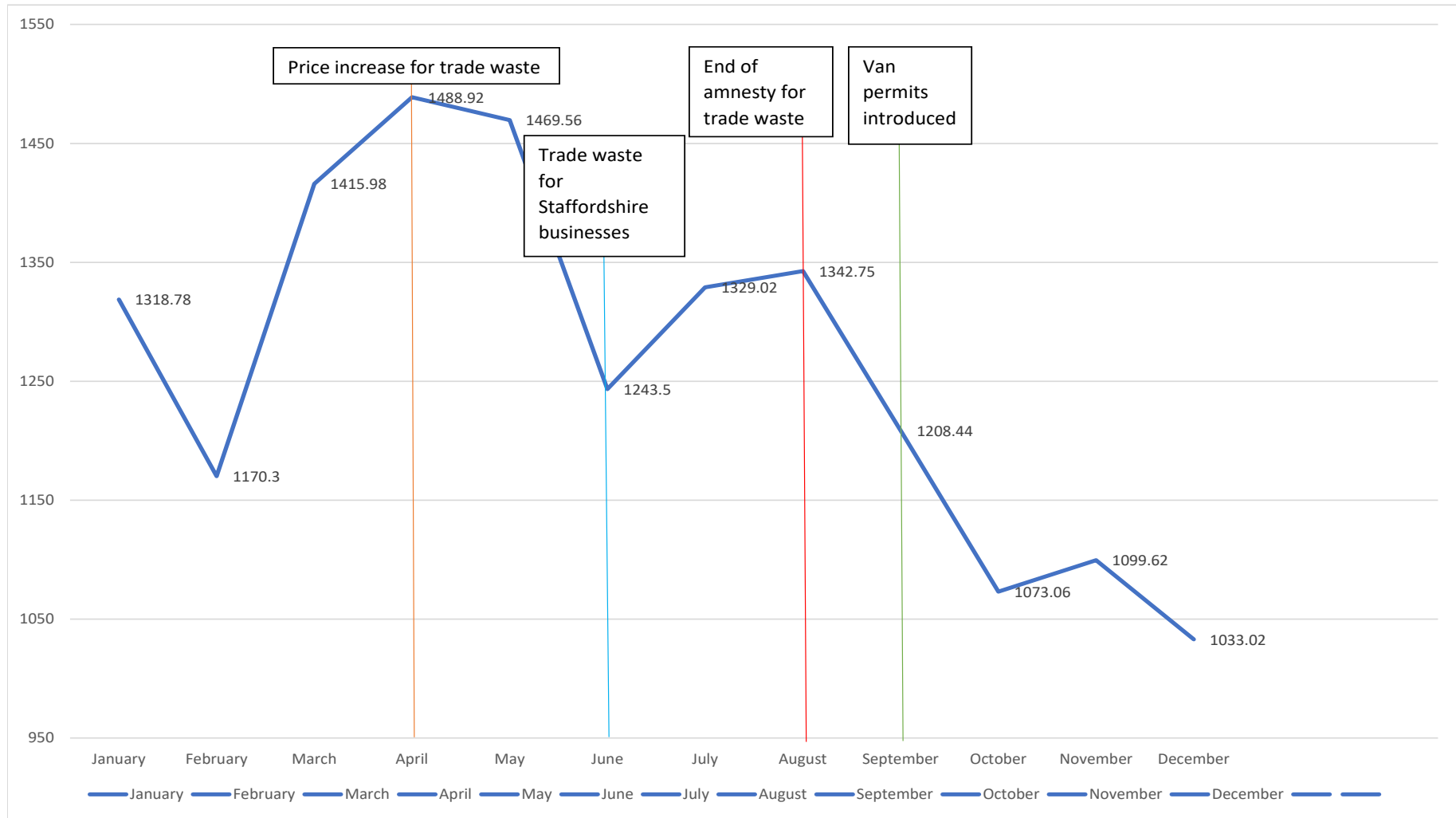
Contact Details

Assistant Director: Dave Atkinson
Assistant Director for Connectivity and Sustainability

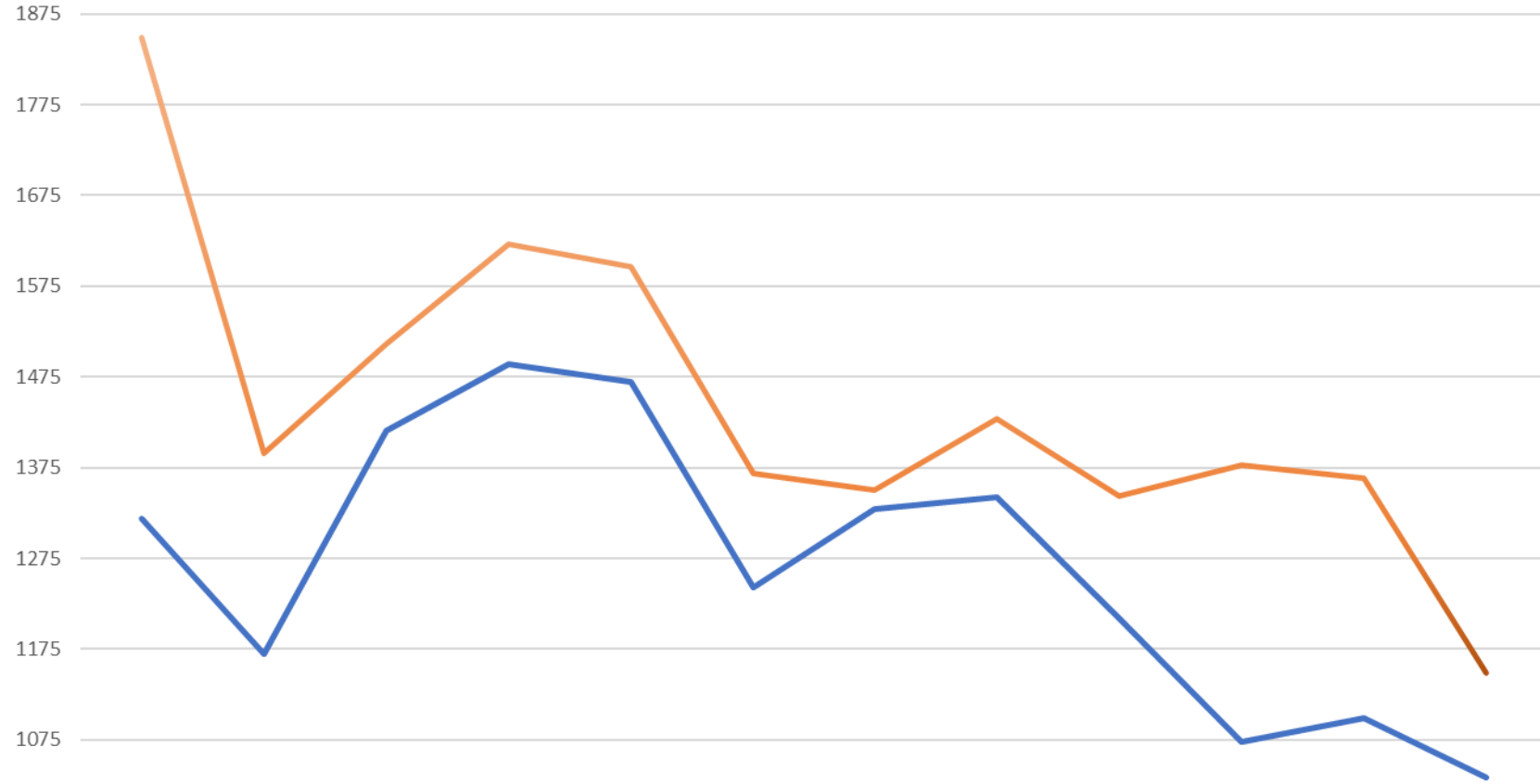
Report Author: Nick Bentley
Job Title: **Operations and Service Improvement Manager**
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Appendix 2 – Bulky Waste – January to December 2023 across the HWRC Network

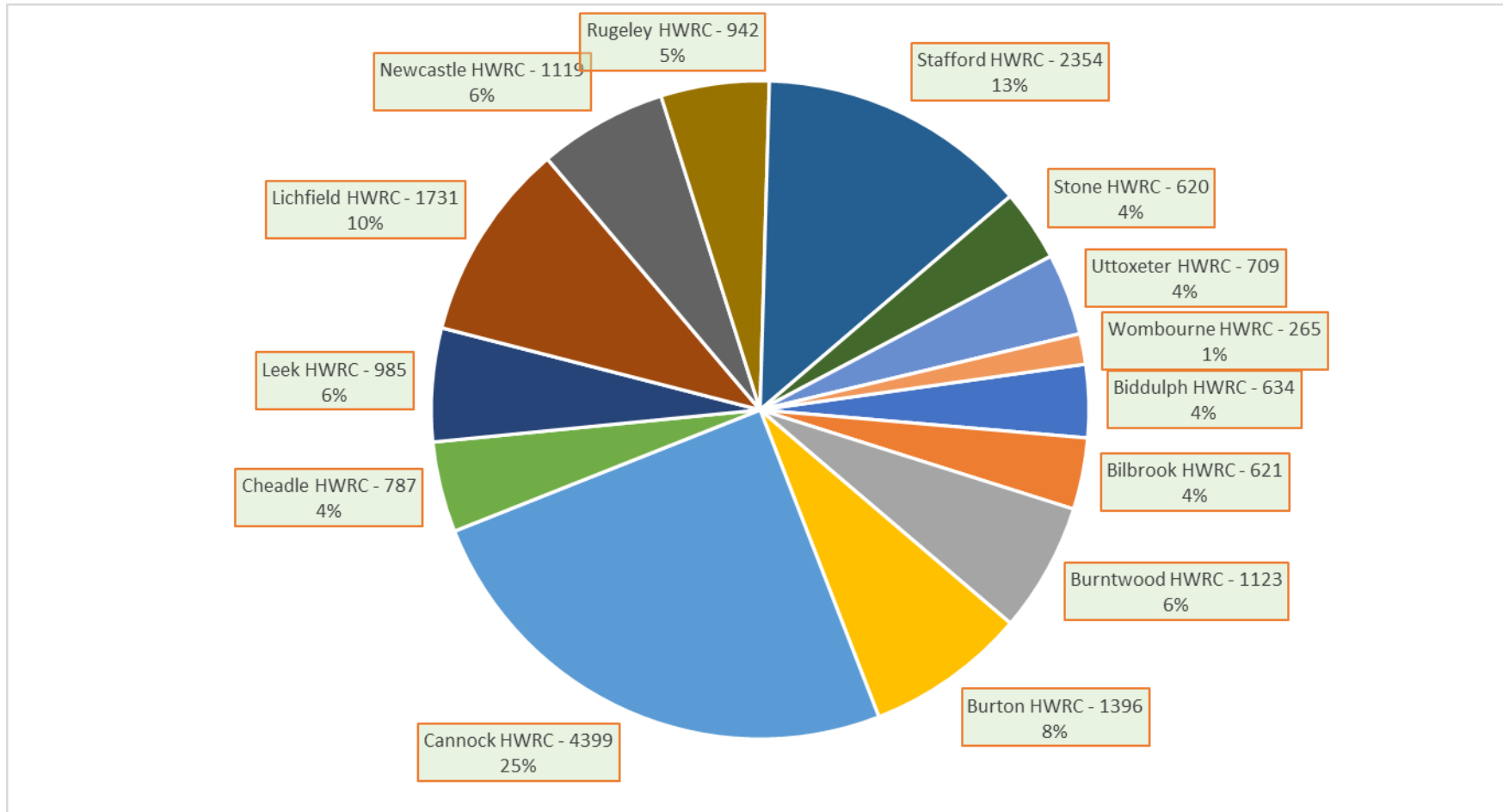


Appendix 3 – Reduction in bulky / commercial (trade) waste tonnages - January 2022 to December 2022 compared to January 2023 to December 2023



	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
2022	1849.02	1390.78	1511.45	1620.66	1596.22	1368.08	1349.95	1428.44	1343.56	1377.86	1363.66	1148.18
2023	1318.78	1170.3	1415.98	1488.92	1469.56	1243.5	1329.02	1342.75	1208.44	1073.06	1099.62	1033.02

Appendix 4 - Van and trailer permit usage by site = 17865



Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 28 March 2024

Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) - Annual Report 2022/23

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Formally receive Staffordshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education's (SACRE) Annual Report for 2022/23.
- b. Raise any questions and/or make particular observations on the work of SACRE, as set out in their Annual Report 2022/23.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of Chairman of SACRE

Report

Background

1. Staffordshire SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is a statutory committee of the County Council.
2. The role of SACRE is to inform and advise the County Council on all matters relating to Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship (CW) in maintained schools within the County.
3. By statute, SACREs must meet at least once each term, and must produce an Annual Report on their activities. The Annual Report is primarily a report to the County Council. It is also sent for information to all maintained schools in the County, to the Department for Education, and to the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

The “Agreed Syllabus” in Religious Education

4. An important responsibility of the SACRE is to ensure that their local authority has a locally agreed RE syllabus in place, and to support and monitor the implementation of that syllabus. The syllabus must be followed by all maintained community schools and by Church of England (CE) Voluntary Controlled Schools within the County.
5. The 1988 Education Act set out the fundamental principles which should apply in drawing up an Agreed Syllabus: any such Syllabus must *reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain*. These principles still apply in law, and underlie Staffordshire’s Agreed Syllabus.
6. Local authorities must revise their Agreed Syllabus every five years. Accordingly, Staffordshire’s syllabus was revised during 2022/23 and has proved popular with schools and RE specialists. Greater provision is now made for covering non-religious world views within the syllabus, taking account of recent debates both nationally and internationally.

Recent Developments

7. A recent development has been the establishing of a national network of regional RE Hubs. These Hubs are intended to work with SACREs and other bodies in coordinating professional support and in providing a forum for RE teachers to interact and share good practice. They will be a resource for all schools - academies, free schools, county schools, diocesan schools. Staffordshire SACRE looks forward to developing strong relationships in the future as part of the West Midlands RE Hub.
8. The Annual report highlights that Staffordshire SACRE’s substantial achievements throughout the year would not have been possible without the support and expertise of the County Council and their Consultant Adviser in RE.

Link to Strategic Plan

9. The County Council’s Strategic Plan sets out their ambitions and priorities for the years ahead. It outlines what they want to achieve and how they intend to achieve it over the next three years (2022 to 2026).

10. The Plan's Vision is that Staffordshire is an innovative, ambitious and sustainable county, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.
11. As a result of this vision the Plan outlines three priority outcomes which the Authority will keep at the heart of what they do and how they aim to achieve them.
12. The County Council's second priority outcome is:- "Staffordshire people will live in thriving and sustainable communities" and the work of SACRE contributes to achieving this ambition by promoting, through education of young people, faith, goodwill and respect for others amongst residents.

Community Impact

13. None from consideration of SACRE's Annual Report 2022/23.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Report of Michael Metcalf (Rev Prebendary), Co-opted Member of Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Contact Details

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Staffordshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education-

**32nd Annual Report
September 2022 - September 2023**

From the Chair of SACRE



Chair's Introduction to SACRE's Annual Report for 2022-23

This Report covers the work of SACRE from September 2022 to September 2023. During this period, the major event has been the launch on February 1st of the County's revised Agreed Syllabus in RE, at a very well-attended and inspiring celebratory occasion held at the Kingston Centre. Since then, schools have been helped to implement the revised Syllabus through a series of in-service training sessions and online consultations, with complete implementation due from September 2023.

The revised Syllabus has elements of both continuity and innovation. Many features of the County's previous, widely appreciated Agreed Syllabus have been retained, not least the core triple dynamic of Exploring, Engaging and Reflecting. The Syllabus has evolved so as to give more attention now to the field of "world views", as it is known. Opportunity has also been taken to add new statutory material to cover areas of school life which have themselves recently gained new statutory status.

Within the lively panorama of Agreed Syllabus appraisal and revision across the country, Staffordshire's revised RE Syllabus continues to be in the forefront of current thinking and design, while also remaining teacher-friendly and accessible to the wider public. I am confident that it will serve Staffordshire schools and pupils well over the years ahead.

The Covid pandemic of 2020 continued to have an impact on the delivery of Religious Education and Collective Worship in schools, as it did on every other aspect of school life in 2022-2023. The process of returning to a new "normal" has continued throughout this year; SACRE has sought both to support schools and to monitor the ongoing situation. SACRE warmly thanks RE teachers and senior leaders across the County for their dedicated efforts to ensure pupils receive their entitlement to the highest quality religious education.

One recent development has been the establishing of a national network of regional RE Hubs. These Hubs are intended to work with SACREs and other bodies in coordinating professional support and in providing a forum for RE teachers to interact and share good practice. They will be a resource for all schools - academies, free schools, county schools, diocesan schools. Staffordshire SACRE looks forward to developing strong relationships in the future as part of the West Midlands RE Hub.

Staffordshire SACRE's substantial achievements throughout the year would not have been possible without the unstinting work and professional expertise of the County's Consultant Adviser in RE, Mary Gale. SACRE, and the County, are extremely fortunate to have the benefit of her committed support for RE alongside her many other skills and interests. Our deep and very sincere thanks are extended to her for all she is giving in RE to the County's schools and to SACRE itself. I heartily commend this Annual Report to Staffordshire County Council and to all schools within the County.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael R. Metcalf".

Rev. Prebendary Michael Metcalf Chair Staffs SACRE

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1. Introduction

This report covers the work of the Staffordshire SACRE during the academic year from September 2022 to September 2023. Three meetings were held during the period covered by the report.

This report is sent to the headteachers of all schools in the County, to the teachers' associations, to the local faith communities and NASACRE.

Further copies are available from:

The Clerk to SACRE,
Democratic Services,
Martin Street,
Stafford ST16 2LH.

The statutory duties of the SACRE are given in Appendix 1 Page 18
The membership of the SACRE is given Appendix 2 Page 19

2. A summary of the work of the SACRE September 2022-2023

- The SACRE worked in line with the SACRE Development Plan. (See Appendix 5)
- Eight face-to-face meetings were held in schools to give direct support.
- Three online meetings were held in conjunction with the local NATRE group, one per term. Eight- ten people attended these meetings.
- The Agreed Syllabus was reviewed and accepted by SACRE.
- The Agreed Syllabus was shared with schools through a launch.
- The launch of the revised Agreed Syllabus at the Entrust Conference Hall in February 2023 was very well attended with 120 plus schools attending, plus delegates from SACRE and the Local authority.
- Long term planning grid has been provided for Middle schools (Year 5- Year 8)
- Early Years planning has been revamped to take into account the changes to the EYFS framework.
- Spring and Summer planning have been altered to take into account world views.
- Monitoring of Staffordshire primary school RE provision was carried out through a questionnaire which evaluated how the Agreed Syllabus supports effective RE. Also, through a review of school websites.
- Monitoring of Staffordshire Secondary school RE was carried out through a questionnaire which evaluated how the Agreed Syllabus supports effective RE and through scrutiny of the work force census data. In addition, reviews of school websites were carried out.
- The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus recommends that students at KS4 study an approved examination syllabus. It was not easy for the SACRE to monitor provision and attainment in externally accredited courses in Religious Studies in 2020 and 2021 due to changes to the examination process as a result of COVID-19 so comparisons are not easy to make. The summary below states the key outcomes.
 - **Staffordshire** % achieving grades 9-4 for the RS course in 2020 was 76.4% and 77.5% in 2021. It fell to 73.4% in 2022.
 - **England** % achieving grades 9-4 for the RS course in 2020 was 80.5% and 80.2% in 2021. This fell to 76.7% in 2022.
 - Therefore Staffordshire % of students achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2021 was 3% lower than the England average, this is an improvement compared to 2020 and this gap remained similar in 2022.

- Grade 5 plus in 2022 for Staffordshire was 61% compared to the National of 65%.
- At KS5 21 schools in Staffordshire entered pupils for A levels- this represented all types of schools with a total of 164 entries. The average grade was a B grade, which was in line with the national average grade.
- 32.6% of Staffordshire students achieved an A*-A and 88.2% achieved A*-C. This compares very favourably with the national % of 36.2% A*-A and 87.5% A*-C.
- The Westhill Engage project in conjunction with YouthNet and the Entrust MEAS team supported over 300 pupils across Staffordshire to gain a greater understanding of Christianity and Islam and of living with diversity.
- Originally Entrust offered a face-to-face programme of CPD to support RE teachers across the year, but due to the continued impact of the pandemic only one face-to face training programme was provided for 22 delegates from the primary, first and special school sectors. In addition, three webinars were provided which were moderately well attended. Bespoke support was provided in response to individual school requests, this was mostly addressed through email correspondence and school visits in a number of schools throughout the county. A number of these were special schools. Resources to support schools were discussed in the February 2023 SACRE meeting.
- Support for schools who wish to carry out RE focus day was given by the RE adviser, providing hints and tips and a schedule for the day. Some of this advice included (if funds allow) a visit to the Open Centre-Faith Trail in Derby. Two schools followed this advice and reported that this had been an inspirational focus visit day and suited learners of all ages. For those schools who could not afford a visit to Derby, they arranged for speakers from The Open Centre to visit them to support learning. This was more cost effective.
- Discussion on Religion and the 2021 census.
- Discussion on the Report Card for RE/RS
- Discussion on the draft handbook published by the REC on Religion and world views in the classroom, with a summary provided by the adviser.
- Presentation/ Reflection on Difference, Diversity and Inclusion by Hifsa Haroon Iqbal of Reengage.
- Provision of information on RE and the Schools Bill 2022 and its implications.
- Staffordshire SACRE continues to be represented at the NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs) AGM, NATRE Conference and AREIAC meetings. Some of these meetings have been held in the virtual environment.
- The partnership with NASACRE remains strong. Members of SACRE are also representatives on other SACREs and on bodies such as Stafford and District Friends.
- No determinations have been requested during this academic year.

3. Standards and quality of RE and Collective Worship (CW) provision

3.1 Monitoring

Monitoring for this academic year continued to take place via email conversations, three online meetings, questionnaires regarding the revised Agreed Syllabus, and scrutiny of examination results and school websites.

Where SACRE is concerned about the provision offered by schools then a formal procedure is followed. See Appendix 3.

General comments

- The syllabus is used in most schools that provided information, those who do not use the syllabus are Catholic or Church of England Aided schools, or in a Multi Academy Trusts.
- Schools are currently exploring best practices, to ensure consistency across the school and prepare for the introduction of the Agreed Syllabus from September 2023.
- Schools are exploring ways to assess learning of RE many feel the revised syllabus provides support in this area.
- Local faith leaders contribute to CW in some areas of the county through the virtual environment, particularly where there were youth leaders to support this.
- Staff confidence in delivering collective worship continue to develop well.
- Leader confidence in Church of England schools regarding the delivery of CW improved with the help of resources from SACRE. Some leaders stated that the delivery of CW continues to improve because after the pandemic there was more consistency in approach and planning.
- Worship teams (pupils) organise worship more so now compared to before the pandemic.
- Varied weekly timetables of collective worship resumed in autumn 2022.
- Allocation of resources to RE has decreased in some schools since last year.
- RE makes a positive contribution to SMSC in most schools especially during online support for learners.
- Two schools have achieved the Gold award for the RE quality Mark. (REQM)

Primary and Secondary Monitoring headlines:

- Collective worship is led by a variety of staff. Online worship and assemblies were led mostly members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The variety regarding the provision for collective worship varies from school to school with schools operating across key stages or class/form or whole school.
- Collective worship continues to take many forms including thought for the day, with the inclusion of Relationship and Health Education, and well-being aspects.
- Withdrawal from CW is only took place in a handful of schools mostly involving Jehovah Witness followers.
- Schools have reviewed their collective worship provision in the past 2 years,
- Schools agreed that the Revised Agreed Syllabus should clearly present what is required by their school in RE. More information will be available in its impact in the June 2025 meeting,
- The majority of schools contacted stated that they had reviewed their RE provision due to the Revised Agreed Syllabus and that planning now covered World Views

Provision for high schools/workforce data.

Workforce data report for 2021-2022.

This report is always one year out of date. The 2022 data is released in the next report.

This data was reported by schools to the DfE as part of the school census in November. Hours taught for years 7 to 13, in subjects RE, philosophy and all subjects, reported by state-funded secondary schools with electronic timetabling software are published.

61 Staffordshire schools are included.

Aspects to note:

Where schools reported that they allocate teaching hours to a specific year group, but have not included RE in that report, this is indicated by a dot in that year group column. 18 schools out of 61 schools

There has been an increase in provision in some schools since the previous years and a decrease in others. The good news is that out of 61 schools recorded, 21 have increased their provision. Which is good news. Last year only 16 schools increased the time allocated to the teaching of RE/RS.

10 have decreased their provision. Some of those schools are middle schools.

There is an improving picture of provision. The SACRE investigated the following:-

- The 0 hours allocations- anywhere in the list. This included 3 schools, the previous year this was 7 schools.
- The schools where there were dots- showing no hours recorded for RE/RS. It is the general feeling that this is not essentially a true account as the census form may have been populated incorrectly.

Some of these are Catholic schools and we are certain that RE/RS is taught as they have examination results.

The advisor to the SACRE scrutinised websites and visited schools where it appears that no RE/RS were taught. The overall picture was more positive for the three schools and only one school was not teaching RE/RS as per the statutory regulations. This has now been rectified.

3.2 Standards

Staffordshire SACRE reviews and discusses standards and achievement in RE during meetings as appropriate.

Throughout 2022-23 Religious Education network meetings which schools can choose to attend would have included moderation of standards across year groups and schools to support schools with the judgements they make against the Agreed Syllabus Age Related Expectations. Face-to-face development opportunities were offered to schools but due to the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic only one opportunity was utilised. In addition, the advisor offered to provide support and information through an online virtual webinar, but no schools took up this offer. Some schools requested instead a face-to-face meeting at their school. This was facilitated in 10 schools,

a) Public examination entries in Religious Education (RE) and Religious Studies (RS)

In the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education, legal requirements state that RE should be provided as part of the basic curriculum for all registered pupils attending a maintained school, this includes high schools.

Academies and Free schools are contractually required through the terms of their funding agreement to make provision for the teaching of RE. They are able to choose to do this by using a syllabus which best suits their needs- this may not be the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.

Background

At Key Stage (KS) 4 all pupils should fulfil their entitlement by following as a basis an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools should provide reasonable time for pupils to complete this and if appropriate, to attain an external qualification.

At KS5 pupils may follow the programme of study provided within the Agreed Syllabus or an accredited specification (from a recognised examination board) in Religious Studies. Schools that do not offer this opportunity to their students are requested to apply to the SACRE for a variation of practice.

b) Religious Studies GCSE 2022

The GCSE system continues to use the new grading of 9-1, with 9 being the exceptional grade.

Here are the trends from the 2022 religious studies GCSE results.

The proportion of grade 9 results achieved by students nationally fell to 10.4% in 2022 compared to 11.45 in 2021 and compared to 9.6 per cent in 2020 and 7.5 per cent in 2019.

- **England** % achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2020 was 80.5% and 80.2% in 2021. This fell to 76.7% in 2022.
- Therefore **Staffordshire** % of students achieving grades 9-4 for the full RS course in 2021 was 4% lower than the England average, this is an improvement compared to 2020 and this gap remained similar in 2022. See table below.
- Grade 5 plus in 2022 for Staffordshire was 61% compared to the National of 65%.
- John Taylor High School entered the most students with 256- entries. 29% achieved grades 8 and 9. 82% achieved the grades 9-4.
- Painsley Catholic High school entered 214 students , 21% achieved grades 8 and 9 and 82.2% achieved grades 9-4.
- Alleyne’s High School Stone entered 211 students. 7% achieved grades 8 and 9. 65% achieved the grades 9-4.
- Kiing Edward VI High School entered 209 students, 8% achieved grades 8 and 9. 69% achieved the grades 9-4.
- Closely followed by Rawlett School (AET Academy) who entered 197 students, 9% achieved grades 8 and 9. 94.9% achieved the grades 9-4.
- And St John Fisher High School who entered 186 students, 15% achieved grades 8 and 9. 73% achieved the grades 9-4.
- And Erasmus Darwin High School who entered 180 students, 12% achieved grades 8 and 9. 73.3% achieved the grades 9-4.

Here are the overall figures to report for 2022 for GCSE

County	Number of candidates	Grade 9 and above - %	Grade 8 and above - %	Grade 7 and above - %	Grade 6 and above - %	Grade 5 and above - %	Grade 4 and above - %	Grade 3 and above - %	Grade 2 and above - %	Grade 1 and above - %
England	178,980	8.4	23.8	37.7	53.2	65	76.7	89.9	95.7	98.9
Staffordshire	3,394	6.5	14	23	55	61	73.4	85.7	95.4	99.2

Compared to 2021

County	Number of candidates	Grade 9 and above - %	Grade 8 and above - %	Grade 7 and above - %	Grade 6 and above - %	Grade 5 and above - %	Grade 4 and above - %	Grade 3 and above - %	Grade 2 and above - %	Grade 1 and above - %
England	201975	11.4	23.8	37.7	53.2	67.5	80.2	89.9	95.7	98.9
Staffordshire	4,320	7.1	17.2	31	46.9	62.6	77.5	89.7	96.4	99.1

Historically

2019 National Average 9 to 4 72.3%
 2019 Staffordshire Average 9 to 65.9%

2020 National Average 9 to 4 80.5%
 2020 Staffordshire Average 9 to 4 76.4%

2021 National Average 9 to 4 80.2%
 2021 Staffordshire Average 9 to 4 77.5%

2022 National Average 9 to 4 76.7%
 2022 Staffordshire Average 9 to 4 73.4%

c) Religious Studies A-level 2022- updated data provided by SCC is as follows

	Number of entries	A*-A	A*-C	A*-E	Average Grade
Staffordshire	164	32.6%	88.2%	97.8%	B
National	15, 220	36.2%	87.5%	98.7%	B

- This shows that Staffordshire in comparison with the top grades is nearly 4% below the National, but when comparing A*-C grades, we are just above the National %.
- At KS5 the information in the table shows the picture for A level results.
 21 schools in Staffordshire entered pupils for A levels- this represented all types of schools with a total of 164 entries.
- ✓ John Taylor High School entered the most candidates- 36 entries. 56% achieved A*-A and 80.6% achieved the A*-B
- ✓ Blessed William Howard entered 15 candidates. 6.7% achieved A*-A and 66.7% achieved the A*-B
- ✓ Walton High School entered 13 candidates. 15.4% achieved A*-A and 38.5% achieved the A*-B
- ✓ The De Ferrers Academy entered 14 candidates. 14.3% achieved A*-A and 57.1% achieved the A*-B
- ✓ St John Fisher Catholic entered 11 candidates. 18.2% achieved A*-A and 54.5% achieved the A*-B
- ✓ The Friary entered 11 candidates. 27.4% achieved A*-A and 45.5% achieved the A*-B
- ✓ The remainder entered between 1-9 candidates.
- All schools achieved well- see table.

- 17 out of 21 schools achieved gradings of A*-A- for some of their pupils-this is indeed praiseworthy.

The relative stability of entries suggests that candidates continue to recognise the value of RS A-level for Higher Education entry, graduate employment, and as a valuable life skill.

3.3 Quality of teaching, quality of leadership and management

Informal monitoring revealed a picture in the primary schools that responded with a high number of schools engaging in regular reviews of their RE provision. This was due to COVID-19, as schools used time to review their RE provision so that on return to full time education, the curriculum would be fit for purpose. The picture was equally positive for provision in the secondary sector with most schools demonstrating that they reviewed their provision.

Schools have the option to purchase further bespoke support and evaluation of their leadership of RE from Entrust. This is a voluntary option. One school in 2022-2023 requested face-to-face support for leadership, and email support for leadership was provided to twelve schools following requests.

There has also been a programme of CPD available for schools. 22 schools attended a training session in November 2022 to support the delivery of the revised Agreed Syllabus. Schools that did not book on this training programme preferred to access support through email. This was facilitated by the adviser to SACRE.

3.4 Teacher recruitment and retention, level of specialist provision

Information regarding monitoring, recruitment and retention continues to be reliant on the collation of evidence from advertisements in the educational press. There is no established method of gathering data within the LA.

Information gleaned from the national press indicated that there was a relatively low turnover of subject leaders at the end of the academic year with few changes taking place.

Newly qualified teachers are now referred to as Early Career Teachers- ECTs

3.5 Resources

Much of the work of the Entrust consultant for RE was carried out virtually this past year. This involved support for Religious Education planning and Collective Worship. Resources were sent to schools to support online RE and CW. These were well received by schools.

3.6 Collective Worship (CW)

3.7 Practice and provision for Collective Worship

An advice booklet was made available to Staffordshire schools to support their statutory duties regarding CW.

Schools can also email the commissioned consultant advisor for Religious Education at Entrust for additional support. This academic year there have been no specific training

opportunities for CW although email advice has been provided. Several schools have requested face-to-face meeting with the commissioned consultant to discuss these aspects.

3.8 Monitoring determinations for Collective Worship

There are no existing determinations in Staffordshire.
No determinations have been applied for or granted in this academic year.

4 Managing the SACRE and partnership with the LA and other stakeholders

4.1 SACRE meetings

Three meetings were held during the year 16th November 2022, 1st February 2023, and 28th June 2023, at the Council Chambers in the County Buildings Stafford, ST16 3AD. All meetings were held at 2.00 p.m.

At the autumn term 2022 meeting the Rev. Prebendary Michael Metcalf was elected as chair for the following year.

4.2 Membership

There was a review of membership in the previous year. It was noted at that time that there were several vacancies which the SACRE tried to fill over the year.

Several changes to the membership of the SACRE were noted during the year.
See Appendix 2 for full details.

All new members are required to sign the SACRE Code of Conduct on appointment.

4.3 Training

During 2022-2023 professional development activities were offered virtually to teachers, these activities centred around email support for planning and advice regarding the Agreed Syllabus planning and Collective Worship. Governors were updated three times by way of a general update webinar over the year to support their link governor roles, which was well received.

Reverend Preb. M.R. Metcalf and M Gale (Advisor to SACRE) attended the 2023 NASACRE conference **on 23rd May 2023** in London.

M Gale Advisor to SACRE attended three of AREIACs regional meetings in 2022-2023. She also attended the face-to-face Church of England conference in London and three NATRE virtual meetings, one per term.

4.4 SACRE developments

Development Projects

The Explore- Engage -Reflect pupil workshops provided for pupils across Stafford, Stone and Newcastle were all cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19. These resumed from

September 2021 onwards to the present day with a number of schools taking part and learning about Islam and Christianity.

The proposed high school conferences in conjunction with YouthNet were postponed due to a lack of take up by high schools.

Additional Support

The advisor to SACRE provided support on remote learning for schools during the pandemic.

In addition, advice was provided on Collective Worship and planning for RE including short term and long-term planning.

4.5 LA support for the SACRE

The LA continues to commission its support for Religious Education from Entrust. Support for SACRE 2022/23 was provided by Mary Gale, director of Mary Gale Consultancy. She was commissioned to provide this support and advice to SACRE and schools. This commission continues.

4.6 Financial support

£6,340 was made available to support the work of SACRE during the financial year 2022-2023 as approved by the Service Delivery Agreement (SDA) between Staffordshire County Council and Entrust. Additional funds were provided to support the work of the advisor to review and revise the Agreed Syllabus. This amounted to £3,000. Some of the available budget was also spent. In total this amounted to £4,500. The National mean for such a review is £5,000. Continuing priorities for the year were identified as supporting schools to be aware of their statutory responsibilities with regard to the revised AS and to provide support in relation to fulfilling the statutory functions for SACRE including but not limited to:

- (i) provision of advice and guidance on teaching and learning on the Religious Education syllabus.
- (ii) providing updates to maintained school RE teachers with a refresh on the requirements to the RE Syllabus.
- (iii) Support for specific projects in a small selection of schools ranging from support for resources for CW and RE including advice on application for the RE quality mark. (Gold award successful)
- (iv) Support for the revision and the subsequent publishing and launch of the AS.

The budget was a standing item on the agenda at each meeting see Appendix 4.

SACRE provided information to NASACRE via a Freedom of Information request regarding their funding from the LA This resulted in a report of all LA support for SACREs. It is pleasing to note that our funding is average for SACREs around the country receiving approximately 2%.

The results from National SACREs were varied but showed that most SACREs did not receive the share of the Central School Services Block (CSSB) of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) that they should in order to support SACRE. The report provided useful evidence in NASACREs discussions with the government.

4.7 Information and advice

During the period covered by this report, the SACRE took time to talk to school regarding the steps being taken to ensure RE and CW resumed their significance in the curriculum of schools post pandemic.

Members were advised of the national picture regarding RE. SACRE has used this information effectively to advise the LA on the range of issues covered elsewhere in this report.

4.8 Partnerships with other Key Stakeholders

NASACRE

The Chair of Staffordshire SACRE, Michael Metcalf, was until May 2022 the treasurer of the National Association of SACREs (NASACRE).

A report from NASACRE is a standing agenda item at each meeting.

At each of the three meetings, the Chair gave a brief update on key issues raised by the National Association of SACREs. Matters for 2022-23 are included in the minutes from each meeting. SACRE subscribes to NASACRE receiving updates as appropriate.

It is particularly noteworthy that our chair Michael Metcalf was nominated and subsequently received an award at the National SACRE conference in London and provided the closing speech for this conference, celebrating 30 years of support for SACREs..

Here is a summary of his nomination.

Reasons for nomination

As a longstanding member of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education, Prebendary Michael Metcalf has played an instrumental role in the promotion of RE education in the region since SACREs were set up after the 1988 Education Act, when Religious Education (RE) was confirmed as a compulsory part of the curriculum, and it became a statutory requirement for every Local Authority (LA) to appoint a SACRE. He has represented the Diocese of Lichfield on Staffordshire SACRE to the current day, with a short break in the middle years. In 2002 he was nominated as Chair of SACRE by Committee A. He was duly elected and has remained in that position to this day.

Throughout his tenure, Michael has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to improving the quality of RE education for students across Staffordshire. He has worked tirelessly to promote inclusivity and diversity ensuring that all have access to a well-rounded education that respects and celebrates the beliefs and cultures of all faiths. In addition, he has worked on the National SACRE body since 1993 supporting developments nationwide- his influence is far reaching. He has only recently retired from this elected post.

*Under Michael's leadership, the Staffordshire SACRE has developed innovative programs and initiatives that have helped to raise standards and improve outcomes for students. He has worked closely with teachers, educators, advisers and inspectors (including Paul Bellingham, Heather Farr, Emma Jardine Phillips and for the past 8 years with Mary Gale) across the region to provide guidance, support, and commissioned training, guiding all to develop the skills and knowledge needed to deliver effective RE education. We are particularly proud of his support for the Staffordshire SACRE **Explore, Engage and Reflect** project- a legacy project from the 2017 Westhill grant, which continues in Staffordshire schools to this day.*

Michael's contributions have not gone unnoticed. He is widely respected and admired in Staffordshire and throughout the Lichfield Diocese by his fellow colleagues and members of SACRE, who have praised his dedication, passion, and expertise. His ability to engage in

intellectual debate has been a source of inspiration and motivation for countless stakeholders. His life experiences are a major factor in his ability to guide and support those working in the RE field. His impact on education especially on RE in Staffordshire and the Lichfield Diocese is immeasurable. His contribution towards the writing of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus over the years has been considerable, especially the writing of the very recent 2023 revised syllabus. This was launched in February 2023.

AREIAC (Association for Religious Education Inspectors, Advisers and Consultants) and NATRE (National Association for the Teaching of RE)

SACRE subscribes to these organisations, receiving updates as appropriate. The consultant advisor also attends meetings and conferences with members of these organisations ensuring SACRE receives regular information which supports them in carrying out their core duties. During COVID-19 all communication was through online platforms. These continue. Mary Gale has attended 3 such meetings.

NATRE

Mary Gale continues to communicate with NATRE on a number of topical RE aspects. She receives publications and news as appropriate and disseminates this information to schools and Governors. She has attended three virtual NATRE meetings and meets with the local representative to explore RE issues.

The provision of regional RE hubs has been a new initiative of 2022; this is still in its infancy but should prove to be beneficial for schools and organisations.

Local Authority

The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus (AS) for Religious Education is the key document for the provision of RE in local schools. Schools receive reminders regarding the statutory status of this syllabus on a regular basis. As the key curriculum document for pupils in all Staffordshire's maintained schools and in some Multi Academy Trusts (this at the discretion of each Trust board) the local authority is responsible for ensuring that guidance is in place. The advisor to Staffordshire SACRE and the Assistant Director for Education Strategy & Improvement have continued to remain in regular contact and work together to ensure that schools are clear about their statutory responsibilities for Religious Education. The review of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus commenced in July 2021 in line with legislation which advises that the AS is reviewed every 5 years. There was a delay to the launch of the revised AS, but this was realised in February 2023 and is now in use in Staffordshire schools as appropriate.

5 The effectiveness of the local agreed syllabus

5.1 Guidance/monitoring and evaluation of the agreed syllabus

Previously in September 2016, the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus (AS) for Religious Education was formally adopted by Staffordshire County Council and introduced into Staffordshire's schools.

The review of the 2016 AS commenced in 2021. Due to the impact of COVID-19 this review was delayed and was completed in late autumn 2022 ready for its launch in February 2023. Schools will be teaching the revised AS from September 2023, although many adopted the AS from summer 2023.

Ongoing guidance was provided in the following formats:

- RE news was provided through the headteacher Electronic Bag and through the Governor Information Pack together with targeted emailed to schools to support them with aspects of teaching and learning.
- Schools have been invited to phone/email the commissioned consultant advisor for Religious Education at Entrust for advice and support on all aspects of their RE provision- there have been a number of queries.
- Revised long and medium-term plans have been made available to schools to support high quality Religious Education. These plans will be further revised in 2023-2024.

5.2 The Agreed Syllabus Conference (ASC).

The meeting of the ASC continued into 2022-2023 where each of the four SACRE Committees with the support of Staffordshire Local Authority, agreed to the Religious Education Agreed Syllabus Review and the work to be undertaken.

Rev Metcalf was appointed as the Chair of the Conference.

The review stages were outlined in a development plan including feedback from schools and stakeholders on how the 2016 syllabus was being utilised. The second stage of the review considered any developments or changes in RE since the previous syllabus was written. The review continued throughout the year resulting in a draft AS being written ready for scrutiny to the ASC in autumn 2022 and then after further revisions as per the advice of the conference, the final version of the AS was ready for an official launch in February 2023 with the AS being the statutory document for the teaching of RE in Staffordshire schools from September 2023 (according to the status of the school).

6 Contribution of the SACRE to the wider community

6.1 Representative nature of the SACRE

The membership of the SACRE indicates that it is representative in nature. There are currently vacancies which the SACRE are seeking to fill.

6.2 Knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic minorities.

A number of the SACRE members are also representatives on the Stafford Friends of Faith Forum, a local interfaith network. Where opportunities arise SACRE members and members of Stafford Friends of Faith Forum support each other's events to promote positive community relations. This relationship supports SACRE members knowledge and understanding of the local religious, cultural and ethnic minority.

The commissioned consultant/advisor for RE works alongside the Entrust MEAS (Minority Ethnic Achievement Service) and the local YouthNet team.

There are several Inter faith/cultural experiences/workshops available for schools to book which aim to enhance RE in Staffordshire schools.

These offer the opportunity for an interactive experience for pupils where they meet with members of a faith and learn about what that faith means to them. The MEAS team support

the Westhill Legacy project. The SACRE are pleased to be associated with the work of the MEAS team.

Support for schools, particularly around diversity and race relations had been provided through information on Black History month, on the Holocaust Educational Trust learning support tool and Interfaith support. Emphasis had been put on the schools embedding all such aspects in all that they do, not just during the national awareness periods.

6.3 Understanding the intrinsic contribution which RE can make to social, racial and religious harmony and to the wider community.

The Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education affirms that the role of RE is to foster in each pupil a growing level of religious literacy, through three complementary aims, encapsulated as Exploring, Engaging, Reflecting. This was emphasised in the revised 2023 Agreed Syllabus.

These three aims call for pupils to “acquire a growing range of the social, spiritual and emotional skills and dispositions appropriate to living well in a religiously plural and open society, by reflecting on the reality of religious diversity and on the issues raised by living in a diverse world”.

Pupils studying RE are now specifically required to reflect on the issues raised by living in a diverse world, through studying world views in addition to studying Abrahamic and Dharmic religions. These aims highlight the key role played by Religious Education in developing, supporting and promoting a knowledgeable society with respect for and sensitivity towards the beliefs and life choices of others. The 2023 revised syllabus emphasises that, in a civilised society, difference can be celebrated when we also seek out and build on shared values and experiences.

The SACRE is committed to the syllabus and to the role it plays in building a cohesive community.

Appendices



32nd Annual Report September 2022-September 2023

Appendix 1

The Statutory Duties of a SACRE

All LAs are required to establish a SACRE.

A SACRE's main function, as set out in the 1996 Education Act is:

"to advise the local education authority upon such matters connected with religious worship in county schools and the Religious Education to be given in accordance with the agreed syllabus as the authority may refer to the council or as the council may see fit". [s.391(1)(a)]

Such matters include:-

"methods of teaching, the choice of materials and the provision of training for teachers".

A SACRE also:

- can require the local authority to review its current agreed syllabus [s.391(3)]
- must consider applications made by a headteacher, that the requirement for collective worship in county schools to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character shall not apply to the collective worship provided for some or all of the pupils in a particular school ('determinations'). [s.394(1)]

Every SACRE must, by law, produce an annual report on its work and on actions taken by its representative groups, specifying any matters on which it has advised the local authority, broadly describe the nature of that advice and set out reasons for offering advice on matters not referred to it by the local authority. [s.391 (6) and (7)]

A copy of the report should be sent to The National Association of SACREs (NASACRE)

Appendix 2

SACRE Membership

Attendance at Meetings and Vacancies 202 /2023

✓ = Attended

A = Apologies Submitted

- = No Response

NA = Not a member at the time of the meeting

	16 Nov 22	1 Feb 23	28 Jun 23
Committee A - Christian and other religious denominations			
Free Churches (4)			
Sam Phillips	A	A	A
Maddy Belle	A	A	A
Vacancy			
Vacancy			
Hindu (2)			
Mr. G. Devadason	-	-	-
Vacancy			
Jewish (1)			
Vacancy			
Muslim (2)			
Mohamed Sedky	-	-	-
Mohamed Parekh	✓	-	Resigned
Quakers - (1)			
Gabi Oldfield	A	✓	✓
Roman Catholic (2)			
Claire Tomlinson	✓	A	Resigned
Vacancy			
Sikh (2)			
Mr Tajinder Singh	-	-	A
Vacancy			
Salvation Army (1)			
Amy Bayliss-Fox – from June 22 onwards	✓	✓	✓
Buddhist (1)			
Ven. Dr Phramaha Laow Panyasiri	-	-	-
Humanist			
Ian Horseywell	-	A	-
Baha'i			
Julie Thompson	✓	A	A
Committee B - Church of England (5)			
Vickie Longson	✓	A	✓
Vicky Priestley	✓	A	✓
Lauren Nicholson-Ward	✓	A	A
Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf	✓	✓	✓
Zoe Cahalan	✓	A	✓

Committee C - Teacher Associations (5)	16 Nov 22	1 Feb 23	28 Jun 23
Samantha Kirwan (NEU)	A	A	A
Judy Wyman (ASCL)	✓	✓	✓
Shaun Miles (NAHT)	-	✓	✓
Linda Goodwin (NEU)	✓	A	✓
Harold Gurden (NASUWT)	A	A	-

Committee D - Local Education Authority (5) (Membership change in November 2021)	16 Nov 22	1 Feb 23	28 Jun 23
Councillor Philip Atkins, OBE	✓	✓	✓
Councillor Paul Northcott	✓	✓	✓
Councillor Kath Perry, MBE	✓	A	✓
Councillor Paul Snape	A	✓	A
Councillor Mike Wilcox	A	✓	✓

Co-opted - Spiritualist National Union	16 Nov 21	1 Feb 23	28 Jun 23
Vacancy			

Clerk to SACRE:	16 Nov 21	1 Feb 23	28 Jun 23
Simon Humble	✓	✓	✓

Officer	16 Nov 21	1 Feb 23	28 Jun 23
Mary Gale	✓	✓	✓

Appendix 3

Procedures for schools causing concern.

Where, in carrying out its statutory duty to monitor the provision of Religious Education as appropriate within the Local Authority, the SACRE has identified a cause for concern:

1. The SACRE or a sub-committee will request that a letter be sent from the Consultant Adviser for RE or an appropriate LA officer to outline concerns to the school and offer support.
2. Any responses will be referred to the SACRE or a sub-committee for consideration.
3. Where no reply is received, a further letter will be sent by the chair of SACRE reiterating concerns and offering the support of the Senior Adviser or appropriate LA officer.
4. Any responses will be referred to the SACRE or a sub-committee for consideration.
5. Where no reply is received, the SACRE, through the chair, will send a further letter to the school reiterating concerns and alerting the school to further action:
 - a) Concerns to be raised with relevant LA officers with a request that the SACRE be informed of the outcome of any ensuing discussion.
 - b) A note of concern be sent to the Senior LA officer with responsibility for SACRE.
 - c) The SACRE to hold a note of concern on its records

2022-2023 Budget

GL Account Codes for : Enquiry Group: Curr Budget (v2) v Act + GRNI/GL Account Code Range: EM1100/***** to EM1100/***** / Enquiry Year: 2022/ Period: 00 to 12

<u>GL Account Code</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Current Budget (v2)</u>	<u>Actual + Grni</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Variance Bud v(Act +GRNI)</u>
EM110010002	SACRE Teachers Gross	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EM110025502	SACRE Rent/Lease of Premises	0.00	81.00	81.00	(81.00)
EM110044038	SACRE QLS Curriculum Advice	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EM110046204	SACRE Conference Fees	0.00	40.00	40.00	(40.00)
EM110047017	SACRE Grants to third parties	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EM110047202	SACRE Subscriptions General	0.00	105.00	105.00	(105.00)
EM110048342	SACRE Contingency	6,340.00	0.00	0.00	6,340.00
EM110064550	SACRE Tfrs to Oth Accounts	(10,080.00)	(10,080.00)	(10,080.00)	0.00
		(3,740.00)	(9,854.00)	(9,854.00)	6,114.00

Attendance at the NASACRE Conference

Total Available before commitments

6,114.00

Less committed amounts:

7 days for Agreed Syllabus work with MEAS team	3,150.00
4 days for AS support and planning	1,800.00
Agreed Syllabus Launch	1,000.00

Work Programme

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2023/2024

This document sets out the work programme for Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023/2024.

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee are responsible for scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity, flood and water management, education, learning and skills. As such, the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee. The Work Programme is linked to the Vision, Outcomes and Priorities detailed in the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26.

We review our Work Programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something important comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Councillor Tina Clements

Chairman of Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Friday 2 June 2023 at 10.00 am (Informal meeting)	Work Programme Planning	Annual consideration of potential areas of scrutiny focus during 2023/24. Resolved to be considered at informal meeting at 27 April Committee meeting.	
Wednesday 7 June 2023 at 10.00 am	1. Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly update Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee meeting. Scheduled at request of Chairman at 2 November 2022 Triangulation meeting. Previous update given 22 March 2023.	(a) That the oral report and presentation be received and noted. (b) That satisfactory progress had been made in the Highways Transformation Programme to date. (c) That the Cabinet Member be urged to have regard to the above-mentioned comments in his work to implement the new future delivery model for Staffordshire Highways. (d) That Highways Functional Service Level Commissioning be added to their Work Programme for the meeting on 6 July 2023.
	2. Economic Recovery, Renewal and Transformation six-monthly Progress Report Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/Anthony Hodge	Requested at 15 July 2020 Triangulation meeting (amended at 23 2021 and 13 January 2022 Committee meetings). Previous update given at 22 September 2022 Committee meeting.	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the good progress made towards delivery of the County Council's Economic Strategy 2023-2030, be welcomed. (c) That further updates on the various ambitions set out in the Strategy and targets in the accompanying Delivery Plan be brought to the Committee at six-monthly intervals. (d) That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills arrange for Members to receive an update on the development of the West Midlands Rail Freight Interchange.

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 57			(e) That the Deputy Leader investigate the potential of promoting some of the initiatives available in support of the Economic Strategy, as set out in the report, through Staffordshire Schools.
	3. Digital Infrastructure – Update Cabinet Member: Simon Tagg Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/David Atkinson	Proposed by Cabinet Member at 12 May 2022 Triangulation meeting. Considered at 10 November 2022 Committee meeting and six-monthly update requested.	(a) That the report and PowerPoint presentation be received and noted. (b) That the County Council’s approach to deploying the Digital Infrastructure Strategic Framework continue to be supported. (c) That a further update be brought to the Committee in six-months time.
Thurs 6 July 2023 at 10.00 am	1. Staffordshire Bus Strategy Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Richard Rea	Requested by Cabinet Member 12 May 2023 (Teams message from Richard Rea).	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the proposed Enhanced Partnership (EP) and full review of the previously agreed Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) be welcomed having regard to the likely availability of future Government funding for public transport. (c) That the Cabinet Member consider revised ambitions for the new BSIP aimed at ensuring both rural and urban areas in the County are better served by public transport having regard to the feedback received from Government following the previously unsuccessful bid and County Council’s Strategic Priorities.

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 58			(d) In establishing an EP, the Cabinet Member prioritise Partnership working and communication with 'Local' Members particularly in respect of future significant service reconfigurations.
	<p>2. Functional Level Service Commissioning Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey</p>	<p>Requested at 7 June 2023 Committee meeting.</p>	<p>(a) That the report be received and noted.</p> <p>(b) That the proposed new approach to the development of Functional Specifications for the delivery of highway works including the 'Main Headings' set out in the presentation, be welcomed.</p> <p>(c) That the Committee's concerns regarding the need for improved communication (especially with 'Local' Members'), responsiveness of third-party contractors to service requests, performance monitoring and enforcement, partnership working with other Public Sector organisations and actions to improve consistency, sustainability and tackle climate change be addressed in future revised Specifications across the range of Highway Works, as necessary.</p> <p>(d) That the Committee welcome the opportunity to input into the annual development of revised Functional Level Service Plans and Specifications and that further consideration be given as to what this should involve, at the appropriate time, having regard to</p>

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
			their other Work Programme priorities.
Page 59	3. Strategy for Special Provision Cabinet Member: Jonathan Price Lead Officers: Tim Moss/Halit Hulusi/Karen Withington	Requested by Cabinet Member 6 June 2023 (email from Karan Withington).	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the actions set out in Staffordshire's Special Education Needs and Disabilities Accelerated Progress Plan particularly in respect of Special Provision continue to be endorsed. (c) That the positive feedback received from the Department for Education following their twelve month review of progress against the APP be welcomed and that the 'next steps' and further actions required by the next review be implemented as necessary. (d) That the County Council's proposed Strategy for Special Provision be endorsed. (e) That the Cabinet Member continue his efforts to improve the processing of applications for statutory Educational Health and Care Plans so that pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities might have appropriate additional support, according to their needs, at the required time.
Thurs 28 September 2023 at 10.00 am	1. Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly update	Requested at 15 July 2020 Triangulation meeting (amended at 23 2021 and 13 January 2022 Committee meetings). Previous update given at 2 June 2023 Committee meeting.	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That satisfactory progress had been made in the Highways Transformation Programme to date.

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 60	Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey		(c) That the Cabinet Member be urged to have regard to the above mentioned comments in his work to implement the new future delivery model for Staffordshire Highways. (d) That the Cabinet Member investigate what additional support (financial and practical) could be provided to local communities by the County Council during Highway Improvement Works, in the future.
	2. HS2 six-monthly update – Impact on and Opportunities for Staffordshire (focusing on Economy, Training and Skills) Cabinet Members: David Williams/Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Sarah Mallen	Requested at 26 February 2021 Committee meeting, amended at 23 July 2021 Committee meeting.	(a) That the oral report and presentation be received and noted. (b) That the efforts made to date to maximise the opportunities available to Staffordshire residents from the construction of the high-speed rail line, by HS2 be welcomed. (c) That a further update be brought to the Committee in April/May 2024. (d) That any further information received in relation to the above-mentioned requests be forwarded to Members as soon as possible.
	3. Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Darren Farmer	Requested by Cabinet Member 11 May 2023 (email from Darren Farmer).	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the Cabinet Member have regard to the various comments made by the Committee in finalising Staffordshire’s Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030. (c) That the Cabinet Member explore how the County Council’s

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
<p>Papers Thurs 17 October 2023 at 10.00 am</p>	<p>1. Avanti West Coast Main Line Rail Services Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Mark Osborne (Avanti West Coast)</p>	<p>Identified at 22 March 2023 Committee meeting. Request programme for October Meeting by Chairman (email 18 July 2023).</p>	<p>engagement with school pupils (including those with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)) wishing to undertake work experience placements could be improved having regard to the various ambitions contained in the Strategy.</p> <p>(d) That the Committee receive a progress update on implementation of the Strategy in six-months' time taking into consideration their other Work Programme priorities.</p>
<p>Thurs 17 October 2023 at 10.00 am</p>	<p>1. Avanti West Coast Main Line Rail Services Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Mark Osborne (Avanti West Coast)</p>	<p>Identified at 22 March 2023 Committee meeting. Request programme for October Meeting by Chairman (email 18 July 2023).</p>	<p>(a) That the report be received and noted.</p> <p>(b) That news of Avanti West Coast's improved performance along the West Coast Mainline in Staffordshire be welcomed.</p> <p>(c) That Avanti West Coast provide a progress update on their performance in six-month's time having regard to the Committee's on-going concerns.</p> <p>(d) That Network Rail and HS2 be invited to attend the above-mentioned meeting so that the Committee can better understand the implications of recent Government announcements on rail services in the County.</p>
<p>Thursday 9 November 2023 at 10.00 am</p>	<p>1. Community Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022/23</p>	<p>Requested by email 7 June 2023 (Amanda Darlington on behalf of Cabinet Member).</p>	<p>(a) That the report be received and noted.</p> <p>(b) That the 'Good' performance of the Community Learning Service during 2022/23 be welcomed.</p>

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	<p>Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Amanda Darlington</p>		<p>(c) That the Cabinet Member continue his efforts to address the above-mentioned areas of weakness with a view to achieving significant improvement by December 2023.</p> <p>(d) That the Cabinet Member consider reconfiguring future Self-Assessment reports to the Committee to include Key Performance Indicators listed by gender.</p> <p>(e) That the Cabinet Member consider reconfiguring future Self-Assessment reports to the Committee to better illustrate learners by ethnicity so that any inequalities highlighted can be addressed, as appropriate.</p>
	<p>2. Highways Network Management Plan (Including Permits) – Annual Report Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey</p>	<p>Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Request programme for November Meeting by Chairman.</p>	<p>(a) That the report be received and noted.</p> <p>(b) That the Street Works Permit Scheme Annual Report for Years 1 and 2 (1 April 2020 – 31 March 2022) indicating the successful operation of the Scheme during that time, be welcome.</p> <p>(c) That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport consider lobbying Central Government regarding the level of fees and charges applicable under the Scheme to ensure they better reflect the scope of the Authority's strategic aims, as set out above.</p> <p>(d) That the proposed format/headings for the Traffic and</p>

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
			Network Management Plan be supported and that the draft Plan be presented to the Committee for Scrutiny when it becomes available in Spring 2024.
Wed 22 November 2023 at 2.00 pm Page 63	1. Staffordshire History Centre Delivery Update Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Catherine Mann	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for November 2023 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023).	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the key findings of the Independent Evaluation Report on the Staffordshire History Centre Capital Works progress be welcomed. (c) That consideration be given to the citing of a Time Capsule at the Staffordshire History Centre, as part of the celebrations to mark its opening in 2024.
	2. Libraries Performance Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Catherine Mann	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for November 2023 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023).	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the overall direction of travel for the Staffordshire's Libraries and Arts Service, as set out in the report, be supported. (c) That the performance of the Service continue to be monitored and further scrutiny be undertaken at the appropriate time, as necessary.
Thurs 21 December 2023 at 2.00 pm Wednesday 13 December	1. Economic Recovery, Renewal and Transformation six-monthly Progress Report Cabinet Member: Philip White	Requested at 15 July 2020 Triangulation meeting (amended at 23 2021 and 13 January 2022 Committee meetings). Previous update given at 2 June 2023 Committee meeting.	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the good progress made towards delivery of the County Council's Economic Strategy 2023-2030, be welcomed. (c) That further updates on the various ambitions set out in the

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
2023 at 2.00 pm	Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/Anthony Hodge		<p>Strategy and targets in the accompanying Delivery Plan be brought to the Committee at six-monthly intervals.</p> <p>(d) That scrutiny of the Authority's Employment and Skills Strategy be undertaken at the appropriate time with advise from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Employment and Skills.</p>
Page 64	<p>2. Review of Schools' Performance Cabinet Member: Jonathan Price Lead Officers: Neelam Bhardwaja/Tim Moss</p>	Requested at 21 August 2023 Triangulation Meeting.	<p>(a) That the report be received and noted.</p> <p>(b) That the Cabinet Member undertake further detailed analysis of the Educational Achievement in Staffordshire schools results September 2022 – July 2023 in order to better understand the reasons for the various key messages with a view to ensuring appropriate remedial measures were implemented where possible.</p> <p>(c) That further scrutiny of Educational Achievement in Staffordshire schools be undertaken at the appropriate time, as necessary.</p>
	<p>3. Natural Environment Strategy Cabinet Member Simon Tagg Lead Officers Darryl Evers/Catherine Mann</p>	Requested by email 16 August 2023 (Sarah Bentley on behalf of Cabinet Member). Postponed to 13 December 2023 Committee meeting at request of Cabinet Member (email Simon Tagg 6 November 2023).	<p>(a) That the report be received and noted.</p> <p>(b) That the draft Natural Environment Strategy be welcome that that further scrutiny be given to the progress made against the various Actions contained in the accompanying Action Plan, at the appropriate time, as necessary.</p>

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Thurs 11 January 2024 at 2.00 pm Page 65	1. Local Transport Plan 4 Development Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Request programme for October Meeting by Chairman. Postponed to December 2023/January 2024 Committee meetings at request of Cabinet Member (email from Darryl Evers 8 September 2023 with clarification from David Atkinson 4 October 2023).	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the significant progress which had been made in achieving many of LTP3's objectives be welcomed. (c) That the early progress which had been made in the preparation of LTP4 be welcomed. (b) That further scrutiny be given to LTP4's progress, particularly having regard to the absence of Statutory Guidance, at the appropriate time, as necessary.
	2. Lighting for Staffordshire Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Scheduled at request of Chairman at 25 October 2023 Pre-Agenda Preview.	(a) That the report be received and noted. (b) That the excellent performance of the current Private Finance Initiative contract arrangements for street lighting in Staffordshire be welcomed. (c) That the Cabinet Members' proposed approach to procuring a new contract for the supply of

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 66 Fri 2 February 2024 at 10.00 am	1. Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly update Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Requested at 15 July 2020 Triangulation meeting (amended at 23 2021 and 13 January 2022 Committee meetings). Previous update given at 28 September 2023 Committee meeting. Re-Scheduled to January 2024 at request of Chairman at 25 October Pre-Agenda Preview.	electricity for street lighting and Intelligent Transport Systems in Staffordshire for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2028 be supported. (d) That the progress made in implementing new arrangements for street lighting in the County from 1 April 2028 be monitored closely and a further report be brought to the Committee for scrutiny at the appropriate time.
	2. Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership – performance Cabinet Member: David Williams	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for March 2024 Committee meeting (email James Bailey 26 June 2023). Item brought forward at 13 December 2023 Committee meeting.	

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey		
Thurs 28 March 2024 at 10.00 am	1. Cultural Strategy Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/Catherine Mann	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for March 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Cabinet Member requested item deferred to May 2024 Committee meeting (email Chairman/Sue Ball 12 February 2024).	
Page 67	1. Household Waste Recycling Centres Performance Cabinet Member: Simon Tagg Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/Tim Cooper	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023.	
	2. HS2 six-monthly update – Impact on and Opportunities for Staffordshire (focusing on Economy, Training and Skills) Cabinet Member: David Williams/Philip White Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/Sarah Mallen	Requested at 26 February 2021 Committee meeting, amended at 23 July 2021 Committee meeting. Previous update given to 28 September 2023 Committee meeting.	

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	3. SACRE Annual Report 2022/23 Cabinet Member: Jonathan Price Lead Officers: Mary Gale (Entrust)	Requested by Church of England Co-opted Member at February 2024 Committee meeting (email from Reverend Metcalf 2 February 2024)	

Any provisional matters requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2023/2024

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
Tourism and Visitor Economy: Cabinet Member: Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Evers	Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee meeting.	To be advised.
School Age Education – Development Post Pandemic (including school attendance (request by County Councillor Paul Snape Cabinet Member: Jonathan Price Lead Officers: Neelam Bhardwaja/Tim Moss	Identified at 15 June 2022 Committee meeting	To be advised.
Avanti West Coast (West Coast Mainline train operator) Cabinet Members: Philip White and David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Identified at 22 March 2023 Committee meeting following request from County Councillor Jeremy Pert.	To be programmed Programmed for 17 October Committee meeting. Six-month update requested at 17 October Committee meeting for April 2024.
Lighting for Staffordshire Cabinet Member: David Williams	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023.	To be advised (email from James Bailey 26 June 2023). Programmed for 11

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2023/2024

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey		January 2024 Committee Meeting at 25 October Pre-Agenda Preview.
On Street Parking Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023.	To be advised (email from James Bailey 26 June 2023).
People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines	Identified at 9 November 2023 Committee meeting.	To be advised.
Zero by Nature Strategy Cabinet Member: Simon Tagg Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/ Catherine Mann	Proposed by Cabinet Member at 18 August 2022 Triangulation Meeting. Programmed for 10 November 2022 Committee meeting at 29 September Committee meeting. Postponed until April 2023 (indicative) Committee meeting at request of Cabinet Member (email from Sarah Bentley 18 October 2022) owing to national delays in funding settlement. Further postponed at request of Cabinet Member (email Sarah Bentley 14 March 2023) owing to delay in publication of commissioned report. Cabinet Member requested item programmed for February 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Deferred at the	To be advised.

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2023/2024

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
	request of the Cabinet Member to a date to be confirmed.	
<p>Cultural Strategy Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Catherine</p>	<p>Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for March 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Postponed to May 2024 Committee meeting (email Victoria Wilson (via Chairman) 8 February 2024).</p>	<p>30 May 2024</p>
<p>Review of Jobs and Brokerage Service: Cabinet Member: Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines</p>	<p>Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for 28 March 2024 Committee meeting (email Tony Baines 5 June 2023). Postponed to 30 May 2024 Committee meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).</p>	<p>30 May 2024</p>
<p>Employment and Skills Strategy Cabinet Member: Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines</p>	<p>Identified at 28 September 2023 Committee meeting. Postponed from 28 March 2024 Committee meeting to 30 May Committee Meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).</p>	<p>30 May 2024</p>
<p>Country Parks Strategy Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Catherine Mann</p>	<p>Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for March 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Postponed to future meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2023/2024

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
<p>Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey</p>	<p>Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Postponed to future meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>

Any provisional matter requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green

Standing Items 2023/2024

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
<p>PS2 Six-monthly Update – Impact on Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers/ Sarah Mallen</p>	<p>Requested at 26 February 2021 Committee meeting (amended at 23 July 2021 Committee Meeting). Update given to 22 March and 28 September 2023 Committee meetings. Next update due March 2024.</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Economic Recovery Renewal and Transformation Six-Monthly Progress Update (incorporating former APMG Report – Future Economy and Enterprise – Update) Cabinet Member: Philip White Leads Officer: Darryl Eyers/ Anthony Hodge</p>	<p>Requested at 15 July 2020 Triangulation meeting (amended at 23 July 2021 and 13 January 2022 Committee meetings). Further update incorporated into County Economic Strategy report to 23 March 2022 Committee meeting. Updates given to 19 October 2022, 7 June 2023 and 13 December 2023 Committee meetings. Next update due June 2024 Committee meeting.</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly Update. Cabinet Member: David Williams</p>	<p>Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee meeting. Next Update due September 2022 (Update for Q2 postponed until later in Q3 at request of Director (email</p>	<p>See above</p>

Standing Items 2023/2024

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/ James Bailey	from James Bailey 18 August 2022). Updates given to 16 December 2022, 7 June 2023, 28 September 2023, 13 December 2023 (postponed) and February 2024 Committee Meetings. Next Update due May/June 2024.	
Digital Infrastructure Plan Progress Update. Cabinet Member: Simon Tagg Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines	Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee Meeting. Considered at 10 November 2022 and 7 June 2023 Committee Meetings. Next update due December 2023.	See above

Any provisional matter requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green

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Briefing Notes / Updates / Visits 2023/2024

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
13 December 2023	Dedicated Schools Grant Deficit Management Plan		
13 December 2023	Digital Infrastructure in Staffordshire Update		

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2023/2024

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
In progress	Civil Parking Enforcement	Requested by Cabinet Member on 10 August 2022.	Inquiry Day held on 17 April 2023. Working Group established at 7

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2023/2024

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
			June 2023 Committee Meeting. Working Group meeting #1 held on 5 September 2023; #2 held on 17 October 2023; #4 held on 11 December 2023.

Any provisional matter requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green



Membership – County Councillors 2023-2024*	Calendar of Committee Meetings - 2023-2024 (All meetings to be held at County Buildings, Stafford unless otherwise stated)
<p>Tina Clements (Chairman) Ross Ward (Vice-Chairman – Scrutiny) Peter Kruskonjic (Vice-Chairman – Overview) Charlotte Atkins Philippa Hadden Philip Hudson Graham Hutton David Smith Samantha Thompson Bernard Williams Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf (Co-optee)</p> <p>* Unless otherwise stated.</p>	Friday 2 June 2023 at 10.00 am;
	Thursday 6 July 2023 at 10.00 am;
	Thursday 28 September 2023 at 10.00 am;
	Tuesday 17 October 2023 at 10.00 am (additional meeting);
	Thursday 9 November 2023 at 10.00 am;
	Wednesday 22 November 2023 at 2.00 pm (additional meeting);
	Thursday 21 December 2023 at 10.00 am; Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 2.00 pm;
	Thursday 11 January 2024 at 2.00 pm (additional meeting);
	Friday 2 February 2024 at 10.00 am;
	Thursday 28 March 2024 at 10.00 am.

Work Programme

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2024/2025

This document sets out the work programme for Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2024/2025.

Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee are responsible for scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity, flood and water management, education, learning and skills. As such, the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee. The Work Programme is linked to the Vision, Outcomes and Priorities detailed in the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26.

We review our Work Programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something important comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Councillor Tina Clements

Chairman of Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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

Work Programme 2024/2025

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Thurs 30 May 2024 at 10.00 am	1. Cultural Strategy Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Catherine	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for March 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Postponed to May 2024 Committee meeting (email Victoria Wilson (via Chairman) 8 February 2024).	
	2. Review of Jobs and Brokerage Service: Cabinet Member: Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for 28 March 2024 Committee meeting (email Tony Baines 5 June 2023). Postponed to 30 May 2024 Committee meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).	
	3. Employment and Skills Strategy Cabinet Member: Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines	Identified at 28 September 2023 Committee meeting. Postponed from 28 March 2024 Committee meeting to 30 May Committee Meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).	
	4. Work Programme Planning		
Tues 23 July 2024 at 10.00 am	1.		
	2.		
	3.		

Work Programme 2024/2025

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Thurs 26 September 2024 at 10.00 am	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
Thurs 21 November 2024 at 10.00 am	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
Thurs 19 December 2024 at 10.00 am	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
Thurs 30 January 2025 at 10.00 am	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
Thurs 27 March 2025 at 10.00 am	1.		
	2.		

Work Programme 2024/2025

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	3.		

Any provisional matters requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2024/2025

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
Tourism and Visitor Economy: Cabinet Member: Phillip White Lead Officers: Darryl Evers	Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee meeting.	To be advised.
School Age Education – Development Post Pandemic (including school attendance (request by County Councillor Paul Snape Cabinet Member: Jonathan Price Lead Officers: Neelam Bhardwaja/Tim Moss	Identified at 15 June 2022 Committee meeting	To be advised.
Avanti West Coast (West Coast Mainline train operator) Cabinet Members: Philip White and David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Identified at 22 March 2023 Committee meeting following request from County Councillor Jeremy Pert.	To be programmed Programmed for 17 October Committee meeting. Six-month update requested at 17 October Committee meeting for April 2024.
Lighting for Staffordshire Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Evers/James Bailey	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023.	To be advised (email from James Bailey 26 June 2023). Programmed for 11 January 2024 Committee Meeting at 25 October Pre-Agenda Preview.

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2024/2025

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
<p>On Street Parking Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey</p>	<p>Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023.</p>	<p>To be advised (email from James Bailey 26 June 2023).</p>
<p>People Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines</p>	<p>Identified at 9 November 2023 Committee meeting.</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>
<p>Zero by Nature Strategy Cabinet Member: Simon Tagg Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/ Catherine Mann</p>	<p>Proposed by Cabinet Member at 18 August 2022 Triangulation Meeting. Programmed for 10 November 2022 Committee meeting at 29 September Committee meeting. Postponed until April 2023 (indicative) Committee meeting at request of Cabinet Member (email from Sarah Bentley 18 October 2022) owing to national delays in funding settlement. Further postponed at request of Cabinet Member (email Sarah Bentley 14 March 2023) owing to delay in publication of commissioned report. Cabinet Member requested item programmed for February 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Deferred at the request of the Cabinet Member to a date to be confirmed.</p>	<p>To be advised.</p>

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2024/2025

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting
Country Parks Strategy Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Catherine Mann	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Cabinet Member requested programme for March 2024 Committee meeting (email Catherine Mann 7 June 2023). Postponed to future meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).	To be advised.
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/James Bailey	Identified at Work Programme Planning session on 2 June 2023. Postponed to future meeting (email Darryl Eyers 5 January 2024).	To be advised.

Any provisional matter requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green

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Standing Items 2024/2025

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
HS2 Six-monthly Update – Impact on Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers/ Sarah Mallen	Requested at 26 February 2021 Committee meeting (amended at 23 July 2021 Committee Meeting). Update given to 22 March and 28 September 2023 Committee meetings. Next update due March 2024.	See above
Economic Recovery Renewal and Transformation Six-Monthly Progress Update (incorporating former APMG Report – Future Economy and Enterprise – Update) Cabinet Member: Philip White	Requested at 15 July 2020 Triangulation meeting (amended at 23 July 2021 and 13 January 2022 Committee meetings). Further update incorporated into County Economic Strategy report to 23 March 2022 Committee meeting. Updates given to 19 October 2022, 7 June 2023	See above

Standing Items 2024/2025

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Leads Officer: Darryl Eyers/ Anthony Hodge	and 13 December 2023 Committee meetings. Next update due June 2024 Committee meeting.	
Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly Update. Cabinet Member: David Williams Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/ James Bailey	Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee meeting. Next Update due September 2022 (Update for Q2 postponed until later in Q3 at request of Director (email from James Bailey 18 August 2022). Updates given to 16 December 2022, 7 June 2023, 28 September 2023, 13 December 2023 (postponed) and February 2024 Committee Meetings. Next Update due May/June 2024.	See above
Digital Infrastructure Plan Progress Update. Cabinet Member: Simon Tagg Lead Officers: Darryl Eyers/Anthony Baines	Identified at 26 May 2022 Committee Meeting. Considered at 10 November 2022 and 7 June 2023 Committee Meetings. Next update due December 2023.	See above

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Any provisional matter requiring Committee confirmation/approval are shown in green

Briefing Notes / Updates / Visits 2024/2025

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2024/2025

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
In progress	Civil Parking Enforcement	Requested by Cabinet Member on 10 August 2022.	Inquiry Day held on 17 April 2023. Working Group established at 7 June 2023 Committee Meeting. Working Group meeting #1 held on 5 September 2023; #2 held on 17 October 2023; #3 held on 11 December 2023; #4 held on 15 January 2024.

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Membership – County Councillors 2024-2025*	Calendar of Committee Meetings - 2024-2025 (All meetings to be held at County Buildings, Stafford unless otherwise stated)
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	* Unless otherwise stated.

