



Staffordshire Leaders Board

Thursday 9 March 2023,
11:00am - 12:00pm,
Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 1 - 4)
4. **Chairperson's Update**
5. **Economic Vision and Priorities** (Pages 5 - 22)
6. **Economic Growth Programme Update** (Pages 23 - 26)
7. **Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy** (Pages 27 - 32)
8. **Code of Joint Scrutiny Working - Local Authorities** (Pages 33 - 44)
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”.



Staffordshire

Membership

George Allen (Vice-Chair)	Doug Pullen
Patrick Farrington	Paul Roberts
Roger Lees	Simon Tagg
Olivia Lyons	Alan White (Chair)
Jeremy Oates	

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

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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 Staffordshire Leaders Board Meeting
held on 1 December 2022**

Present: Alan White (Chair)

George Allen (Vice-Chair)	Jeremy Pert (Substitute)
Iain Eadie (Substitute)	Robert Pritchard (Substitute)
Roger Lees	Paul Roberts
Olivia Lyons	Simon Tagg

Apologies: Doug Pullen, Patrick Farrington, Jeremy Oates, Simon Fletcher and Andy O'Brien

Also in attendance: Andrew Barratt (Tamworth Borough Council), Tim Clegg (Stafford Borough Council / Cannock Chase District Council), Kerry Dove, Chris Ebberley, John Henderson (Staffordshire County Council), Heywood (South Staffordshire Council), Keith Luscombe, Simon McEneny (Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council) and Andrew Stokes (Staffordshire Moorlands District Council)

PART ONE

7. Apologies for absence

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The notes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Change to Terms of Reference at paragraph 10.1, where "The Leaders' Board will meet at least quarterly" has been changed to "The Leaders' Board will meet no less than every four months". This change was made to allow the preferred frequency of meetings. This means that following the new approach, a formal meeting of the Leaders' Board will fall every four months.

9. Declarations of Interest

10. Chair's Update

The Chairman welcomed Members to the second meeting of the Staffordshire Leaders' Board.

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The Chairman reemphasised that the Leaders' Board was established to build on the partnership work of all nine councils and, as importantly, to maximise the opportunities for everyone who lives and works in this fantastic county.

The Chairman stated that after turning the corner on Covid, attention has shifted to very different challenges which started to emerge in 2022 and will extend into 2023 including cost of living, supporting refugees and asylum seekers and responding to the challenges of climate change.

11. Single Front Door

The Board noted the progress of the Single Front Door Programme, building on the Board's agreement to take forward work to scope the benefits of greater alignment and integration of the member organisations' front doors and customer service operations.

An opportunity for questions followed.

The report was noted.

12. Climate Change and Sustainability

The Board noted the progress of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board and identified other successes of joint working in climate change and sustainability.

An opportunity for questions followed.

The report was noted.

13. Cost of Living

The Board were asked to note work taking place. The report provided a high-level summary of key activities and support led by local authorities in Staffordshire.

An opportunity for questions followed.

The report was noted and it was agreed to support the establishment of an officer group to ensure partners continue to collaborate locally where appropriate, as well as ensuring residents are signposted to all relevant support and guidance.

14. Visitor Economy Action Plan

The Board were asked to consider collaborative work to stimulate future economic growth together, linked to Staffordshire's strong visitor economy.

An opportunity for questions followed.

It was agreed to:

1. Note and support the draft Visitor Economy Action Plan.
2. Note the emerging priority themes, including that accommodation will be a focus of future product development to support future growth.
3. Note the vision and list of priorities within the plan and provide associated feedback.
4. To support a longer-term commitment to collaboration and funding for the DMP with a view to securing national accreditation with VisitEngland and DCMS working as a collective through our DMP.
5. Request the Economic Growth Directors group prioritise the sharing of information relating to Destination Management projects, to support the success of the partnership.

15. Exclusion of the Public

Chairman

**Staffordshire Leaders Board****Economic Vision & Priorities**9th March 2023**1. Background**

- 1.1. At the meeting of the Staffordshire Leaders Board in December, it was agreed that an economic vision and priorities document would be developed by the Economic Growth Directors Group to guide future work programmes and enable effective communication of our shared economic goals. Together, we all share the same ambition: to make sure both residents and businesses flourish, right here in Staffordshire. Our shared vision and priorities set out those opportunities we will strive to take advantage of and the challenges we will work to address in our aim of ultimately achieving this ambition.
- 1.2. The Staffordshire economy generates around £18 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA) every single year, making the county one of the largest economic areas across the West Midlands. Over the last ten years around 44,000 jobs have been created in Staffordshire, the skill levels of our population have improved vastly, whilst the number of people choosing to start a business within the county has increased greatly and is now in line with the national average for the first time. Whilst we have therefore had many successes, we have no intention of resting on our laurels and will drive forward our plans for the local economy as set out within our shared economic vision and priorities.
- 1.3. Whilst our economic vision and priorities document sets out those priorities that we will aim to achieve to deliver our long-term, 10-year vision for the Staffordshire economy, it will be important that we are able to remain flexible in our approach to deal with any challenges and opportunities as they arise. It is therefore proposed that a supporting delivery plan is developed in the coming months, to be reviewed annually, to set out those projects and programmes that we will deliver to both achieve our longer-term ambitions but also address any immediate challenges and to take advantage of any opportunities. We are not starting from scratch, and this will build upon the work already undertaken on projects such as the economic growth pipeline and investment prospectus.

2. Recommendations



2.1. The Staffordshire Leaders Board:

- a. Approves the final version of the Economic Vision & Priorities.
- b. Agree for a supporting delivery plan to be developed by the Economic Growth Directors Group over the coming months, to be considered by the Leaders Board in the summer.

3. List of Background Documents / Appendices:

3.1. Appendix 1 – Staffordshire Leaders Board Economic Vision & Priorities

Contact details

Sponsor(s): Dave Heywood / Darryl Evers

Report author: Matt Shufflebotham
Job title: Senior Economic Development Officer
Organisation: Staffordshire County Council
Telephone: 01785 277355
E-mail: matthew.shufflebotham@staffordshire.gov.uk



Staffordshire

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BUILDING A PLACE TO PROSPER

OUR UNITED VISION FOR THE
STAFFORDSHIRE ECONOMY

2023 - 2033



TOGETHER, WE'RE MAKING STAFFORDSHIRE A PLACE TO PROSPER

Staffordshire is already an amazing place. And it has the potential to be even more amazing. It's our role, as Local Authorities working together through the Staffordshire Leaders' Board, to unlock that potential. That's why we've all committed to a joint programme of ambitious, strategically important economic projects and investments that come together to deliver more than the sum of its parts, make more of an impact on the regional economy and help our businesses and residents to thrive.

We want town centres to be proud of. So, looking through a fresh future-proof lens, we'll regenerate and revitalise these important hubs of commerce and community.

We want to bring huge growth in jobs and homes across the county. So it's at the forefront of our local plans, supported by investment in roads, rail, green transport and gigabit-capable broadband to make us one of the UK's best-connected places to live and work.

We want people with the skills to take on the highly-paid opportunities that will be created. So we're working with, and investing in, schools, colleges and universities to make sure we have a skills pipeline that, together with our internationally renowned businesses, will drive vital technological innovation.

Together, we share the same ambition: to make sure both residents and businesses flourish right here in Staffordshire. We believe our co-ordinated vision and priorities will create the opportunities to make this a reality.



Councillor Alan White

Leaders' Board Chair and
Leader of Staffordshire
County Council



Councillor George Allen

Leaders' Board Vice-Chair and
Leader of East Staffordshire
Borough Council

On behalf of council leaders across Staffordshire.

GREEN SUSTAINABILITY
& INNOVATION LOCAL CULTURE

WELLBEING

COMMUNITY PRIDE

TOWN CENTRE
IMPROVEMENT INNOVATION &

COMMUNITY TECHNOLOGY

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

OUR SHARED VISION

PEOPLE ACROSS STAFFORDSHIRE WILL BENEFIT FROM MORE AND BETTER-PAID JOBS IN ONE OF THE UK'S PRIMARY LOCATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE GREEN GROWTH AND INVESTMENT, CREATING PLACES WE CAN ALL BE PROUD OF, DRIVEN BY INNOVATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES.



OUR PRIORITIES

While recognising both the similarities and the diversity that exists in our county, our plan is to work together across eight economic priorities.

OUR AMBITION:
RESIDENTS AND
BUSINESSES FLOURISH
WITH STAFFORDSHIRE
PLAYING A MAJOR
ROLE IN GREAT
BRITAIN PLC



TOWN CENTRES

Reshaping, reimagining and revitalising



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting housing and business-led growth



RURAL AREAS

Developing the rural and visitor economies, and addressing rural connectivity challenges



STRATEGIC CORRIDORS

Exploiting strategic growth corridors such as the A50/A500



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Optimising small business and start-up growth



CLIMATE CHANGE

Supporting sustainable businesses and their potential for growth



SKILLED WORKFORCE

Enabling high-value job opportunities for all



PLACEMAKING

Marketing Staffordshire as a place of cultural, leisure and heritage importance to visitors





REGENERATING AND RESHAPING

Our towns and local centres are where most people live and work. While people's shopping habits may change with the shift to online retail, high streets remain essential as a place to live, meet, relax, access services and more; they are still community centres, and as such need reshaping and reimagining to create places people value and have pride in.

Retail space may shrink on many of our high streets, but other areas such as hospitality, housing, education and front-line services have the potential to grow. In other words, they will still play a key role in everything that gives us our quality of life; so from market towns to city living, our high street community hubs are critical.



SUPPORTING OUR RURAL ECONOMY

We're all rightly proud of our county's rural assets – so we want to maximise the way they contribute to developing its thriving economy. The role of agriculture remains vital of course, and many of our most well-known visitor attractions are in rural areas.

We're planning to improve infrastructure and access for rural areas, including gigabit-capable broadband, while also making the most of the opportunities they offer to tackle big challenges such as moving towards cleaner energy generation through renewable energy schemes.

DID YOU KNOW?

80% of Staffordshire is rural – that's why it plays such an important role in the county's economy.





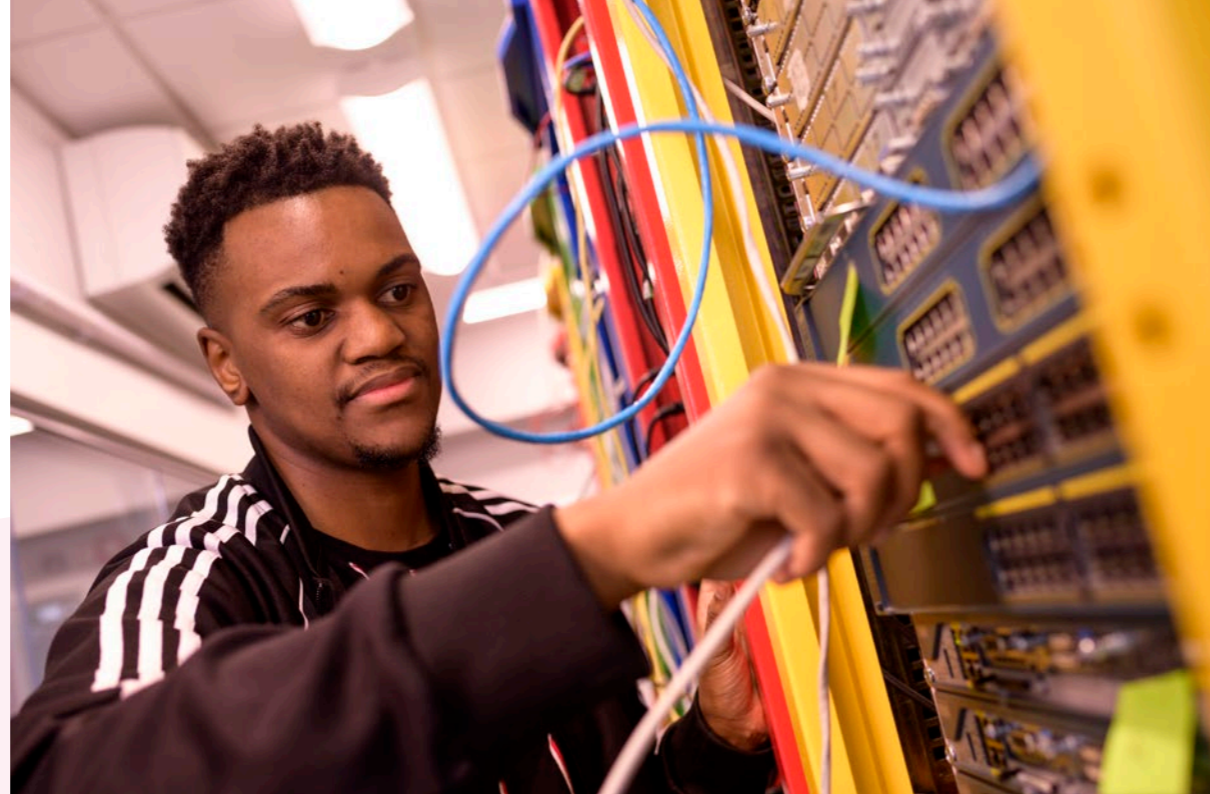
SUPPORTING START-UPS AND BEYOND

Encouraging business start-ups and helping them to flourish is vital to increasing the county's productivity levels and employment opportunities – the more start-ups we support, the more will become growing businesses that take on employees.

That support means providing the right infrastructure, including high-quality premises, broadband and transport connectivity; it also means making sure good quality advice and access to finance are readily available. We're committed to working together so that people see starting up their own business as a viable career option, with access to all the skills development programmes they need to start up and grow.

DID YOU KNOW?

Staffordshire already boasts a higher start-up survival rate than most of the UK.



BETTER PAID, LOCAL JOBS

The people of Staffordshire have long been known for their resourcefulness, creativity and determination. Now we're working together to tackle skills isolation and make sure everyone has the opportunity to upskill through lifelong learning and broader access to education. The aim is to not only support jobs growth and add value to the local economy, but also improve general health and wellbeing.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our local universities are recognised as trailblazers in broadening access to higher education.





PROVIDING FOR MORE JOBS AND HOMES

Staffordshire is a great place for businesses and people to put down their roots and thrive – and this potential is being realised through local plans incorporating high quality affordable homes and supporting substantial job growth.

Our role is to support these through projects that ensure sustainable development supported by valued services, together we're planning for longer-term growth, investing in our infrastructure while also finding continued private and public sector investment in the county.

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BETTER CONNECTIVITY, BETTER GROWTH

Our prime location at the heart of the UK has given us the opportunity to create strategic growth corridors, opening up our region to the world, helping businesses innovate and grow and helping with our wider ambitions to provide good homes and a greener infrastructure.

These corridors, such as the A50/A500 and A38, connect numerous towns and locations in conjunction with planned investment in road and rail, including HS2, to improve connectivity across the sub-region, and thus create the potential for significant sustainable growth in the future.

DID YOU KNOW?

The A50/A500 Strategic Corridor plays a key role in the development of green energies.





MAKING THE MOVE TO NET ZERO

Minimising our impact on the environment is more important than ever – so we need to support businesses to take advantage of the move towards a Net-Zero economy. For some, this will mean supporting start-ups and growing businesses in new emerging sectors. For others, it means helping existing businesses diversify and adapt so they can still play a key role in our economy.



IMPROVING OUR VISITOR ECONOMY

From natural assets such as Cannock Chase and the Peak District, to Alton Towers and Drayton Manor theme parks alongside countless other cultural and heritage attractions, Staffordshire has so much to attract people here.

Together, we're playing a key role in making the county a place that everyone – organisations and individuals – can be immensely proud to shout about, and we're investing in projects that will make people want to live, work, visit and invest here even more.





HOW WE'RE MAKING IT HAPPEN

Achieving our vision for Staffordshire will need a strong partnership to deliver the many projects and programmes. Fortunately, we have a strong history of collaborating with our other council partners and many other stakeholders.

Rather than working as separate locations with separate identities, all nine Local Authorities are committed to a co-ordinated action plan to drive the county's economic growth in a sustainable way.

Importantly, we recognise that we'll need others' help – which is why we'll sometimes play a different role.



We'll lead on **DIRECT DELIVERY**



We'll collaborate with **PARTNERS & STAKEHOLDERS**



We'll advocate the **DELIVERY OF PROJECTS** and programmes by other organisations that meet our own ambitions.

We'll also always listen to our businesses and communities to understand how we can better create a more productive, dynamic local economy.



INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

Individually, we continue to invest significant sums of money in Staffordshire, as well as unlocking funding from a range of sources and advocating for investment within the county.

Many of the county's existing assets will also play an important role in achieving our collective vision, and we'll continue to make sure that any investment we make will achieve the maximum possible benefit.

Over the longer-term we'll be able to explore different approaches to funding growth, as well as influencing how the Government progresses its various policy agendas, and will continue to work with our partners to deliver our vision and priorities for Staffordshire.



£200M INVESTED

The government also believe in the economy of Staffordshire with an investment of over £200 million in the last few years to help grow our economy.



A PARTNERSHIP GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

In a unique collaboration by public sector partners across Staffordshire, all nine councils across the county have joined together in the 'Staffordshire Means Back to Business' partnership to reach more businesses more quickly, and with more bespoke help than any single organisation could possibly have managed. By throwing out the rulebook on the usual processes and innovating across administrative boundaries, the partnership has already:

- played a substantial role in improving business start-up and survival rates which are now significantly higher than the national average.
- played a substantial role in improving business start-up rates, which for the first time, are now similar to the national average - whilst more businesses continue to survive in Staffordshire than the country as a whole.



OUR PLACES

Proudly individual, and proud to be part of Staffordshire.

CANNOCK CHASE

Outstanding environmental assets, vibrant communities and a unique entrepreneurial spirit make Cannock Chase an attractive place to live. Set in the rural heart of Staffordshire, its long-term strategy is built around clean growth and the green agenda, aiming to champion clean growth principles to support a highly productive, clean and resilient economy.

The Council has secured £20m from the Government's Levelling Up Fund to develop part of Cannock town centre, which will bring a new economic purpose, a highly visible transformational change and act as the catalyst for its longer-term revival.



£20M

External funding already secured to transform Cannock town centre.



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE

Location is the key here; perfectly positioned for the West and East Midlands (with significant economic and social links with both), East Staffordshire's easy accessibility and local raw materials have created a Borough characterised by a mix of urban and rural areas.

The principal towns are Burton upon Trent, known worldwide for its brewing, logistics and other industries, and Uttoxeter – an attractive and friendly market town, with a famous leading National Hunt racecourse, close to Alton Towers and home to both St Georges Park (England's National Football Centre) and the worldwide headquarters of JCB.

Burton upon Trent is one of the towns to receive investment through the Towns Fund and has been allocated a grant of £23.8m to create a resilient, better, brighter Burton for the future, whilst Uttoxeter is being regenerated through the Council's Uttoxeter Masterplan, identifying investment in the town centre and the creation of a new Sports Hub.



£23.8M

External funding secured for a brighter Burton.





NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME

This historic Borough is made up of the market town of Newcastle and its second town, the canal town of Kidsgrove, as well as a string of urban and rural villages.

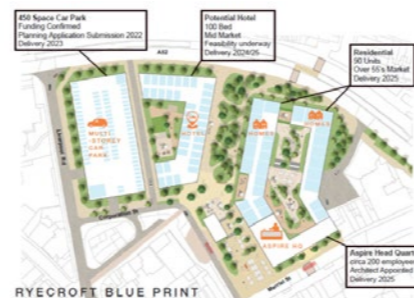
As the home of Keele University and the Newcastle campus of the Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group, the town has a strong academic reputation and high levels of student satisfaction. The Keele University Science and Innovation Park is a regional centre of excellence, attracting a wide variety of businesses.

The award-winning New Vic Theatre is one of the country's most successful independent producing theatres, with town centre events and festivals celebrating the local cultural heritage. Newcastle-under-Lyme is a great place to live, featuring a wide choice of housing from town centre apartments to rural family homes, and offers businesses cost-effective wage rates.

The Borough is now taking a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest in its town centres and reshape its urban landscape, with Newcastle-under-Lyme and Kidsgrove receiving over £50m in two Town Deals and Future High Street Funds investment for economic regeneration.



Over **£56 MILLION** secured through Future High Streets Fund, Town Deals and Shared Prosperity Fund.



LICHFIELD

Perhaps best-known for its distinctive cathedral and many other historic buildings, Lichfield District is also home to major attractions such as Drayton Manor Park and the National Memorial Arboretum. It's also a place of culture, with the Garrick Theatre, community theatre events and the annual Lichfield Festival, set among its many open spaces and gardens. With its excellent transport links via rail and motorway to the rest of the region, together with a highly skilled, entrepreneurial workforce and Staffordshire's first Michelin-starred restaurant, Lichfield is also a perfect location for both global and local businesses.

With the Lichfield City Centre Masterplan and Local Plan 2040 both in place to shape the future growth for the city centre, there are promising major regeneration plans to enhance the quality of the city centre environment.



STAFFORDSHIRE'S FIRST MICHELIN STAR RESTAURANT

Home to Upstairs by Tom Shepherd, Staffordshire's first restaurant to be awarded a Michelin star.





SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE

Just a short hop from Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Telford, South Staffordshire is a superb destination due to its location and major route access. It's a great place to live, work and visit, surrounded by glorious open countryside and steeped in history. The area's diverse high streets with independent retailers and restaurants are a perfect contrast to its thriving and ever-growing advanced manufacturing base.

Three major projects are shaping the South Staffordshire region; the West Midlands Interchange, the largest rail-served logistics development in the UK; the redevelopment of the 60-acre Royal Ordnance Survey site at Featherstone (Logic54) for a range of uses including industrial, storage and distribution; and i54 South Staffordshire, one of the most sought-after shovel-ready sites in Europe. There's strong interest in the remaining plots on the new i54 Western Extension which is set to create up to 100,000 sq m of development platforms for high-value manufacturing and up to 9,700 jobs.



West Midlands Interchange is expected to generate around **£430M** of local economic activity each year once complete.



STAFFORD

Stafford Borough is primarily made up of three towns, each with its own distinct character – Eccleshall, with its personal touch; Stone, with its creativity; and Stafford, the county town with its big brands. Surrounding them is a wealth of lush countryside and wonderful attractions, including Trentham Estate, Shugborough Estate, Cannock Chase and more.

Stafford already has an outstanding transport infrastructure, and HS2 will put London just 50 minutes away, with Birmingham and Manchester 20 and 30 minutes respectively, to bring new investment to the Borough.

Work on the £23 million Skills and Engineering facility at Stafford College is underway while the £63 million Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR) has just been completed, while the county town's dramatic growth continues with the planned £21m transformation of the high street and new History Centre, the recent restoration of the award-winning Victoria Park and development of Wren house.

Plus there's the proposed Stafford Station Gateway Masterplan with projected investment of £500 million, the regeneration of the Eastgate Quarter, a major house-building programme and the new Pets at Home distribution centre creating 750 jobs.



£500M Stafford Masterplan already underway.





STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS

On the edge of the Peak District National Park, Staffordshire Moorlands offers a great location with a healthy work-life balance. The area features spectacular scenery from rocky outcrops to lush valleys such as the Churnet and Manifold Valleys, ideal for walkers, cyclists, water sports and more. Its idyllic towns and villages include Leek with its bustling markets, antique shops and popular Arts Festival, Biddulph with its glorious gardens at Biddulph Grange, and Cheadle, a busy market town with many historic buildings.

For businesses and developers, Staffordshire Moorlands has been recognised as one of the top five best value locations to invest in the UK.

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£21M

of Government investment secured including for town centre improvements in Leek.



TAMWORTH

The charming market town of Tamworth, on the border with Warwickshire, is steeped in history and surrounded by beautiful Staffordshire countryside. Once the capital of Mercia, largest of all the English kingdoms, it still has its ancient castle as well as many other historic buildings and a host of attractions from nearby Drayton Manor Park to the SnowDome.

Today work is well underway on a £40m investment package to completely transform the vibrant Town Centre, with the relocation of a brand-new flagship Further Education College. The recently completed Enterprise Quarter project saw significant investment in the refurbished Tamworth Assembly Rooms theatre, a new Enterprise Centre and public realm improvements.



£40M

Town centre investment package.





“

WE'RE DELIGHTED THAT THE COUNTY'S NINE LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAVE COME TOGETHER IN A VISION FOR REALISING THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF STAFFORDSHIRE'S ECONOMY.

”

Alan White
Leaders' Board Chair and Leader of
Staffordshire County Council

George Allen
Leaders' Board Vice-Chair and Leader of
East Staffordshire Borough Council



DELIVERING A STRONGER STAFFORDSHIRE

We're united in our ambition to deliver a stronger Staffordshire – one we can all be proud of.

By working together, we will grow a local economy that's fully coordinated, integrated, robust and thriving. The potential is boundless. We remain as one to put the whole of Staffordshire on the UK and world map to contribute even more to our national wellbeing.

CONTACT US

To talk to us about our plans for Staffordshire, please contact:



Councillor Alan White
Staffordshire County Council
01785 276121
alan.white@staffordshire.gov.uk



Councillor George Allen
East Staffordshire Borough Council
07791 176489
george.allen@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk



OUR SHARED VISION:

PEOPLE ACROSS STAFFORDSHIRE WILL BENEFIT FROM MORE AND BETTER-PAID JOBS IN ONE OF THE UK'S PRIMARY LOCATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE GREEN GROWTH AND INVESTMENT, CREATING PLACES WE CAN ALL BE PROUD OF, DRIVEN BY INNOVATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES.



Staffordshire



Staffordshire Leaders Board

Economic Growth Programme Update

9th March 2023

1. Summary

- 1.1. Over the past year, the Leaders Board has agreed to progress several pieces of work with the aim of achieving the local authorities shared economic ambitions. These include projects considering the opportunities for the development of the green economy, the joint promotion of our Levelling Up Fund bids to Government and the creation of an economic growth pipeline, detailing the vast number of projects and programmes either being delivered or planned for delivery across the county.
- 1.2. This report provides an overview of the work undertaken by the Leaders Board and supporting officer groups over the past year, projects and programmes that are currently ongoing, as well as providing a look to the year ahead.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Staffordshire Leaders Board:
 - a. Note the work already undertaken by the Leaders Board and supporting officer groups, including successes in helping to secure investment in the county.
 - b. Consider and comment upon the progress being made on the many shared projects and programmes outlined within the report that are being progressed jointly by the Staffordshire local authorities.

3. Background

- 3.1. Outlined below is a summary of some of our main economic growth projects and programmes that have been completed over the last year, are already in progress or will commence over the coming year. These projects and programmes are aligned to and will play an important part of the delivery of both our Economic Vision and Priorities and emerging Employment and Skills Strategy.
- 3.2. **Levelling Up Fund Round 2 (LUF2)** – Prior to LUF2, the Staffordshire local authorities had already secured over £130 million in investment through the Future High Streets Fund, Town Deals and LUF round one for town centres across the county. The Leaders Board undertook work to promote further bids for



LUF2, highlighting the strength of our proposals and alignment across the county in what we wanted to achieve. This helped to secure a further £17.1 million for Leek town centre, and £20 million for investment in our transport infrastructure, including enabling improved and greener access to our town centres.

- 3.3. Including Shared Prosperity Fund and the forthcoming Rural England Prosperity Fund, over £200 million of government investment has been secured and the local authorities continue to work tirelessly to deliver projects and programmes utilising this funding.
- 3.4. **Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) ‘Grand Challenges’** – Rather than attempting to focus on a broad range of issues and spreading resource thinly, the Leaders Board is recommending that the Local Enterprise Partnership focuses on a small number of key economic issues for the local area in the coming year. These are the green economy, innovation, and a focus on an important local industrial sector.
- 3.5. As the green economy has already been agreed as a key priority and we have already undertaken a significant amount of joint work on this issue, our suggestion is that this is considered by the LEP as the priority. Our expectation is that the LEP will engage with businesses on this to seek their views on the impacts and opportunities of Net Zero and climate reduction targets, including what support businesses believe can and should be provided by local government.
- 3.6. A specification for this work is currently in development and will be circulated to the Economic Growth Directors Group for comment prior to agreement by the Leaders Board. This specification will then be used to commission the LEP to undertake the work as part of their primary remit to provide the business voice for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.
- 3.7. **Economic Growth Pipeline** - The development of a pipeline of priority economic growth projects was identified as one of the top priorities in supporting the future development of the Staffordshire economy. This was for several reasons including to provide a clear picture of the priorities across the county and allow us to speak with one voice, to consider and help to address any issues related to our ability to access funding streams and to identify joint projects that have the potential to have significant benefit to the local economy.
- 3.8. The Economic Growth Directors Group completed the initial pipeline, and this has remained under review. It was clear from this work that most projects were either in train, awaiting decisions or in need of further consideration before they are able to progress.
- 3.9. There was therefore an opportunity to progress some projects that have the potential to be transformational for the local economy, and it was agreed that innovation, new science park(s) and the green skills would be the priorities. The



green skills work is initially being progressed through the Employment and Skills Plan, whilst discussions are underway on the work related to innovation. The Economic Growth Directors Group will have oversight of these projects and progress will be reported to the Leaders Board as appropriate.

- 3.10. **Investment Prospectus** – Our first Investment Prospectus, produced towards the beginning of 2022, proved to be hugely successful in highlighting the significant number of key investment opportunities across the county. These include a broad range of developments, from smaller town centre schemes to large scale employment sites. These types of developments have been hugely successful in generating employment opportunities and attracting investment from world-renowned companies into the county in recent years.
- 3.11. Investment opportunities will of course change, and the Investment Prospectus has already become an integral part of our marketing, including at events attended by major investors and developers such as the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum. We are therefore in the process of updating Investment Prospectus, and this will be circulated to the Leaders Board for consideration and agreement.
- 3.12. **Spatial Planning** - An initial high-level review of the Staffordshire Spatial Planning Services was agreed as an action by the Staffordshire Leaders Board at its Autumn meeting. This included how we may be able to develop a more efficient and joined up approach to planning in Staffordshire, seeking consistency across policies, sharing of resources and a common strategic approach to planning.
- 3.13. This was further discussed by the Economic Growth Directors Group in February, and it was suggested that the work focus upon:
 - An audit of current resources and skills to identify gaps and opportunities for shared resources.
 - Consideration of a mechanism for sharing transformation / efficiencies developed across the local authorities.
 - Review of the need for the commissioning evidence and the case for doing this jointly to reduce costs.
 - Review of strategic policy areas that could be developed together.
 - Review Highways Development Control capacity / issues in terms of timeliness of responses.
- 3.14. With agreement of the Leaders Board, this work will continue to be progressed by the Economic Growth Directors Group and will report back as appropriate. As well as considering the service delivery issues outlined above, we will also consider any innovative approaches to joint delivery that could create benefits for the local authorities.



Contact details

Sponsor(s): Dave Heywood / Darryl Evers

Report author: Matt Shufflebotham
Job title: Senior Economic Development Officer
Organisation: Staffordshire County Council
Telephone: 01785 277355
E-mail: matthew.shufflebotham@staffordshire.gov.uk



Staffordshire Leaders Board
Employment and Skills Strategy

Vision & Priorities

9th March 2023

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Staffordshire Leaders Board has agreed an economic vision and priorities and a pipeline of priority economic growth projects to support the future development of the local economy.
- 1.2. An Employment and Skills Strategy is being developed to support the delivery of the economic vision and priorities. The Employment and Skills strategy can be used to guide future employment and skills work programmes, to support external funding bids, to enable effective communication of Staffordshire's shared employment and skills goals, and to inform the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.
- 1.3. The employment & skills priorities set out in this report, form the framework for the design of the Staffordshire Employment & Skills Strategy and for the "asks" of the LSIP.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Staffordshire Leaders Board:
 - a. Consider and comment upon the draft Employment and Skills Strategy vision and priorities set out within this report.
 - b. Agree that the Economic Growth Directors Group develop the vision and priorities into a succinct document to guide future work programmes and enable effective communication of Staffordshire's shared employment and skills goals.
 - c. Agree that the final draft of the document to be circulated electronically to Leaders for comment and agreement prior to the Summer 2023 Leaders Board meeting.
 - d. Consider for sign-off the final version of the Employment and Skills Strategy at the Summer 2023 Leaders Board meeting.



- e. Agree that the appointed representatives of the Economic Growth Directors Group lead on the dialogue with Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Employer Representative Body in the development of its LSIP with the aim of ensuring that the LSIP contributes to the delivery of Staffordshire’s Employment and Skills vision and priorities.

3. Building on recent employment and skills improvement and success

- 3.1. Through strong partnership working and significant capital and revenue investment e.g., City Deal, Growth Deal, ESF, Getting Building Fund etc. over recent years Staffordshire has seen significant improvement and success in developing local skills, with faster improvement than nationally in reducing the number of residents with no formal qualifications and those with higher skills at Level 3+ (A Level equivalent or above) and 4+ (Degree equivalent or above).
- 3.2. By developing local skills, we have helped ensure that more residents can access better paid jobs and play an active and productive role in the local economy. Our unemployment and economic inactivity (worklessness) rates remain well below the national average meaning that significantly more of our residents are in work and fewer are reliant on state support.
- 3.3. Overall, this recent employment and skills improvement and success has contributed to greater local economic growth and increased productivity, with more businesses choosing Staffordshire as a place to invest and operate creating more better paid jobs and closing the productivity gap to national.

4. A united vision and mission

- 4.1. We are now looking to build on this recent employment and skills improvement and success across Staffordshire and ensure that the county has the highly skilled workforce it needs to reach its full potential.
- 4.2. Working with key partners such as the DWP, Job Centre Plus and Skills Providers we will look to provide the employment and skills support needed for residents to access the better paid jobs being created across Staffordshire.
- 4.3. We will continue to develop inspirational Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) through our Careers Hub to ensure that all residents have access to the information and advice they need to make informed career choices and manage their career.
- 4.4. Through our strong Colleges and Universities, we will increase the supply of higher-level technical skills and develop new skills needed by businesses in our priority sectors, with a particular focus on cross-cutting digital skills development through new state-of-the-art provision and green skills vital for the county’s net zero ambitions. We want the needs of business to be at the heart of



transformation and seek to forge new and lasting partnerships to make this happen. Key to this is building on the recent development of the £16m Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Institute of Technology (IoT), with business and education providers increasingly working together to deliver the facilities and technical provision needed in Staffordshire to provide the future skills for growth.

- 4.5. We will also look to ensure that there are fully effective pathways for all learners to achieve higher technical qualifications. An important aspect of this will be addressing the current progression issues from level 2 to level 3 and the requirement to reform level 3 alternative academic and technical qualifications that sit alongside A Levels, T Levels and apprenticeships in order to support progression and attainment for all students. This will provide the opportunity for all students to move into high-skilled jobs, either directly, or through progression into good quality higher education courses.
- 4.6. We also want to ensure that residents have access to the support and provision in order to develop entrepreneurial and innovation skills that support greater local enterprise.
- 4.7. Staffordshire is resilient and we have put in place skills support for our residents and workers to deal with change and access support and training when they need it. This includes ensuring that those people more adversely affected by economic shocks such as Brexit, the pandemic and energy/cost-of-living crisis (young people, women and those with lower-level skills and workers from hardest-hit sectors) are front and centre of our plans for the future. Transferable skills are at the heart of this, especially for those leaving rapidly shifting sectors such as retail and hospitality.
- 4.8. Given the speed with which the economy is now changing we also recognise the need to develop a stronger culture of life-long learning in Staffordshire to ensure that all residents can continue to benefit from continued economic growth and the better paid jobs being created.
- 4.9. Models of delivery are changing, and we will support that change so that businesses, especially small ones, can be instrumental in crafting new courses in modular, bite-size, and on-demand formats. We want individuals to be able to access qualifications, especially for digital and green skills, at a time and in a way that suits them to upskill or reskill, improving social mobility, inclusion, and lifelong learning.
- 4.10. These better local skills and stronger workforce can support the delivery of our shared economic strategy and vision alongside the wide range of ambitious current and pipeline projects being delivered by our Local Authorities.
- 4.11. To achieve these aims a potential shared vision and mission are set out below. These are to be considered and shaped by Staffordshire Economic Development



Officers, the Economic growth Directors and Chief Executive Officers groups prior to being presented to the Staffordshire Leaders Board. If agreed, it would be our intention for this to be further developed into a succinct document.

4.12. The proposed vision for our Employment and Skills strategy is:

4.13. **“To help deliver a diverse, inclusive and sustainable economy across Staffordshire, developing local skills which enable more people to access higher value, better paid jobs across a wide range of priority and locally important sectors.”**

4.14. The mission for local employment and skills stakeholders is to:

4.15. “Create strong and effective partnerships which support our people to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their ambitions and play a productive role in the growth of the Staffordshire economy.”

5. Our shared employment and skills priorities

5.1. Fundamental to our strategy are the cross-cutting priorities of developing **digital and green skills** to support the adoption of new innovative and productive technologies and to transition our economy to net zero.

5.2. Beyond these cross-cutting priorities, we recognise the similarities but also the diversity that exists across the county and with this in mind our suggested employment and skills priorities are:

Priority 1: Creating an Aspirational and Active Workforce – Work across our communities to provide employment and skills support to ensure all can access work and be productive, creating a more inclusive local economy with reduced labour shortages, increased economic activity and greater transition to work.

Priority 2: Providing Inspirational Careers Advice - Continue to develop inspirational Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to ensure that all residents have access to the information and advice they need to make informed career choices and have a productive and prosperous career.

Priority 3: Developing Technical Skills to Drive Productivity and Growth – Create a flexible Staffordshire-wide skills system that responds to local business needs now and, in the future, particularly in priority growth sectors which increases productivity and economic growth through technical skills development (including apprenticeships, T- Levels, Institute of Technology) e.g.

- Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing (Automation/AI/Machine Learning)
- Construction including Modern Methods (Automation/AI/Retrofitting)
- Advanced Logistics (Automation/AI)
- Health and Social Care (Digitisation of Services/New Technologies).



Priority 4: Supporting Innovation and Enterprise – Support entrepreneurial, enterprise and innovation skills that enable more residents to start-up and grow their own business.

Priority 5: Creating a Place of Learning - Embed the culture of life-long learning into the local labour force to support upskilling & retraining and progression to higher value, skilled and paid jobs.

5.3. These priorities are aligned to our shared and individual strategies and plans.

5.4. Our priorities have clear interdependencies and the action we take to deliver on each of them will have broader impact on local employment and skills.

6. Our approach

6.1. Our approach to deliver this strategy across Staffordshire and its districts and boroughs will be:

- To work in partnership to leverage and align public sector investment e.g., the Levelling Up Fund, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- To match and maximise public and private sector investment e.g., Apprenticeship Levy
- To work with government on the opportunities for more powers and funding through devolution e.g., Adult Education Budget
- To maximise employer investment in skills and involvement in the design of skills provision
- To shape and influence the strategic commissioning of other funds and priorities e.g., HS2, West Midlands Freight Interchange, A50 A500 Strategic Corridor, the LSIP as a route to delivering technical skills

Contact details

Sponsor(s): Dave Heywood / Darryl Evers / Tony Baines

Report author(s): Darren Farmer / Dave Poole

Job title: Economy and Skills Analyst

Organisation: Staffordshire County Council

Telephone: 01785 276672

E-mail: darren.farmer@staffordshire.gov.uk



Staffordshire Leaders Board

9 March 2023

Code of Joint Working Arrangements with District and Borough Councils for Health Scrutiny

What is the Leaders Board being asked to do?

- a) Consider and approve the revised Code of Joint Working Arrangements (Joint Code) with District and Borough Councils for Health Scrutiny.
- b) The Leaders of each District and Borough Council consider adopting the Joint Code.

Background

1. The Code of Joint Working Arrangements with District and Borough Councils for Health Scrutiny has been reviewed and refreshed to develop the health scrutiny function across Staffordshire and to foster good relationships with District and Borough Council scrutiny committees and Health Partners.
2. The statutory responsibility for Health Scrutiny lies with Staffordshire County Council as the social care authority, the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers health, adult social care, and public health matters. Scrutiny of wider determinants of health falls within the District/ Borough scrutiny function.
3. The Joint Code was first introduced in 2003 to provide guidance to County and District/Borough Scrutiny processes. In essence, matters that had a Staffordshire wide theme be scrutinised by the County, whilst the local District/Borough scrutiny arrangements were intended to deal with matters that had a local theme.
4. The Joint Code was updated in 2015 in response to Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013, implications of the Francis Report, and the changes to the structure of the Health Service. This was to ensure health matters were being scrutinised in the right forum and to avoid duplication. The Joint Code was signed by District/ Borough Leaders in 2015.
5. The Health and Care Act 2022 has introduced the Integrated Care System and new ways of working. Existing regulations from 2014 on



health scrutiny remain in force for the time being but there will be new powers for the Secretary of State to intervene in local health services from July 2023. Around this, the role and functions of health scrutiny will be changing, and it is important to prepare for these changes. It is therefore timely to refresh working arrangements and re-launch the Joint Code.

6. The Chairman, District / Borough Chairmen and support officers refer to the Joint Code to determine the method for scrutiny of any item that is of interest to both County and District/Boroughs:
 - o Countywide issues are considered by the County (e.g. System Pressures)
 - o Local issues may be considered by the Districts/Boroughs (e.g. Cannock MIU) by mutual agreement.
 - o Joint scrutiny (e.g. Walleys Quarry or Integrated Care Hubs in North Staffordshire) considered by the County and one or more Districts/Boroughs.
 - o All Staffordshire Member Webinars (e.g. GP access) County, District/ Boroughs and Parish Councils.
7. The Staffordshire County Council Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee has 21 members: 13 County Council and 8 District and Borough representatives (The Chairman of each District Committee with the remit for Health and Wellbeing).
8. District/ Borough Committee structures, remits and support staff have changed considerably since 2015. The Health Scrutiny Officers Group (HSOG) has been refreshed and the Terms of Reference forms part of the revised Joint Code.
9. The Health Scrutiny Officer Group, the Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Chairman and the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Forum were all consulted when drafting the revised Joint Code.

Next Steps

10. The Leaders of the District and Borough Councils will be requested to seek approval from their respective Councils to formally agree, sign and adopt the document.
11. The Joint Code would need to be signed by all District and Borough Councils.
12. To ensure consistency, each District and Borough Council would be required to include the following within their respective Constitutions:
 - a. The Council has agreed a Code of Joint Working between the District/ Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council in relation to Overview and Scrutiny of health matters.



- b. In accordance with the agreed code:
 - i. the County Council shall discharge the overview and scrutiny function under the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and subsequent guidance including the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.
 - ii. the [*Borough/District*] Chairman of the [*relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee*] Committee will be appointed to Staffordshire County Council’s Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
 - iii. the County Council is entitled to appoint one of its members to the [*relevant Borough/District Overview & Scrutiny Committee*] in relation to health matters.

Contact details

Sponsor(s): John Tradewell /Chris Eberley
Report author: Deb Breedon
Job title: Scrutiny and Support Manager
Organisation: Staffordshire County Council
Telephone: 01785 276016
E-mail: deborah.breedon@staffordshire.gov.uk

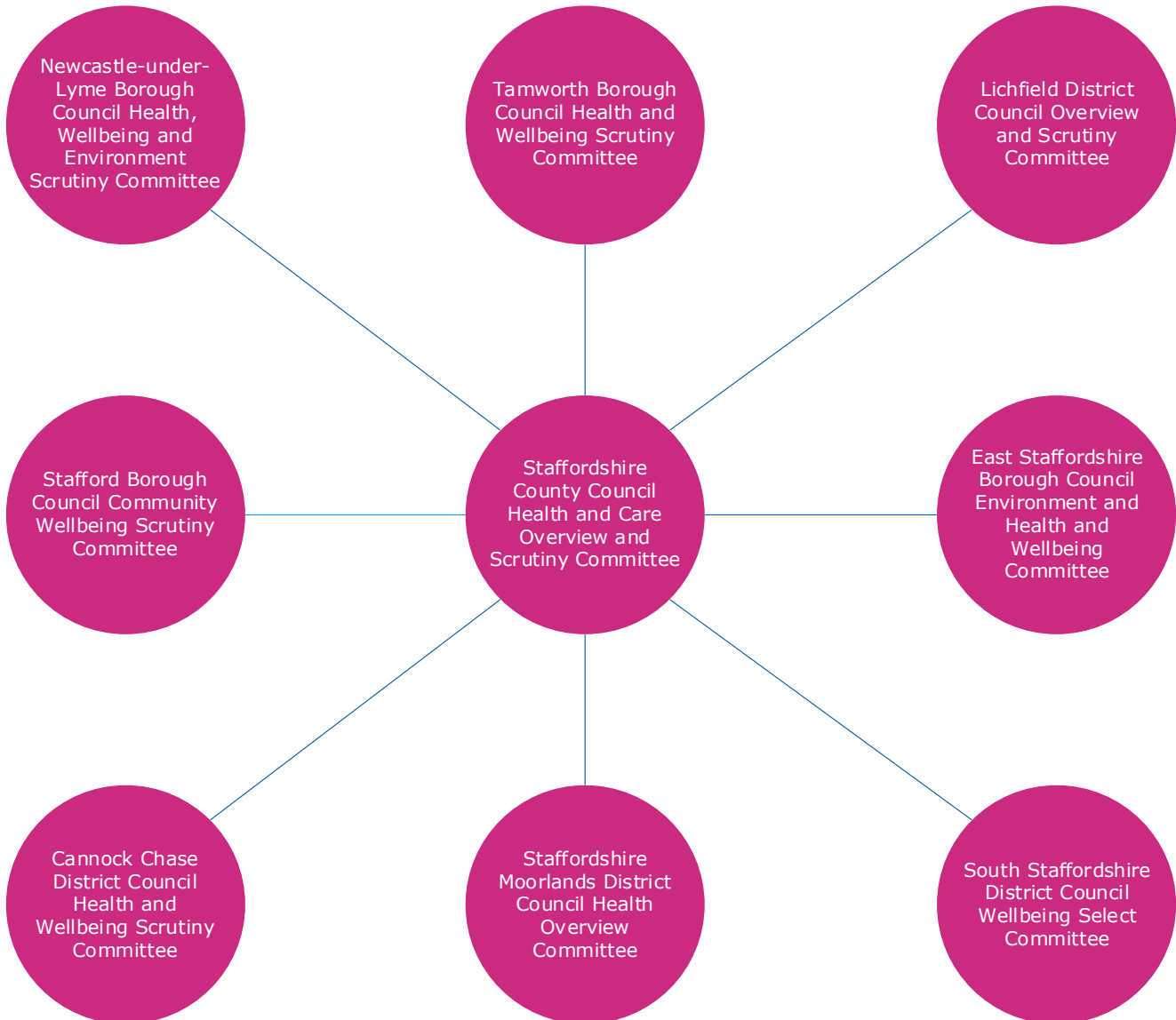
Appendices: The Joint Code

Staffordshire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Code of Joint Working – Local Authorities

1. Background

- 1.1 The Health and Social Care Act 2001 (“the Act”), as amended by the National Health Service Act 2006, provides local authorities with social services functions and powers to undertake scrutiny of health matters as detailed in the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 (The Regulations).
- 1.2 The remit of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be found in Staffordshire County Councils constitution.
- 1.3 The County Council and the eight District/Borough Councils in the county agreed to operate joint working arrangements for health scrutiny in 2003 (amended in 2014).



2. General Principles

- 2.1 The Health and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee carries out Health Scrutiny activity in Staffordshire on the basis of the following working principles (and meeting statutory requirements where applicable):
- a. **Scope of Health Scrutiny** - The intended outcome of health scrutiny activity is the improvement of the health and wellbeing of the people of Staffordshire. The Staffordshire County Council Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HCOSC) may review and scrutinise any matter relating to the planning, provision, and operation of health services in its area.
 - b. **Co-operation** - The authorities involved must be willing to share knowledge, respond to requests for information, initiatives and reports as appropriate. The County and District Councils will work together and mutually agree who will scrutinise each topic to ensure that nothing is overlooked and to avoid duplication of effort.
 - c. **Accountability** - The process of health scrutiny will be open and transparent. The HCOSC cannot delegate its statutory power to Districts/ Boroughs (paragraph 1.1).
 - d. **Code ownership** - The document will be owned by the County Council and will be reviewed annually in partnership with District and Boroughs.

3. Governance

- 3.1 Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- a. The **County Council** will lead on matters that can best be dealt with at a county wide level.
 - b. 21 Members appointed annually: 13 County Councillors and a councillor from each District/ Borough (8) (see point 3.3a).
 - c. The District/Borough Councillor can nominate a substitute if they are unable to attend a meeting. The County Council should be notified prior to the meeting and the substitute will have full voting rights.
 - d. The **County Council may ask a lead District / Borough Council** to carry out scrutiny of an issue, which the County Council believes can be best dealt with at a district level which is specific to their geographical area. This may be singly or jointly with other District/Borough Councils. The capacity of committees and partners



to carry out scrutiny activity should be taken into consideration when planning scrutiny of an issue.

- e. **District and Borough Councils may ask the County Council** to carry out scrutiny of an issue that is of a strategic nature or is county-wide.

3.2 District and Borough Committees:

- a. Each District and Borough Committee operates in line with their terms of reference in their constitutions. As per 3.1 d The HCOSC may ask it to consider:
 - i. Locality specific commissioning proposals that solely affect health and wellbeing activities within that district/ borough, whoever they are provided for;
 - ii. matters which have been agreed with the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - iii. District/Borough services that interface with planning for and providing health services - for example, but not exclusively, housing, leisure and environmental health service; and relevant locality specific partnerships

3.3 Appointment of representatives:

- a. The Chair from each District/ Borough Scrutiny Committee which holds the remit for Health and Wellbeing matters will be appointed to the HCOSC and will have full voting rights. Their role is to:
 - i. Provide updates from their relevant Committee to the HCOSC.
 - ii. Report back on any issue which the HCOSC has requested the relevant Committee to scrutinise.
- b. One County Councillor will be appointed to each District/Borough Committee with full voting rights on the respective Committee. The appointment will be made by the County Council annually. The representative will provide updates from HCOSC to the District/Borough Committee.

3.4 Health Scrutiny Officers Group:

- a. The terms of reference is appended to this code.



Appendix 1 – FAQs

1. Why does the County Council scrutinise the big issues such as the ICS Transformation Programme and ambulance waiting times? Borough/Districts also want to look at how these issues affect services in our area and our residents.

The Transformation Programme covers services across Staffordshire County. The joint code ensures that representatives from all 8 District Councils have a seat on the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to raise local issues and that a representative from the County Committee has a seat on the District Committees to report back to District Councils on matters discussed. Any specific questions can be channelled through the local representatives on the committee.

2. Should Borough/District Councils invite NHS providers to their meeting to scrutinise a particular issue?

Largely no unless the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed with the Borough/District Council that it should be the lead authority for scrutiny. The reason for this is to avoid NHS providers attending 8 Borough/District Council meetings, Staffordshire Council has the responsibility for health scrutiny under the Health and Social Care Act and to avoid duplication of effort.

3. Can a Borough/District Council scrutinise the performance of a local GP surgery?

The performance of a GP Surgery does not fall under the scrutiny remit. GPs are commissioned under contract by the ICS and the quality management of their contract is through NHS England. There are other ways for local members to discuss concerns about local surgeries directly with the ICS, but a public scrutiny meeting is not the appropriate forum.

4. Can a Borough/District Council scrutinise access to GP surgeries in their area?

The Primary Access Plan is a countywide plan and includes access to GP surgeries. This is scrutinised by the Staffordshire Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Representatives from District and Borough Councils have equal opportunity to question witnesses about progress of actions in the plan to improve access to GP surgeries across the region.



5. Can a Borough/District Council scrutinise issues such as NHS Dentistry provision?

The provision of NHS Dentistry is a countywide contract, currently led by NHS England, this will change in April 2023 when the ICS takes on the contractual role. This should be looked at in a strategic nature by the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

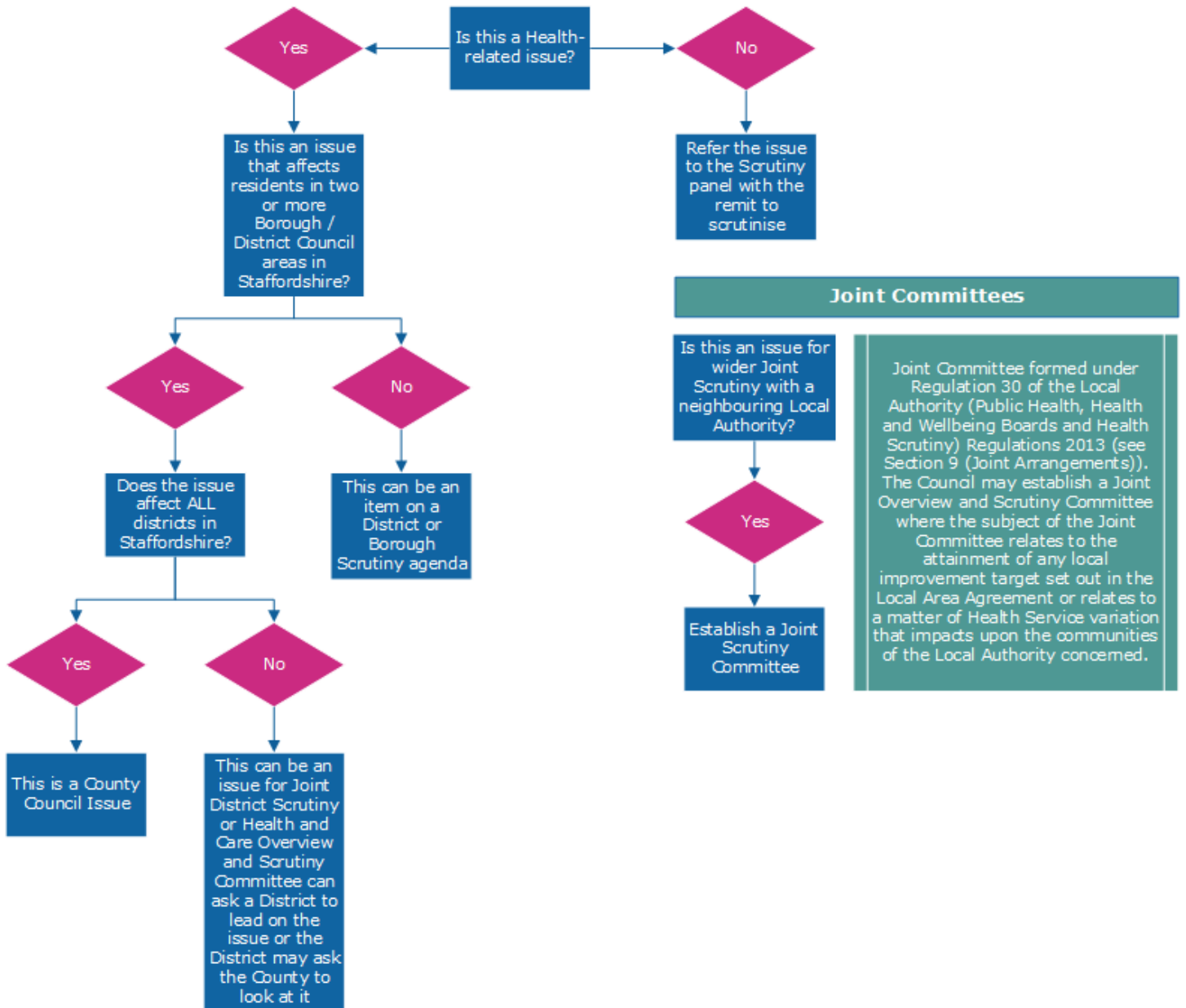
6. What should a Borough/District Council do if their Committee wants to scrutinise a health issue that was the responsibility of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee?

The Borough/ District Member appointed to the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (i.e. the chairman of the Borough/District committee) should bring the matter to the attention to the Chairman of the Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee under the terms of this Joint Code of Working.



Appendix 2 – Joint Code of Working with Districts and Boroughs

Plan for where scrutiny of an issue takes place, as determined by the County Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman in consultation with the relevant Committee Members and agreed by the Committee in the Work Programme.



Appendix 3 – Health Scrutiny Officers Group

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

1.1 The Health Scrutiny Officers Group (HSOG) has been formed to support the Staffordshire County Council Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HCOSC) and District and Borough Scrutiny arrangements.

2. Membership

2.1 The membership will consist of:

- a. Officer representatives from Staffordshire County Council
- b. At least one officer representative from each District / Borough

2.2 Other advisers and partners may be invited to the Group on an ongoing or ad-hoc basis as appropriate.

3. Terms of Reference

3.1 The main aims of the Group is to mutually support the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing function in achieving its aims and objectives.

3.2 The group may:

- a. Put forward items of business to the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- b. Inform the process of work programme planning and delivery;
- c. Discuss and report on matters of note on health and care across Staffordshire; and
- d. Establish an appropriate mechanism to carry out the scrutiny function and consider the scrutiny arrangements at Districts and Boroughs.

4. Ways of Working

4.1 The Group will meet twice annually as a minimum. Meetings will be organised and administered by the County Council. Meetings will be chaired by the County Council.

