

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

Monday, 12 May 2014

2.00 pm

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

John Tradewell
Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation
1 May 2014

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 24 April 2014** (Pages 1 - 6)
4. **Achieving Excellence: Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire (part 2)** (Pages 7 - 16)
Report of the Cabinet Member, Children, Communities and Localism
5. **Learning and Skills Strategy** (Pages 17 - 48)
Report of the Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills
6. **Work Programme** (Pages 49 - 52)
7. **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 Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

nil

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Committee Membership

George Adamson	Rachel Kidd-Smithers
Ann Beech	Geoff Martin
Len Bloomer	Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf
Maureen Compton	Geoff Morrison
Mark Deaville	Martyn Tittley (Vice-Chairman)
Brian Edwards (Chairman)	Diane Todd
Deborah Kay	Ellen Wright

Scrutiny and Support Manager: Tina Randall Tel: (01785) 276148

Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Meeting held on 24 April 2014

Present: Brian Edwards (Chairman)

Ann Beech
Len Bloomer
Maureen Compton

Geoff Martin
Martyn Tittley (Vice-Chairman)

Also in attendance: Gill Heath, Mark Winnington and Susan Woodward

Apologies: George Adamson, Mark Deaville, Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf, Geoff Morrison, Diane Todd and Ellen Wright

PART ONE

50. Declarations of Interest

There were none on this occasion.

51. Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 7 March 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee meeting held on 7 March 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

52. The new Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015-2030) Draft for consultation

The Select Committee were updated on the preparation of a new Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire. Staffordshire quarries produced about two thirds of the sand and gravel sold in the West Midlands, the greatest amount of clay and shale compared with any other county in England and had one of only 12 cement kilns in the UK. 80% of the anhydrite used in the cement industry was also produced from Staffordshire's only mine. The Minerals industry employed 700 people in Staffordshire and a further 4000 related jobs. Given the importance of the minerals industry to the economy, it was important that Staffordshire had a Local Plan that was effective in guiding decisions on mineral planning applications.

In preparing the new Minerals Local Plan, it had been necessary to take into account the circumstances that had changed since the adoption of the 2006 Plan, including:

- new legal requirements such as the "duty to cooperate" on issues that had cross boundary impacts;
- the National Planning Policy Framework which set out the basis for assessing whether a Local Plan was "sound";
- the quality of remaining permitted reserves to meet anticipated demand; and
- lessons learnt through decision making on planning applications and monitoring mineral development.

On 3 April 2014 the Staffordshire County Council's Planning Committee had approved a draft of the new Plan for public consultation. This consultation would provide an opportunity for feedback on draft policies and proposals prior to preparing a final draft of the Plan which would be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The consultation would begin in May and run for at least six weeks, with consultation documents available on the County Council's web site with a full range of consultees invited to provide feedback on the draft policies and proposals. Following the initial consultation it was anticipated that the final draft plan would be available for comment in November/ December prior to it being submitted to the Secretary of State in Spring 2015.

The new Plan was based on a vision for mineral development in the county to be achieved by 2030. As part of that vision six policies were proposed for determining planning applications and Members received details of these.

The Cabinet Member, Economy and Infrastructure, reassured Members that the intention was to extend existing quarries rather than open new quarry sites. He also informed the Select Committee of the need to work closely with the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure that careful consideration was given to the choice of site for housing, with mineral resources extracted prior to housing developments.

Members raised concerns over the number of HCVs accessing quarry sites and the difficulties this presented for the infrastructure, specifically on rural roads. Members wished to ensure that access and infrastructure was addressed in the Plan.

Members referred to gas extraction and asked whether this had been explored in the County, in particular whether there was any intention to extract shale gas. At present there was no indication that Staffordshire was of interest to any private industry with regard to shale extraction.

It was suggested that a small working group be set up to consider the Plan in more detail and produce a response to the consultation on behalf of the Select Committee. The following members agreed to take part in this working group:

Ann Beech
Geoff Martin
Len Bloomer
Martyn Tittley

Those members not present at today's meeting would also be invited to take part in this working group.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and the working group be established to prepare the Select Committee response to the Minerals Local Plan consultation.

53. Briefing Report: Staffordshire Rural Forum

The Cabinet Support Member, Environment and Rural Affairs, informed Members of progress with regard to the Staffordshire Rural Forum. This Rural Forum was an

informal network of organisations with an economic, environmental or social remit which took a strategic view of the needs of rural communities, businesses and the rural environment. The aim of the Forum was to represent, act and collaborate on behalf of Staffordshire's rural businesses and communities, to address challenges and exploit opportunities that resulted in tangible and sustainable economic, social, community and environmental benefits for the county's rural areas.

By early 2013 multi-organisational agreement had been reached on collective beliefs and key values and behaviours which were contained within the Staffordshire Rural declaration, signed by over 40 organisations. The Rural Forum's priorities and desired outcomes were published in the Staffordshire Rural Strategy. This strategy encouraged a partnership approach to opportunities and addressing the issues of greatest need within rural Staffordshire.

80% of Staffordshire was rural, with 25% of its population living within these communities. Congratulations went to the officers and Cabinet Support Member for the progress made on this issue.

Members noted that all District and Borough Councils within Staffordshire had signed the Rural Declaration except Newcastle Borough Council. Although Newcastle had been invited to participate they had not responded to the invitations. Mrs Ann Beech agreed to discuss the appropriate contact with officers so that this could be addressed.

The Cabinet Support Member had referred to using rural post offices more effectively and Members asked what this would entail. The suggestion was to consider the possibility of using them as community hubs. Officers had been in contact with representatives from the Post Office and had received assurances that no post office presence would be lost.

Members were pleased to see the developments made through the Rural Forum. They referred to a recent publicity campaign which promoted Staffordshire as the "hidden county" and asked that the Select Committee receive details of tourism within rural Staffordshire and the wider county. The Cabinet Member, Economy and Infrastructure, informed the Select Committee that he had recently agreed a delegated decision on the strategic plan for Staffordshire which used a range of social media and technology to promote the County. £100,000 of European funding had been used to support tourism in Staffordshire, advertising the County as "Staffordsheer enjoyment/excitement/relaxation". Tourism was worth £1.2b to Staffordshire and had increased by 30% over the last few years.

RESOLVED – That a) the progress on the Staffordshire Rural Declaration and the work of the Rural Forum be noted; and
b) Mrs Ann Beech help establish the appropriate Newcastle Borough Council contact officer to give consideration to signing the Rural Declaration.

54. Chasewater Country Park

Chasewater Country Park was one of six country parks owned by Staffordshire County Council. The Council had taken over management responsibility of Chasewater on 1 April 2014 from Lichfield District Council.

The Chasewater project was divided into two phases. Phase 1 sought an operational budget for the Park from 1 April 2014, which had been secured. The operational budget supported the delivery of a minimum level operating model and a development resource focused on mitigating the Park's budgetary pressure through reducing running costs and increasing revenue streams. Phase 2 was the production and approval of a development plan for Chasewater which aimed to maximise the economic, health, social and environmental value of the Park.

Nine initial strategic options had been identified and through the appraisal process a mixed delivery model could be chosen. Members considered the nine options and considered the site, understanding that most of the site was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which would impact on any future development.

Members were excited by the possibilities for this site and felt there was a lot of potential. A Centre Parks style approach was suggested as a way forward, augmenting with the other Staffordshire attractions. The possibility of some commercial development was suggested as a key facet to the future of Chasewater, as it was in a prime location for such development, encouraging more people to visit and stay in Staffordshire. However the site was on green belt land, with 75% of the site being a triple SSSI, and therefore any development would need to be appropriate.

Work had already been undertaken to establish a route between Chasewater and the Cannock Chase Visitors Centre at Marquis Drive, Hednesford, which would be approximately 7 miles in length. The possibility of promoting a cycle route between the two Centres was also being explored.

Members felt that the use of the site for school parties should be expanded as this presented some fantastic opportunities.

Mrs Sue Woodward, local member, told the Select Committee that she was excited to see the options suggested and the possibilities for the future of Chasewater. Mrs Woodward had grown up in the area and had fond memories of Chasewater. She informed Members that the site was already looking better after some initial maintenance from the County Council. There was great potential to improve the health and wellbeing of the local community and the surrounding area and for the local community to take ownership of the opportunities it presented. Chasewater was half a mile away from where the Staffordshire Hoard had been found and Mrs Woodward suggested that a Mercian Trail could link these facilities with other local tourism attractions such as Tamworth Castle and Lichfield Cathedral.

Mrs Woodward reported that Burntwood Town Council had suggested a myriad of ideas for the future of Chasewater. There were many possibilities and Mrs Woodward suggested that this facility would be beneficial for youth services, those with disabilities or learning disabilities. The facility also gave opportunities for jobs and for developing the economy. She was pleased to see the shared enthusiasm for this project.

A recent report had been requested by the Cabinet Member, Economy and Infrastructure, to establish the value to Staffordshire. The value had been established as £7b based on what was calculable, however the actual value was expected to be in

excess of this. Chasewater had the opportunity to contribute to the health economy of the County as well as to its leisure and tourism.

RESOLVED – That the Select Committee note the transfer of Chasewater Country Park from Lichfield District Council to Staffordshire County Council and the possibilities for its development.

55. Roll out of Broadband

At their meeting of 21 March 2012 Cabinet approved £7.44m capital expenditure as match funding to Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) funding to extend the superfast broadband network across Staffordshire. Having undertaken a framework procurement exercise BT was awarded the contract. By 2016 97% of the premises in Staffordshire would be connected to the fibre broadband network. The project would be delivered in 8 phases over the two year fibre deployment period, starting in 2014 and due for completion in 2016. Over 500 individual structures would be upgraded during this period, deploying 1 million metres of fibre in the process.

Approximately 90,000 premises in the intervention area would be connected to the fibre network. Communities would start to benefit from May 2014 and would be able to order superfast broadband services. The first communities to benefit would be Rugeley, Colton, Ash Bank, Clifton Campville, Marchington, Yarnfield, Yoxall, Kings Bromley, Burntwood, Heath Hayes and Penkrige. It was anticipated that additional communities would be announced on a quarterly basis as the project progressed.

This project had developed quickly and the Cabinet Member. Economy and Infrastructure, congratulated Officers on the progress achieved. In particular he shared the excellent comments made as a result of the BDUK project assurance review on this project.

The County Council had ownership of the project, having funded the £7.44m. A claw back mechanism was in place, however if take up was greater than 20% the additional revenues would be shared between the funding partners (ie the County Council/BDUK and BT) pro-rata their investment. The County Council would reinvest this funding to address the final 5% of premises not able to access Superfast Broadband.

Members asked what the maximum distance from the green box was for receiving superfast broadband speeds. Although there was no firm data from BT on this it was suggested that between 1 and 1.2 kilometres away from the green box was the distance within which residents should receive the 24 megabits per second, with 1.8 kilometres line length being the distance where no appreciable difference would be seen.

In sixth months time an update report could be brought to the Select Committee to share the progress made and to highlight any solutions found to addressing the 5% unable to access superfast broadband.

RESOLVED – That the progress report be noted and that a further progress report be received in six months time.

56. Work Programme

The Scrutiny and Support Manager informed the Select Committee of the following suggested amendments to the work programme:

- the Rationalisation of Household Waste Recycling Centres, which was due to be considered at the 12 May Select Committee, had been withdrawn from that agenda following a decision at the 16 April 2014 Cabinet;
- a new item on the Learning and Skills Strategy would now be added to the 12 May Select Committee;
- a progress report updating members on the Ofsted Inspection of School Improvement Arrangements to be added to the work programme for consideration on 5 September 2014; and
- two extra items be added to the work programme on Tourism and an update on Superfast Broadband.

Members were aware that the issue of Sportshire and the legacy of the Olympic games had been referred to, and considered by Corporate Review Committee. Members asked that the appropriate extract from the minutes of Sportshire and the legacy of the Olympic Games item be circulated to members so that they can reassure themselves that the Olympic legacy had been debated.

Members were informed that Mr Neil Taylor's (Parent Governor Representative) term of office had now finished and the Select Committee agreed that a letter thanking him for his contribution should be sent.

RESOLVED – That, a) the amendments to the work programme be approved; and b) the extract of the Corporate Review Committee minutes on Sportshire and the Olympic Games legacy be circulated to Members.

Chairman

Documents referred to in these minutes as Schedules are not appended, but will be attached to the signed copy of the Minutes of the meeting. Copies, or specific information contained in them, may be available on request.

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 12 May 2014

Achieving Excellence - Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire (part 2)

Recommendation

1. To agree the methodology being used to assess the library offer

Report of Michael Lawrence Cabinet Member for Children, Communities & Localism

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

2. To consider and comment upon the methodology that will be used to assess the library offer. This is an opportunity for the Committee to influence and shape both criteria and models which will be used to adapt and reposition Staffordshire's library offer so that it makes a more effective and relevant contribution to the lives of local residents.
3. The library service welcomes comments from the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee which will be reported to Cabinet at their meeting on 18th June 2014 for them to take into account in their consideration of the subsequent proposals.

Report

Background

4. Under the Public Libraries & Museums Act 1964, public library services are a statutory duty for local authorities who are required to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service. To comply with the act local authorities must:
 - Provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons in the area that want to make use of it (section 7)
 - Promote the service (section 7(2)(b))
 - Lend books and other printed material free of charge for those who live, work or study in the area (section 8(3)(b))

The Government superintends councils' role and has a duty to:

- Oversee and promote the public library service (section 1(1))
- Take action where a local authority fails to perform its duties (section 10)

This role is currently undertaken by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The Secretary of State of the DCMS is Sajid Javid. The Minister responsible for libraries is Ed Vaizey.

Current Position

5. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee discussed proposals to adapt and reposition Staffordshire's library offer and agreed a report on 19th December 2013. A commitment was made to update the Committee and seek further involvement in the process following Cabinet approval of the model and the first engagement phase. Input from the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee will inform a second paper, Achieving Excellence – Libraries in a connected Staffordshire: part 2 which will be discussed at Cabinet on 18th June 2014
6. On 15 January 2014 Cabinet agreed the tiered model for Staffordshire's library offer which included the following:
 - A virtual (online) offer
 - A physical offer at a locality / town level
 - A physical offer at a community/ village level
7. During February 2014 a first engagement phase was held which:
 - Began the conversation with communities and raised awareness that libraries need to adapt to better serve their needs.
 - Encouraged staff, stakeholders and individuals to have their say and contribute to the proposals that we're developing
 - Registered contact details from people who wish to be involved in the formal consultation proposed for later this year, subject to Cabinet approval.
8. During this phase District Managers held stakeholder conversations with 107 partners and organisations. These discussions highlighted the importance of libraries to our partners, particularly in terms of libraries as a social space, somewhere to meet, the hub of the community, a safe place. Vulnerable groups value the library. Meeting rooms are important to our partners/ stakeholders. Libraries are seen as having educational and socio-economic value, an important place for developing skills and seeking employment. Information services are also valued by stakeholders, both the traditional reference service and also use of PCs and Wi-Fi to access the internet and online reference resources.
9. We held 8 drop in coffee mornings in our District Libraries which were attended by approximately 350 people. There were 244 replies to the dedicated Connected Libraries mailbox and 1674 leaflets were returned with answers to the following questions:
 - How do you currently use your library?
 - How could your library do things differently to support more members of your community?
 - What do you need from your library service now and in the future?

- Do you have further ideas or suggestions on how Staffordshire Library service could develop?

10. During the engagement phase our customers and stakeholders told us that:

- They use the library to borrow, learn, visit, gain information, read newspapers, find out about local history, find out what is going on in the community, socialise, attend events and training courses, use computers, use the photocopier, study, bring children, and hire the meeting rooms.
- The social value of libraries is important with stakeholders highlighting the importance of libraries in supporting education and job seeking. Libraries have become a place not only where knowledge can be found, but more proactively where people can access training and develop new skills
- Libraries are valued as a community space where people can socialise and relax. They are seen as safe places which are neutral and non –judgmental.
- While some people do not want to replace staff with volunteers, others do see the potential of volunteers as a way of maintaining or extending services and to fulfil specific roles
- Libraries have a role to play in the community. Many people value the library service, wish it to remain and the words “vital” and “essential” appear repeatedly in the feedback.

11. All library staff were given the opportunity to comment online to share their aspirations and expectations for the library service as it is remodelled. Over a third of front line library staff were also engaged with directly through discussions facilitated by their District Manager.

12. During the staff engagement, library staff told us that:

- Libraries are currently used by a wide range of people from all ages and all backgrounds including vulnerable groups and individuals.
- They anticipate that our future customers will have additional needs and that there will be increased demand from the service due to an aging population. It is also expected that there will be more people accessing the service online.
- There is a need to market the offer effectively and work with local partners to enhance local services.
- The virtual/online offer could be enhanced.

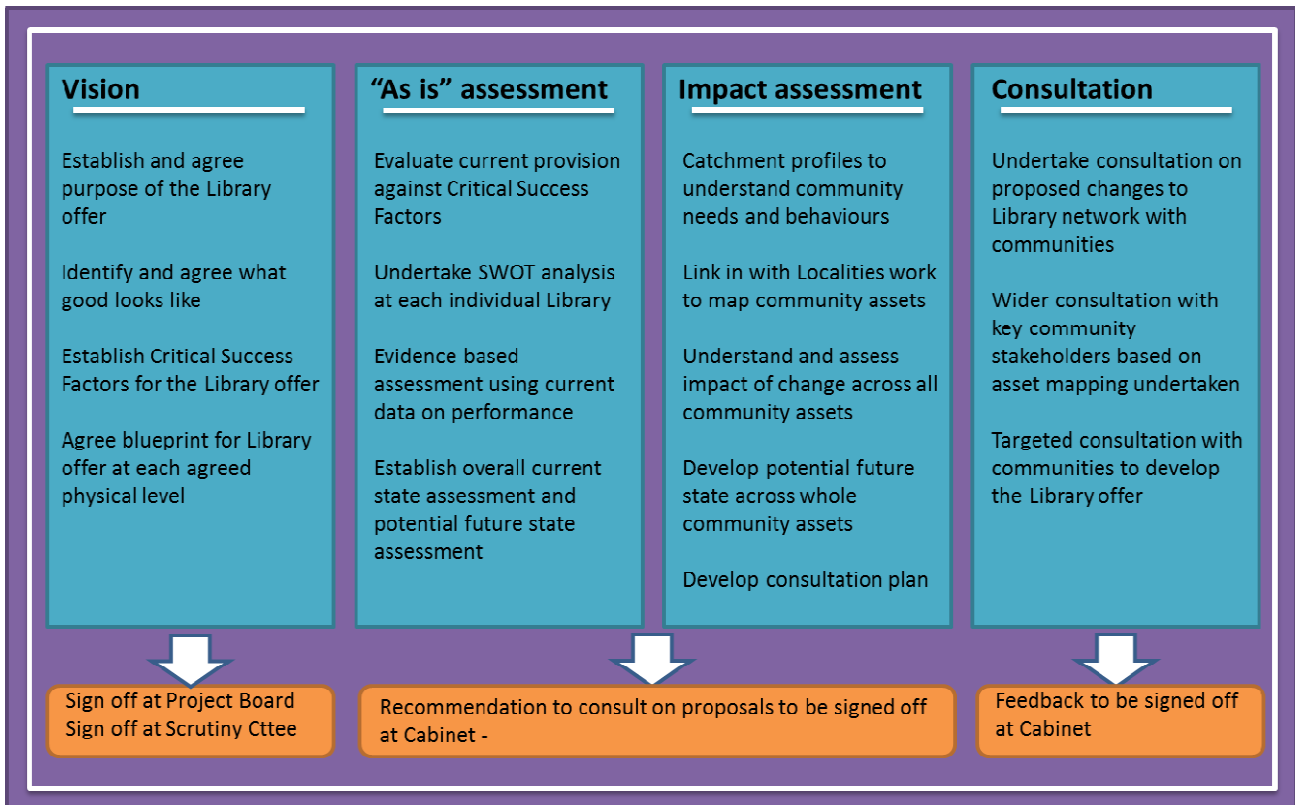
13. Having analysed what communities, customers and library staff are telling us and made an assessment against the critical success factors, we have further clarified the levels for the library offer and recommend the following, these are clarified later in this report:

- Virtually – Library Plus
- Physically at a locality level – Library Extra
- Physically at a town level - Library
- Physically at a community/ village level – Library Local

Key Considerations

14. As outlined in Achieving Excellence – Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire: Part 1, the way that people access information and learning, the way they socialise and interact with each other or with organisations continues to evolve in the digital age. The core principles of a library are described in Achieving Excellence – Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire: Part 1. However expectations of libraries already have and will continue to change so we need to adapt our library service so that it remains a relevant and valued part of the community, whilst also ensuring it is affordable.
15. In addition to these changing patterns of use, the Library Service has changed the way it operates to deliver £1.1m of savings over 5 years without any building closures or reductions of opening hours. This has been achieved through a combination of reducing management and support services and reducing investment in new books and other resources. There is now a need to save a further £1.325 million by 2016/2017 as part of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
16. The introduction of the Commissioning Framework in early 2013 changed Staffordshire County Council's approach to the delivery of services. The Commissioning Framework seeks to deliver better outcomes for people and communities rather than directly delivering services, and seeks to do so through the most appropriate and value for money solution. This encourages innovation and creativity in finding ways of providing what people want and need that may not necessarily be directly through the County Council. The role of the County Council is therefore changing into seeking out, developing and facilitating new approaches that encourage personal responsibility amongst communities in order to achieve outcomes.
17. It is intended to review the Library offer in Staffordshire based on this commissioning context and also the Art Council England's report 'Envisioning the Library of the Future' and the Society of Chief Librarian's Universal Offers. The outcome of this review is to identify a "tiered" library offer.
18. This report outlines the approach being taken to reviewing the current Library offer in order to engage Member input into this approach prior to finalising the evaluation of each individual Library and identifying what the future network might look like.

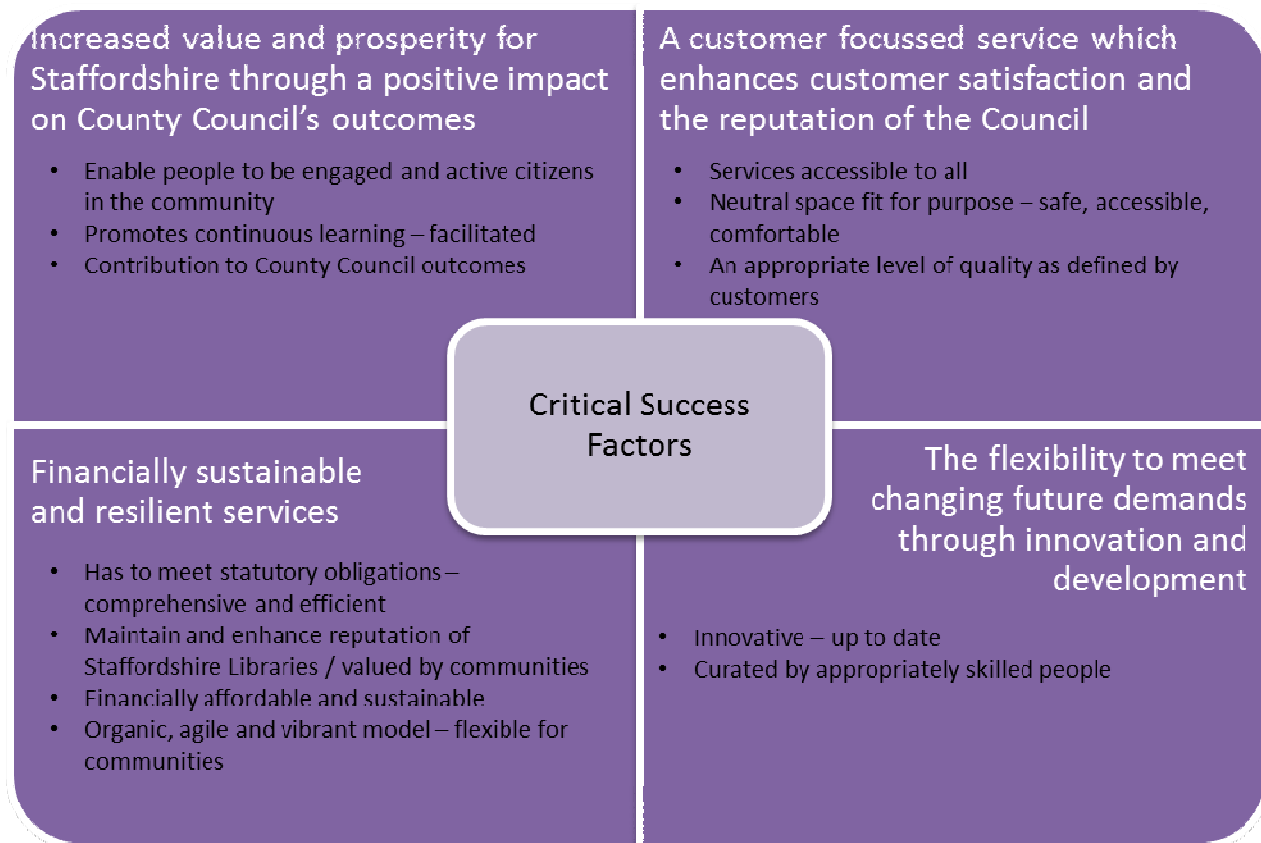
19. The approach being taken to review the Library offer is summarised in the diagram below:



20. At present the project is into the "As is" assessment stage, evaluating each individual Library against the agreed Critical Success Factors. Prior to completion of this stage, it is important to ensure the methodology being used is understood and agreed by key stakeholders in order to achieve buy-in to future proposals when they are identified.
21. At the first stage, we re-affirmed the purpose of the Library offer as outlined in Achieving Excellence – Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire: Part 1 as follows:

Enabling people to access, explore and enjoy learning, reading and knowledge

22. In view of this purpose and taking into account feedback from the early engagement exercise we have developed four Critical Success Factors (CSF). These identify what a good Library offer looks like and how it contributes to wider outcomes. The critical success factors have been established as follows:



23. The table below shows how the critical success factors can be applied to determine each level for the library offer:

	Library Extra	Library	Library Local
Increased value and prosperity for Staffordshire through a positive contribution to SCC outcomes			
• Enable people to be engaged and active citizens in the community	This offer will be able to accommodate more partners and will be better integrated into the wider offer available to the community. It will, however, be limited in terms of how personalised it can be to any one particular community or need.	This offer will have less space to accommodate partners and wider service offer, but will be able to provide a more local and personalised offer than at the Library Extra level.	This level will provide the most personalised community focused offer and will also have some space to accommodate partners and contribute to wider outcomes. It will be limited in terms of the scope of services able to be offered due to space available.
• Promotes continuous learning – facilitated			
• Contribution to County Council outcomes			

A customer focussed service which enhances customer satisfaction and the reputation of the Council

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services accessible to all • Neutral space fit for purpose – safe, accessible, comfortable • An appropriate level of quality as defined by customers 	<p>Services will be fully accessible and there will be a broad range available. There will be scope to bring partners in and work across a number of priority areas. The offer will be broad and all inclusive, but will not be personalised to any one particular group or community.</p>	<p>There will be less space at this level than at the Library Extra level, but a smaller more localised offer will be able to adapt more readily to customer requirements</p>	<p>Services will be accessible to all and will all fit the neutral offer. Customers will have a greater say in designing the offer, but it will be limited in terms of the space and size available</p>
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Financially sustainable and resilient services

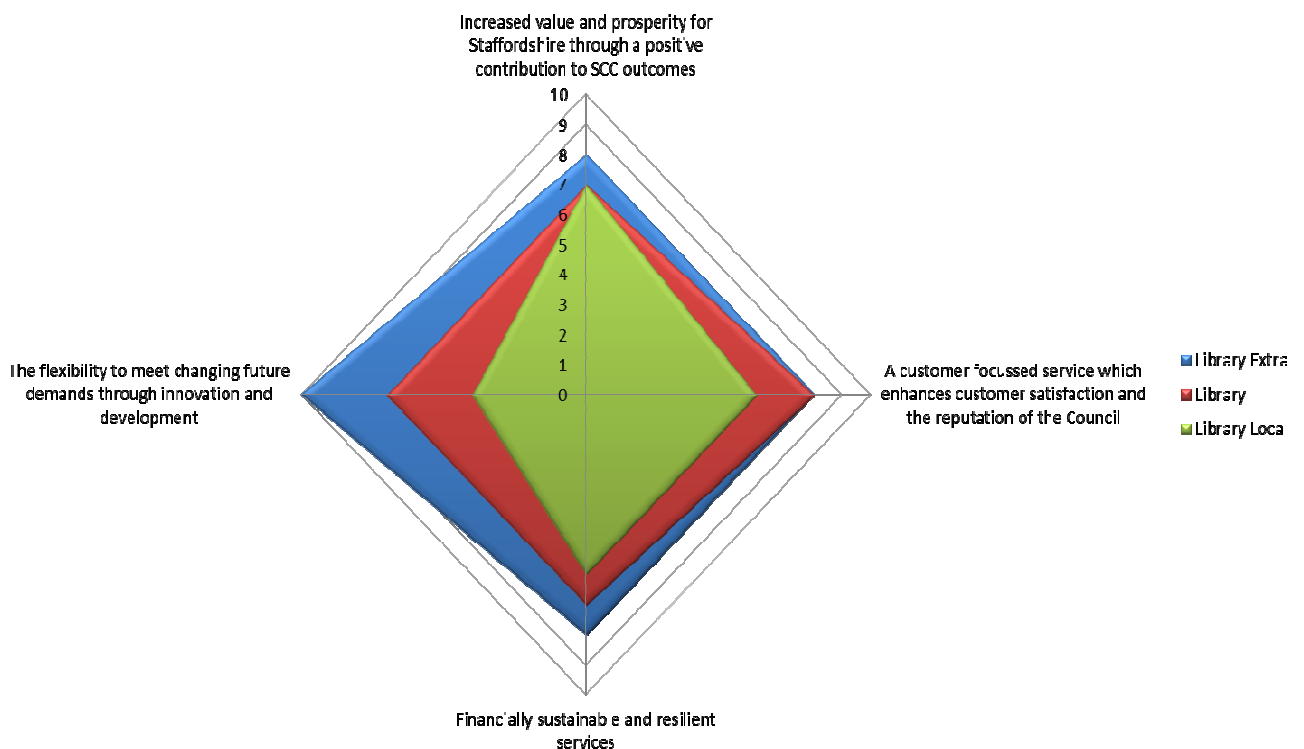
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has to meet statutory obligations – comprehensive and efficient • Maintain and enhance reputation of Staffordshire Libraries / valued by communities • Financially affordable and sustainable • Organic, agile and vibrant model – flexible for communities 	<p>This offer will meet statutory requirements and will enhance the reputation of the Council and service overall. It will be more expensive than a smaller facility and will be more difficult to adapt to the needs of specific communities quickly.</p>	<p>This offer will be similar to the Library Extra offer in terms of sustainability. However, where it is likely to have a slightly smaller offer, this may be slightly cheaper and more able to flex to the needs of communities.</p>	<p>This offer will meet statutory requirements and will enhance the reputation of the service locally. It will also be adaptable to the needs of the community quickly and effectively. However, it will be limited in size and scale of offer and whilst it will be cheaper to deliver, value for money will always be a real challenge at this level.</p>
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The flexibility to meet changing future demands through innovation and development

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative – up to date • Curated by appropriately skilled people 	<p>This offer will be the most innovative facility across the offer and will also have the space to accommodate highly specialised curatorial</p>	<p>This offer is likely to be very similar to the Library Extra offer, with a slightly reduced curatorial presence. It also is unlikely to provide strategic leadership to the</p>	<p>The scope for innovation and development at this level will be reliant on community input and is therefore likely to be localised and ad-</p>
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	resources who will strategically manage the wider library network.	wider network.	hoc overall due to this. Curatorial expertise will mainly be accessed through the higher level offer.
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24. Each Critical Success Factor was assigned a value which has helped to create the radar diagram below. This has helped to determine a blueprint of what ‘good’ should look like at each level of the library offer.



- 25. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis has been completed for each static library. The next step is to use the SWOTs to measure the current library offer at each library against the critical success factors.
- 26. The offer at each library will then be assessed against the blueprints to determine which level we are proposing for each library.
- 27. Summary sheets for individual libraries including details of existing opening hours, customer profiles, performance and library survey data will be used to validate this assessment.
- 28. The proposals for the library service will need to be viewed alongside the wider Staffordshire County Council work on localities and take into account the implications of the Locality Impact Assessments.

Next Steps

29. If this approach is agreed, specific recommendations to be tested with communities will be taken to Cabinet on 18th June 2014 as part of the next stage in this process.
30. To comply with our statutory duty we propose to consult formally on these proposals during a 12 week consultation period which will be managed with support from the Customer Insight & Engagement Team.
31. During the formal consultation the proposals will be brought to this committee for discussion to ensure that the process used to adapt and reposition Staffordshire's library offer is robust and transparent.
32. When the feedback from the formal consultation has been fully analysed, final recommendations with a full Community Impact Assessment will be taken back to Cabinet for consideration later this year.

Contact Officer

Report Commissioner: Janene Cox
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Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 12 May 2014

Achieving Excellence in Learning and Skills

Recommendation/s

1. That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee recognise the existing achievements of our education partners: staff, children, young people, parents and carers.
2. That Committee Members comment on and endorse the progress being made to bring about improvements in Learning and Skills in Staffordshire.

Report of Anna Halliday, Commissioner for Education and Wellbeing

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

3. The Select Committee is being asked to recognise the existing strengths of the learning and skills system in Staffordshire, and comment on the progress already being made to bring about further improvements.
4. The comments of the Select Committee will be reported to the Cabinet at their meeting on 21 May 2014 for them to take into account in their consideration of the strategy.

Report

Background

5. A good education is one of the best investments that can be made in life. The people of Staffordshire expect access to good schools for themselves and their children and family members, and Staffordshire's businesses cannot grow and innovate without the talents of a highly skilled local workforce. Our nurseries, schools, colleges, universities and training providers are powerful assets, as they are influential in creating the right conditions that enable our communities to thrive, individuals to realise their potential, and society to continue to develop culturally, economically and socially.
6. The way that the county council has traditionally been involved in the delivery of learning and skills, and in delivering its school improvement function in particular, may have been effective in the past, but in the modern world and with a global economy it is no longer fit for purpose. Our robust self-assessment and analysis of outcomes (as reviewed by the Select Committee Working Group Sept 2013 –

January 2014) tells us that there are many areas of attainment and opportunity in which Staffordshire's performance is average at best – and this is not good enough.

7. At the same time, the world in which we operate has continued to change rapidly. The government's policy direction revolves around granting greater independence to schools, academies, and education providers. The time is right to take full advantage of this flexibility for the benefit of Staffordshire people. Advances in technology are also affecting the entire learning and skills system, and mean that people themselves are accessing learning in different ways and there is greater demand for a more diverse range of outcomes from education. Choice and control mean that people are much more empowered to take responsibility and drive accountability through consumer choice.
8. The time is right to drive a step-change in how we work and the outcomes that we achieve together. This is now ready to be taken forward, as "Achieving Excellence for Learning and Skills".

Recent Progress

9. Staffordshire County Council and its partners have been working together to deliver a step-change in outcomes and performance in Learning and Skills. We have a positive record of success and have made significant progress over the last 12 months:
 - a. we have more schools graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted up from 65% in August 2012 to 74% in August 2013
 - b. we have around 7,200 more primary pupils and 2,500 more secondary pupils attending a good or better school in 2013 compared with the previous year
 - c. we have reduced by 21% the number of pupils attending schools graded as inadequate, which was down to 3% of pupils by August 2013
 - d. we have "core groups" established and operating to raise standards in every school where we have identified a cause for concern
 - e. we have secured a major investment into Skills through our City Deal, which includes a significant Skills programme to further strengthen apprenticeship participation and technical skill levels in advanced manufacturing and engineering
 - f. we have established a unique model of public-private sector partnership through our Education Trust which is operating to improve links between business and education locally including through curriculum innovation and careers advice and guidance
 - g. we have established an innovative joint venture partnership through Entrust, designed to deliver a one-stop-shop of services for schools
 - h. we have transformed our commissioning approach and operating model for school improvement to deliver more robust challenge, support and intervention so that schools improve
10. There are many and significant signs of progress in learning and skills. However, we know that we need to do more and to go further and faster if we are to achieve our bold ambitions for Staffordshire people. The strategy for Achieving Excellence in Learning and Skills sets out how we will achieve this.

Principles – Straight A's for Staffordshire

11. Our new approach is one that puts Staffordshire people in greater control of where and how they learn, and makes the most of freedoms and flexibilities available to us through the current policy environment. It means a greater connection with the pathways into work and economic innovation to ensure that skills and learning in the workforce meet the needs of local businesses, and it takes full advantage of the independence of Staffordshire's schools and education institutions.
12. A good education should be one that encourages people to think for themselves and be able to respond to life situations. Clearly this is a far wider remit than simply being able to deliver under exam conditions. Our strategy for this area therefore needs to be radical, bold and ambitious, and delivered jointly with all partners around a single set of principles. These principles foster:
 - Aspiration – so that individuals, families and communities cultivate high aspirations and raise their expectations of what they can expect and what can be achieved;
 - Access – so that there is fair and equitable access to excellent provision through a vibrant, dynamic and diverse market of providers, with genuine choice and control for the customer
 - Ambition – so that providers are ambitious about what they offer and the standards they deliver and that parents or carers are persistently ambitious for their children and young people's futures;
 - Attainment – so that the learning and skills outputs in terms of results , exam scores, levels of attainment and progress will continue to improve and will match with the latent potential of each individual and each cohort of learners;
 - Achievement – so that successful outcomes are enabling people to achieve their personal goals, to progress well, into good jobs, well-equipped to thrive and prosper in adult life;
 - Attitude – so that the culture and behaviours we most value are intrinsic to our approach including: promoting personal and community responsibility, stimulating innovation and enterprise, valuing volunteering, making positive and informed lifestyle choices, being prepared to go the extra-mile, solve problems, and be resilient and tenacious in driving for excellence.
13. This will be a very different approach, and mean a role for the county council which is much more focused on strategic leadership to marshal and mobilise the contribution of diverse stakeholders and partners across the local system.
14. We will be the facilitators and enablers, working with partners and providers to develop the customer offer, and supporting Staffordshire residents to take advantage of it. This needs to be a whole system approach – with every part of the learning and skills system operating to drive and deliver excellence for Staffordshire people. This is about working together to capitalise on every asset in local communities, make good use of the, freedoms and flexibilities that we have at a local level to build on local strengths and jointly tackle any weaknesses.

Seven Pillars of the Strategy

15. There are seven key components of the learning and skills system in Staffordshire, each of which is critical to delivering our aims. Achieving Excellence for Learning and Skills therefore details how each component will contribute to the overall success:
- **Effective System Leadership** – this promotes collaboration between partners, articulates the shared ambition, leads the strategy and implementation, drives the step-change, and champions the interests of all partners.
 - **Powerful Citizens as Customers** – residents who make informed choices will drive improvement through their raised expectations for quality and outcomes, will shape and influence through their demand, and will be active in contributing to successful outcomes.
 - **Influential Business Engagement** – partnership between the public and private sector lends the expertise and opportunities of both, informs the curriculum with skills priorities of local businesses, promotes pathways into good jobs and means investment in our people and places.
 - **Flexible Learning Infrastructure** – it is vital to ensure that education infrastructure (such as schools) contributes as an asset in each community, adapts and organises to meet those communities' changing needs, designs for access, inclusion, sustainability and efficiency, and embraces technology and 21st century learning.
 - **Supportive Partnership and Policy Environment** – we must ensure that innovation and flexibility are allowed by the policy environment, supporting a proportionate approach and generating collaboration and trust.
 - **Excellent Schools and Settings** – greater autonomy amongst institutions will mean greater self-improvement and more engagement in collaborative networks made up of institutions themselves. They will be high-performing and maintain high aspirations.
 - **Effective Governance** – schools and institutions will be held to account through the use of robust intelligence, and a combination of a focus on the institution combined with activity to harness the wider expertise of others. Challenge and support and action in the best interests of the community in school governance will be essential to the success of Achieving Excellence for Learning and Skills.

What will be different?

16. Setting out a clear ambition and a bold plan means that success will deliver real and radical sustainable change. By the end of 2016 we expect the differences to be tangible in:
- A very different role for the Local Authority in its Learning and Skills function. Having already moved away from directly delivering and providing services to schools – through the transfer of these to our Joint Venture Partnership, Entrust – the Local Authority will offer strategic and system-leadership for our area.
 - A different system of public accountability, with greater autonomy and therefore accountability held by each school, college or provider for the services they offer.
 - New and different structural and support networks of schools will be operating under a new national funding system.

- A different and more powerful role for children, young people and their parents or carers in the whole system and in the choices they make for themselves.
 - A fully transformed system for Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be operating to change the pattern of local provision.
 - A different approach to meeting the additional (but less complex) needs of our learners. More will be met through tailored and timely support within mainstream provision and resources.
 - An enhanced and increasingly different extended offer from schools and education settings, operating purposefully as community hubs and shared assets, accessible at different times and in different ways than in the past.
 - A different kind of local ownership and accountability will develop. New, more diverse and different measures of success will be applied in judging what a successful and effective education delivers.
 - A different and more actively connected education-business link that encourages local pathways into employment and improves the supply of the skills that businesses need.
 - An improved supply of relevant information, advice and guidance. Informed by business and local economic opportunity, and powerful in the hands of those that use it, the IAG offer will include more real-time and real-life experience of work through innovative public – private partnerships led by our Education Trust
 - A more powerful and influential voice for the people of Staffordshire and the community, including in governance and accountability mechanisms.
 - The role and function of governing bodies will be different, developing to function in an even more professionalised capacity across groups of schools.
17. All of these changes will combine to deliver a new and vibrant local offer of learning and skills that is judged externally as at least good, and increasingly as outstanding and it performs as “best in class.”
18. There will be a shared commitment to innovation, collaboration and a collective pride in the learning and skills offer in Staffordshire, based on a shared recognition of the passion, optimism and professionalism that drives all of our local partners and stakeholders.

Link to Strategic Plan

19. Learning and skills are fundamental to the delivery of the county council’s strategic aims. In August 2013, Staffordshire County Council agreed three priority outcomes to build a better Staffordshire. These priorities are that the people of Staffordshire will:
- Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth;
 - Be healthier and more independent;
 - Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.
20. Learning and skills underpin each of these outcomes, whether that is in young people moving through school or adults being able to retrain and adapt to whatever changes they experience through life. There are key

health and wellbeing benefits to a strong learning and skills system, and vital links to the ways that communities develop and support one another.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity –

21. At the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee meeting on the 19th December 2013, Members discussed:
 - Details of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Education Trust's terms of reference, governance structure, key task groups and business plan in bringing together all organisations that have an interest in education, training, skills and jobs.
22. At the meeting on 24th January 2014, Members discussed the report of the Working Group on the Ofsted Inspection of LA School Improvement Arrangements, at which all those who had been involved in this work were thanked, and the report and its recommendations were welcomed. Members were told that it was felt this work had helped to shape the documentation into something that was fit for purpose, and that the school improvement process was now clearer, with a good framework and robustness of intervention. At the same meeting, Members also discussed:
 - Pupil attainment in Staffordshire
 - Entrust, and the way that the significant changes within education, such as the move towards academies and schools exercising their autonomy in purchasing services, had prompted consideration of a new way to deliver services. There had been an emerging market in school service providers and Staffordshire had identified an opportunity to become part of a partnership that would bring both benefits of commercial expertise and to the wider organisation through joint ownership of a commercial offer.

Community Impact

23. As the approval of this strategy by Cabinet does not constitute a key decision, a detailed CIA is not deemed to be required at this stage. However, in summary:
 - **Prosperity, knowledge, skills, aspirations** – positive impact through raised standards, attainment and better skills for life and work
 - **Living safely** – positive impact through informed decision making
 - **Supporting vulnerable people** – positive impact through an included focus on supporting those facing disadvantages which may impact on outcomes
 - **Highways and transport networks** – neutral, with some potential for change linked to travel-to-learn patterns and school transport
 - **Learning, education and culture** – positive, through the aim to improve outcomes in learning and skills for all Staffordshire residents
 - **Children and young people** – positive, through improving standards and outcomes in schools, colleges and other provision
 - **Citizens and decision making, improved community involvement** – positive, through: greater choice and control for Staffordshire residents; recognition of the

importance of schools as assets in their community; delivery of the strategy including through local governance

- **Physical environment including climate change** – neutral/positive, through well-managed and sustainable schools
- **Maximisation of use of community property portfolio** – positive, through the strategy embracing learning taking place in many varied settings and circumstances. Community venues feature in the commissioning of Adult and Community Learning which is embedded within the strategy

24. Impact on:

- **Age** – positive, through promotion of life-long learning opportunities, up-skilling and reskilling regardless of age
- **Disability** – positive, through provision for implementing the SEND reforms that will benefit those with complex needs and disabilities
- **Ethnicity** – positive, as monitoring of outcomes by all ethnic groups is a core feature of performance and standards in education and skills
- **Gender** – positive as above, as monitoring of outcomes by gender and tackling underachievement, particularly of boys, is a core feature of performance and standards in education and skills
- **Religion/belief** – neutral / positive, as school designation and diocesan links are a core feature of our diverse network of schools, promoting positive opportunities and influences in regard to religious belief
- **Sexuality** – neutral / positive through a promotion of choice, control and a drive for high standards for all learners irrespective of sexuality. A positive learning experience, with good governance and learner feedback should provide benefit.

25. Impact / Implications

- **Resource and value for money** – no direct resource implications, though opportunities to drive efficiency, effectiveness and value for money are intrinsic to the strategy
- **Risks identified and mitigation offered** – the benefits of the approach and the cost of failure are outlined in the body of the strategy. There are reputational risks associated with failure, and longer term risks for citizens and communities arising from failure to strengthen and reform learning and skills in Staffordshire
- **Legal imperative to change** – There are legal imperatives in regard to implementing statutory reforms, specifically SEND reform, and undertaking statutory duties including those for School Improvement. The strategy seeks to improve and enable the functioning of these duties.

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Appendices/Background papers

Appendix 1: Achieving Excellence in Learning and Skills

Achieving Excellence in Learning and Skills

The foundations to
prosper, be healthy
and happy



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Foreword

Every child deserves a good education.

The right foundation of learning and skills is vital for our young people to access good jobs and live healthier, happier and independent lives.

Naturally we want the children of Staffordshire to have the very best, with strong leaders and teachers in all our schools. While this strategy challenges every one of our 400 schools to be rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, it also recognises that educating young people to take advantage of the skilled and hi-tech job opportunities in the county involves more than obtaining academic qualifications.

A good education also raises aspirations, provides personal skills young adults need to prosper in the real world and offers good, balanced careers guidance from an early age.

While the need for excellence in teaching and learning remains paramount, the rest of the education landscape is changing. More schools will become self-supporting, controlling their own destiny by forming strong partnerships with other schools, working together in partnership to share expertise, senior management teams and costs. As part of that process Staffordshire County Council's role must also change from being a direct provider of services to commissioning them, to

building upon the many strengths in our provision and swiftly challenging the weaknesses.

We have already created a unique joint venture in Entrust and commissioned it to support improvement in our schools. Simultaneously a newly-formed Education Trust is forging closer links between employers and schools so pupils better understand the world that awaits them. Parents and students will be provided with more details about performance, so they can make informed decisions on the choices before them, while governors' training and development will be supported.

Make no mistake, striving to be among the very best in the country will take hard work, but I am excited about the future, because I believe in that our approach in Staffordshire is unique and one that will make a real difference to the lives our children and young people will lead.

Please join in this conversation so we can work together to achieve the very best for Staffordshire's next generation."



Councillor Ben Adams

Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills, Staffordshire County Council

Introduction – Our Vision for Staffordshire

Staffordshire County Council has a clear vision that we want to make real for the whole county – a **Connected Staffordshire, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy**. We know that to deliver this we need to fundamentally change as an organisation. If we are to achieve our vision and its three underpinning outcomes, within a reduced financial settlement, we must think creatively and work differently. More of the same is not good enough. We must change now, if we are to make Staffordshire a great place to live, work and learn.

We are changing the way that we work, becoming an outcome-based commissioning council. Everything we do will contribute to achieving better outcomes for Staffordshire's people. This means new delivery models, and a new focus working together in partnership, including through the integration of commissioning arrangements and more efficient and responsive delivery functions.

The County Council will no longer hold on to its role as a deliverer of services – instead we commission the market to respond to local need and direct our efforts to ensuring that the whole system is operating effectively to improve the quality of life of Staffordshire's people.

Learning and skills are vital to this and they underpin each of the three outcomes which we focus our leadership on:

1. **Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefit of economic growth**

To propel local growth it is vital that the workforce is equipped with the aspirations, skills and qualifications to meet the needs of growth in the Staffordshire economy. Driving up attainment and skills levels means that a greater proportion of Staffordshire residents can access more of the potential 28,000 new jobs that will come to the county by 2032.

2. **Be healthier and more independent**

We also know that people increasing their skills, aspirations and attainment become healthier. Through learning and skills more people are able to move into work from unemployment, and the resultant health benefits represent an estimated saving to the NHS of between £570 and £1,150 per person moving into work.

3. **Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community**

Positive health and purposeful, rewarding employment link very closely to the state of wellbeing of communities, and to the level of time and personal effort which people are willing to commit in and to their own neighbourhoods. Schools, colleges and universities are important assets in a community and a focal point for community connections.

Why are Learning and Skills so important to us?

A good education is one of the best investments we can ever make in life. In terms of laying down the foundations for a happy, healthy and prosperous future there is little that beats it. Ask any parent or carer of a young person and they will tell you how important it is to them that they have access to the best schools and a good education for their children. Ask any business and they will tell you how important the skills of their workforce are in both improving productivity and driving innovation. In our modern global economy, learning and skills are prime factors in securing competitive advantage and feeding success. Our nurseries, schools, colleges, universities and training providers are powerful assets as they influence and create the right conditions that enable our communities to thrive, individuals to realise their potential, and society to continue to develop culturally, economically and socially.

In the UK we have a strong tradition and reputation for delivering first class education. But there is much evidence to suggest that we will not be able to trade off our proud history for much longer. As international competitors raise their game, so must we. Our observation, here in Staffordshire, tells us that we have significant challenges ahead if we are to deliver a first class education to all of our children and young people, and also ensure opportunities for life-long learning and skills development for our adult population.

Using 2012/13 as our baseline year, Staffordshire is ranked toward the lower quartile of the national tables that show the proportion of children accessing schools that are graded by Ofsted as good or outstanding, with 69% of children in these primary schools and 67% in secondary. This is not acceptable. The story gets more troubling when you look at it for those children and young people in our communities facing the disadvantage of coming from a poorer household. If you are in receipt of a “free school meal” (FSM) you are currently even less likely to get access to a good or outstanding school and the likelihood of leaving school with 5 good GCSEs, including English and maths, falls dramatically when compared with your Staffordshire peers – 60.8% of those not in receipt of a Free School Meal achieve these grades, compared with only 34.3% with those who are. This is not acceptable. Whilst we have many successes, and low unemployment rates, there are challenges too when it comes to skills. We have success rates stubbornly below the national averages (generally about 2% lower), enterprise rates below both the region and national figure (at 41.7% compared with 43.3% and 51.6% respectively), reported skills gaps in priority sectors such as advanced manufacturing and energy engineering, and pockets in every area of the county where the working-age adult population has no qualifications at all (peaking at 20.7% in Tamworth). This is not acceptable.

This is why we are putting a priority on Learning and Skills in Staffordshire.

A Whole System Approach - Why Work Together to Make a Difference?

Every school, college, university or training provider sets out to deliver the best for their learners – no-one wants to fail. There are many complex factors that contribute to the current position and we all know that there are very few easy answers or quick fixes. “Requires Improvement” the first state of the nation report into education failure in England produced by the Centre for Social Justice makes a number of recommendations across a wide span of influential factors, including social determinants and the impact of parenting. This reinforces our belief that it takes concerted and collaborative action to drive and sustain systemic change.

Staffordshire’s core vision is “Connected Staffordshire, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy”.

Staffordshire County Council wants to work together with all education providers, business and community leaders, and the children, young people and families themselves, to make a difference to the lives of our citizens, through driving excellence in learning and skills. We know that by working together and by marshalling and focusing our resources we can make a difference.

There are already positive trends emerging. Working as part of the Local Enterprise Partnership we have agreed a City Deal with central government, with skills as a key element of our investment, driving up apprenticeship participation and technical skill levels. Staffordshire schools have achieved year on year improvements, for example in the number of students achieving 5 GCSEs at A*-C including Maths and English – this has risen consistently over the last 4 years to 59.3% (while the national average has most recently dropped, to 58.6%). Colleges and Training providers have massively increased apprenticeship participation from 4,718 in 2009/10 to 9,221 in 2011/12, with success rates generally holding steady over the period too. Our Special Schools buck the trend – all but one is currently graded as good or outstanding meaning 88% of special school students are in good or outstanding provision. There are strengths in our local provision that we can build on and expand.

What are the Benefits of Success?

There is a lot of evidence that points to the fact that having a good education contributes to success in life:

- Michael Marmot found in his review that the relationship between socio-economic position and educational outcome has significant implications for later life – in employment, income, living standards, behaviours, and even mental and physical health. This is illustrated in the fact Marmot found that for people aged 30 and

above, if everyone without a degree had their death rate reduced to that of people with degrees, there would be 202,000 fewer premature deaths each year.

- A review by Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that the average economic benefits of early education programmes for low-income 3- and 4-year-olds are close to two and a half times the initial investment. These benefits take the form of improved educational attainment, reduced crime and fewer instances of child abuse and neglect¹. Just as these factors are closely linked, they often improve together. Other reviews of individual early education programmes have noted benefit-to-cost ratios as high as 17:1², proving the importance of making sure children get the best possible opportunities to learn from day one, and as such the best start in life. These are the principles which Graham Allen put at the centre of his 2011 review of early intervention for the Government.
- These are just two examples in the growing body of evidence around early intervention and the way education is a key part of this concept. Other reviews, like those of Rt Hon Frank Field MP, Dame Clare Tickell, David Norgrove and Joyce Moseley OBE, all link very closely with this idea.

What are the Costs of Failure?

Whilst the case for positive benefit of investing in learning and skills is compelling, a look into the cost of failure in the system is even more so. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the evidence is overwhelming – poor educational outcomes correspond with blighted prospects:

- A recent Strategic Assessment of offending in the county³ found a strong link between low educational attainment and offending behaviour – over two thirds of young offenders in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent have issues with their statutory or further education, which is associated with their offending behaviour. There has also been considerable research into the extent to which a young person's educational experience can be associated with an increased likelihood of criminality – for example⁴:
 - **Low attainment, beginning in primary school.** At least half of the young people who have come to the attention of Youth Offending Teams have been deemed to be under-achieving⁵.
 - **Poor literacy and numeracy.** Of young people who enter custody, 31% have literacy levels at or below that of a 7-year-old, and 40% have numeracy skill levels at or below that of a 7-year-old⁶.

¹ Aos S, Lieb R, Mayfield J, Miller M and Pennucci A (2004) Benefits and Costs of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs for Youth. Document No. 04-073901. Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

² Lynch R (2005) Early Childhood Investment Yields Big Payoff. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

³ Staffordshire Observatory, *A Strategic Assessment of Offending in Staffordshire*, June 2011

⁴ Research summary from <http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/youth-justice/yjb-toolkits/ete/ete-source-document.pdf>

⁵ Oxford University, 2002, cited in YJB, 2006a

⁶ (Ecotec Research and Consulting, 2001)

- **Poor relationships with teachers.** Farrington et al⁷ found that the ‘troublesome’ behaviour (as rated by teachers and classmates) of 8–10-year-olds, was the strongest individual ‘predictor’ of later delinquency.
 - **Truancy.** Prisoners are 10 times as likely to have been a regular truant compared with the general population⁸.
 - **Exclusion.** In 2004, MORI explored young people’s experience of crime and found a higher rate of offending amongst excluded young people (60%) in comparison to those in mainstream education (26%)⁹.
 - **Engagement with education.** A young person’s perception of school can also be related to the risk of offending. A survey in 2000 found that boys aged 12–16 years who did not like school were three times as likely to be an offender (31%) than those who liked school (9%). Similarly, girls of this age who did not like school were four times as likely to offend (20% compared to 5%)¹⁰.
- We also know that poor educational attainment is linked with substance abuse.
 - We know that young people who live in conditions of relative poverty are more likely to attain lower educational outcomes than young people in relative affluence
 - Poor educational attainment is strongly linked with unemployment – DfE figures show that young people who leave school with no qualifications are most at risk of dropping out of other education or work. Our own figures also clearly show the link between attainment and progression – or the alternative of not being in education employment or training (NEET). Our 2010 Worklessness Assessment showed that Cannock Chase and Tamworth –then the areas with by far the lowest levels of progression into higher education – were also the areas with the lowest levels of KS4 attainment, and the areas with the lowest levels of skills amongst their working age populations¹¹.

Therefore, we know that improving learning and skills outcomes is not only the right thing to do for our children and young people, but it will pay dividends for the health and wellbeing of our economy, our communities and drive improvement across the full breadth of the public sector. It is no exaggeration to say that Learning and Skills touches the future of every one of the people of Staffordshire.

What is a Good Education?

A good education is about more than just exam results. The argument about what an education should be and should deliver is hotly debated and widely researched, ranging from the Government’s Schools White Paper in 2010 which focused on the importance of teaching, Alison Wolf’s report on vocational education, to the Finnish approach which

⁷ The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, Farrington et al, 2006.

⁸ According to research by the Social Exclusion Unit 2002

⁹ The Youth Survey (MORI, 2004)

¹⁰ Flood-Page et al, 2000

¹¹ Staffordshire Observatory, *Staffordshire Worklessness Assessment*, 2010

focuses on equality of opportunity for all students, rather than distinction in a few. What is clear is that a good education should be one that encourages people to think for themselves and be able to respond to life situations – to be “ready for life” - clearly this is a far wider remit than simply being able to deliver under exam conditions.

Talking to parents and carers about what they want to see in Staffordshire for their children is an essential part of our approach. Through this engagement we know that parents want to know – just as their children do – that a system exists which enables those moving through school and beyond to do what they want to do. Moving forwards, we will further build on our partnership with parents/carers, through governing bodies, voluntary groups, and formal or informal networks. Reforms for learners with Special Educational Needs and the arrangements for integrated education, health and care planning is one important aspect of how parents/carers and learners can inform and influence local provision.

It is also fundamental to our approach that we engage with, and respond to, children and young people themselves. For example, our recent insight has shown that children do not feel they have all of the necessary practical skills to support them through adult life, even down to simple but essential elements like cooking and managing finances. We need to create a system where people feel prepared for work, but also for life. We also know from engagement work that 27% of children aged between 7 and 12 did not feel confident that they would be able to do what they wanted to do when they left school, with reasons for this lack of confidence including that they did not think they would be able to get the right grades and that there were not enough jobs. This reflects the priority that young people place on the need for good quality careers information and guidance, and the opportunity to gain work experience: a message clearly articulated by our Youth Action Council of young people from across Staffordshire.

We must also consider the needs of businesses and employers who can offer these jobs. In a recent Employer Skills survey¹², where recruits have been considered poorly prepared for work, this has most often been put down to a lack of experience, or a lack of the softer skills and attitudes which businesses need. This suggests that young people would benefit from increased work experience activities, to build these skills. It also shows a need for action to increase the numbers of children and young people engaged in social and volunteering activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh programme, where leadership and social skills are fostered.

Also, beyond the softer skills, we know of a number of hard-to-fill vacancies across the county where employers struggle to find the specialist candidates they need. Our role in responding to this has to be creating the environment where people want to rise through the skills system and develop their expertise, in the knowledge that they are pursuing available jobs. Not only do employers want a stronger focus on skills and experience but young people want that too.

¹² Employer Skills Survey, UK Commission, 2011

Whilst we have a wealth of research evidence about what a good education can look like now, in Staffordshire we are also driving for excellence through innovation and not being constrained by seeing learning dominated by traditional classroom-based activity. We are already adapting to living in a digital era and technologies are bringing about radical and rapid change. The first iPad was sold in April 2010 – less than 4 years later, tablet computing is redefining the workplace and the classroom alike, and the changes being driven by technology’s proliferation are still accelerating. Just as a good education does not have to be just about exam results, learning environments no longer have to be all about classrooms in a school building either.

Parts of life like social networking, mobile technologies, the internet and even newer technologies like 3D-printing are all adding to a situation where people are more independent and have more opportunities to create and learn than ever before. Countries across the world are recognising the potential of this for learning and skills, as well as for industry too; Staffordshire’s ambition is not simply to adapt or “keep up”. We want to be well placed to achieve through the creativity, innovation and enterprise that is characteristic of Staffordshire heritage from ceramics to engineering, from medical sciences to rural enterprise, and more besides.

The speed of technological advancement is the speed with which areas like Staffordshire will be left behind if we cannot develop the advanced skills system which will be a part of future innovation. In fact, we already have significant strengths in advanced, high-growth sectors:

- Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is fast becoming a major centre for medical technologies and healthcare expertise in the UK. A growing medical technologies and healthcare sector continue to expand, including pharmaceuticals, medical devices, medical software, diagnostics, biologics and nanotechnology. Over 1,100 people contribute to the sector, with more than 850 employed in scientific R&D and related technical roles. Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is also home to a growing number of leading medical technology and healthcare companies, including Swiss owned TRB Chemedica, Biocomposites, Cobra Biologics and Intelligent Orthopaedics.
- A strong cluster of automotive companies exists throughout the Midlands and wider area, such as JLR, JCB, Toyota, BMW, Mini, Rolls Royce, Vauxhall, Bentley, Peugeot, Ford Triumph, Massey Ferguson, Morgan etc.
- The agri-tech sector is a significant strength of Staffordshire’s – not just because of the presence of companies like JCB and their supply chain, but because of our existing skills strengths here. And these strengths in industry are supporting innovation in learning and skills with JCB Academy as the country’s first University Technical College and The Rural Enterprise Academy as the first dedicated land-based free school in England.

Our economic strength is shown across the world – from Staffordshire-built JCBs, to Alstom’s energy engineering at an international scale, to the ‘earthquake-proof’ Oakland Bay

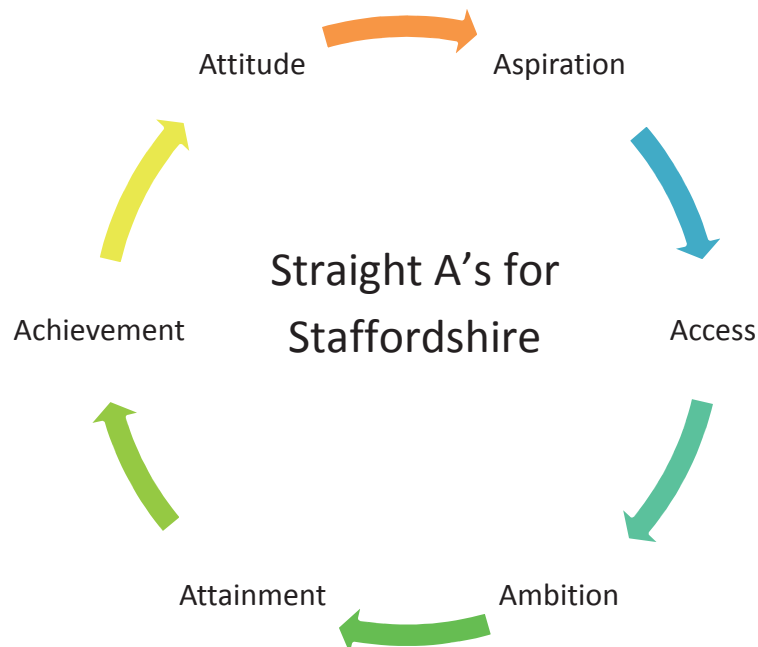
Bridge in San Francisco which contains parts made by Goodwin in Stoke-on-Trent. These are the strengths we need to protect – and build on. Here in Staffordshire we are saying very clearly that “good enough is not good enough!” By setting the bar high we are accelerating and magnifying the challenge – but we are driving for excellence.

The Principles of Our Approach - Straight A's for Staffordshire?

Our response to the challenge of achieving excellence in learning and skills needs to be radical, bold and ambitious – to deliver a learning and skills strategy which shapes the future environment in Staffordshire, moving ahead of change and with all partners aligned to a singular ambition. How we operate to drive and deliver a step change is central to our success. To achieve our vision we will need to be unified around a set of principles that will guide how we deliver. Summarised as “Straight A for Staffordshire” these principles foster:

- **Aspiration** – so that individuals, families and communities cultivate high aspirations and raise their expectations of what they can expect and what can be achieved
- **Access** – so that there is fair and equitable access to excellent provision through a vibrant, dynamic and diverse market of providers, with genuine choice and control for the customer
- **Ambition** – so that learning providers are ambitious about what they offer and the standards they deliver to, and parents/carers are persistently ambitious for their children and young people’s futures by championing high standards
- **Attainment** – so that the learning and skills outputs in terms of results , exam scores, levels of attainment and progress will continue to improve and will match with the latent potential of each individual and each cohort of learners
- **Achievement** – so that successful outcomes are enabling people to achieve their personal goals, to progress well, into good jobs, well-equipped to thrive and prosper in adult life
- **Attitude** – so that the culture and the behaviours we most value are intrinsic to our approach including: promoting personal and community responsibility, stimulating innovation and enterprise, valuing volunteering, making positive and informed lifestyle choices, being prepared to go the extra-mile, solve problems, and be resilient and tenacious in driving for excellence

Each principle in our approach works together in a virtuous circle – each supporting and accelerating change in the next. This is illustrated below:



Critical Success Factors - The Components of our Approach – What Do We Need to Deliver Excellence in Learning and Skills?

In order to deliver our ambition and to create a step-change that accelerates progress over the next five years, we need to ensure that all of the components of the learning and skills system can operate together to drive and deliver excellence in learning and skills.

This system-wide approach will provide the leadership for partnership working that will engineer and deliver radical change. It will secure co-operation, recognise inter-dependencies and provide coherence through a unified approach. By avoiding fragmentation of the local learning and skills landscape we can more effectively tackle the challenges, and create opportunity from policy and curriculum reforms. Our system wide approach will promote confidence to utilise our resources to the full, to invest to make a difference, and to reap the benefits of a bold approach.

Powerful and effective system-leaders bring clarity, purpose and energy to drive for excellence. We will be clear in setting out the key contributions of the each component within an integrated system. Through local partnership we will harness the energy and dynamism of shared leadership and hold ourselves jointly accountable. Through this we will create momentum and movement – driving the step-change in both quality and outcomes that we required in order to achieve excellent in learning and skills.

Together we will grow and build on the strengths in local provision and together we will tackle the weaknesses. We will capitalise on the diverse assets we have in our communities and make good use of the local freedoms and flexibilities that we have available at local level.

The main components of the local system and therefore the critical success factors we describe as:

- Effective System Leadership
- Powerful Citizens as Customers
- Influential Business Engagement
- Flexible Learning Infrastructure
- Supportive Partnership and Policy Environment
- Excellent Schools and Settings
- Highly Effective Governance

The key contribution that each of these critical success factors makes to driving the whole system approach is further developed and detailed in our “Whole System Action Plan”.

What will be different as a result of this Strategic Plan?

Setting out a clear ambition and a bold plan means that success will deliver real and radical sustainable change. By the end of 2016 we expect the differences to be tangible in:

- A very different role for the Local Authority in its Learning and Skills function. Having already moved away from directly delivering and providing services to schools – through the transfer of these to our Joint Venture Partnership, Entrust – the Local Authority will offer strategic and system-leadership for our area. We will bring partners together, champion democratic accountability, advocate on behalf of our residents and communities, and secure coherence across a range of local services to enable better integrated commissioning that focuses on delivering impact and benefit to the citizen
- A different system of public accountability, with greater autonomy and therefore accountability held by each school, college or provider for the services they offer. We expect more schools to have chosen to operate independent of the Local Authority as the confidence of schools to take-up academy status accelerates
- New and different structural and support networks of schools will be operating under a new national funding system. The advantages and opportunities inherent in being part of a strong network of provision will have changed the way that schools work together. There will be more multi-academy trusts, more hard federations, different specialist networks and the clustering of groups of schools and providers in order to reap the benefits from economies of scale, gaining access to shared expertise, capacity, and developing sustainable operating systems that support a self-improving system

- A different and more powerful role for children, young people and their parents in the whole system and in the choices they make for themselves. Better informed, and with greater choice and control, the people of Staffordshire will feel the local offer of provision responding to meet their needs and ambitions. This will impact on admissions, school choice, transport options, and in particular the support provided to meet the assessed needs of those with special education needs and disabilities
- A fully transformed system for Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be operating to change the pattern of local provision. Statements of SEN will have phased out and the integrated Education, Health and Care assessment and plan will ensure that children and young people with the most complex need are well-supported to achieve to their full potential alongside their peers, through access to local provision that meet their needs
- A different approach to meeting the additional (but less complex) needs of our learners. More will be met through tailored and timely support within mainstream provision and resources. The redesigned “common assessment framework” will underpin highly effective multi-agency early intervention action. This will identify, assess and plan to address the specific needs of children and young people thereby avoiding escalating need and preventing a pattern of cycling in and out of service dependency
- An enhanced and increasingly different extended offer from schools and education settings. As critical assets in their local community, the public purse investment in buildings, infrastructure and facilities will be operating purposefully as community hubs and shared assets, accessible at different times and in different ways than in the past. This will reap benefit for community cohesion and participation as well as for income generation and sustainability
- A different kind of local ownership and accountability will develop. New, more diverse and different measures of success will be applied in judging what a successful and effective education delivers. This will include a stronger focus on the progress each learner makes to fulfilling their potential, the progression into good jobs and further learning opportunities, more learner/customer satisfaction feedback that informs and shapes self-improving systems, and increased local and peer accountability
- A different and more actively connected education-business link that encourages local pathways into employment and improves the supply of the skills that businesses need. Our skills programme will have contributed to reshaping the curriculum, strengthened the supply of highly technical skills and fostered a skill-based culture of enterprise, creativity and innovation
- An improved supply of relevant information, advice and guidance. Informed by business and local economic opportunity, and powerful in the hands of those that use it, the IAG offer will include more real-time and real-life experience of work through innovative public –private partnerships led by our Education Trust
- A more powerful and influential voice for the customer and the community, including in governance and accountability mechanisms. Student councils and parent

partnerships will be better connected to provide feedback that shapes and steers responsive provision

- The role and function of governing bodies will be different, developing to function in an even more professionalised capacity across groups of schools. With access and the ability to interrogate a rich set of both soft and hard intelligence, they will be better able to set strategic direction, ensure continuous improvement and secure efficient, effective and sustainable schooling

All of these changes will combine to deliver a new and vibrant local offer of learning and skills that is judged externally as at least good, and increasingly as outstanding and it performs as “best in class.”

There will be a shared commitment to innovation, collaboration and a collective pride in the learning and skills offer in Staffordshire, based on a shared recognition of the passion, optimism and professionalism that drives all of our local partners and stakeholders.

How we will get to this is outlined in the whole system approach to Learning and Skills.

Learning and Skills Whole System Approach – Overview:



1. Effective System Leadership

- Promotes collaboration
- Articulates the shared ambition
- Leads the strategy and implementation
- Drives the step-change
- Champions the interests of all stakeholders



2. Powerful Citizen as Customer

- Makes informed choices
- Raises expectations for quality and outcomes
- Shapes and influences by demand
- Active in contributing to successful outcomes



3. Influential Business Engagement

- Partners the public and private sector
- Lends expertise and opens opportunity
- Informs curriculum and skills priorities
- Promotes pathways into good jobs
- Invests in our people and our places



4. Flexible Learning Infrastructure

- Contributes as an asset in each community
- Adapts to meet changing needs
- Organises to meet demand
- Designs for access, inclusion, sustainability and efficiency
- Embraces technology and 21st century learning



5. Supportive Partnership and Policy Environment

- Fosters innovation and excellence
- Permits freedom and flexibility
- Devolves decision-making and power
- Supports a proportionate and light-touch approach
- Generates collaboration and instils trust and confidence



6. Excellent Schools and Settings

- Autonomous institutions engaged in collaborative networks
- Self-improving and evaluative
- High performing with big aspirations
- Delivering added value and improving outcomes
- Warm, welcoming and willing to engage



7. Highly Effective Governance

- Holding to account through robust intelligence
- Governing to provide powerful leadership for each institution
- Harnessing wider expertise and valuing the local commitment
- Challenging and supporting for the benefit of every child or young person
- Serving the interests of the community



Success Factor 1 : Effective System Leadership

Why is this important?	Strong and effective leadership and management are crucially important to the success of the local system. This is recognised at the level of each individual school or setting and at the strategic level through Health and Wellbeing Board; the Local Enterprise Partnership; Safer Staffordshire Board; and Staffordshire Strategic Partnership. Leadership for the whole learning and skills system needs to articulate, orchestrate and co-ordinate the operation of the whole system, holding all of the components and contributory parts to account on behalf of children, young people and families in Staffordshire			
What does it need to do?	System Leadership needs to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote collaboration • Articulate the shared ambition • Lead the strategy and its implementation • Drive the step-change by setting clear expectations and planning to deliver these • Champion the interests of all stakeholders but in particular those who are most vulnerable or who face disadvantage 			
What does success look like?	Improving outcomes for learners will be evident and measured through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Excellence – we want all children and young people to have an excellent education so we will increase the % of pupils attending good or outstanding schools from 63% in 2012 to 90% in 2016 • Rapid Improvement – we want schools and settings that are judged to be failing to improve rapidly within 8-12 months, reducing the % graded as inadequate to zero by 2016 (from 5% of schools in 2012) • Nothing less than Good – we want all Staffordshire schools and settings to be good or outstanding, therefore we will challenge all to be at least good and ensure that we are lower than the national average for schools not yet reaching this benchmark from 65% in 2012 to 90% by 2016 • Sustained Progress – we want the attainment and progress of all learners to at least match national level of expectation at each key stage, therefore we will ensure progress between and across key stages is at least in line with national averages by 2016, reversing current weak trends from 2012 baseline • Best Start – we want all children to get the best start in life including in education. We will reduce the number of schools below the floor standard for attainment and progress at key stage 2 			
How will we get there?	Action	Impact	Delivery Lead	Output Milestones
1.	Develop a clear strategy for Learning and Skills in Staffordshire	Identifies and targets collective effort to priority areas and delivers on shared goals and ambitions	Cabinet member for Learning and Skills/SCC Commissioner for Education and Wellbeing	Published by Summer 2014 Monitored and reported at least annually
2.	Establish strong partnership infrastructure for Learning and Skills in Staffordshire	Collaborative leadership and effective mechanisms for engagement and accountability	Health and Wellbeing Board – Children’s Partnership Board Staffordshire Strategic Partnership/LEP – Education Trust	Established and operating 2014- Strategic Plan published annually Meeting schedule Reporting and accountable to Partnership Boards
3.	Effective communication and operating system	Transparent, co-ordinated and accountable local network	Children’s Partnership chair Education Trust chair Commissioner for Education and	Published communications schedule Reports and minutes public

Success Factor 2 : Powerful Citizen as the Customer

Why is this important?	Each learner and their family have a fundamental role and responsibility in contributing to the success of Learning and Skills in Staffordshire. The power and the potential of the customer to drive up expectations and standards are considerable. We must work across the system to give greater choice and control to local people. We need to empower them to make good choices through access of effective impartial information and advice, including a clear description of the local offer of what is available and promote their part within it. We need a system that is driven by intelligent demand from all of its customers – and this includes responsiveness to business in order to support economic growth and demand for skills and innovation. We need to use customer feedback and insight to drive further improvement, personalisation and responsiveness so that the market of provision rises to meet customer demand and expectation.			
What does it need to do?	A system with the citizen as the customer needs to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a clear local offer with customer choice and control • Empower people to make an informed choices with good information and advice • Raise the expectations for quality and outcomes for customers • Be more responsive to customer feedback and demand • Promote the active contribution of customers contributing to success 			
What does success look like?	Improving customer responsiveness will be evident and measured through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Satisfaction – we want learners to enjoy and achieve so their experience will be monitored and reported through impartial annual surveys and citizen surveys • Learner Feedback – we will promote and publicise the methods available for recording and reporting learner satisfaction and feedback both at school or provider level and through corporate or statutory procedures • Responsiveness to Choice – we will publish the local offer and monitor the number of first choices achieved in the offer of school places • Complaints Resolution – we will encourage swift and effective resolution of complaints and introduce analysis of themes and trends in order to drive responsiveness and service improvement 			
How will we get there?	Action	Impact	Delivery Lead	Output Milestones
4.	Redesign the Information, advice and guidance offer	Clear and impartial information to inform choices	SCC County Commissioner/Education Trust City Deal for Skills plan	Commissioning Review 2013/14 New service operating 2014/15 Evaluation 2015/16
5.	Maintain effective school place policy and allocations	Learners access their first choice of provision	SCC County Commissioner &/or Admissions authority	Systems accessible Transparent policy and allocations Report on choices
6.	Promote Learner Feedback mechanism and data reporting	Transparent and accountable local systems	Children’s Partnership chair Education Trust chair Governing Bodies/Providers	Published feedback and complaints analysis
7.	Deliver regular surveys and publish outcomes including trends over time	Range of impartial intelligence to enrich strategic dialogue and improvement	SCC Insight Engaging Communities Staffordshire	Surveys increasingly representative and utilised to drive responsiveness

Success Factor 3 : Influential Business Engagement

Why is this important?	Staffordshire places a priority on ensuring that all of our residents have the best opportunity to thrive and to feel the benefit of economic prosperity. Our City Deal’s focus on skills demonstrates this. We value the fact that learning for learning’s sake contributes to enriching people’s lives culturally, socially and academically. However, we know that our young people place “getting a job” as one of their foremost concerns. For adults being skilled and equipped to adapt to a changing jobs market is also crucial. We also know that the competitiveness and productivity of local business whether public or private sector and regardless of size, relies on access to a skilled and adaptable workforce. Strengthening the link between business and education is therefore a key component of achieving excellence in Staffordshire			
What does it need to do?	Influential business engagement would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and expand the partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors, including through the delivery of the City Deal • Lend expertise and open up new opportunity for innovation and growth • Better inform curriculum development and delivery in schools and settings and ensure that skills priorities are recognised and addressed • Promote pathways into good jobs through high quality work experience, internships, apprenticeships, training placements, sponsorship and more • Secure personal, public and private investment into skills 			
What does success look like?	Improving business engagement would lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum change and innovation – with employers playing a greater part in informing and shaping local curriculum content and context so that it connects and responds to real life challenges • More and Varied Partnerships – we want more and different collaborations between the public, private and voluntary sectors and a programme of local activity and links that connect communities, schools and settings, local business • Improved workforce planning – some employers and sectors face skill shortages so better, more proactive workforce planning could help to address this, including through apprenticeship programmes and skills plans • Local Skills Plans – by bringing partners together through our City Deal we can further strengthen progression into employment and promote innovative pathways for those moving into work or changing direction as adults 			
How will we get there?	Action	Impact	Delivery Lead	Output Milestones
8.	Develop the work of the Education Trust	Clear and visible leadership through expert partnership	Education Trust Chair and lead partners	Annual programme of activity and impact
9.	Create local Skills Plans to deliver City Deal targets	Specific targets for local skills development and delivery	Education Trust with partners	Skills plan produced and implemented with City Deal milestones
10.	Promote education business links	Better quality work-related learning and locally relevant contextualised learning	Education Trust with Chambers of Commerce and wider partners	On-going programme of vibrant and purposeful links
11.	Deliver an Apprenticeship strategy to support City Deal delivery	Fewer skills shortages and gaps, better workforce planning	SCC County Commissioner with Apprenticeship Providers	Apprenticeship strategy that delivers targets, progression into jobs and growth

Success Factor 4 : Flexible Learning Infrastructure

<p>Why is this important?</p>	<p>Staffordshire is a large county and very diverse in its characteristics. In our more rural settings being well connected with appropriate access to good local learning and skills provision is a focus, when access, size and sustainability can be issues. In our more urban settings ensuring that clusters of provision work to strengthen and enrich the local offer is critical when competition, specialisation or inequalities can be issues. Furthermore, schools and other settings represent a major public investment in each local community and these assets need to work hard for us both in and outside of a formal learning context. Changes in population, through demographic shifts and other circumstances demand that our infrastructure is sufficient, suitable and flexible enough to respond to changing need. Combining good access with a viable, safe and well-maintained infrastructure is an on-going priority and challenge, and therefore a key component of our overall system for learning and skills.</p>			
<p>What does it need to do?</p>	<p>A flexible learning infrastructure would ensure that each school and setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes positively as a valued public asset within its community • Adapts to meet needs and organises to meet changes in demand • Designs in fair access, inclusion, sustainability and efficiency • Embraces technological innovation and 21st century learning styles 			
<p>What does success look like?</p>	<p>A flexible learning infrastructure will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and available – we want all of our community to benefit from the public purse investment in school buildings and facilities, both through formal learning for children, young people and adults and through wider access evening and weekends to meet local need and demand • Organised to meet demand – changing populations will be well accommodated in a flexible and responsive system that educates in good quality safe environment, utilising space well and responding to demand and choice • Efficient and Sustainable – we want to see efficient and sustainable learning and skills infrastructure. Ensuring that the estate is appropriately maintained, managed and attractive will keep our learners safe and inspired to be responsible beneficiaries of public investment • Inclusive and Accessible – all parts of our community should be able to access appropriate learning opportunities and we will continue to strengthen the ability of the local offer to meet specific needs so that people do not have to move out of county to access the right opportunities to learn 			
<p>How will we get there?</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Delivery Lead</p>	<p>Output Milestones</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Publish a school organisation plan for Staffordshire</p>	<p>Ensures adequate and sufficient provision of places and capacity</p>	<p>SCC County Commissioner</p>	<p>Published monitored and reported at least annually</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Promote availability and access as part of a published local offer</p>	<p>Communities are aware of how their schools contribute as assets and what there is to do locally</p>	<p>SCC County Commissioner, and Local leads</p>	<p>Local offer published and accessible – eg through Staffordshire Cares by Sept 14</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Further strengthen local offer to promote inclusion and access</p>	<p>Fewer out of county placements and learner demand is met</p>	<p>SCC County Commissioner and provider network</p>	<p>Local Offer developed as part of SEND reform programme</p>

Success Factor 5 : Supportive Partnership and Policy Environment

Why is this important?	<p>We have to work collaboratively to create the conditions whereby learners can thrive and the market of learning and skills provision operates in a way that drives up standards. Partners need to work together as there are significant inter-dependencies that are critical to success. For example, support services that wrap around a child with additional needs will significantly influence and contribute that child's ability to learn well. Meeting needs in terms of the conditions to thrive is all part of the partnership and the policy environment, including through safeguarding, family support, health and wellbeing support, attendance and inclusion. The framework set by national policy will also establish parameters for local activity. Examples of this include school funding reform and the changes to the national curriculum or the examinations system. Staffordshire's ability to meet new challenges and to seek out the opportunity in each circumstance of change will help to determine our success, through our resilience, strength of purpose, innovation and determination.</p>			
What does it need to do?	<p>A supportive partnership and policy environment will need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support innovation and excellence in partnership working • Build efficient and effective support around the learner and/or the family • Permit and foster increased use of freedoms and flexibilities • Devolve decision-making and power to local level and influence or inform in a national arena, through Staffordshire's reputation and record of success • Ensure that regulation and intervention is proportionate and timely 			
What does success look like?	<p>Supportive partnership landscape and policy environment would deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalised Approaches – the drive to personalise the way in which we meet additional or specialised needs would better focus choice and control with the learner, including through fundamental respect for learner views and voice • Integrated commissioning and delivery – there will be more seamless approaches particularly where there are complex needs and circumstances. Commissioners and providers will better integrate approaches so that both assessment and provision planning considers holistic need and local • Efficient and effective multi-agency operation – building on the strengths of partnership working in Staffordshire, multi-agency working particularly in respect of safeguarding, care and support will deliver better outcomes and efficiencies for those in need of care and support • Freedoms and Flexibilities – for local innovation and operation, and that secure proportionate but timely regulation and intervention to manage risk, prevent failure and promote continuous improvement and innovation 			
How will we get there?	Action	Impact	Delivery Lead	Output Milestones
15.	Ensure that the CAF and other multi-agency tools operate effectively to support the child/learner	Streamlined and efficient tool will ensure efficient and effective support at early stages of need	Integrated Service Delivery Board/ with Families First	New CAF arrangements produced, embedded and operating effectively
16.	Implement integrated assessment Education, Health and Care planning for SEND	Single holistic assessment and plan will help learners achieve to their full potential	SCC County Commissioners in Care and Education/Health Commissioners	Integrated Education, Health and Care assessment and planning operational
17.	Develop proportionate and appropriate policies and regulatory functions	All providers and stakeholders are clear and operate within a consistent framework	SSC Commissioners, Children's Partnership members	Policies developed, published and applied
18.	Embed personalisation across partnership	Approach promotes independence and is tailored to need	Children's Partnership members	Personalisation evident in planning and assessment

Success Factor 6 : Excellent Schools and Settings

Why is this important?	Every child in every school in Staffordshire matters to us. Every apprentice or trainee, every adult learner, whether they are learning for work or learning for life, they all matter to us. If we are going to achieve excellence then the contribution of each and every setting will need to reach that standard. Staffordshire has a very diverse network of schools and settings. From nursery school through to adult learning in the community this stretches to around 400 different settings and is therefore both our greatest asset and our greatest challenge. Each school and setting will have its own leadership and management, its own accountability regime through governing bodies and inspections, and will operate as autonomous and self-determining institutions. We wish to respect and support this independence, whilst ensuring that system-wide together we achieve excellence. Therefore, through appropriate regulation, scrutiny, challenge and support we will work proportionately to effect continuous improvement across the whole system.			
What does it need to do?	Excellent Schools and Settings will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomous but willing to operate in collaborative networks • Self-improving • High performing and open to sharing expertise and supporting best practice • Ambitious to progress and deliver added value that improves learner outcomes 			
What does success look like?	Excellent schools and settings will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a difference for each learner – success will mean that each learner will make progress from their starting point to at least achieve to their expected level of attainment, and more often better. This means progress within and across key stages at school level, or added value in other settings, and achievement in excess of initial learning goals in informal adult learning, no matter where you learn. • Promote attainment at the highest level – this will drive toward seeking the most each learner is capable of and move away from delivering the least they need to do to reach the benchmark/requirement. It is the spirit of aspiration • Provide the best quality of teaching and learning – good teaching is at the heart of much good learning. Our learners want and deserve the best teaching input available and we want to continue to attract and retain the best teachers for Staffordshire • Excel in Leadership and Management - effective leadership is a powerful driver of improved outcomes. Success will include a vibrant Staffordshire network of local and national leaders in education, that act to power our system and inspire us to even greater things • Focus on Impact – by extending our shared vision and measures of success and by not using exam results as a proxy for success, we will better focus on how learning impacts to enable progression into work, further learning, more highly skilled roles, contributing to happier, healthier lives 			
How will we get there?	Action	Impact	Delivery Lead	Output Milestones
19.	Agree our joint measures of success and report these openly	Greater transparency in outcomes achieved	Cabinet member for Learning and Skills/SCC Commissioner	Published education insight dashboard by Dec 14
20.	Revise the Framework for School Improvement	Clear & targeted support, challenge and intervention delivered	SCC County Commissioner	Framework published and operating 2013/14
21.	Introduce robust business & improvement cycle	Continuous improvement achieved	SCC Commissioner with Provider Networks	Annual cycle with published outputs
22.	Strengthen commissioning for outcomes	Effective investment in improved impact	SCC and other Commissioners/Entrust & delivery partners	Service Delivery Agreements and reporting metrics

Success Factor 7 : Highly Effective Governance

<p>Why is this important?</p>	<p>Effective governance is vitally important and powerful driver of the local system. The wealth of expertise that governors bring – through the diversity of their backgrounds in business, as parents, as professionals, as key contributors to community life and leadership – cannot be underestimated. Good governors make a powerful difference and are highly valued both at local level and strategically. That is why we need to recognise and support their role, empowering and enabling them to be equipped to support and challenge within their school, setting or organisation. Through a network of strong governance we can also build in greater resilience and flexibility so that we can respond in any case that needs additional support, and we can better share learning about what makes a difference to learner success and learner experience.</p>			
<p>What does it need to do?</p>	<p>Highly effective governance will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold to account each institution for their delivery and performance • Govern each institution to ensure it meets statutory and regulatory requirements • Harness the commitment, energy and expertise within across the local system • Provide robust challenge and support to lead improvement • Serve the community’s interests and champion the needs of each learner • Deliver outstanding leadership and management 			
<p>What does success look like?</p>	<p>Effective Governance will lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong individual schools and settings – by holding local leaders and managers to account, effective governance will provide the support and challenge necessary to drive continued improvement and provision that fulfils potential • Improved pace of change – In cases where rapid change is needed the energy and commitment of a tenacious governing body is critical to success, bringing additional expertise and a wider perspective to the leadership and management of the institution, and removing barriers or blockages • Schools and Settings Connected with their Community – as local volunteers governors connect and root schools/settings within their local community, and are powerful in the capacity of community leaders, championing these assets in their area and for the benefit of local residents • A Network of expertise and strong local leadership in education – utilising the strengths in our network of expert and experienced governors enables strengths to be better shared across the area, and where need arises, to address any problems or shortfalls across a locality, phase or type of provision 			
<p>How will we get there?</p>	<p>Action</p>	<p>Impact</p>	<p>Delivery Lead</p>	<p>Output Milestones</p>
<p>23.</p>	<p>Invest in the Governor Network across Staffordshire</p>	<p>Improved quality and responsiveness of governor network to local challenges</p>	<p>Cabinet member for Learning and Skills/SCC Commissioner for Education and Wellbeing</p>	<p>Revised Governor Programme & improved communications approach</p>
<p>24.</p>	<p>Re-specify commissioned support for Governors via Entrust</p>	<p>Better support for Governors that aligns with strategic ambitions</p>	<p>SCC County Commissioners/Entrust</p>	<p>New offer in place 2014/15 Evaluation to inform 2015/16</p>
<p>25.</p>	<p>Develop a pool of governance expertise to support interim or intervention arrangements</p>	<p>Strengthened capacity for local support for local problems if they arise</p>	<p>SCC County Commissioners with Entrust/Governor Network</p>	<p>Updated database Expert flexible pool available New initiatives and networks</p>

Governance and Partnership Structure

For Our Partners: To deliver this strategy, Staffordshire County Council will work through the strong established partnerships and networks that are already operating locally. This includes links to the Education Trust, Staffordshire's Children and Young People Strategic Partnership (reporting through to the Health and Wellbeing Board), the Schools Forum with the range of statutory and advisory functions that it holds, plus the wider network of school, college and governor forums that bring together local leaders.

For Local People: The diverse infrastructure that engages children, young people, parents, carers and stakeholders in the decisions and provision that affects them is a vital component of our approach. In order to give choice, control and influence to citizens we will secure strong links to these networks. We will use appropriate methods to engage, consult and communicate on the development, delivery and impact of our strategy.

For the wider Public: All of the work of the County Council, both officers and members, is accountable through the democratic systems of council. Through Cabinet, Select Committee and scrutiny function, there is on-going challenge and transparency in decision-making and operation. In addition, there are inspection and regulatory frameworks that provide impartial scrutiny and reporting to further support public accountability.

This strategy will be led, managed and held to account through this full range of governance and partnership arrangements. A communications approach will support the streamlining of our communication and meet the needs of our different audiences.

Implementation, Performance Measures and Milestones

The success of this strategy is of critical important to us and a priority for Staffordshire County Council. We will develop the detail of our approach to implementation, including through our commissioning plans, operational and business planning systems. We will establish performance metrics, key performance measures and progress milestones that provide specific and measureable mechanisms for implementation, working within the parameters established in this strategy. Wherever possible and appropriate (aside from legally restricted and commercially sensitive intelligence), these will be shared and reported through our governance and partnership structures.

Contact Us – Want to Know More?

If you want to discuss the strategy or know more about Staffordshire's drive to achieve excellence in learning and skills, please contact us.

General Enquiries: 0300 111 8000

Email: contactus@staffordshire.gov.uk

Key Contacts: Councillor Ben Adams – Cabinet Lead Member for Learning and Skills and Anna Halliday – Commissioner for Education and Wellbeing



Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Work Programme 2013/14

This leaflet sets out the work programme for the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee for 2013/14. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of achievement against the Council's strategic ambitions for promoting prosperity and economic growth. The committee is also responsible for the scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity. In addition the committee will be responsible for priorities around education, learning and skills. As such the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee.

We review our work programme from time to time. 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.

County Councillor Brian Edwards

Chairman of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Tina Randall, Scrutiny and Support Manager, 01785 276148 or tina.randall@staffordshire.gov.uk

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Details	Action/Outcome
Minerals Local Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Ian Benson	24 April 2014	Consulting on the developing Minerals Local Plan	A working group has been set up to develop a response to the consultation
Rural Forum Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Cabinet Support Member: Gill Heath Lead officer: Ian Wykes	24 April 2014	To consider the work of the Rural Forum	Members were pleased with the progress of the Rural Forum and development of the Rural Declaration
Chasewater Country Park Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Cabinet Support Member: Gill Heath Lead Officer: Ian Wykes	24 April 2014	To update Members on progress of the transfer and development of the Chasewater Country Park	Members were pleased with the progress made and the exciting opportunities for the future of Chasewater Country Park.
Achieving Excellence:Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead officer: Janene Cox/Catherine Mann	12 May 2014		
Learning and Skills Strategy Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday	12 May 2014		
Freight Policy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: James Bailey		Update of monitoring of actions and priorities against Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2011	Initially, face to face discussion to be arranged between officers and Cllr Tittley who raised the matter.
Country Parks Review Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Wykes	25 July 2014	To update Members on the production of a management plan for the county council owned countryside estate. This could be considered in a briefing note initially.	
Rail Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington	25 July 2014	Monitoring progress with delivery	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Details	Action/Outcome
Lead officer: Clive Thomson/Clare Horton			
Strategic Economic Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Evers	25 July 2014	Members to scrutinise progress on the European Growth Deal submission	
Staffordshire Local Nature Partnership and Eco System Services Lead Officer: Ian Wykes	It is proposed that a briefing note be circulated to update Members on this issue.	Informing Members of the work of the Staffordshire Local Nature Partnership	
Entrust Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead officer: Ian H Benson	5 September 2014	Monitoring progress of contract with Entrust to ensure that it is delivering intended outcomes.	
Update on progress with LA Schools Improvement Arrangements Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday	5 September 2014	Members to be updated on progress with school improvement arrangements following the report of the Working Group to the Committee on 24 January 2014	
Roll out of Broadband Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Steve Burrows	16 October (following the update request on 24 April 2014)	Monitoring progress with delivery	
Improving Connectivity in Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Clive Thomson	16 October 2014	Members to be updated on the transport review (to include concessionary travel arrangements)	
W2R Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Ian Benson	16 October 2014	Members requested a briefing note updating them on progress	
Flood Risk Management – progress update Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Benson	18 December 2014	Update on progress of Staffordshire’s flood risk management.	
Tourism – Destination Staffordshire		This was subject to a delegated	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Details	Action/Outcome
Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Graeme Whitehead		decision to extend the strategy and therefore Members may wish to receive a copy of the strategy rather than a report.	
Infrastructure + Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Turner	6 March 2015	The Select will continue to monitor the quality of the work delivered through the contract (including Shugborough and Cannock Chase)	

<p>Membership</p> <p>Brian Edwards (Chairman) Martyn Tittley (Vice-Chairman) George Adamson Ann Beech Len Bloomer Maureen Compton Mark Deaville Geoff Martin Geoff Morrison Diane Todd Deborah Kay (Co-optee) Rachel Kidd Smithers (Co-optee) Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf (Co-optee)</p> <p>Ellen Wright (Co-optee)</p>	<p>Calendar of Committee Meetings (at 10.00 am and at County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford ST16 2LH unless otherwise stated)</p> <p>12 May 2014, 2.00 pm (extra meeting) 25 July 2014, 10.00 am 5 September 2014, 10.00 am 16 October 2014, 10.00 am 18 December 2014, 10.00 am 23 January 2015, 10.00 am 6 March 2015, 2.00 pm</p>
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