

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

Tuesday, 24 May 2016

10.00 am

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

John Tradewell
Director of Strategy, Governance and Change
16 May 2016

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 4 March 2016** (Pages 1 - 8)
4. **Flood Risk Management** (Pages 9 - 20)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport
5. **Countryside Estate Review - Part Two** (Pages 21 - 78)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport
6. **Working Together to address the impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles/HCVs on roads in Staffordshire** (Pages 79 - 130)

Report of the Working Group
7. **Executive response to Infrastructure+ - scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee** (Pages 131 - 136)



8. **Work Programme** (Pages 137 - 162)
9. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:-

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

nil

Committee Membership

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Len Bloomer | Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf |
| Maureen Compton | Sheree Peaple |
| Tim Corbett | Simon Tagg (Chairman) |
| Carol Dean | Paul Woodhead |
| Ian Hollinshead | Mike Worthington |
| David Loades (Vice-Chairman) | Candice Yeomans |
| Geoff Martin | |

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

Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Meeting held on 4 March 2016

Present: Simon Tagg (Chairman)

Attendance

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Len Bloomer | David Loades (Vice-Chairman) |
| Maureen Compton | Geoff Martin |
| Tim Corbett | Rev. Preb. M. Metcalf |
| Carol Dean | Sheree Peuple |
| Ian Hollinshead | Mike Worthington |

Also in attendance: Ben Adams

Apologies: Paul Woodhead and Candice Yeomans

PART ONE

59. Declarations of Interest

There were none at this meeting.

60. Minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 22 January 2015

RESOLVED- That the minutes of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 22 January 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

61. Adult and Community Learning (ACL)

The Council's Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Service contributed to the County Council's outcomes through the commissioning of community learning programmes providing courses that contribute to better health and well-being, employment and social inclusion for all adults. ACL worked with adults aged 19+ and families. Targeted courses were provided for those learners below level 2, i.e. those having not achieved 5 GCSE qualifications including English and Maths. There was a mix of direct and contracted delivery through Further Education Colleges and the third sector with funding coming through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the County Council.

Accredited courses were provided through apprenticeships and the adult skills budget, with non accredited courses provided through community learning, including: leisure courses; bespoke provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or enduring mental ill health; family learning; employability; and functional skills, i.e. English and Maths.

During 2014/15 there were 1,500 courses county wide with 9,549 learners. Members received a breakdown of learner figures. A progression survey was undertaken in

October 2015 and the findings were shared with Members. Overall learners reported a high level of satisfaction with the courses provided.

Members asked how effective the promotion of adult literacy and numeracy courses was within ACL. These courses were promoted in a range of ways, however the challenge was often getting learners to take part. Efforts were made to make access as easy as possible, with, for example, courses held in local schools where children were seen to be underachieving in these areas. This initiative aimed to target support at parents, enabling them to improve their skills and in turn support their children in developing their English and Maths.

Members asked whether links were made with Public Health to support healthy living and promote good multi-agency working, with an example given of a successful healthy living project in Glasgote. Members felt this would help target resources more effectively. There were no formal links at present, although informally work was undertaken with public health colleagues.

Through analysis of district data sets, district priorities had been established that underpinned the broader strategic priorities of the service. These included targeted services for specific wards identified as key areas of deprivation for targeted service provision. Members queried how these areas had been identified, feeling that a number of deprivation areas were not included. These areas had been identified through consultation with District Councils, the District Commissioning Leads (DCLs), and engagement with the community, however provision was not restricted to these areas, with courses offered where need was identified. Members were not aware of discussions with DCLs on this issue and felt they themselves would have been well placed to advise where the most appropriate areas of deprivation were within the area they represent. Members requested that they be included in consultation on any review of the local priority areas. The Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills, also suggested that data would be used more intelligently to identify local families needing support through the Building Resilient Families and Communities data.

Members noted that the Apprenticeship Funding would cease in March 2017 due to the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy. There was no information currently available from the Skills Funding Agency and Members asked that they receive details of the funding allocation as soon as this was available.

Members also highlighted the difficulties within Rural Communities in accessing and promoting ACL, and asked how individuals were made aware for courses offered. Information was available in local libraries and community venues, however those families and individuals who would benefit from targeted service may require a more direct approach.

Members queried the percentage of learners who had started a new job following their ACL course. Whilst the 15% was a small part of the ACL participation numbers Members were reminded that the vast majority of ACL courses were leisure based and that learners didn't access these with a view to influencing future employment.

Members noted that 31% of learners were male and asked what work was being undertaken to encourage more male participants in ACL. The Staffordshire figure was

better than the national average of 26-28% male participation in ACL, however there was still work to be done to try and increase this. The range of courses offered was one way being developed to increase male participation.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) County Councillor local members are included in any review of identifying local priority areas;
- b) details of the new Apprenticeship Levy be shared with the Select Committee as soon as this is available;
- c) the use of Building Resilient Families and Communities data be promoted to prioritise those families needing targeting support;
- d) that further work be undertaken to increase the number of male participants in ACL; and
- e) links are improved with Public Health to help ensure courses are offered and support targeting appropriately.

62. Progress of the Attendance Working Group

At their meeting of 4 September 2015 the Select Committee had received details of an officer attendance working group established to consider the range of issues around school attendance. Good attendance was critically important to successful attainment, achievement and progression into adult life. The working group had reviewed and analysed detail of participation and attendance in Staffordshire, producing a draft document “Improving Participation and Attendance at our schools and settings” which promoted a new approach to securing collective action to drive further improvement and to help support reaching the new national target of 90% attendance for all children and young people.

Members received the 2014/15 Autumn and Spring terms attendance report and heard details of the Working Group’s progress.

Permanent exclusion rates had increased above the national average during 2013/14. This was being closely monitored. More up to date un-validated exclusion data had been received by officers and this would be shared with Members once the validated figures were available in May. There was some anecdotal evidence that increased exclusion were linked to the increase in academisation, however where trends were identified work would be undertaken with schools to ensure any exclusion was legal and address concerns.

Priorities to be achieved by summer 2017 had been shared with schools, settings and partners, and were around: participation in Early Years; primary and secondary school attendance; special school attendance; attendance of vulnerable groups; schools performing below national expectations for attendance; post-16 participation,; attendance at Pupil Referral Units (PRUs); Children Missing Education (CME) and Children Missing Out On Education (CMOOE); permanent exclusions; and fixed term exclusions. The Select Committee heard that a pilot data collection project was being run in the Cannock area around CMOOE to identify those young people not receiving a full time education and the reasons for this. It was intended that this data be used as a starting point to work around combatting CMOOE.

Members noted the work being undertaken to address attendance issues at PRUs. Difficulties had been highlighted through dual registration pupils and how this reflected attendance figures. Registration status of pupils at a PRU influenced attendance figures and work was being undertaken on the admission pathway across all six PRUs.

The accuracy and consistency of absence recording was queried, with the Select Committee being informed that this was an area for further work. This had been discussed at a recent Headteacher conference, particularly considering where a young person was absent for medical and/or health reasons. There was a need to work more closely with governing bodies and information would be included in the Governors e-bag.

The issue of unaccompanied asylum seekers was raised, with this group not currently identified in the report as a “vulnerable group”. Work was undertaken to get unaccompanied asylum seekers a school place as soon as possible, where their age could be verified.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) progress on the implementation of the “Staffordshire Attendance Priorities – Improving Participation and Attendance in our Schools and Settings: Our Principles and Priorities for 2015-2017” be endorsed;
- b) the Autumn and Spring Terms Attendance Report 2014/2015 be endorsed;
- c) detail on the work with unaccompanied young asylum seekers be included in future reports;
- d) the verified figures on exclusions be forwarded to Members as soon as these were available;
- e) names of those participating in the Officer Attendance Working Group be forwarded to Members for information;
- f) progress of the Working Group be reported to a future Select Committee.

63. Strategy on Commemorations for the Great War Centennial

In 2012 the Archives and Heritage Service received £80,000 funding from Arts Council England to develop plans for Staffordshire to commemorate the Great War Centennial. Staffordshire was one of the first authorities to attract significant funding for the Centennial. One of the outcomes from this funding was the development of a strategy for the commemoration which would reach communities within Staffordshire and beyond, and the Select Committee received a copy of the Strategy. Members received details of events and work already delivered, and the reach and impact of these, as well as details of future work.

Members heard that in autumn 2016 Archives and Heritage were planning to bid to the heritage Lottery Fund’s “Our Heritage” Fund for a project based around the Archive Service collections relating to the county’s asylums. This project would look at the impact of war on the mental health of combatants and how treatment developed in the post-war period. It would aim to raise awareness of mental health issues both then and now.

Members heard that all projects around the Centennial had been self funding through a range of grants.

Members were recommended to view “Staffs 14” on the web site. This was a series of pieces commemorating the Centennial.

RESOLVED – That Members endorse the work programme going forward to 2019 and congratulate officers on the excellent work so far.

64. Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services Working Group - Final Report

The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee had established a working group to consider the implementation of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Staffordshire “Mental Health is Everybody’s Business” (the adult strategy) and the Strategy for Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health of Children and Young People from Birth to 18 Years Integrated Commissioning Strategy 2014-2017 (the Children’s Strategy). Due to the cross cutting nature of this piece of work a representative from both the Prosperous Staffordshire and the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committees had been part of the working group.

The Group had now completed its work and produced its report, conclusions and recommendations. The Report had already been presented to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee, who had endorsed its recommendations and agreed its submission to the appropriate Cabinet Members.

Members felt this was a good report and were happy to endorse its recommendations. In particular they supported the recommendation that children’s mental health services should be extended from 0-18 to 0-25 years to ensure a service that takes account of the immense changes impacting on young people today.

Members also supported the recommendation that the Tamworth Multi-Agency Centres (MACs) project be included on the Select Committee’s work programme, to receive details of how the project developed during 18 months and evidence the outcomes achieved to determine the success of this project.

The Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills, welcomed the report and suggested that it should be shared with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Police and Crime Commissioner. He felt that Room 21 had already proved how effective MACs can be. He also suggested that the report be shared with education colleagues. He explained to Members that the proposed extension of age range for children’s mental health services would require legislative changes.

The Select Committee felt all schools should have their own mental health strategy which set out how they recognised and dealt with this issue. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the local authority could not require all schools to produce such a strategy, however they could encourage schools to do so.

Whilst supporting the working group recommendations Members wished to include a further recommendation when the report was forwarded to the appropriate Cabinet Members, this being:

“ That schools are encouraged to develop their own mental health strategy.”

RESOLVED – That the Select Committee:

- a) endorse the recommendations and agree the report’s submission to the appropriate Cabinet Members,
- b) propose the report’s circulation be extended to include the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Police and Crime Commissioner and education colleagues;
- c) include a progress report on the Tamworth MACs on their work programme; and,
- d) propose a further recommendation be made to the Cabinet Member that “schools be encouraged to develop their own mental health strategy”.

65. Work Programme

The Select Committee received a copy of their work programme. Members noted that the Infrastructure+ working group report and recommendations had been submitted to the Cabinet Member, Economy, Environment and Transport, for his response.

Members also asked that the Annual SACRE Report be included on the Select Committees work programme under the briefing note section.

RESOLVED – That the amendments to the work programme be noted.

66. Relocation of Lichfield Library Report

[The following Local Members were present for this item: Mrs Janet Eagland (Lichfield Rural North) and Mr Terry Finn (Lichfield City South)]

The Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 gave the County Council a statutory duty to provide “a comprehensive and efficient library service”. The way people use libraries had changed and the Library Service had recently completed a review which resulted in transforming the service across Staffordshire. The proposal for Lichfield Library was therefore considered in the context of transforming libraries in Staffordshire to ensure a sustainable library service for the future.

The focus for the Lichfield Library was to concentrate the library service in one open plan space that reflected the changing service requirements. Key drivers for change included: an ambition to have a more central location; a modernised and relevant service; a reduction in the cost of the backlog of maintenance on the existing building; efficiency savings achieved through a reduced footprint; and cost effective facilities. The proposal was to move the library location from the Friary site to St Mary’s Heritage Centre. This new site offered:

- a) lower cost than commercially available space
- b) no repair and maintenance liability for St Mary’s Centre and removes the county council from the maintenance back log at the Friary
- c) reduced running costs for Staffordshire County Council
- d) potential access to third party funding

- e) a town centre location
- f) added value in terms of social and community benefit
- g) preservation of a Grade 2* listed building
- h) best value

The Chairman read out an email from Local Member Ms Caroline Wood (Lichfield City North) seeking clarification on the size of the new library space in relation to the new Stafford library and the number of PCs available for users. Members were informed that the size of the open library space at the new Stafford library was very similar to that of the proposed new site for the Lichfield Library. There were 24 PCs in the new Stafford library and 4 tablets available for library visitors and whilst the layout of the new Lichfield library had not been designed as yet, it was anticipated that the facilities would be similar to those of the Stafford Library. As with Stafford the intention was for the whole of the new Lichfield Library to have free wifi and therefore visitors would be able to use their own tablets within the library space.

Those local members present were on the whole happy to support this proposal, in particular as it brought the library into the centre of the City. However the St Mary's Heritage Centre was used for a number of civic ceremonies and they wished to clarify whether this would still be possible if the library was on the site. Feasibility plans had been undertaken and no definite layout had as yet been agreed, however it was intended that the Organ would be unchanged and the Pews would remain in the area therefore space could be available for civic ceremonies. The Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills, informed members that this would be checked and confirmation forwarded to both Select Committee and Local Members.

Members requested that the inclusion of a break clause in the lease form part of negotiations with Lichfield Diocese.

RESOLVED – That:

- a) Clarification be forwarded to the Select Committee and Local Members on whether the chapel space would remain available for use on civic ceremonies; and
- b) The proposal to relocate Lichfield Library be supported.

67. Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below

The Committee then proceeded to consider reports on the following issues:

68. Relocation of Lichfield Library Appendices

(exception paragraph 3)

Chairman

| |
|-------------------------|
| Local Members' Interest |
| NA |

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 24th May 2016

Flood Risk Management

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

1. Scrutinise the update on the preparedness of the County Council for a severe flood event
2. Approve the next steps the County Council are taking to further improve preparedness for a severe flood event
3. Approve plans to host a Staffordshire Flood Summit

Report of Cllr Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

Summary

4. In light of the recent severe flooding in Cumbria, Lancashire and Yorkshire in December 2015, this paper explores how prepared Staffordshire County Council (SCC) is for a similar severe flood event. It explores our role as Lead Local Flood Authority, Highways Authority and Category 1 Emergency Responder and how likely the County Council would be to cope in such severe circumstances, highlighting the issues likely to occur.
5. This paper provides an update for Members and seeks approval for further work to be undertaken by the County Council to improve preparedness for a severe flood event.

Report

Background

6. Storms Desmond, Eva and Frank brought record-breaking levels of rainfall to many parts of the country in December 2015. Cumbria, Northumberland, Lancashire and Yorkshire were particularly badly affected.
7. The flooding was devastating. 16,000 homes and over 4,000 businesses were flooded. Many of these properties were behind flood defences in Cumbria that had been built following major flooding in 2009 or in locations like York, where the Foss Barrier was overwhelmed for the first time in its 30 year working history.

8. Flood defences protected 20,000 properties from flooding, but the unprecedented levels of rainfall pushed many beyond the resulting river levels they had been designed for and they were overwhelmed or breached.
9. There were major impacts to the local economy and infrastructure. The West Coast Mainline was closed for 2 months and multiple bridges were washed away or damaged and closed, such as Pooley Bridge in Ullswater, Cumbria and the historic bridge over the River Wharfe in Tadcaster, North Yorkshire. Electricity, gas and water supplies were also badly affected.
10. The worst hit Council was Cumbria, which had around £175m of damage to infrastructure. Calderdale had costs of around £33m, Northumberland £24m and Lancashire £5m.
11. The overall economic impact of the 2015-16 winter floods has been estimated at over £5bn. Flooding can both directly and indirectly affect local communities, when those outside of flood risk areas are affected due to infrastructure damage, temporary loss of facilities such as schools and health centres and businesses and local employers close, relocate or temporarily shut down.
12. It is not 100% possible to prevent everyone from flooding but effective flood risk management before, during and after a flood event can support local communities and businesses to plan for, respond to and recover from the serious effects of flooding.
13. Planning ahead for severe flooding and learning lessons from other parts of the Country will make the County Council well placed should Staffordshire be affected by such flooding. It is important for maintaining a strong and growing economy and ensuring we have great places to live that are safe for local communities, all of which are essential parts of the County Councils Business Plan.

Current Position

14. Major floods have affected Staffordshire in the recent past in 1946, 1977, 1981, 1994, 1999, 2000 and 2007. These caused property flooding and major impacts to local infrastructure and the economy at the time.
15. Flood defences have been built after such events to reduce the chance of a repeat flood event. Table 1 shows that many of our larger towns are afforded flood protection. Millions of pounds of public money have been invested in flood defences and recent flood events have demonstrated that in the large part, these defences continue to protect us from flooding.

Table 1 Largest defended areas in Staffordshire

| Settlement | Impacts of flooding | Last flooded |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Burton-on-Trent | 7,300 properties, town centre affected, closure of key bridges with 20-40 mile diversion, railway line closed | In 2000, the defences were close to overtopping. 40 properties flooded. Since then the defences have been improved. |
| Tamworth, Elford and | 3,000 properties, Ventura Retail park flooded and A51 | Flood events in June and July 2007 caused widespread flooding at Fazeley |

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Fazeley | closed | and Elford in particular. Since then defences have been improved. |
| Stafford | 150 properties | 1946,1977,1981, 2000 |
| Cannock | 100 properties, A5 and A34 closed | September 1994, July 1999, November 2000 |

Table 1 shows the larger defended areas. There are often localised issues behind flood defences caused by surface water and small, often culverted, watercourses.

16. Flood defences are designed to offer protection against a certain size storm known as the design event. This is typically the type of event we might expect on average once in every 100 years and is sometimes referred to as the 100 year flood. However, this is misleading as this is a probability and such events could occur in close succession rather than only once every 100 years.
17. In December, areas in the north saw unprecedented levels of rainfall that exceeded the design standard of many of the flood defences. Should we receive record-breaking levels of rainfall in Staffordshire, our flood defences would also be overwhelmed.
18. In addition, a flood defence is also only as strong as its weakest point. When defences are under great pressure during severe flood events, there is the potential for them to breach, as was seen at St Michaels in Lancashire in December.

What is our role as the County Council in preparing for, responding to and recovering from flooding?

19. SCC has three key roles: as an emergency responder, as a Highways Authority and as a Lead Local Flood Authority.
20. **Emergency Responder:** SCC is a Category 1 Emergency Responder (Civil Contingencies Act 2004) and has responsibility to assess the risk of, and plan for, emergencies. SCC commissions emergency planning and business continuity services from the Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU). The CCU is a multi-agency emergency planning hub based at Stafford Fire Station. The CCU supports the work of the Staffordshire Local Resilience Forum, which brings together responders such as the police, fire, ambulance, Environment Agency, local authorities and utility providers to plan for, respond to and support recovery from emergencies.
21. Within SCC, a number of officers are identified to form part of the Incident Management Team (IMT) in response to an incident. These officers have a training and exercising programme available to them, via the CCU, to ensure they are suitably prepared for their role.
22. **Highways:** The Infrastructure Plus Partnership is set up to address highway related flooding such as blocked gullies and the like. When a large flooding event occurs the Partnership has six gully emptying machines which could be diverted onto reactive type works. In addition, through call on contracts, SCC has access to pumps and tankers; however, in times of flood these may be in high demand outside of the county and unavailable. In a flood event highways could deploy resources to close roads etc.
23. **Lead Local Flood Authority:** As a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) we have an overview of the management of flood risk from small non main watercourses, surface water and groundwater. We prepare a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

(published in December 2015) that sets out how we will do this. This includes working closely with the CCU and Highways to improve our preparedness and response to flooding and also a duty to investigate flooding incidents after they have occurred.

24. The key partners we work with include:

- a. The Environment Agency, who carry out flood forecasting and warning, manage flood risk from Main Rivers (generally the larger rivers) and have an operational role on these watercourses (such as shutting flood gates and operating pumps)
- b. District and Borough Councils are also Category 1 Responders with a key role in emergency preparedness, response and recovery at a district and borough level. They have a specific role in evacuation and should have plans in place to provide temporary accommodation (such as rest centres).
- c. The Water Companies, who respond to and seek to alleviate flooding from the sewer network. It is not possible to design sewers to be large enough to accept significant amounts of rainfall and so following severe rainfall, the sewer network would be overwhelmed.

Key Considerations

25. To put this into local context, this paper explores what might happen at Burton-on-Trent in East Staffordshire and Leekbrook in Staffordshire Moorlands, should we experience severe flooding and considers our preparedness before, during and after.
26. Burton-on-Trent is on relatively flat land in the Trent Valley and extensive areas of the town are within the floodplain. The defences in the town were last upgraded in 2007, following a near miss in the November 2000 floods, when the water was inches from the top of the defences.
27. Due to the extensive floodplain of the Trent at Burton, the river can take 1-2 days to respond here to rainfall near the source of the Trent at Stoke-on-Trent. On the 5th and 6th of November 2000, nearly a month's rainfall fell in 24 hours, causing the River Trent to rise by nearly 2 metres in 50 hours and giving a record level of 3.79m.
28. In contrast, Leekbrook has a relatively steep Pennine catchment that responds rapidly to intense rainfall. There is the potential for flash flooding that could be life threatening, such as that seen in Boscastle in Cornwall in 2004 or Lynton and Lynmouth in Devon in 1952.
29. In both of these scenarios, it is unlikely that they would be the only communities affected. Pockets of flooding spread around the county would provide challenges to an effective response.

Before a flood

30. Rainfall and river levels are constantly monitored and forecasted up to five days ahead. The Environment Agency (and Met Office – Flood Forecasting Centre) use this information alongside local knowledge to issue flood alerts (flooding is possible) and

more serious Flood Warnings (flooding is expected) and Severe Flood Warnings (severe flooding expected, with a danger to life).

31. Should Staffordshire be shown to be at risk of flooding, procedures to establish multi agency coordination would be triggered. Should a severe flood be forecast, this would be co-ordinated at both a Strategic and Tactical level. Initial considerations would include the scale, impact and duration of flooding. Subsequent actions may include evacuation, the opening of rest centres and deployment of strategic resources such as high volume pumps and flood barriers.
32. To test these procedures, the multi-agency flood plan is exercised at least every three years, through a multi-agency flood exercise. This was last exercised in March 2016.
33. Alongside the multi-agency response, SCC would set up its Incident Management Team to consider relevant issues including the continued provision of critical services. Each service identified as critical is required to have a Business Continuity Plan to allow them to maintain services during an incident (whatever the cause e.g. fire/ flood) and these include responding to the loss of a building and loss of ICT.
34. ICT have two central data centres, to which the risk of flooding is relatively low. Both of these contain water detection systems to alert staff of any flooding. This would allow equipment and services to be moved between data centres as necessary to maintain the ICT system. All servers are hosted out of the data centres in Stafford.
35. An important role for both SCC and all Local Resilience Forum partners at this stage would be to communicate information about the risk to the public. This should include information on areas at risk, how residents can protect their property and consider how they would evacuate if required to do so. This is vital as it can reduce the demand on emergency responders during the incident.
36. The River Trent at Burton-on-Trent responds to prolonged rainfall and localised thunderstorms often make little difference to the levels in the Trent, although they can cause localised surface water flooding. Once prolonged seasonal rain had started to fall and the response in the river network could be monitored, the Environment Agency would have at least a day to predict that the defences in Burton would be likely to be overwhelmed. This would give some time for measures such as evacuation and rest centres to be set up, although recent flood evacuation studies in Lincolnshire have shown that it might take several days to completely evacuate a large area. There may also be an element of apathy from the local community to evacuate, since there has not been widespread flooding of the town for some time.
37. In contrast, thunderstorms that occur over steep and small Pennine catchments, like Leekbrook, are both difficult to forecast and can have significant impacts. In July 2013, a band of thunderstorms affected central Nottinghamshire and caused around 1,000 properties to flood from surface water and small watercourses, some within 30 minutes of the rain starting. On this day, the heaviest rainfall was forecast further north, around the Humber Estuary. No Flood Alerts were issued in advance and there were limited actions organisations could take with the low level of confidence in the location of the rainfall. The flooding happened so quickly that by the time many of the emergency responders had reached the flooded areas (which was challenging due to flooded roads), in many places the flood waters had been and gone.

38. Therefore responders and communities need to be prepared for both long term and sudden flood events.

During a flood

39. On receipt of information from the Flood Forecasting Centre that flooding was likely, a Strategic Assessment Meeting would be held and a multi-agency response stood up. This would initially be chaired by SCC. At the point where flooding was occurring and life was in danger, the emergency services would lead the multi-agency response. This would continue throughout the incident and into the recovery phase. The Strategic Coordinating Group could request military assistance if deemed necessary.

40. In respect of SCC services, the response would be co-ordinated by the Incident Management Team. Ensuring the continued delivery of council services would be a priority for the Incident Management Team to consider. SCC is likely to experience greater demand from residents impacted by flooding, the general public and the media.

41. This is likely to place increased burden on Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Highways, Customer Services, Schools and Communications which would need to be managed alongside ensuring business continuity and managing a potentially prolonged emergency response and recovery effort.

42. Our highways response is generally set up for very localised highways issues and during a severe event at Burton-on-Trent, our main focus would be closing roads to keep the public safe and assisting evacuation. We do not issue sandbags to the public and these are rarely effective.

43. As the LLFA, the SCC Flood Risk Management Team would support the Incident Management Team as flood risk specialists with decision making and would also be collating information on what flooding has occurred to inform the response and later flood investigations.

44. The County Council would put in place the above measures to respond to a major flood event, but is not resourced to totally cope with a severe event like this and would rely on mutual aid from other areas. In a widescale incident this may have to be sourced from further afield as neighbouring authorities may also be affected. SCC would use its Business Continuity Plans to prioritise service delivery while resources are diverted to flood response and/ or staff were directly affected by the flooding or unable to travel to work.

45. In contrast to widespread flooding of the Trent Valley, flash flooding at locations such as Leekbrook would be much shorter in duration, although the effects could be locally very severe to those affected and in terms of impacts on SCC services. The multi agency response would switch much faster to post event recovery in such locations.

Recovering from a flood

46. Experience from previous floods shows that it can take years for a community to fully recover from a major flooding incident, with many people out of their homes for over 12 months. Initial recovery considerations would begin during the response phase with a dedicated SCC team leading this.

47. Once the flood water has begun to drop and there is no further risk to life, the response would transition into recovery. SCC would have a key role chairing a multi-agency recovery group. At the same time, day to day services would need to return to business as usual as soon as possible. Work might involve:
- a. Establishing routes for obtaining financial aid. The Bellwin Scheme may assist Local Authorities to recoup some of the costs involved. However this is only for expenses incurred during the response phase and would not cover recovery work.
 - b. Supporting the recovery of local businesses,
 - c. Restoring roads and other infrastructure. Once the flooding has receded it is difficult to estimate how long it may take to reopen the highway as it would depend on the level of damage. When considering recent incidents around the country this could range from a few hours to many months,
 - d. Ensuring access to a full range of health advice (including long term psycho-social care),
 - e. Clean-up of areas contaminated by floodwater. This would include the disposal of contaminated waste, including white goods and household belongings,
 - f. Administering central government flood resilience grants to affected residents and businesses, should these be made available.
 - g. Ensuring delivery of County Council services to residents who may have been displaced by the flood.
 - h. Supporting other agencies involved in recovery (such as district/borough councils)
48. As LLFA, we would investigate the flooding. This would seek to establish what happened, where and why, the role of the different flood risk organisations involved and what measures it might be possible to put in place to reduce the chance or impact of a repeat event.

Comments and Next Steps

49. SCC are working with the CCU and Environment Agency to improve preparedness for severe flood events. This work includes:
- a. A County Council-wide flood exercise based on the scenario of the Burton-on-Trent flood defences overtopping later in 2016/17 to test preparedness,
 - b. Supporting the Environment Agency to produce Incident Response Plans for key defended areas that make clear the roles and responsibilities of the different organisations,
 - c. Identifying the critical road network to ensure it is as resilient as practical to extreme weather conditions,
 - d. Taking forward a new gulley emptying cycle that takes a risk based approach,
 - e. Working with the Environment Agency, District and Borough Councils and Water Companies on a rolling six year programme of new or improved flood alleviation schemes,
 - f. Working with the National Flood Forum, an Independent Charity, to work with communities and local businesses to raise awareness of the risk of flooding and increase community resilience,
 - g. Implementing the recommendations locally of the National Flood Resilience Review that is due to report in November 2016.

50. In addition, it would be beneficial to host a Staffordshire Flood Summit. Warwickshire County Council (WCC) held a similar event in 2014 and 2015. This involved County Councillors, District Councillors and officers, Parish Councillors and officers from other organisations such as the Environment Agency and consultants. Presentations were given on matters such as planning and community flood resilience, with time given for networking. Organisations had stands, including WCC as LLFA, Emergency Planning, the Environment Agency and the National Flood Forum.

Conclusion

51. Recent flood events in the north of the Country have shown the devastating impact that severe flooding can have on local communities. Should we experience similar flooding in Staffordshire, this would have a significant and long term impact on local residents and businesses.

52. SCC are working with others to try to continue to improve our flood defences and improve preparedness for a severe flood event. However, the scale of the flooding that would occur would be such that we would need to rely on mutual aid from other areas and at least in the short term, SCC services would be overwhelmed by requests for help. However, multi-agency and County Council plans are in place and exercised to manage a large scale flood event which challenges the capability of all responders.

53. There are no legal implications of the recommendations as essentially the report describes how we are fulfilling our legal requirements to plan for and respond to flooding under various different pieces of legislation (The Highways Act 1980; The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010).

Link to Strategic Plan

The people of Staffordshire will:

- Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth, and
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

Flood Risk Management supports this by developing strategies and actions at a County and community level to reduce the risk of flooding for Staffordshire residents.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

Cabinet, 21st October 2015, Sign off of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, 18th December 2014, Flood Risk Management update

Community Impact – A Community Impact Assessment is not relevant to this paper. One was completed for the Cabinet sign off of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in October 2015.

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Appendices:

Appendix A - Roles and Responsibilities for Flood Risk Management

Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities for Flood Risk Management

The Council is a Lead Local Flood Authority and has powers and statutory duties to manage and co-ordinate local flood risk management activities (shown on Table A1 below). Local flood risk covers flooding from surface water (overland runoff), groundwater and smaller watercourses (known as Ordinary Watercourses).

Table A1 Roles and responsibilities as Lead Local Flood Authority

| Strategic | Operational |
|--|---|
| <p>Develop, maintain, apply and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.</p> <p>Co-ordinate partnership working between relevant organisations.</p> <p>Represent Staffordshire on the River Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.</p> <p>To comply with the European Floods Directive, produce a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment and for nationally significant Flood Risk Areas, surface water mapping and a Flood Risk Management Plan.</p> | <p>Investigate flooding incidents and set out who has responsibilities and what actions can be taken.</p> <p>Hold a register of significant drainage/flood alleviation assets.</p> <p>Power to designate third party assets acting as flood defences so they cannot be altered or removed.</p> <p>Powers to enforce land drainage legislation to ensure ordinary watercourses flow properly and a duty to consent to certain works on these watercourses.</p> <p>Powers to build new flood alleviation schemes for local sources of flooding.</p> <p>Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications for surface water drainage on major developments</p> |

There are a number of different organisations in and around Staffordshire that have roles and responsibilities for flood risk management and these are shown on Table A2.

Land and property owners are responsible for the maintenance of watercourses either on or next to their properties. Property owners are also responsible for the protection of their properties from flooding. When it comes to undertaking works to reduce flood risk, Lead Local Flood Authorities, District Councils, Water Companies and the Environment Agency do have powers but limited resources are prioritised and targeted to where they can have the greatest effect.

Table A2 Roles and responsibilities for flood risk management

| Organisation | Operational role |
|--|---|
| Environment Agency | Main Rivers e.g. Severn, Trent Reservoirs (regulation role) |
| Lead Local Flood Authority (Staffordshire County Council) | Surface water Groundwater Ordinary Watercourses (consenting and enforcement) |
| District and Borough Councils | Ordinary Watercourses (works) |
| Sow and Penk Internal Drainage Board | Ordinary Watercourses in the Internal Drainage District around Stafford |
| Water Companies (Severn Trent and United Utilities) | Public Sewers |
| Highways Authorities | Highway drainage |
| Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit | Emergency planning |

| |
|-------------------------|
| Local Members' Interest |
| N/A |

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 24th May 2016

Countryside Estate Review – Part Two

Recommendations

1. That the Committee scrutinises the proposed approach for developing the detailed management arrangements and for selecting the most appropriate partner or partners for each countryside site.
2. That the Committee supports the Scheme of Delegation set out in paragraph 28 of this report for selecting the preferred partner(s) and management arrangements for each countryside site.

Report of Cllr Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

Summary

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

3. The Select Committee has previously been involved in and influenced the Review into the future management of the countryside estate. The Select Committee is now being given an opportunity to consider the results and feedback from the public consultation exercise and to comment on the proposed process which has been designed to develop the detailed management arrangements and for selecting the most appropriate partner or partners for each countryside site.
4. The comments of the Select Committee will be reported to the Cabinet at their meeting on 15 June 2016 for them to take into account in their consideration of this matter.

Report

Background

5. The Review is about looking for new and innovative ways to manage the countryside estate so that it is more affordable to run and delivers better outcomes for Staffordshire's residents.
6. Following an initial engagement exercise which Select Committee took part in, Cabinet agreed in October 2015 to consult more widely on four options, detailed below, for managing the estate in the future:-
 - A. Retain under council management and seek opportunities to increase income from existing sites by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties.

- B. Transfer management on a site-by-site basis to local community or voluntary sector groups such as parish councils. This option could see parish councils, local community or voluntary sector groups maintaining and managing the use of the site, running events and deciding on wildlife management.
- C. Establish a partnership of landowners and/or other organisations with similar aspirations to work with us to manage and maintain one or a cluster of sites and develop appropriate and approved income generating facilities.
- D. Establish a not for profit trading company or charitable organisation to run and develop parts of the estate.

Public Consultation

7. The full public consultation ran for twelve weeks from 2 November 2015 to 24 January 2016 and sought people's views on what they value about the sites, appropriate partners, the appetite for joint working as views of the options. The consultation included an online and paper survey, drop-in sessions at the main country parks, posters, promotion via media outlets and face to face briefings. A dedicated email inbox was also set up.
8. The full consultation report is attached at Appendix A.
9. Over 7000 people signed a petition to oppose the sale of Cannock Chase. However, once our promotion campaign had been launched explaining the proposals that the Chase (and all the other sites) are to remain in county council ownership and that sale had never been an option only a total of 555 felt the need to comment during the consultation. These responses have been very constructive and important in helping shape the way forward.
10. As expected, 77% of respondents agreed with. Option A which largely reflects the existing in-house management arrangement but places more emphasis on reducing operational costs. This management arrangement will continue until any new management arrangements are in place with income generation and reducing the operational costs of the estate remaining two of the main priorities for the Service.
11. The general consensus amongst respondents was that national charitable organisations and local community groups are preferable groups to become involved with the management of the estate. This is because they have plenty to offer in terms of expertise, volunteers, access to funding, new ideas and local knowledge. Respondents felt that the three most important facilities on countryside sites are the management of wildlife/ heritage, maintenance of footpaths, bridleways, cycling trails and car parking areas, and accessible tracks and facilities. Comments were also made about the need to maintain standards, the possibility of rising costs for car parking or cafes or charging for access.
12. All of the results and feedback from the full public consultation have been used to guide our thinking in deciding the management approach for each site (see paragraphs 10 to 23 below).

13. 138 respondents including individuals, groups, and third sector and private organisations also registered their interest through the consultation process in working with the county council to manage the countryside estate. Some of these parties are already known to the Service but this interest will be explored further as the detailed solutions for the sites are developed.

Developing the Detailed Approach for each Site

14. See flowchart at Appendix B.

15. The next stage in the Review is to find the most viable management arrangement for each site to ensure that it is looked after in ways that give the most value to people and wildlife and to ensure its financial sustainability. At the same time operational efficiency across the wider countryside estate needs to be maintained.

16. Because of the diverse nature of the sites, it was never envisaged that a single solution would be identified for managing all the countryside sites. The approach to find the best solution for each site is described below and includes two stages: firstly, to find the best management option for each site and secondly to select the most appropriate partner or partners to work with on the site.

17. As the detailed approach for each site is developed, engagement with relevant groups will be ongoing to give them an opportunity to shape the future management of individual sites.

Stage 1 - Matching the Options to the Sites

SWOT Analysis

18. A *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats* (SWOT) Analysis has been used to find the most viable management option for each site and also, to identify site bundling or clustering opportunities that will deliver better outcomes and operational efficiencies

19. The SWOT Analysis looked at how each site would thrive and contribute to the required outcomes under each of the four management options based on factors such as its infrastructure and income generating potential, its existing relationships and potential for partnership working, its environmental sensitivities which could limit its development potential and its proximity to other public access land. Consideration was also given to the characteristics of each site that could be used to more beneficial effect or, in some cases, would need to be overcome to achieve the desired results. As stated above the feedback from the public consultation including the expressions of interest in joint working were fed into and guided the thinking in this process.

Summary of SWOT Analysis

20. The detailed Summary from the SWOT Analysis is attached at Appendix C and is condensed in the table below. A partnership arrangement has been chosen for the main country parks because it will deliver better outcomes and benefits for both people and nature conservation. This is largely due to the size, limited infrastructure and the environmental sensitivities of most sites that limit their income potential and to the greater efficiencies that can be achieved through partnership arrangements with other

organisations or local communities that will allow for the pooling of resources, knowledge and expertise. Transferring management to local community groups has been chosen for the smaller sites unless there are opportunities for them to be bundled into a partnership arrangement. This concurs with the views expressed in the public consultation.

| SITES | Option Appraisal Outcome/ Possible Approach |
|--|---|
| Country Parks | |
| Cannock Chase and Chasewater | A partnership arrangement (Option C) which includes both these sites and possibly Sevens Road Picnic Site is seen to be the most viable Option. * |
| Consall, Deep Hayes and Greenway Bank | A partnership arrangement (Option C) which includes these country parks and Froghall and Oakamoor Picnic Areas and the Oakamoor to Denstone and Leek to Rushton Greenways is seen to be the most viable Option for these sites in support of the wider Churnet Valley offer being developed by the Churnet Valley Living Landscapes (CVLLP) Project. In relation to Consall, there may be an opportunity to transfer the management of the site to a charitable organisation (Option B).* |
| Apedale | Transferring the site to a charitable organisation (Option B) or a partnership arrangement (Option C) are seen to be the most viable Options for this site.* |
| * Developing partnership arrangements may take some time. In the interim, opportunities to offset operating costs by increasing income, where appropriate taking into account the environmental sensitivities of sites, or by increasing volunteering opportunities will continue to be explored . | |
| Picnic Areas | |
| Froghall and Oakamoor | Inclusion within the partnership arrangement (Option C) for the wider Churnet Valley offer is the most viable Option for these sites. Alternatively, transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) would be an appropriate substitute. |
| Sevens Road | Inclusion within the partnership arrangement (Option C) with Cannock Chase and Chasewater Country Parks is the most viable Option for these sites. Alternatively, transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) would be an appropriate substitute. |
| Hanbury Common, Brownshore Lane, Hanchurch Hills, Wimblebury Road and Hatherton Reservoir | Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) is seen to be the most viable Option for these sites. |
| Chillington Car Park | Continue to maintain with voluntary support or consider termination of lease in the longer term. |
| Greenways | |
| Stafford to Newport | Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) is seen to be the most viable Option for this route or alternatively, increasing the existing voluntary contribution. |
| Oakamoor to Denstone | Inclusion within the partnership arrangement (Option C) for the wider Churnet Valley offer is the most viable Option for these sites. Alternatively, transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) would be an appropriate substitute. |
| Leek to Rushton | Inclusion within the partnership arrangement (Option C) for the wider Churnet Valley offer is the most viable Option for these sites. Alternatively, transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) would be an appropriate substitute. |

Selecting the Most Appropriate Partner(s) for each Site

21. Having identified the most viable option for managing each site, a selection process has been developed to secure the most appropriate partner or partners: public, private or third sector for each site. Some soft market testing will be part of this process. Conversations with stakeholders/ potential partners will also continue at the same time but in a more formal and structured way.
22. The selection process will be a staged approach as described below. Effort will be concentrated in 2016/17 on transferring the management of the smaller sites because of the existing joint working relationships with local community groups and parish councils.:

Step 1 – Hold Potential Partner Information Days

23. The purpose of these Information Days will be to more specifically test:-
 - a. the appetite for a partnership arrangement on sites
 - b. the appetite for taking on the management of sites
 - c. the appetite for delivering some on-site services or maintenance tasks.
24. All existing and potential partners will be invited to these Information Days which will provide an ideal opportunity to build relationships with potential partners and also give them an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about the management activities on each site.
25. An exercise was carried out early in the project to identify all existing stakeholders/ partners. These included other landowning bodies, District and Parish Councils, tenants, Friends of Groups and voluntary organisations. Also, a total of 138 respondents registered their interest through the consultation process. All of these potential partners will be invited to attend the Information Days. The county council's new VCSE strategic partner will also be invited to the Information days to guide and provide support to organisations or volunteers who wish to become involved with the management of sites. This support will be ongoing.
26. A prospectus will be produced for each site to support this process.

Step 2 – Implement Selection Process

27. A proposed selection process has been drawn up which includes an evaluation process (Appendix D). The primary approach will be to place a public advert to notify interested parties followed by the release of relevant documentation specific to each site. Bids will be evaluated against a set of pre-determined evaluation criteria which reflect the critical success factors.

Delegation of Future Decisions

28. It is proposed that decisions on the final management proposals for each site should be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport unless there is likely to be a significant change or impact on the public or level of service. Where that is possible, the proposals will be referred back to Cabinet for a decision. The Cabinet

Member will also ensure no decisions will be made on the future of any site without the proposals being appropriately promoted widely amongst key stakeholders and the public in advance.

Legal Implications & Key Risks

29. The legal implications will need to be considered for each site in respect of contracts/agreements, property and employees and any other issues/risks that may arise during the development of the proposals. This may involve the transfer of county council assets (but not land) to an organisation and the leasing or licensing of county council properties. Any organisation interested in the county council's proposals for the various sites will need to be a legal entity (i.e. a company, charity etc.) which has previous experience and/or knowledge to assist in the management/running of such sites and have the relevant financial standing to enter into agreement for the obligations placed upon it. This will include having in place sufficient levels of insurance and effective systems to manage the health, safety and welfare of any buildings; employees; and third parties that it may be responsible for as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, subsequent regulations and approved codes of practice. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places general duties on employers to ensure the health and safety of their employees and anyone else who may be harmed by the employer's work activities or workplace. Where voluntary organisations show interest (i.e. those organisations that do not employ anyone); these will be treated as though they are an employing organisation and therefore will need to satisfy the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, subsequent regulations and approved codes of practice. It is crucial that the organisations are robust organisations whether large or small to enable them to effectively comply with their obligations in respect of the sites including the employment of staff that may potentially transfer to the organisations. The relevant checks and obligations on the organisation are aimed at reducing the county council's exposure to liability.
30. The county council will need to undertake financial checks on any organisations and this would form part of any appointment process. The county council needs to be clear about what organisations will be required to do on sites i.e. catering provisions at Marquis Drive at Cannock Chase Country Park which is commissioned by the county council from Entrust Support Services Ltd. One of the major issues for the county council is the Higher Level Stewardship Agreements which affect Cannock Chase, Apedale and Norton Bog/Anglesey Basin. Natural England will need to be informed and agree any changes in the management of sites under existing HLS Agreement and will be a key stakeholder in the development of the proposals relating to the Cannock Chase, Apedale and Norton Bog/Anglesey Basin.
31. The agreements with any organisations will deal with the liabilities in respect of each site. Any liabilities will be highlighted as part of the development of the proposals and the county council will need to consider during the development of these proposals what liability can be transferred to the relevant organisations and what will be retained by the county council.
32. Any substantial legal issues and risk will be highlighted within any subsequent cabinet reports or delegated decisions. Risks of any nature including legal risks will be set out within a risk log which will be maintained for each site and for the project as a whole.

33. During the continued development of the detailed proposals for the sites the county council will need to consider the client side structure required to manage any partnerships or management agreements with organisations. A relevant governance process will need to be put in place.

HR Implications

34. All staff involved, directly or indirectly, with the management of the countryside estate may be affected by the Review. This includes members of the Ranger Service, the in-house Works Unit and the Environmental Specialist team.

35. The management of sites could transfer to new providers which would have an impact on staffing levels or job roles. It is still premature at this stage to predict the extent of the impact because the management arrangements for particular sites have not been established. Staff and Trade Union Representatives have been engaged and consulted as the Review has progressed and this will continue as the detailed proposals for each site are developed.

MTFS

36. The Review aims to deliver MTFS savings of £50,000 in 2017/18 rising to £250,000 by 2020/21. Future savings will be made once the new management arrangements plans are in place, but it is not known yet what these will be. The point of this next stage in the Review is to find the best management arrangement for each site which, in turn, will determine how much is saved.

Next Steps

37. The Select Committee is now being given the opportunity to review the proposed approach for developing the detailed management arrangements and for selecting the most appropriate partner or partners for each countryside site prior to consideration by Cabinet on 15 June 2016.

Link to Strategic Plan – Great Place to Live

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity – Previous consideration by Select Committee on 18 December 2014 and 4 September and 12 October 2015.

Community Impact – A full CIA has been produced and is included in the background papers.

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Background papers

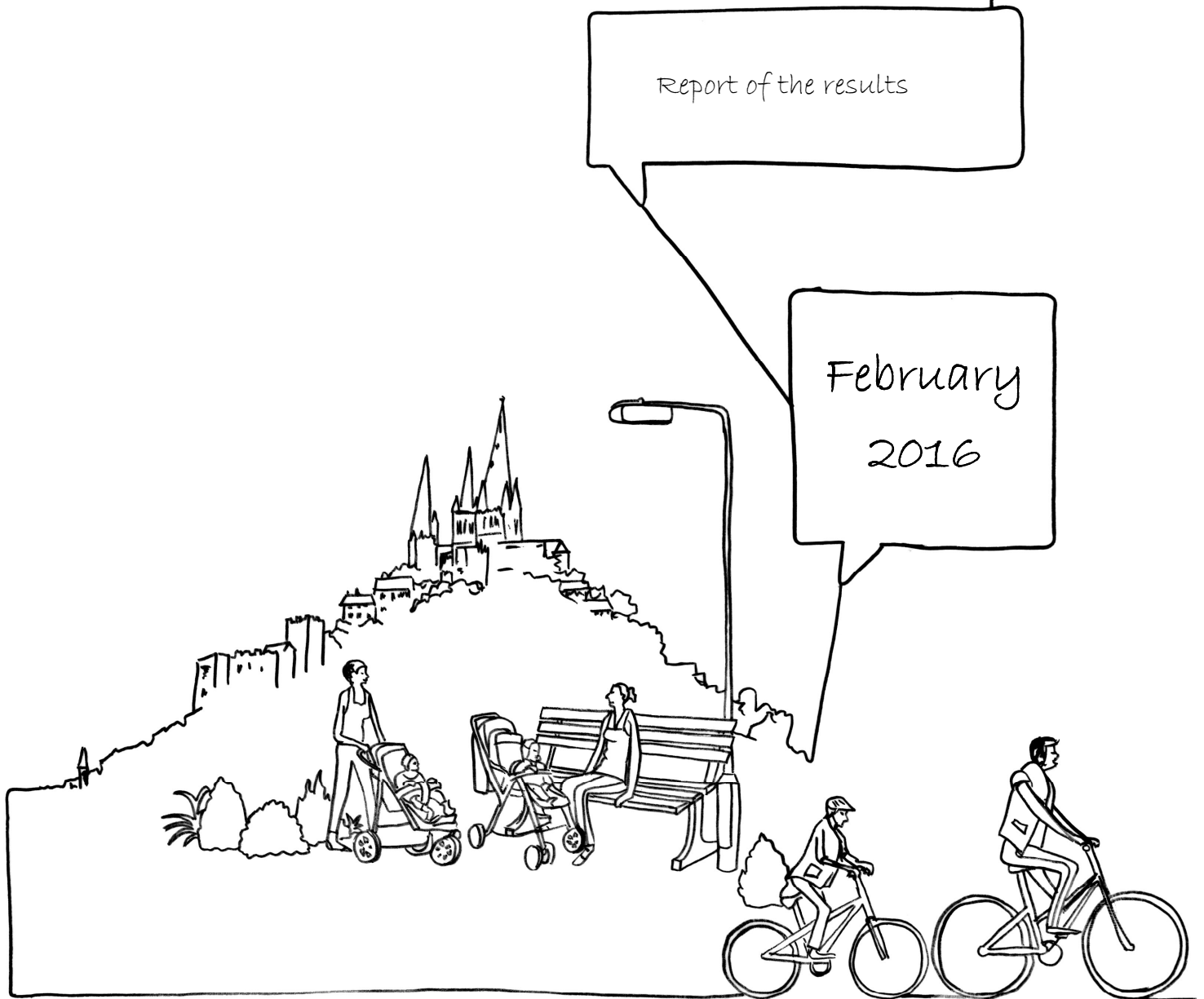
Appendix A – Countryside Estate Review Consultation Report
Appendix B – Flowchart of Development of Detailed Approach
Appendix C – SWOT Summary
Appendix D – Proposed Selection & Evaluation Process
Appendix E – Community Impact Assessment

Reports of Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee - 18 December 2014, 4
September and 12 October 2015.
Community Impact Assessment
Draft Cabinet Report and Appendices

Countryside Estates Consultation

Report of Results

Insight, Planning & Performance Team



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DOCUMENT DETAILS

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Title | Countryside Estates Consultation—Report of Results. |
| Date created | February 2016 |
| Description | The purpose of this document is to illustrate the results of the Countryside Estates Consultation. The consultation seeks to understand current visitor patterns and to identify those facilities which are important to people. It also analyses people's views on the Council's proposals for its future Countryside Estate and articulates the likely impacts that these proposals may have. |
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Visiting countryside estates

The majority¹ (97%) had visited one or more of Staffordshire’s countryside estates in the last 12 months. All sites had been visited during the last 12 months. Cannock Chase Country Park was the most visited, 73% had been there in the last year and nearly all (72%) were regular visitors.

Most other sites were also visited regularly. Some of the smaller sites were used by fewer respondents but in most cases these were still used regularly. Exceptions to this included Hanbury Common which was visited by few respondents and on an infrequent basis.

The main reasons for wanting to use countryside parks was for walking (85%), to enjoy wildlife and heritage (65%) or to use the visitor centres and cafes (40%).

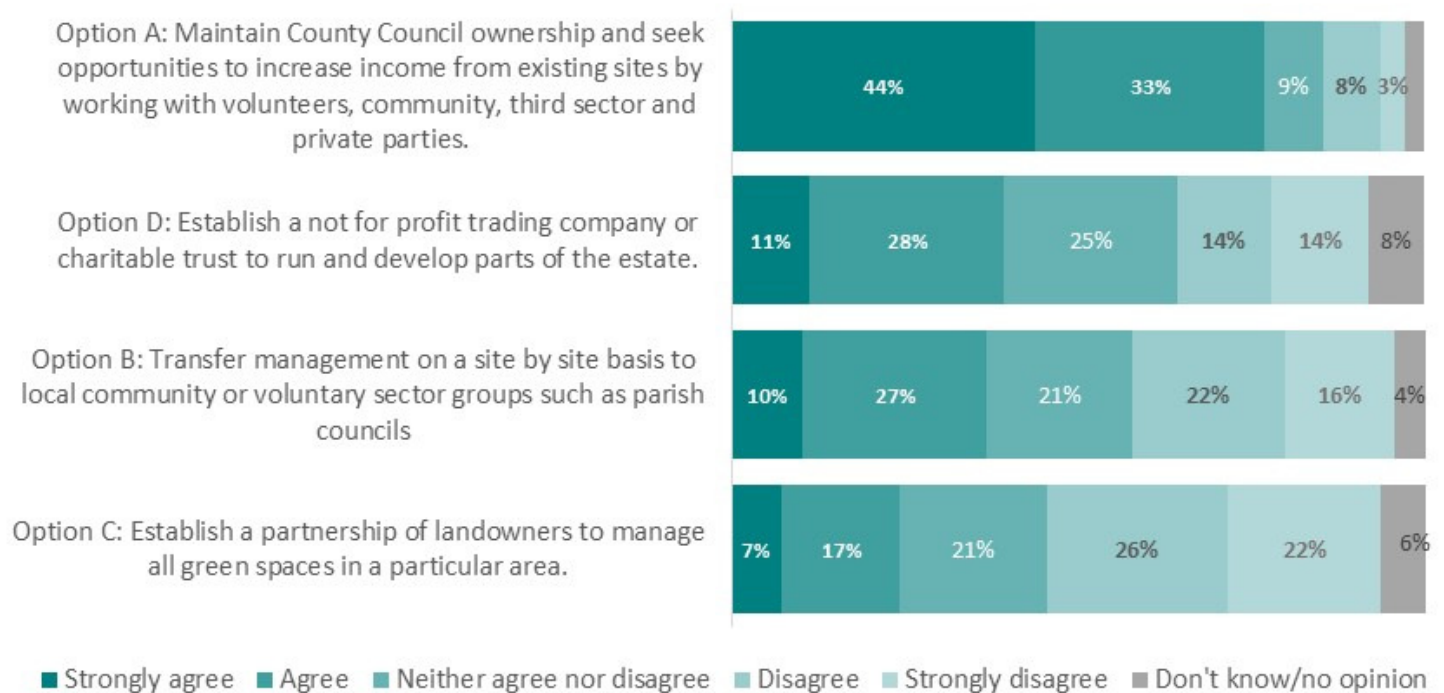
1.2 The proposals

To protect the use of countryside parks for current and future generations, the County Council needs to seek out new and affordable ways of managing its countryside estate. Respondents were invited to express their views on four proposals and to share other suggestions which they may have.

Over three quarters (77%) agreed with Option A, maintaining County Council ownership and seeking opportunities to increase income from existing sites by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties. Respondents who agreed with this option did so because they felt it was important to have a trusted and accountable body in charge of decision making.

Just under one quarter (24%) agreed with Option C, establishing a partnership of landowners to manage green spaces in a particular area. A minority of the additional respondents felt that options C and D could work well together.

Figure 1.1: Agreement with the County Council’s proposals



¹ Responses in the executive summary are mainly based on those views shared by survey respondents. Where other responses are included, these are referenced and refer to those people who participated in drop in sessions, meetings or sent in letters/emails.

1.3 Future service provision

Considered most important for future service provision was the management of wildlife/heritage (98%), maintenance of footpaths, bridleways, cycling trails and car parking (98%) and the provision of accessible tracks/facilities (97%). When questioned on what was most in need of improvement, respondents felt that countryside sites needed to be more accessible. This included improving “*access by public transport*”, providing “*more accessible tracks*” as well as “*an integrated approach to cycle and pedestrian access*”.

1.4 Impact of the proposals

The largest proportion of respondents (52%) felt that the current proposals would have some impact on them and their families future use of countryside estates. Smaller proportions of people felt they would be unaffected (26%) or significantly affected (22%) by the changes.

Key issues/concerns included the ability to maintain standards, the possibility of rising costs e.g. for car parking or cafes and payment for access. These tended to be issues for all respondents regardless of the level of impact they felt the proposals would have upon them.

1.5 Safeguarding future provision

Respondents’ views were equally split between those who were in agreement that the County’s proposals would safeguard the future of the countryside estate (34%) and those neither agreeing nor disagreeing that this was the case (33%). A further 19% disagreed and 14% did not know or were not sure. Commonly mentioned comments included that:

- “*The reality is efficiencies need to be made and if transferring management is the way to do this to protect the estates then it’s a necessity*”.
- “*Until a decision has been made as to which proposal is to be commenced no-one can make an accurate assessment and answer this question*”.

1.6 Other ideas

Throughout the consultation, some respondents expressed concerns about potential charges or price increases. However, when asked to identify other ways in which the County Council could improve the countryside estate, respondents suggested that charging for services could be a good option. Suggestions included charging for “*access*”, “*increasing charges for refreshments*” and “*car parking charges*”. Holding “*events/activities*” which provided “*income generation*” was also a popular suggestion.

1.7 Working with other organisations

Respondents were invited to indicate which organisations they felt should be involved with the management of the countryside estate in the future. 82% agreed national charitable organisations should be involved in the management of countryside estates. 60% of respondents also agreed that local community groups or friends groups should be involved.

1.8 Working with volunteers, charitable, voluntary and private organisations in the future

A total of 138 respondents indicated that they would be interested in working with the County Council in a range of ways in the future.

86 were individuals who were interested in volunteering. The following were also interested in working with the County Council to secure the future sustainability of its countryside estate; 63 individual/groups, 15 third sector organisations and 6 private organisations.

- Those who registered an interest in volunteering were willing to participate in a range of capacities, These included site maintenance, development, management and participation in educational initiatives.
- Individuals/groups offered support with policy and partnerships development, bidding for funding, the provision of funding and sharing advice on the feasibility of commercial activity.
- Third sector organisations expressed an interest in working with the County Council to maintain current relationships and to offer further help. They also offered to provide partnership support and assistance with recruitment, training and the provision of volunteers. Encouraging healthier lifestyles was important to this group who offered to promote sites to encourage greater visitor numbers.
- Private organisations were interested in maintaining current support and in potentially working collectively to develop a community management of shared assets organisation. Some also offered the services of their volunteers and suggested that they would be interested in encouraging the development of new activities.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Staffordshire County Council's countryside estate comprises of six main country parks, nine picnic places and three greenways. In previous years, these have been managed by the County Council with some voluntary support.

Current financial pressures however, now means that the County Council need to seek out new and affordable ways of managing it's countryside estate, to protect it for current and future generations.

Whilst it is clear that all sites will continue to remain under County Council ownership, the Council are looking for new ways to manage them. This could involve other organisations or local groups of interested people helping with the management of some sites.

This consultation is seeking to understand the views of all interested parties on the Council's proposals. This includes the likely impact that the changes would have on different groups of people.

In addition, views on current usage and experience of the sites have also been explored. The consultation also sought to encourage both volunteers and charitable, voluntary and private organisations to consider working with the County Council to manage it's countryside estate in the future.

This report contains the details of the feedback provided by all interested parties. These views will be considered by the Council's Cabinet and taken into account as part of the decision-making process.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The consultation ran for a twelve week period from the 2nd November 2015 to 24th January 2016. Residents, visitors, volunteers, community, voluntary and private organisations as well as other interested parties were encouraged to share their views.

Participation was encouraged through both an online and a paper survey which were designed by staff in Insight, Planning and Performance, Communications and Place. These were accompanied with additional information including frequently asked questions and other ways in which people could participate in the consultation, such as drop in sessions.

Drop in sessions were held at a number of key visitor centres around the county. These included Cannock Chase, Chasewater, Apedale and Greenway Bank Country Parks, also Consall Nature Centre. In addition, Rangers and Information Assistants, employed in visitor sites, also actively engaged and encouraged visitor participation. Posters promoting the consultation were also displayed in key locations.

Email and letter responses were also encouraged through a dedicated email box.

Face to face briefings were held with key stakeholders such as district and parish councils, elected members, District Commissioning Leads, VAST, Staffordshire Buddies, key friends and pressure groups.

To maximise the opportunity for involvement, the consultation was also promoted via press releases to all media outlets across Staffordshire.

Additional involvement of young people was also promoted through social media. These included posts/ tweets on Facebook and Twitter.

2.3 RESPONSES

In total, 555 interested parties shared their views during the 12 week consultation period. Participants included residents, volunteers, community, voluntary and private organisations.

The majority of those taking part, did so via the survey. In total, 456 people responded in this way. The survey results are statistically representative of the Staffordshire population at the 95% confidence level².

99 chose to engage in the consultation process through other channels;

- 25 participated through drop in sessions and meetings. Those attending the drop in sessions were visitors to the countryside sites. Meetings were also held with those individuals and groups who were interested in working with the County Council to secure the future sustainability of its countryside estate. These included meetings with parish councils.
- 19 letters/emails were received from a wide variety of respondent types. These included parish councils, local MP's, residents, organisations, district councils and staff from Staffordshire County Council who have environmental expertise.
- 55 young people also engaged via Facebook and Twitter. On this occasion, however, they did not choose to share their views on the consultation.

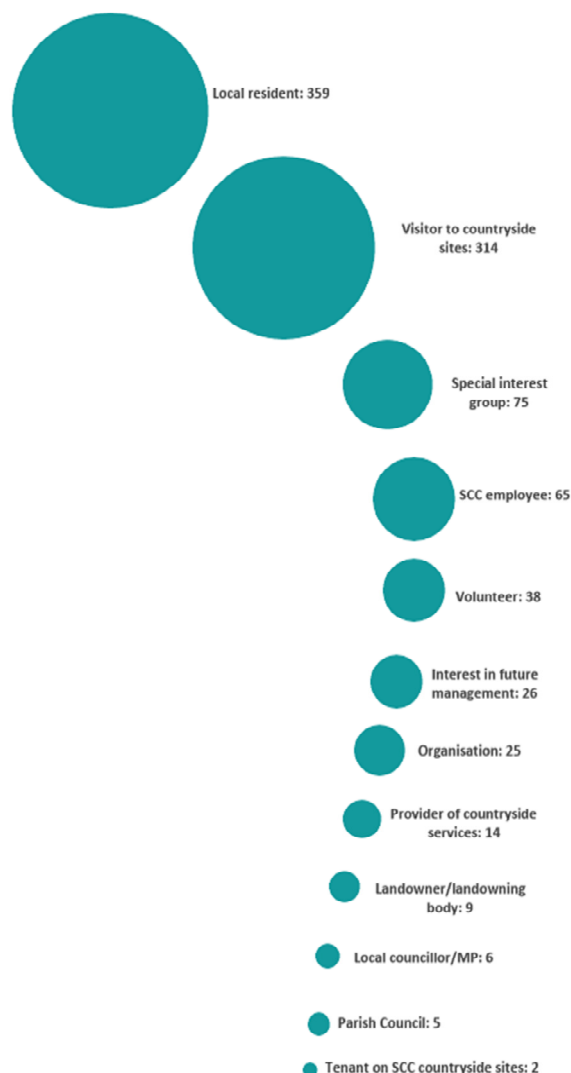
The views of those respondents who engaged in the consultation through letters, emails and drop in sessions have been included in the relevant sections, alongside the survey responses.

² This means that if the surveys were repeated, in 95 out of 100 cases, the same responses would be achieved. Survey responses have a confidence interval of +/-4.5% meaning that the percentage response given to any question could fall up to 4.5% higher or 10% lower than the actual response given. A confidence interval of +/-3 to 4% is fairly typical for a robust survey.

2.4 PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

- ⇒ The largest majority of respondents described themselves as local residents (359) or visitors to countryside sites (314). 313 respondents (70%) were regular visitors, accessing sites at least once a month or more frequently³.
- ⇒ 26 indicated they were responding to the survey as an individual/group or organisation interested in being involved in the future management of countryside sites. When questioned further, a total of 136 indicated an interest in working with the County Council in the future either as an individual, third sector or private sector organisation.
- ⇒ The survey results were representative of the Staffordshire population by gender. 52% of respondents were male and 48% were female.
- ⇒ Responses were also representative of 25-44 year olds. They were however over representative of those aged 45-74 and under representative of the youngest and oldest age groups (under 18s and 75+ year olds)³.
- ⇒ 10% of survey respondents had a disability. This is significantly lower than the number of people in Staffordshire as a whole who have a disability (19%)⁴.
- ⇒ Responses were received from seven of the eight Staffordshire districts. The highest response was from Stafford (134 responses) and the lowest response was from East Staffordshire (12 responses). No responses were recorded from Tamworth. The results cannot be considered statistically robust at the district level and therefore analysis at this level has not been included in this report.
- ⇒ Responses have been analysed by key demographics where the number of responses is sufficient and where there are clear differences of opinion.

Figure 2.1: Respondent type



³ Analysis by respondent type does suggest there may be differences of opinion by type. However, a breakdown of these views has not been included in the report because response numbers for some respondent types are relatively low and therefore they may not be representative of the wider population which they seek to represent. Further research would be necessary to clarify the viewpoints of different respondent types.

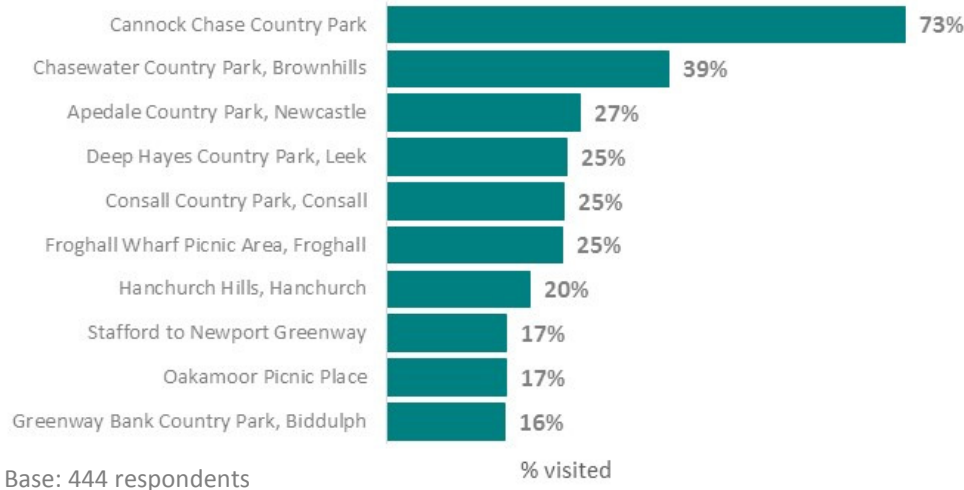
⁴ Research commissioned by DEFRA on diversity highlights that young people, disabled people and people from black and ethnic minority groups are under-represented users of the countryside and green outdoor spaces, What About Us, Diversity Review, Challenging Perceptions: Under represented groups, July 2005.

3. VISITORS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE ESTATE⁵

3.1 Countryside sites visited in the last 12 months

444 respondents have visited one or more of Staffordshire’s countryside estates in the last 12 months. Cannock Chase Country Park was the most visited of all the sites. 73% or 322 respondents had visited this site in the last 12 months. The sites which have been used the most by respondents in the last 12 months are documented in the graphic below.

Figure 3.1: Countryside sites which had been visited in the last 12 months



All other sites had been used by 60 or less respondents in the last year; Oakamoor to Denstone Greenway (59), Leek to Rushton Greenway (44), Sevens Road Picnic Area, Cannock Wood (42), Branston (38), Hatherton Reservoir, Cheslyn Hay (30), Chillington Picnic Area, Nr Brewwood (19), Wimblebury Mound Picnic Area (15), Broad Lane, Essington (14), Hanbury Common, (13), Brownshore Pools Picnic area, Essington (11), Fair Oak Picnic Area, Essington (10).

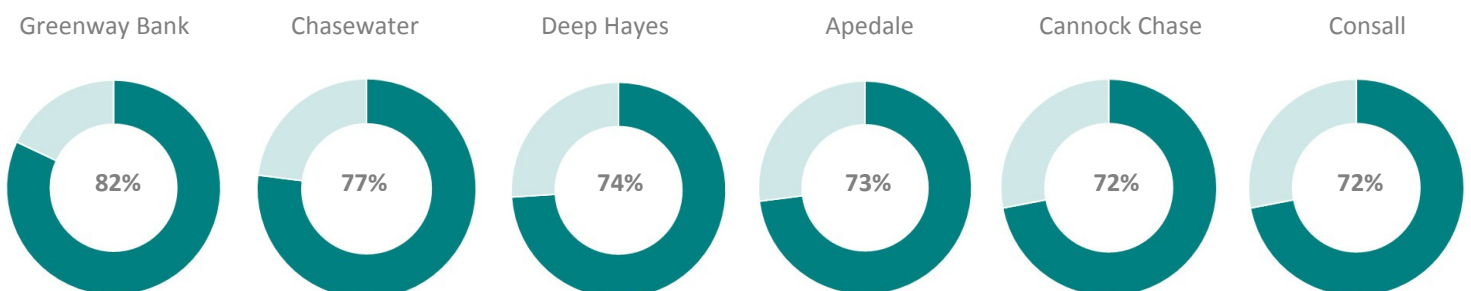
3.2 Frequency of visiting countryside sites.

The majority of respondents (70%) were regular visitors at countryside sites, citing that they tended to visit them at least a few times a month or more often. By site, the percentage of visitors who were regular users tended to vary between 38% and 100%.

The six main countryside parks all had high numbers of regular visitors. These ranged from 82% in Greenway Bank Country Park to 72% in Cannock Chase Country Park and Consall Country Park (72%).

Overall visitor usage numbers were lowest at Hanbury Common and the majority of these users (62%) used the site infrequently, either a few times a year or less often. Visitor numbers were also low at Brownshore Pools and Fair Oak Picnic Area. All visitors to these sites were however regular.

Figure 3.2: % who were regular visitors of the county’s countryside parks

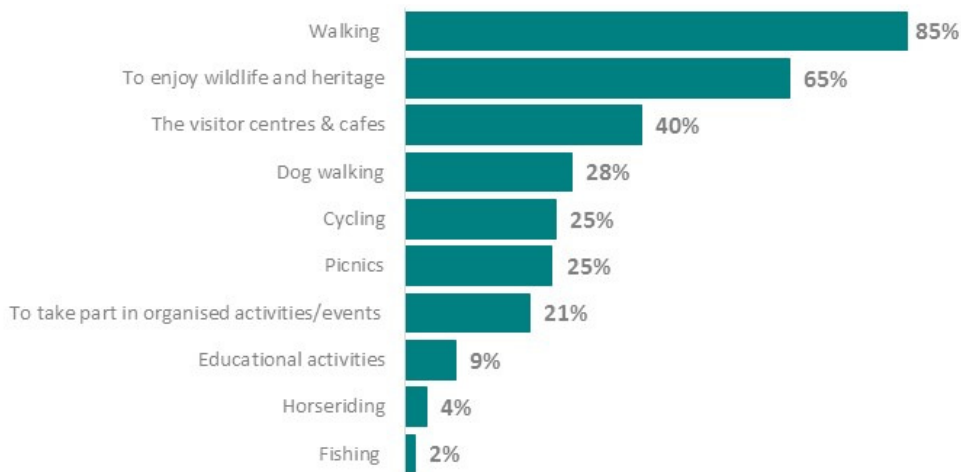


⁵ The questions in this section were asked to survey respondents only and therefore the answers in this section relate specifically to the answers provided from this respondent group.

3.3 Reasons for using countryside parks

It was most common for respondents to say that they had used countryside parks for walking (85%), to enjoy wildlife and heritage (65%) or to use the visitor centres and cafes (40%). These were the three most popular reasons for using all parks, including the County's six main countryside parks.


Figure 3.3: Reasons for using countryside parks




Base: 451 respondents

Differences in views by person type

There were different reasons for using countryside sites by person type. Local residents followed by visitors were the two groups most likely to say they used countryside sites for all the reasons listed in the graphic above.

 Male respondents were most likely to use countryside parks for each of the following; walking, cycling, fishing, to enjoy the wildlife and to take part in organised activities/events.

 Females however, were more likely to use them for dog walking, horse riding and educational activities.

By age group, it is those between the ages of 35-74 or 45-74 who are most likely to say they visit countryside parks to use a wide range of services. These are outlined below.

Aged 35-74: Common uses are walking, dog walking, cycling.

Aged 45-74: Common uses are taking part in organised activities/events, the visitor centres and cafes.



3.4 Encouraging the use of countryside parks

A relatively small proportion of respondents (7% or 33 respondents) provided suggestions for encouraging the greater use of country parks in the future.

Accessibility was a common theme amongst these respondents and views for example included that respondents would use parks more if improved access was made to public transport links and if an integrated approach to cycle paths and pedestrian access was developed.

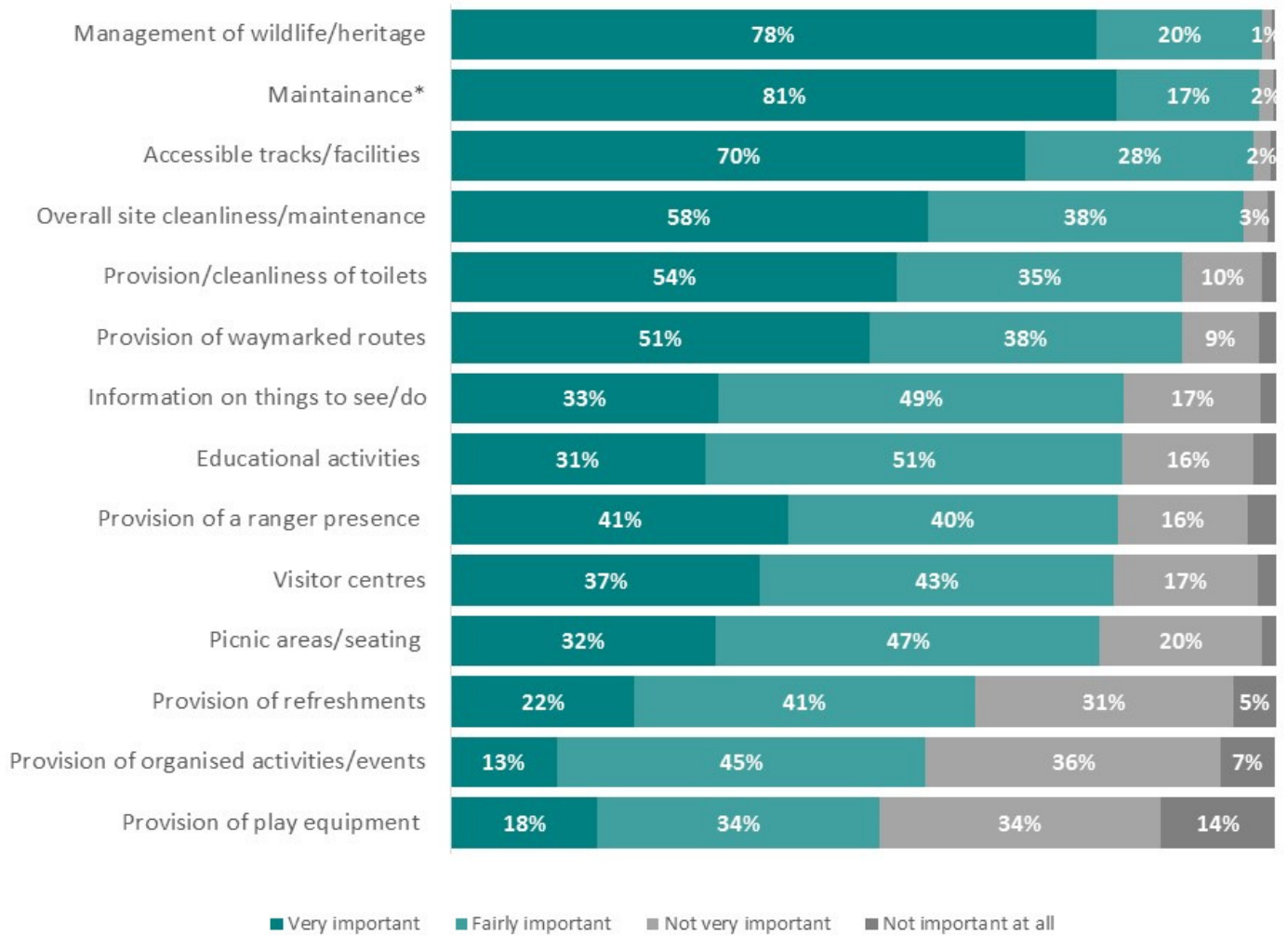
Some respondents expressed a concern that access to countryside parks could become limited to only those who could afford it in the future.

3.5 The importance of facilities within countryside parks

All facilities were considered to be important to 50% of respondents or more. Management of wildlife/heritage and maintenance of footpaths, bridleways, cycling trails and car parking areas were considered most important, with 98% saying both of these were very or fairly important. Considered least important was the provision of play equipment, provision of organised activities/events and the provision of refreshments.

Respondents three most important facilities overall; management of wildlife/heritage, maintenance of footpaths, bridleways, cycling trails and car parking areas and accessible tracks facilities are also the three most important priorities in the County's six main country parks.

Figure 3.4: The importance of facilities within countryside parks



* Maintenance of footpaths, bridleways, cycling trails and car parking areas

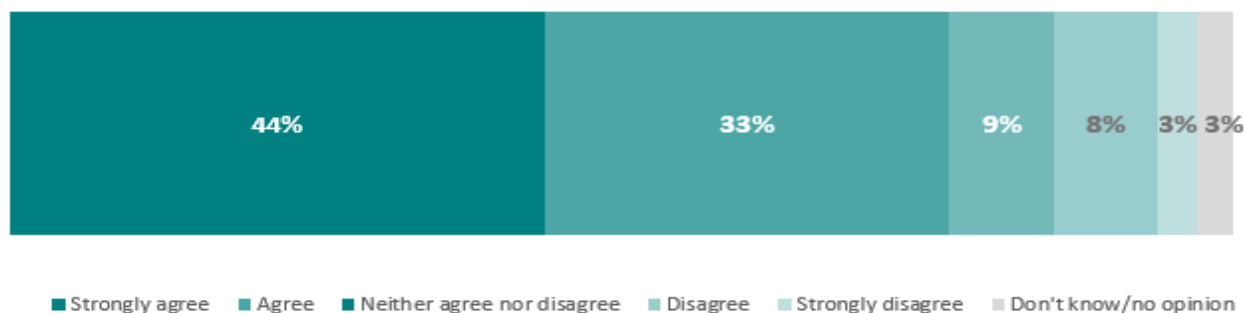
4. THE PROPOSALS⁶

4.1 Option A: Maintain County Council ownership and seek opportunities to increase income from existing sites by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties.

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this option could be a suitable way of managing our larger sites?

Consultation responses: There was a high level of agreement with Option A. 77% agreed it was a suitable way of managing the County’s largest countryside sites. Respondents replying by letter/email, also expressed strong support for this option.

Figure 4.1: Views on Option A



Comments

Through their comments, respondents explained why they felt it was important for the County Council to maintain ownership of its larger sites. These included the importance of having a trusted and accountable body who would make good decisions on behalf of the electorate. Commonly mentioned comments reflected through survey and other correspondences received are documented below.

- *“It keeps the site with an accountable service provider with the knowledge and experience of staff with a long term vision of the importance of management upon the site”.*
- It is key to *“protect the natural environment”* and *“access to public areas”* and this should be undertaken by *“a qualified and accountable body”*.
- *“Local Authorities need to protect the countryside by being ultimately responsible to its electors for the long term health of these areas”.*
- *“The County Council should maintain ownership and have a strong presence with any outside interested parties, to be able to monitor their activities, and have the facility to terminate any agreements if they are not working effectively”.*
- *“The environment would be protected by the County Council but have the ability to attract funding opportunities. It also offers volunteers and community groups a greater voice/role”.*

⁶These responses include survey responses and also comments and views shared from additional contributors via letters/emails, drop-ins and meetings.

An exploration of the letters and emails received also revealed some individual comments for consideration. These included:

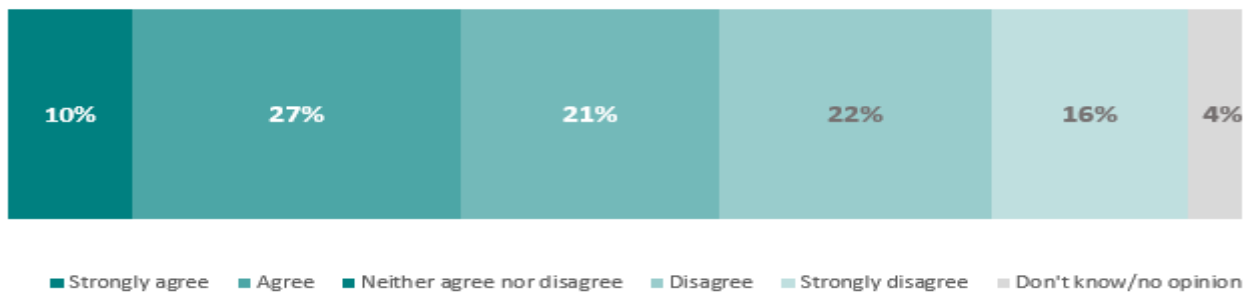
- One respondent expressing strong support for Option A but recognising that other parties may have access to *“funding streams”*. For this reason, the respondent felt it would be sensible to *“bring them on board but limit the autonomy that such groups or organisations would have”* over countryside sites. *“Private partners would need to sign up to the fact that sites are owned by the public, for the public”*.
- Another respondent emphasised that whilst they supported this option, they were unsupportive of *“an increase in the charges for events because of the potential negative impact on numbers of people participating in the sport”*.
- Another *“supported the partnership approach and recognised that we can achieve more by acting in strong partnerships rather than through actions taken in isolation”*.

4.2 Option B: Transfer management on a site by site basis to local community or voluntary sector groups such as parish councils.

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this option could be a suitable way of managing sites?

Consultation responses: Views on this proposal were relatively mixed with 37% of survey respondents expressing agreement with the proposal and 38% disagreeing with it. There was some support for this option from respondents replying by letter/email.

Figure 4.2: Views on Option B



Comments

Respondents in agreement with this proposal tended to agree that this option could work well for smaller sites as these would be easier to manage by local groups of interested people. Commonly expressed comments are documented below.

- *“Smaller sites are easier for the community to manage. They are also usually used more by the local community and so probably better looked after”.*
- *“I think this would be suitable for the picnic sites, less so for the other sites”.*
- *“The areas would be in the hands of people/groups with the best interests of them in mind”.*

An exploration of the letters/emails reflects one parish councils interest in assuming the responsibility for *“a smaller site”*, with the *“assistance from local community groups”*.

Another respondent was supportive of this option, with *“some reservations”*. They felt they could see this option working *“very well in some areas”* but highlighted the potential issues that can arise if volunteers decide to step down from their position. Support was provided for this option so long as *“sensible safeguards were put in place”*.

Respondents in disagreement tended to be concerned about *“potential variable standards of care between sites”* and *“the general expertise, resources and commitment which would be required to make this option a success”*. Comments which are reflective of these main themes are outlined below.

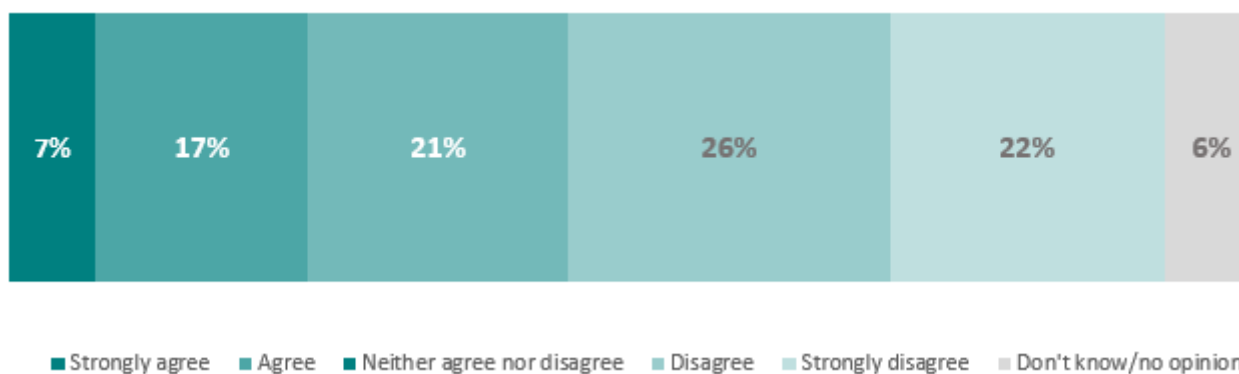
- *“Local Community and voluntary sectors do not have the resources or experience in managing important sites, they lack the experience to manage a site for nature conservation and this would be at the detriment to vulnerable habitats”.*
- *“Other groups do not have the resources or long-term commitment to the sites”.*
- *“There could be too much diversity in standard from one site to another”.*
- *“I do feel we will not get the same standard of care”.*

4.3 Option C: Establish a partnership of landowners to manage all green spaces in a particular area.

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this option could be a suitable way of managing a cluster of sites within a specific area?

Consultation responses: Just under one quarter of respondents (24%) were in agreement with this proposal, the largest majority, 48% were in disagreement. There was limited support for this option from respondents replying by letter/email.

Figure 4.3: Views on Option C



Comments

Through their comments, respondents expressed their reservations about the motives and long term sustainability of this option for the management of “clusters of sites within specific areas”. Comments which are reflective of these concerns are outlined below.

- *“As a public body SCC’s responsibilities and priorities differ from private landowners. What may start out as an equitable arrangement may disintegrate when other options for land use arise”.*
- *“The management would be too far removed from public control”.*
- *“Third parties may have vested interests counter to preserving our natural spaces”.*
- *“There is a risk that these locations be used to generate an income, making them unaffordable to visit. Those that are honeypots will be well maintained to keep the visitors going, those less well attended will lose out”.*

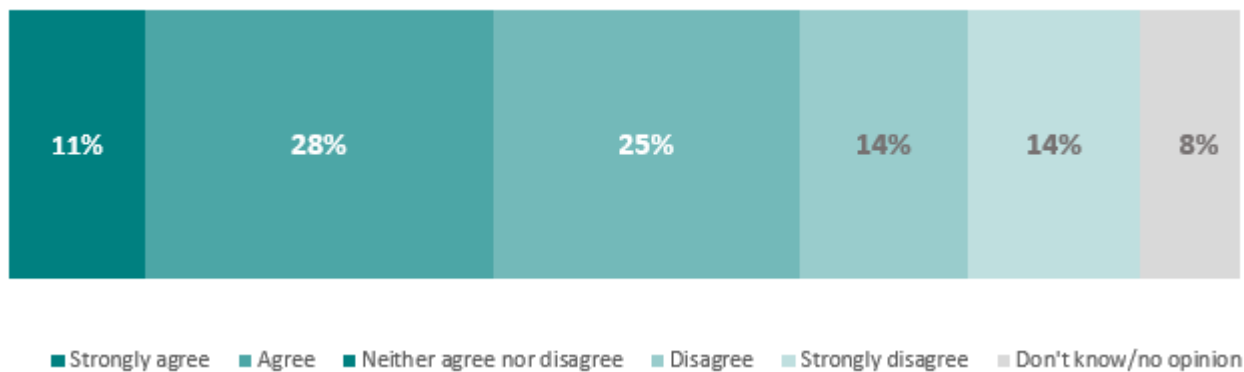
An exploration of the additional responses including letters/emails, drop in and meetings reflects minimal support for this option. One stakeholder was supportive of this option. They felt that this may be “the most appropriate option for delivery” and provided details of a potential vehicle for delivery.

4.4 Option D: Establish a not for profit trading company or charitable trust to run and develop parts of the estate.

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this option could be a suitable way of running and developing some parts of the estate?

Consultation responses: 39% were in agreement with this proposal. This proposal received a high proportion of neutral responses.

Figure 4.4: Views on Option D



Comments

Respondents comments were reflective of the faith they would place in a not for profit or a charity organisation to manage sites in the best interests of wildlife and the people of Staffordshire. Respondents were also supportive of the benefits of charitable status both for the facilities and for attracting volunteers. Comments which were reflective of these viewpoints are outlined below.

- *“This is a satisfactory alternative to option A. This would be the best option, the trust would be guardians of the areas and would want it to succeed rather than fail so they can then purchase it”.*
- *“This option has the potential to attract additional grants and funding not available to the County Council and with the right partners such as the Woodland Trust or Mercia Forest Trust they would be able to gain additional assistance and management skills”.*
- *“The added income from having charitable status could be used for the benefit of the facilities”.*
- *“A charity can generate more money and probably attract more volunteer workers”.*
- Consideration should be given to *“integrating Option D with Option C”.*

Whilst respondents were more likely to be supportive of this option, some expressed caution:

- There should be some caveats so that the County Council could *“buy back the land”* if this approach was *“deemed to be unsuccessful”.*
- *“The management would be too far removed from public control”.*

5. OVERALL VIEWS ON THE PROPOSALS

Respondents were invited to indicate which organisations they felt should be involved with the management of the countryside estate in the future. Respondents were most likely to agree that national charitable organisations such as the RSPB or the Wildlife Trusts should be involved with this. They were least likely to feel that district councils should undertake this role.

5.1: % who feel that organisations should be involved in the future management of the countryside estate



Respondents were encouraged to provide some context to help explain their views on the above organisations. These have been summarised below.

National charitable organisations: Respondents comments on these were largely reflective of the comments respondents shared about Option D. These highlighted their safeguarding role, their wealth of skills and experience as well as the benefits such as funding and volunteers which established charitable organisations could attract. Some respondents also articulated that national charitable organisations would be the most suitable alternative for looking after those estates which included areas of SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Local community groups: Respondents felt this would work if there was a body of people who were interested in proving support and if they had a genuine interest/concern for the site. Respondents felt that local people/users of local sites usually have a good idea of what is best and could bring passion and new ideas into the provision of country estates. Some respondents felt that this option would work well if it was combined with organisations who bring expertise in land management.

Parish councils: There were relatively few comments which focused directly on parish councils. Those that were received included that parish councils could manage small sites successfully.

District Councils: 43% of respondents indicated that district councils should be involved with the management of the countryside estate in the future. As with parish councils, there were relatively few comments which focused directly on district councils. Those that did, provided similar comments to those that were received about parish councils. For example, district councils would be good at managing the less intensive sites, such as picnic areas. More generic comments recognised that all groups could have a useful role to play in the management of the countryside estate in the future.

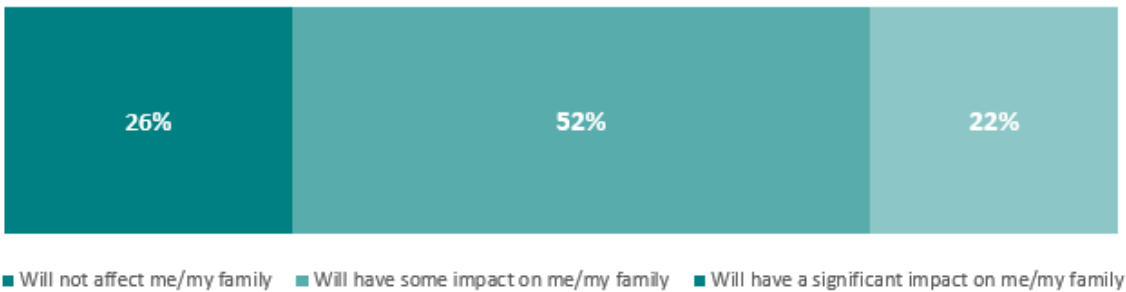
- *“All groups might have something to offer. Any one of these groups would uphold the standards required”.*
- *“Any group should be able to be involved, so long as they have a genuine interest and concern for the sites. They should present a clear business case that is not just focused on profit making, but on conservation and maintenance”.*
- *“A mix of all of these needs to be utilised BUT with an overarching body that sets strategy and receives and reviews their reports”.*

6. IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSALS

6.1 Impact of the proposed changes

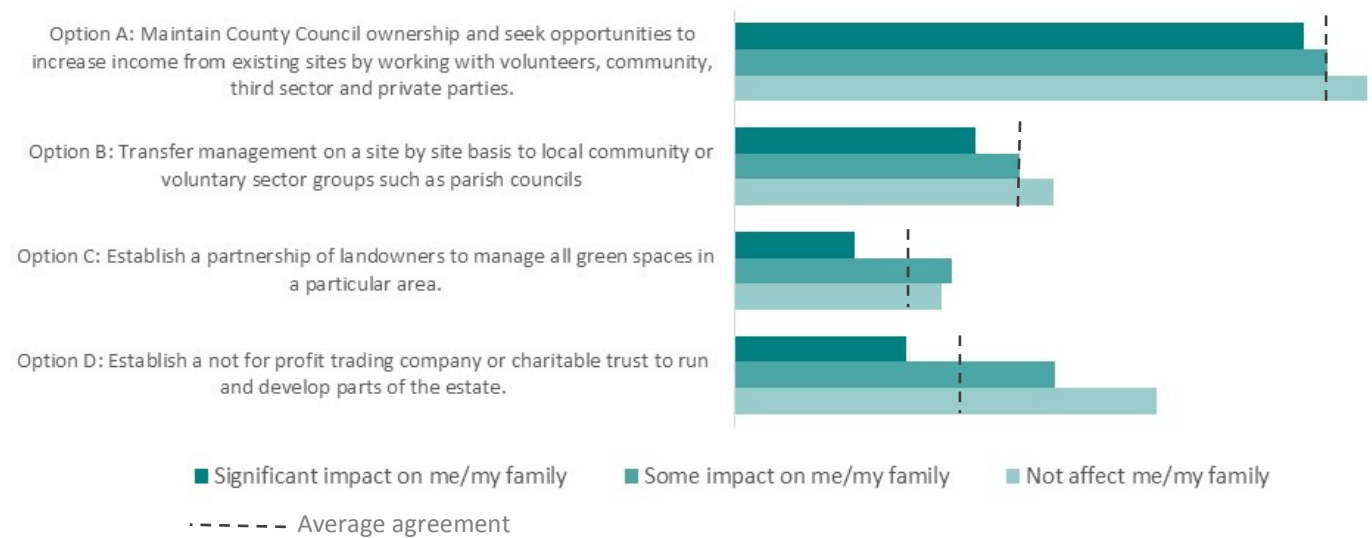
The largest proportion of respondents felt that the current proposals would have some impact on them and their families future use of countryside estates. Smaller proportions of people felt they would be unaffected or significantly affected by the changes.

Figure 6.1: The impact of the proposed changes



The graph below reflects that agreement with each of the proposals is lower amongst those who felt they would most likely be significantly impacted by the proposals. Conversely, who would not be affected were more likely to be in agreement with each of the proposals. The greatest variations in views was in relation to option D.

Figure 6.2: % who agreed with each of the options by the impact which each of the changes would have upon them



Comments

Comments from respondents showed that regardless of the level of impact, the issues/concerns raised were generally the same. Key issues/concerns included the ability to maintain standards, the possibility of rising costs e.g. for car parking or cafes and payment for access. It was respondents reactions to these issues/concerns that varied greatly.

The majority of respondents who felt that there would be some impact upon them (52% said this) felt that the above issues could be concerns, but this would largely depend on the final decisions taken by the County Council.

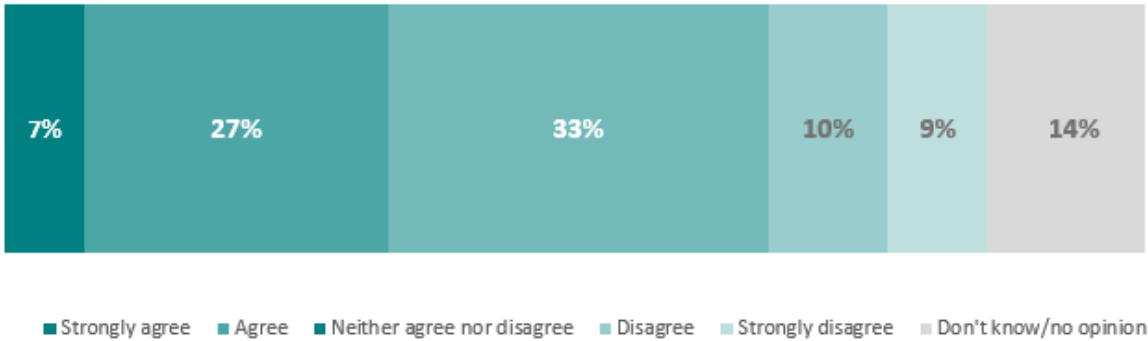
Over one quarter (26%) did not feel that they or their family would be affected at all by the proposals and these respondents said that they would continue to use the facilities regardless of who runs them and regardless of any change to them. If access was restricted this group would still feel unaffected and would seek out alternative facilities which met their needs.

Over one fifth (22%) felt that they would be significantly affected by the proposals. These respondents tended to be regular, daily users who would be impacted most if there were increases to charges or if access was restricted over time. Also people with key areas of interest e.g. bird watching, were concerned about the impact on wildlife and the future ability to continue to effectively manage countryside sites.

6.2 Safeguarding the future countryside estate

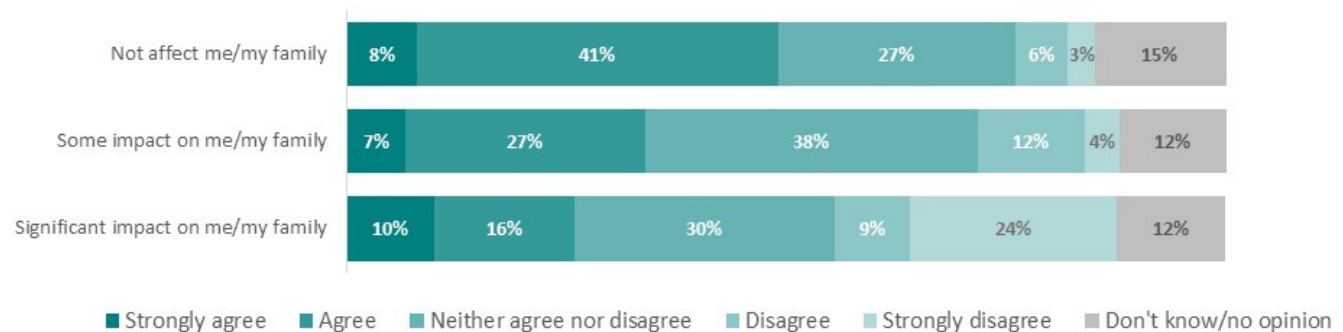
Respondents views were equally split between agreeing that the proposals would safeguard the future of the County's countryside estate (34%) and neither agreeing nor disagreeing that this was the case (33%). Just under one fifth of respondents were in disagreement.

Figure 6.3: Views on whether the proposals will safeguard the future of the County's countryside estate



Those respondents who felt they would not be affected by the current proposals were most likely to agree that the proposals would safeguard the future of the County's countryside estate (49% agreed). Conversely, those who felt that the proposals would have a significant impact on them or their family were least likely to agree that the proposals would safeguard the future of the estate (26% agreed).

Figure 6.4: Views on whether the proposals will safeguard the future of the County's countryside estate by the level of impact the proposed changes will have upon them



Comments

One third agreed that the proposals would safeguard the future of the County's estate and these respondents tended to recognise the financial pressures which the County Council were facing and felt that it was better to act now to ensure the sustainability of sites for future generations. Respondents comments which were reflective of these points are outlined below.

- *"The reality is efficiencies need to be made and if transferring management is the way to do this to protect the estates then it's a necessity".*
- *"It is better to act now than to react in future years when funding has all but disappeared and there is little scope for any new arrangements to be put in place".*
- *"These sites are significant in making Staffordshire a great place to live - they should be nurtured and safeguarded for future generations to enjoy".*

One third of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposals and these respondents felt it was difficult to have a view on whether the proposals would safeguard the future estate until a final decision had been made on which options would given further consideration. Some respondents also felt they needed more information before they could provide an opinion.

- *"Until a decision has been made as to which proposal is to be commenced no-one can make an accurate assessment and answer this question".*
- *"Depends exactly what happens in the future, whichever option is chosen. The options are too vague to assess their outcomes and implication".*

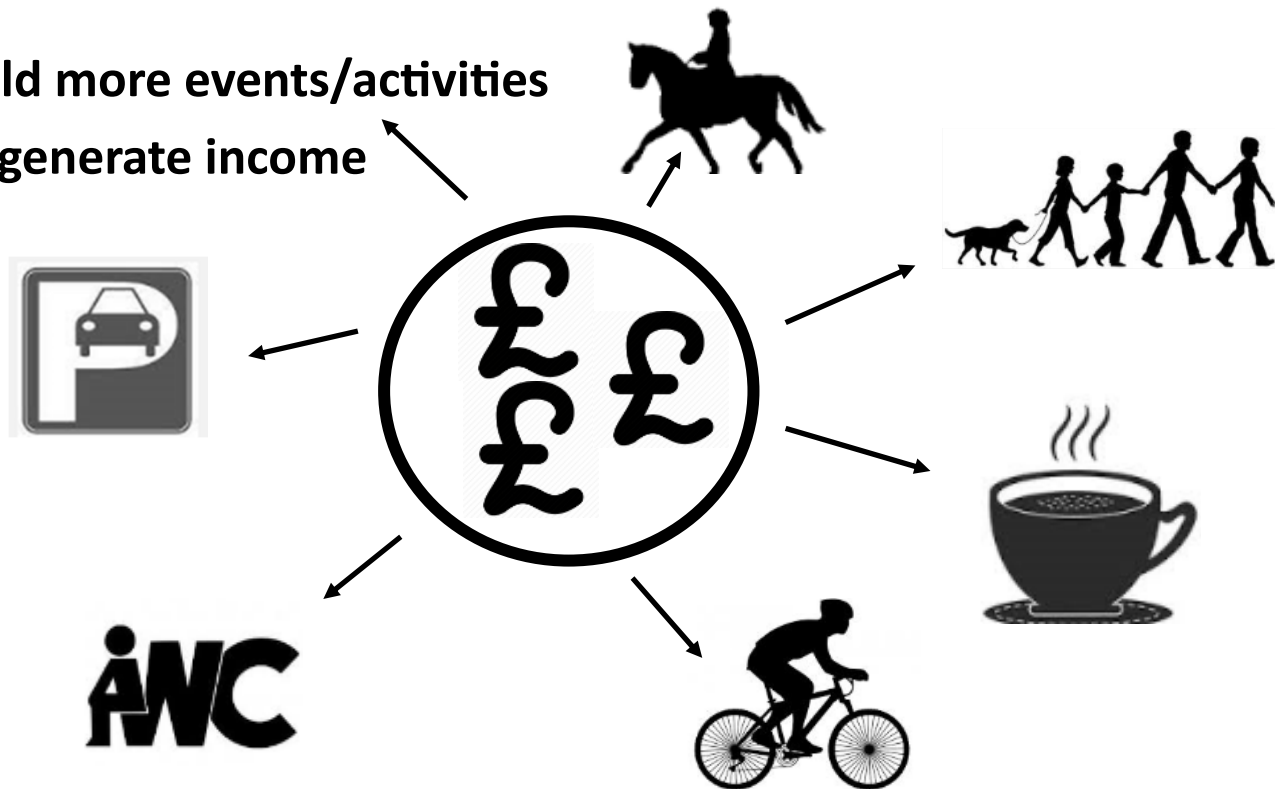
Nearly one fifth of respondents were in disagreement with the proposals (19%). Like those who were in agreement, these respondents also spoke about financial pressures. However, those in disagreement expressed their unhappiness about changes to funding. They also expressed their concerns about potentially shifting responsibility away from the County Council without a clear vision of how the estate should look in the future.

- *"Again we have yet more money cuts affecting the people who pay in!"*
- *Staffordshire County Council has not articulated a vision for the countryside estate so it is difficult to offer an opinion as to whether any proposals will safeguard the countryside estate.*

7. OTHER IDEAS

Throughout the consultation, some respondents have expressed concerns about potential charges or price increases. However, when asked to identify other ways in which the County Council could improve the countryside estate, respondents suggested that charging for services would be a good option. Suggestions included charging for access, increasing charges for refreshments and car parking charges. Holding events/activities which provided income generation was also a popular suggestion. Charges which were acceptable with respondents are outlined below.

Hold more events/activities to generate income



8. WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS, CHARITABLE AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Volunteers and charitable, voluntary and private organisations who would be interested in working with the County Council in the future were invited to identify their interest and to outline the type of involvement they would like to have with the countryside estate. 138 in total, registered an interest in being involved, in one or more ways.

8.1 Individuals interested in volunteering on the County Council's country estate

86 individuals registered an interest in volunteering. Older respondents were more likely to be interested in volunteering. Respondents who were interested highlighted a wide range of activities they would like to be involved in. These included; training, education, managerial support, learning skills, helping to maintain sites, educating people, conservation, wildlife projects, formulating innovative ideas for future sustainability, being involved in clean up/litter clearing initiatives, encouraging crafts, management of trees/woodlands, footpath work, ranger, cycle route design, monitoring wildlife and plant identification.

8.2 Individuals/groups interested in working with the County Council to secure the future sustainability of it's country estate

63 identified themselves as a group or individual interested in working with the County to secure the future of countryside estates. One third of these were also interested in volunteering and therefore offered to be involved in many of the above volunteering activities.

In addition, these respondents offered to share their skills and expertise in the following areas; policy development, partnership development, feasibility of commercial activity, bidding for funding, and in the management of local groups. One respondent also offered to fund occasional projects within their local area and another discussed opportunities to work closely with parish councils.

8.3 Third sector organisations interested in working with the County Council to secure the future sustainability of it's country estate

15 were a third sector organisation. Third sector organisations had various reasons for wanting to work with the County Council to secure the future estate and these included; seeking to maintain the current relationship with the County Council, offering to support through being a partnership co-ordinator, supporting with the recruitment, training and provision of volunteers and promoting the use of sites to encourage active and healthier lifestyles.

Other third sector organisations were interested in helping to ensure species maintenance, cycle track maintenance and the involvement of key groups for example those who are unemployed due to ill health or disability or those with learning disabilities.

8.4 Private organisations interested in working with the County Council to secure the future sustainability of it's country estate

6 private organisations registered their interest in working with the County Council. These included; potentially working collectively through a community management of shared assets organisation and an expression of interest in continuing to provide existing support. Other organisations expressed their interest in offering to encourage the development of new activities or to offer their services or the services of their volunteers.

9. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

- The consultation results reflect that the main countryside sites are well used. The six main country parks all had high numbers of regular visitors—these ranged from 82% using Greenway Bank Country Park regularly to 72% using Cannock Chase Country Park and Consall Country Park on a regular basis.
- The majority of respondents (77%) agreed with Option A, maintaining County Council ownership and seeking opportunities to increase income from existing sites by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties.
- The types of organisations and people favoured to become involved in the future management of the countryside estate included national charitable organisations and local community groups and friends groups. 82% agreed national charitable organisations should become involved in the future management and 60% also agreed that local community groups or friends groups should be involved. It was felt that both groups had plenty to offer with the former group being able to offer expertise, volunteers and access to funding and the latter, passion, new ideas and local knowledge.
- Interest in working with the County Council to secure the future of countryside sites was also expressed with some respondents expressing an interest in being involved in multiple capacities. In total, 138 registered their interest and of these, 86 would be interested in volunteering, 63 were an individual/group seeking to work with the County Council to secure it's future, 15 were third sector organisations and 6 were private organisations. Harnessing the interest of these individuals and groups will be key to safeguarding the future of the County's countryside estate.

APPENDIX I: DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Gender

| | Survey responses | | MYE 2014 |
|--------|------------------|-----|----------|
| | No. | % | % |
| Male | 228 | 52% | 50% |
| Female | 213 | 48% | 50% |

Age

| | Survey responses | | MYE 2014 |
|----------|------------------|-----|----------|
| | No. | % | % |
| Under 18 | 3 | 1% | 20% |
| 18-24 | 7 | 2% | 8% |
| 25-34 | 39 | 9% | 11% |
| 35-44 | 57 | 13% | 12% |
| 45-54 | 98 | 22% | 15% |
| 55-64 | 104 | 24% | 13% |
| 65-74 | 113 | 26% | 12% |
| 75+ | 21 | 5% | 9% |

Disability

| | Survey responses | | Census 2011 comparison |
|-----|------------------|-----|------------------------|
| | No. | % | % |
| Yes | 43 | 10% | 19% |
| No | 390 | 90% | 81% |

Ethnicity

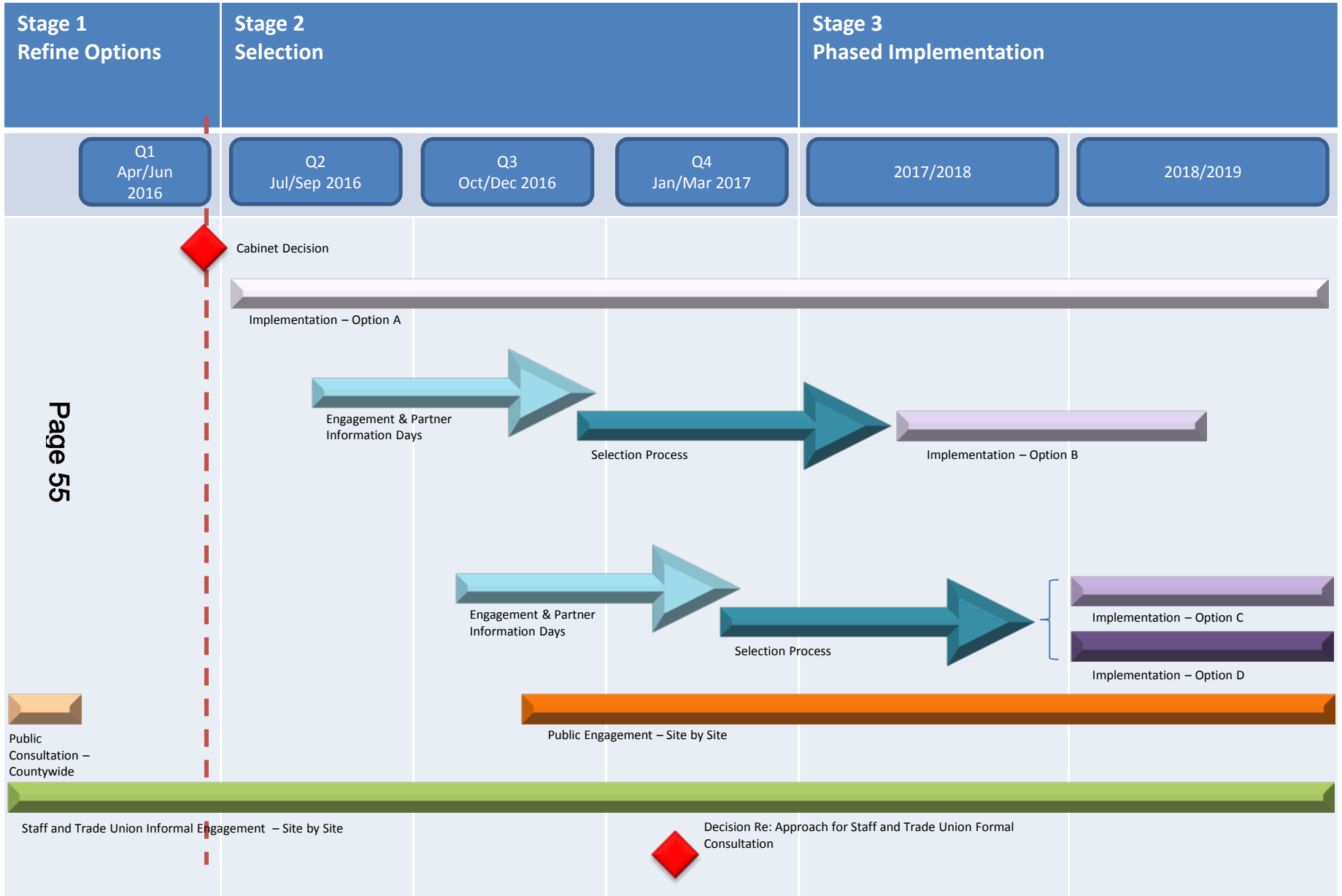
| | Survey responses | | Census 2011 comparison |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------|------------------------|
| | No. | % | % |
| White | 424 | 96.4% | 95.8% |
| Mixed/Multiple | 0 | 0% | 1.1% |
| Asian/Asian British | 1 | 0.2% | 2.4% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British | 0 | 0% | 0.6% |
| Other | 0 | 0% | 0.2% |
| Prefer not to say | 15 | 3.4% | N/A |

District of residence

| | Survey responses | | Census 2011 comparison |
|----------------------------------|------------------|-----|------------------------|
| | No. | % | % |
| Cannock Chase District | 81 | 19% | 11.5% |
| East Staffordshire District | 12 | 3% | 13.4% |
| Lichfield District | 39 | 9% | 11.9% |
| Newcastle-under-Lyme District | 58 | 14% | 14.7% |
| South Staffordshire District | 41 | 10% | 12.9% |
| Stafford District | 134 | 32% | 15.4% |
| Staffordshire Moorlands District | 56 | 13% | 11.4% |
| Tamworth District | 0 | 0% | 9.0% |

Countryside Review – Development of Approach by Site

Fig. 1



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Public Consultation – Countywide

| Site Name | OPTION OUTCOME/ POSSIBLE APPROACH |
|--|---|
| List of Countryside Estates Country Parks | |
| Cannock Chase Country Park | A partnership arrangement (Option C) which includes Chasewater Country Park and Sevens Road site has been chosen as the most viable option because it would deliver the most benefits against the CSFs; provide greater operational efficiencies through pooling of resources and expertise; improve the potential to access external funding; offer more and better co-ordinated volunteering opportunities; and an opportunity for a single management plan, branding and promotion. A larger area of greenspace (with the incorporation of partners' land) could also offer flexibility and help zone / manage users more effectively, thereby protecting some of the more sensitive areas of Cannock Chase. Partnership arrangements already exist e.g. the AONB and SAC Partnership and there are numerous other adjacent landowners i.e. National Trust and Forestry Commission who may be interested in partnership working. Other groups also expressed an interest in volunteering on these sites in the full public consultation. While this Option was less favoured in the full public consultation most of the concerns were around working with the private sector. This proposal has been designed to offset those fears. Developing a partnership arrangement may take some time to establish but in the interim, there are opportunities to generate more income particularly around the Visitor Centres which will be explored. |
| Apedale Community Country Park | Transferring the site to a charitable organisation (Option B) some of whom have expressed an interest in the site or a partnership arrangement (Option C) because of its close proximity to land owned by the District Council or another charitable body have been chosen as the most viable options for this site. These options would deliver the most benefits against the CSFs; provide greater operational efficiencies through pooling of resources and expertise; improve the potential to access external funding; offer more and better co-ordinated volunteering opportunities; and an opportunity for a single management plan to deliver better outcomes across a wider area. Other groups also expressed an interest in volunteering on the site in the full public consultation. These options may take some time to develop and in the interim, opportunities to generate more income from the site such as car park charging, further development of the visitor offer and increased volunteering opportunities will be explored. |
| Consall Nature Park | A partnership arrangement (Option C) or transferring the site to a charitable organisation (Option B), some of whom have expressed an interest in the site, have been chosen as the most viable options for this site. Other sites within the Churnet Valley e.g Deep Hayes and Greenway Bank Country Parks and some of the smaller sites could also be included. These options would deliver the most benefits against the CSFs; provide greater operational efficiencies through pooling of resources and expertise; improve the potential to access external funding; offer more and better co-ordinated volunteering opportunities; and an opportunity for a single management plan to deliver better outcomes across a wider area. Other groups also expressed an interest in volunteering on the site in the full public consultation. These options may take some time to develop and in the interim, opportunities to generate more income from the site such as car park charging, further development of the visitor offer and increased volunteering opportunities will be explored. |
| Deep Hayes Country Park | The opportunities for development on this small site are limited therefore a partnership arrangement (Option C) which includes other sites within the Churnet Valley has been chosen as the most viable option in support of the wider Churnet Valley offer. A partnership arrangement would provide greater operational efficiencies through pooling of resources and expertise; improve the potential to access external funding; deliver the most benefits against the CSFs; and offer more and better co-ordinated volunteering opportunities. The CVLLP legacy project group has also expressed an interest in partnership working. Other groups also expressed an interest in volunteering on the site in the full public consultation. This option may take some time to develop and in the interim, opportunities to generate more income from the site such as car park charging, further development of the visitor offer and increased volunteering opportunities will be explored. |
| Greenway Bank Country Park | A partnership arrangement (Option C) including other sites within the Churnet Valley has been chosen as the most viable option for this site to support the wider Churnet Valley offer. A partnership arrangement would provide greater operational efficiencies through pooling of resources and expertise; improve the potential to access external funding; deliver the most benefits against the CSFs; and offer more and better co-ordinated volunteering opportunities. The CVLLP legacy project group has expressed an interest in partnership working on this site. Other groups also expressed an interest in volunteering on the site in the full public consultation. This option may take some time to develop but there are opportunities to generate more income particularly around the Visitor Centre, from the Reservoir, car park charging and increased volunteering that will be explored in the interim. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Chasewater including Norton Bog | A partnership arrangement (Option C) which includes Cannock Chase Country Park and Sevens Road site has been chosen as the most viable option because it would deliver the most benefits against the CSFs; provide greater operational efficiencies through pooling of resources and expertise; improve the potential to access external funding; offer more and better co-ordinated volunteering opportunities; and an opportunity for a single management plan, branding and promotion. A larger area of greenspace (with the incorporation of partners' land) could also offer flexibility and help zone users more effectively, thereby removing some of the visitor pressures on Cannock Chase. Partnership arrangements already exist on Cannock Chase and there are numerous other adjacent landowners i.e. National Trust, Forestry Commission and District Councils who may be interested in partnership working. Other groups also expressed an interest in volunteering on these sites in the full public consultation. However, it could take some considerable time to develop and establish the partnership arrangement but in the interim, there are significant opportunities to generate more income particularly around the Visitor Centre because of the high visitor numbers, from the Reservoir and by enhancing the existing commercial offer in ways that support the attractiveness of the Park. |
| Picnic Areas | |
| Froghall | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) or managing the site within a partnership arrangement (Option C) has been chosen as the most viable options. Either of these options would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. The CVLLP legacy project has expressed an interest in this site as part of a wider Churnet Valley offer. |
| Oakamoor | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) or managing the site within a partnership arrangement (Option C) has been chosen as the most viable options. Either of these options would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. The CVLLP legacy project has expressed an interest in this site as part of a wider Churnet Valley offer. |
| Sevens Road, Cannock Wood | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development but because of its location there may be an opportunity to manage it with other larger sites e.g. Cannock Chase or Chasewater Country Parks. Failing that, transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) has been chosen as the only other viable option because the group would be able to access funding unavailable to SCC and because this option would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. |
| Hanbury Common | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) has been chosen as the only viable option and there is a well-established volunteer offer on the site which could be formalised. |
| Brownshore Lane, Essington | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group has been chosen as the only viable option. The group would be able to access funding unavailable to SCC and this option would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. It already has a good volunteer base which could be built on and formalised. |
| Chillington | This site is no more than a car park leased to SCC for use by people walking the Staffordshire Way. The site can be maintained in the meantime by volunteers already assisting with the wider country parks. Alternatively consideration may need to be given to terminating the lease because there is less confidence that a local volunteer group can be found. |
| Hanchurch Hills | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) has been chosen as the only viable option because the group would be able to access funding unavailable to SCC and because this option would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. There has been some interest in the site from voluntary groups in the full public consultation. |
| Wimblebury Road, Cannock | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) has been chosen as the only viable option and the Parish Council has already expressed an interest in managing the site. Management by the Parish Council will ensure that the local community has a greater say in its management and the site will deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. |
| Hatherton Reservoir, Cheslyn Hay | Site is more of a local recreational resource with limited potential for development. Transferring the management to a local community group (Option B) has been chosen as the only viable option because the group would be able to access funding unavailable to SCC and because this option would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. It already has a good volunteer base which could be built on and formalised. |
| Disused Railway Walks - - Greenways | |
| Stafford to Newport | This route is part of NCN 55 and is well used now that the Newport section is open. It has a good volunteer base in sections and interest has been expressed by Sustrans in the full public consultation for partnership working. Transferring the management to local groups (Option B) or increasing the volunteer activity are considered to be the only viable options for this route. Both would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Oakamoor to Denstone</p> | <p>This route is an important spine linking other sites, although it has no potential for development in isolation. Transferring its management to a local community group (Option B) or if possible managing the route within a partnership arrangement (Option C) has been chosen as the most viable options for the route. Either of these options would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. The CVLLP legacy project has expressed an interest in the route as part of a wider Churnet Valley offer. It could take some time to develop either of these arrangements and in the meantime, increasing the voluntary contribution will be explored.</p> |
| <p>Leek to Rushton</p> | <p>This route is an important spine linking other sites, although it has no potential for development in isolation. Transferring its management to a local community group (Option B) or if possible managing the route within a partnership arrangement (Option C) has been chosen as the most viable options for the route. Either of these options would deliver more benefits against the CSFs than other options. The CVLLP legacy project has expressed an interest in the route as part of a wider Churnet Valley offer. It could take some time to develop either of these arrangements and in the meantime, increasing the voluntary contribution will be explored.</p> |

Selection and Evaluation Process - Overview

The county council owns a large diverse countryside estate. This helps to make a significant contribution to many of its priorities, including enabling people to lead a healthy lifestyle benefitting both their physical and mental well-being and providing opportunities to enhance their skills, and in some cases employment potential, through volunteering opportunities. Alongside the main country parks, the estate also comprises a number of smaller sites. While the main country parks are very popular and make a significant contribution to the county council's wider priorities, the smaller sites tend to be more of a local recreational asset. As such, these smaller sites have more limited potential to support the county council's wider priorities but they still have to be managed to meet legal liabilities and obligations.

Owning and managing countryside sites is discretionary. However, having assumed ownership of the sites, the county council then becomes responsible for a wide range of statutory duties and obligations. The management of the countryside estate is mostly delivered in-house by the Rural Access Team which comprises the Ranger Service and the Countryside Works Unit, supported by a team of environmental specialists.

The two main drivers for reviewing the existing management arrangements are a financial imperative and a desire to achieve better outcomes for Staffordshire's residents which is becoming increasingly difficult to fulfil in the current economic climate.

To reach the council's objective, there is a potential need for a supporting procurement process to identify the best fit for the sites where there is more than one interested party and to ensure suitable fit where there is a lone or no interested parties.

The primary procurement approach has been mapped to the four options which consist of differing options and procurement requirements. Within the documentation an evaluation process will be conducted on a question and answer format and or a case study basis with declared weightings.

A council evaluation team will evaluate and score the received submissions with the highest scoring interested party being awarded the contract or opportunity to run the particular site. Unsuccessful parties will be provided with a full debrief on their submission. The evaluation process may accommodate presentation/interview sessions if required. The process will also allow for non award if low scoring or unsuitable bids are received

This primary procurement approach will be applied in principle to all sites, however should there be lack of interest in any of the sites from any organisation, the council will consider procurement using the secondary approach.

Procurement Process map outline on following page > > >

| Procurement Process | Option A – Seek opportunities to reduce site running costs by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties. | Option B – Transfer management to local community or voluntary sector groups | Option C – Establish a partnership of landowners | Option D – Establish a not for profit trading company or charitable trust |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Primary Approach | | | | |
| <p>The Primary approach relates to how the procurement process and evaluation will be structured to allow for the best commercial outcome for both the site and Staffordshire County Council and its partners.</p> | <p>It is understood that there is currently no financial exchange for services from the council to volunteers, community, third sector and private parties and therefore the procurement process may not be bound by the EU Public Contract Regulations (PCR) or Staffordshire County Council Procurement Regulations.</p> <p>In this instance the council has created a primary procurement approach which consists of placing a Public Advert to notify interested parties, followed by the release of a suite of procurement documents specific to each site. Within the documentation an evaluation process will be conducted on a question and answer format and or a case study basis with declared weightings. This will be site specific and applicable to the approach chosen for that site</p> <p>This process will be basic and proportionate enough to encourage application from as wide a range of parties as possible but to comply with Staffordshire County Council procurement regulations. The parties will also be supported by the County Council's VCSE strategic partner.</p> <p>A council evaluation team will evaluate and score the received submissions with the highest scoring interested party being awarded the site. Unsuccessful parties will be provided with a full debrief on their submission. The evaluation process may accommodate presentation/interview sessions if required. The process will also allow for non award if low scoring or unsuitable bids are received</p> <p>The procurement scope for option A is varied and will require differing approaches to ensure the individual site are represented by the most appropriate procurement methods.</p> | <p>It is understood that there is currently no financial exchange for services from the council to volunteers or community, groups and therefore the procurement process may not be bound by the EU Public Contract Regulations (PCR) or Staffordshire County Council Procurement Regulations.</p> <p>In this instance the council has created a primary procurement approach which consists of placing a Public Advert to notify interested parties, followed by the release of a suite of procurement / expression of interest documents specific to each site. Within the documentation an evaluation process will be conducted on a question and answer format and or a case study basis with declared weightings. This will be site specific and applicable to the approach chosen for that site. This process will be basic and proportionate enough to encourage application from as wide a range of parties as possible but to comply with Staffordshire County Council procurement regulations. The parties will also be supported by the County Council's VCSE strategic partner.</p> <p>A council evaluation team will evaluate and score the received submissions with the highest scoring interested party being awarded the site. Unsuccessful parties will be provided with a full debrief on their submission. The evaluation process may accommodate presentation/interview sessions if required. The process will also allow for non award if low scoring or unsuitable bids are received</p> <p>The procurement scope for option B will require a specific and targeted approach in attracting the parties able to offer the greatest contribution which meet and exceed the requirements for each individual site.</p> | <p>In this instance the council has created a primary procurement approach which consists of placing a Public Advert to notify interested parties, followed by the expression of interest stage. This will be site specific and applicable to the approach chosen for that site. This process will be basic and proportionate enough to encourage application from as wide a range of parties as possible but to comply with Staffordshire County Council procurement regulations. The parties will also be supported by the County Council's VCSE strategic partner.</p> <p>Parties interested in a site and partnering would then be expected to submit a business case outlining their proposals and partnership approach.</p> <p>The procurement scope for option C looks to create a partnership, with the competitive procurement element moved to support the review of business cases and site specific solutions.</p> | <p>No procurement activity required.</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| | | | | |
| Secondary Approach | | | | |
| <p>Where the Primary approach is not appropriate or where a small number of sites remain with differing requirements.</p> <p>Potentially no formal procurement process</p> | <p>Initial business cases have outlined that the condition of some sites and their potential could be improved increased by the further introduction of partners and utilising the existing supplier base.</p> <p>A small proportion of sites could be benefit from this approach initially. No formal procurement process would be required for this secondary approach.. A selection/recruitment process would be required for the volunteers.</p> | <p>No formal procurement process would be required for this secondary approach.</p> | <p>Staffordshire County Council would need to ensure that any income generating opportunities which increased customer numbers were supported by a procurement process which demonstrated best value had been achieved.</p> | |
| Evaluation markers | | | | |
| <p>Procurement evaluation markers which could shape and decide the outcomes or are the main areas of evaluation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income generation (amounts, types and scope) • Investment in sites (to improve use) • Sustainable development (making sites more affordable) • Long term plans • Community offering • Health and Safety • Experience in management of access land | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding and revenue streams (including grants etc) • Investment in sites (to improve use) • Sustainable development (making sites more affordable) • Long term plans • Community offering (including community events) • Financial management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment and resource sharing opportunities | |

| Timetable | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| <p>Due to the number of site and variation it is recommended and anticipated that the procurement of sites will be staggered.</p> | <p>Larger sites with greatest opportunity for development, largest impacts and potential for successful competition should be considered initially (quick wins)</p> | <p>Sites offered based on interest and application.</p> | <p>All sites available at time of partnership expressions of interest stage.</p> | |

**Leading for Better Outcomes
Community Impact Assessment
Countryside Estate Review**

Community Impact assessments (CIAs) should be used whenever there is a policy or service change. The template will enable staff to record how they have taken account of the following essential areas within proposals;

- Strategic Priorities
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- Health inequalities
- Rural issues
- Climate change

The Public Sector Equality Duty is a legal requirement and must be applied in all that we do, and in particular whenever there are changes.

See guidance note and frequently asked questions for further information.

| |
|---|
| <p>Name of proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countryside Estate Review |
| <p>State here which of the County Council priorities the proposal will deliver against:</p> <p>The Review will contribute to the County Council's vision to create a Connected Staffordshire where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy. It seeks to deliver against the three priority outcomes of enabling SCC residents to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth; 2. be healthier and more independent; 3. feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community. <p>The Review has also agreed the following set of core objectives which reflect the county council's desire to change how it works with and on behalf of Staffordshire's people, make a difference to their lives and ensures that the service runs well:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To maintain and improve the condition and usability of the country parks; 2. To reduce the cost of delivering the Service; 3. To involve communities in decisions and delivery of the country parks; 4. To improve customer satisfaction in Staffordshire County Council and to enhance its reputation. |
| <p>Review lead: (s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ian Wykes: Commissioner for the Rural County |
| <p>Names of other officers involved:</p> <p>The Project Team is made up of a range of officers both from Rural County and from specialist support services. The core team includes the Rural Access Manager,</p> |

two Head Rangers, the Countryside Works Unit Manager, the Environmental Advice Manager, a Rural Development Officer and is supported by officers from Public Health, the Legal services Unit, HR, OD, Finance, Procurement, Community Consultation and Customer insight.

Date:

Executive summary of the assessment

This Review has been driven by a strong desire to secure a more sustainable future for the countryside estate and also deliver better outcomes for people at a time when the Service is facing many challenges such as funding pressures and growing public demand and expectation.

Many other landowning bodies face similar challenges and the Review aims to capitalise on the growing interest for partnership working, pooling resources or developing innovative arrangements to deliver efficiencies and economies of scale.

The Review of 18 of the 21 individual sites began by an initial engagement exercise with critical stakeholders to refine a broad list of potential options for managing the Estate. Part of this initial engagement was also to gauge in-principle interest for partnership working in the future. In addition to this initial engagement process, a benchmarking exercise has also been undertaken with other local authorities undertaking similar reviews.

Further customer and stakeholder insight was still required to make sure that any future management arrangements will meet the needs and expectations of Staffordshire's residents and visitors. At their meeting on 21 October 2015 Cabinet agreed a 12 week consultation from 2 November 2015 on four potential options:

A: Maintain council ownership and seek opportunities to increase income from existing sites by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties.

B: Transfer management on a site-by-site basis to local community or voluntary sector groups such as parish councils.

C: Establish a partnership of landowners to manage all green spaces in a particular area.

D: Establish a not for profit trading company to run and develop parts of the estate.

A consultation plan was subsequently developed and agencies working with protected groups were asked to promote the consultation to secure an inclusive response and as part of delivering our Public Sector Equality Duty.

A summary analytical report of the consultation findings has been produced by the Insight, Planning and Performance Team and these findings will be reported to Cabinet for consideration in any final decisions.

Cabinet are now being asked to agree the process and next steps for developing the detailed proposals for each site or cluster of sites. This will be a major undertaking and is likely to take some time to complete because of the number of sites involved and the need to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and local

communities to achieve the best result for each individual site. A Community Impact Assessment will be completed for each individual site where significant changes to the management arrangements are proposed. This will ensure that any decisions made on the future management of sites are clearly informed and, where appropriate, action is taken to mitigate any negative impacts.

Signature

Preparing the Executive Summary

1. Describe in summary the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal, including desired outcomes.

1.1 The countryside estate is a popular and well-used resource. However, on some sites increasing visitor numbers, growing public expectation and the demand for a wider range of recreational opportunities is putting pressure on the sites and the Service managing them. While this rising demand is positive, it leads to increasing costs to maintain the estate, which is unsustainable in the future. Without a sustainable funding model, there is a danger that the sites, and their use, could deteriorate, thereby impacting on the health, social and economic outcomes that they contribute to.

1.2 Many other landowning bodies face similar challenges and there is a growing interest in the potential for partnership working, pooling resources or developing innovative arrangements to deliver efficiencies and economies of scale. Local communities and volunteers have always been closely involved with the management of the Estate and this local interest is increasing with 'Friends of Groups' developing and some parish councils taking an increasing role in managing their local sites. There has also been some interest from the private sector; for example the maintenance of the countryside estate was included in scope for Infrastructure +.

1.3 Given the growing appetite among partners and communities to be more engaged, the main aim of the Review is to find the most sustainable way to manage the countryside estate and maximise its contribution to the economic and social wellbeing of Staffordshire's residents and beyond.

1.4 The Review's core objectives are to

- Maintain and improve the condition and usability of the country parks;
- Reduce the cost of delivering the Service;
- Involve communities in decisions and delivery of the country parks;
- Improve customer satisfaction in Staffordshire County Council and enhance its reputation.

1.5 A set of **Critical Success Factors (CSFs)** have been developed which outline the key things the Review must deliver. These CSFs have formed the basis for evaluating the potential Strategic Options for the future management of the Estate to date and will continue to form the basis for evaluating any future arrangements going forward.

1.6 The CSFs and their sub-factors are:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Increased value and prosperity for Staffordshire through a positive impact on local communities and wildlife | 30% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to people's quality of life by realising the health, social and economic benefits associated with the countryside estate. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve and enhance the biodiversity, heritage and landscape value of the countryside estate. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to maintain and develop the range of volunteering opportunities and number of volunteers. | |
| A customer focussed service which enhances customer satisfaction and people's experience of the countryside | 20% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure an appropriate level of quality as defined by customers. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service accessible to all. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the quality of communication and engagement with customers. | |
| Financially sustainable and resilient services | 40% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable to implement and run | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable and efficient going forward, able to attract investment and demonstrate value for money | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to manage future financial pressures | |
| The flexibility to meet changing future demands through innovation and development | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide flexibility to meet changes in visitor demand and environmental pressures. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deployment of appropriately skilled people for management and development of sites. | |

1.5 The Review began with a broad list of potential options for managing the estate being developed by the Project Team for initial engagement with a range of critical stakeholders. These stakeholders included landowning organisations (e.g. Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, National Trust, etc.), parish councils with a site in their area, tenants, user groups, bodies with a key interest (Joint Local Access Forum, AONB Partnership), staff involved in managing the estate and Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Members. The purpose of this engagement was to gain initial views on the ten options, to test their viability and consider how they might apply to the sites. The opportunity was also taken to gauge in-principle interest for partnership working in the future.

1.6 In addition to this initial engagement process, a benchmarking exercise was also undertaken with other local authorities undertaking similar reviews. The purpose was to identify any lessons learned and to look for examples of successful models that are working elsewhere.

1.7 Following feedback and analysis from the early engagement exercise, a number of options were discounted. At their meeting on 21 October 2015 Cabinet agreed a

12 week full consultation from 2 November 2015 until 24 January 2016 on four potential options:

A: Maintain council ownership and seek opportunities to increase income from existing sites by working with volunteers, community, third sector and private parties.

B: Transfer management on a site-by-site basis to local community or voluntary sector groups such as parish councils.

C: Establish a partnership of landowners to manage all green spaces in a particular area.

D: Establish a not for profit trading company to run and develop parts of the estate.

1.8 Following Cabinet's decision a consultation plan was developed and implemented which included online and paper surveys, emails to existing community groups and stakeholders, drop in sessions, establishment of a dedicated Inbox for emails etc. face to face briefings, social media and a dedicated website. Specific people or organisations working with protected groups were asked to promote the consultation amongst their networks to ensure inclusivity of response. These organisations included Staffordshire Buddies, VAST, Outdoor Education Centre Managers and groups representing young people.

1.9 A summary analytical report of the consultation findings has been produced by the Insight, Planning and Performance Team. The conclusions from these findings have been incorporated into the tables below.

1.10 Cabinet are now being asked to agree the process and next steps for developing the detailed proposals for each site or cluster of sites. This will be a major undertaking and is likely to take some time to complete because of the number of sites involved and the need to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and local communities to achieve the best result for each individual site. A Community Impact Assessment will be completed for each individual site where significant changes to the management arrangements are proposed. This will ensure that any decisions made on the future management of sites are clearly informed and, where appropriate, action is taken to mitigate any negative impacts.

2. Who are the main people that will be affected?

The main groups of people that could be affected include:

1. Existing and future visitors
2. Tenants, leaseholders and licensees
3. Staff directly involved with the management of the Estate
4. Volunteers and local Friends of groups
5. Sporting clubs and user organisations
6. Special interest groups
7. District Councils and other landowners
8. Entrust/ Chartwells

3. Who is currently using the service?

The table below shows the different groups likely to be affected by changes in the management arrangements of sites and explains why. The Service area does not capture data about service users against the protected characteristics.

| Those Affected | Why? |
|------------------------------|--|
| Existing and future Visitors | <p>The Review aims to secure a sustainable future for the countryside estate which delivers better outcomes, customer satisfaction and more public involvement in the management of the estate. Although , it is likely that the management of some sites could transfer to new providers or involve new ways of working or delivering on site services the intention is to have a positive impact on the visitor experience.</p> <p>Nevertheless the detailed proposals for each site will be subject to further engagement and consultation as appropriate as they are developed before any final decisions are made. This will give visitors an opportunity to have a say in the proposals. Also, final proposals for each site will be designed to ensure that it continues to be inclusive with equality of access being maintained for all groups and with no one protected characteristic being penalised.</p> |
| Staff | <p>All staff involved, directly or indirectly, with the management of the countryside estate will be affected to some degree as a result of this Review.</p> <p>Some of the options mean that the management of some sites could transfer to new providers which would have an impact on staffing levels or job roles. It is still premature at this stage to predict the extent of the impact because the management arrangements for particular sites have not been established but it is recognised that such ambiguity will affect staff.</p> <p>We will continue to brief, engage and consult staff and Trade Union Representatives as the detailed proposals for each site are developed. This will give staff an opportunity to shape the future management of the sites. Also a selection and evaluation process has been drawn up for approval by Cabinet to identify the best fit organisation for the site.</p> |
| Volunteers | <p>Some of the proposals under consideration could mean that the management of some sites could transfer to new providers which could have an impact on individuals or groups who volunteer on those sites. It is still premature at this stage to predict the extent</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>of the impact because the management arrangements for particular sites have not been identified but it is recognised that such ambiguity will affect volunteers.</p> <p>We will continue to brief, engage and consult with volunteers as the proposals for the management of each site are developed so that action can be taken, where appropriate to mitigate any negative impact should it arise. This will also give volunteers an opportunity to shape the future management of the sites. Also a selection and evaluation process has been drawn up for approval by Cabinet to identify the best fit organisation for the site.</p> <p>Also, one of the desired outcomes of the Review is that more people will have an opportunity to play a key role in shaping and managing countryside sites.</p> |
| <p>Tenants, leaseholders and licensees</p> | <p>Most of the main country parks support a network of businesses or concessions under licensing or leased arrangements which may be affected in the longer term by transferring sites to new providers. At this stage no new providers and the future management arrangements for particular sites have not been formalised. However, it is recognised that such ambiguity could affect these tenants and business interests.</p> <p>We recognise that this group could play a key role in the future management of some sites. We will continue to involve and consult with these stakeholders as the detailed proposals for each site are developed. Action will also be taken, where appropriate to mitigate any negative impact on existing businesses and tenants and to ensure the continuity of their tenancies and business interests.</p> |
| <p>External Stakeholders including Sporting Clubs, User Organisations and Special Interest Groups eg wildlife groups.</p> | <p>External stakeholders who use the countryside sites to hold events etc and to pursue their interests could be affected to some degree by changes in the management of sites.</p> <p>A database of all these stakeholders has been developed and categorized according to the level of impact the proposals may have on them.</p> <p>These stakeholders have been involved in the Review to date and will continue to be involved as the detailed proposals are developed.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| District Councils and other landowning bodies e.g. RSPB and Wildlife Trust | <p>Many District Councils and organisations own green space sites and are interested in partnership working, pooling resources or developing arrangements to deliver efficiencies and economies of scale.</p> <p>These stakeholders have been involved in the Review to date and will continue to be involved as the detailed proposals are developed.</p> |
| Entrust | <p>Entrust is responsible for the maintenance of all the buildings on the Estate such as Visitor Centres, toilet blocks and staff accommodation. Some of the proposals under consideration could mean that the management of some sites could transfer to new providers.</p> <p>Entrust will continue to be involved in any discussions about the future of sites where they have an interest.</p> |
| Chartwells | <p>Chartwells is responsible for operating the cafes at Cannock Chase and Chasewater Country Parks and for cleaning all the buildings on the Estate such as Visitor Centres, toilet blocks and staff accommodation. Some of the proposals under consideration could mean that the management of some sites could transfer to new providers.</p> <p>Chartwells will continue to be involved in any discussions about the future of sites where they have an interest.</p> |

4. Will the proposal have an impact on staff and what does this mean for the workforce?

The countryside estate is managed by staff within the Rural Access team supported by members of the Environmental Advice team. The management of the countryside estate is closely co-ordinated with the management of the public rights of way network. The table below shows the staff directly and indirectly involved.

| Staff directly affected by Review of Existing Arrangements | |
|---|-----------|
| Rural Access Manager | 1 fte |
| Head Rangers | 2 fte |
| Rangers | 12.4 ftes |
| Works Unit Manager | 1fte |
| Estate Workers | 17 ftes |
| Biodiversity Officers | 1.6 ftes |
| Chasewater Development Officer | 1fte |
| Country Park Warden | 1fte |
| Information Assistants | 2.6 ftes |

| Staff indirectly affected by Review of Existing Arrangements | |
|---|-----------|
| Environmental Advice Team | 5.65 ftes |
| Rights of Way Team | 5 ftes |

Any changes to the existing management arrangements could have a potential impact on these staff. However, it is too premature at this stage to predict the extent of the impact on staffing levels or on job roles but we will continue to engage and consult with them as the detailed proposals are developed.

5. Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), requires authorities to pay “due regard” to, eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations between people.

5.1 Potential Impact on Protected Characteristics

The Service area has attempted to ensure by working with other organisations that countryside sites are inclusive but does not capture data on the protected characteristics. It has been working with organisations including Staffordshire Buddies, VAST and BME groups.

The table below shows impact on protected groups:

| Protected groups/characteristics | Is there any potential for positive or negative impact | Could the proposal create better opportunities or minimise disadvantage? | Please detail what measures or changes will be put in place to mitigate adverse implications |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Race | Yes | While it is not possible to analyse visits to the Estate by minority ethnic groups, anecdotal evidence shows that visits are increasing. The consultation responses yielded insufficient data for analysis. In the longer term many of the barriers to access by this group could be reduced by joint working with other organisations. | More stakeholder engagement with organisations representing this group will be carried out as the detailed proposals for each site are developed. |
| Disability | Yes | The number of people with a disability who responded to the consultation was significantly lower than the number of people in Staffordshire as a | Accessibility to trails etc was a common theme amongst the consultation responses. More stakeholder engagement with organisations representing this |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|--|---|
| | | whole. In the longer term, many of the opportunities and facilities enjoyed by this group could be enhanced by joint working with other organisations. | group will be carried out as the detailed proposals for each site are developed, to understand their needs and improve accessibility for people with disabilities wherever possible. |
| Age | Yes | The responses to the consultation were representative of 25-44 year olds and over-representative of 45-74 year olds. However, it was under representative of the youngest and oldest age groups. In the longer term, many of the opportunities and facilities enjoyed by these groups could be enhanced by joint working with other organisations. | Accessibility and poor public transport links were common themes amongst the consultation responses. More stakeholder engagement with organisations representing these under-represented groups will be carried out as the detailed proposals for each site are developed, to understand their needs and encourage greater use. |
| Gender | No. | The consultation responses were representative of the Staffordshire population by gender. Changes to the management of sites are unlikely to have any specific impact on any of these protected characteristics. However, a full Community Impact Assessment will be completed following full public consultation. | A Community Impact Assessment will need to be completed for each site as the detailed proposals are developed. |
| Religion/belief | | | |
| Gender reassignment | | | |
| Sexual orientation | | | |
| Pregnancy/maternity | | | |
| Impact on staff | Yes | The proposal could result in protecting employment or in opening additional opportunities for staff depending on the future management arrangements. | Ongoing engagement and consultation with staff will continue as the detailed proposals for each site are developed. |

6. Are there any gaps in your evidence or conclusions that makes it difficult for you to quantify potential adverse impact?

In some cases the response numbers for some respondent types to the consultation was relatively low and also, may not be representative of the wider population they seek to represent.

7. If so, please explain how you will explore the proposal in greater depth

More stakeholder engagement with organisations representing the protected groups will be carried out as the detailed proposals for each site are developed to create better opportunities and mitigate any potential adverse impacts. Also a Community Impact Assessment will be completed for each individual site where significant changes to the management arrangements are proposed.

8. Please provide details of all consultation undertaken specific to the proposal you are making, either prior to the CIA or as part of it and the results of this.

A full public consultation exercise ran for 12 weeks from 2 November 2015 to 24 January 2016. A report on the results from the consultation has been produced by the Insight, Planning and Performance Team. The results from the consultation have been incorporated into the tables above.

9. Consultation with customers & stakeholders

There has been a range of engagement and consultation with customers and a wide range of stakeholders and potential partners throughout the Review which is referred to elsewhere in this Community Impact Assessment.

This engagement and consultation will continue as the detailed proposals for sites are developed.

9. Consultation with staff

We will continue to brief, engage and consult staff and volunteers as the detailed proposals for each site are developed. This will give staff an opportunity to shape the future management of the sites. Also a selection and evaluation process has been drawn up for approval by Cabinet to identify the best fit organisation for the site.

The Trade Union Consultative Forum has been briefed on the County Council's proposals on several occasions. We will continue to consult the Forum on an on-going basis as the detailed proposals develop.

11. Making a decision

Cabinet will be making a decision on the broad proposals for managing the countryside estate in June 2016. Further decisions on individual sites will be required once the detailed proposals have been formulated.

12. Actions

As part of the development of the detailed proposals for sites, we intend to continue

to consult with as wide a range of groups and people as possible including those people who do not currently visit our countryside sites.

13. Monitoring and review

Until such time as the detailed proposals for sites have been formulated, it is not possible to fully quantify potential adverse impacts. A Community Impact Assessment will be completed for each individual site where significant changes to the management arrangements are proposed. This will ensure that any decisions made on the future management of sites are clearly informed and, where appropriate, action is taken to mitigate any negative impacts. Where appropriate, the Assessment will contain arrangements for monitoring and reviewing any proposed changes including an Actions Log.

14. Rural Considerations

The smaller countryside sites are important local recreational resources and some local communities play a key role in their management. Any reshaping of the management arrangements will build on, and not impair, any of these existing relationships and arrangements.

The views of these local communities have been sought and taken into account as part of the public consultation exercise.

15. Health Considerations

The role that the natural environment and also volunteering play in supporting people's health and well-being is understood. The main aim of the Review is to develop new ways of managing the Estate to secure its future and deliver better health and social outcomes.

16. Climate Change Considerations

There are no climate change implications.

| |
|-------------------------|
| Local Members' Interest |
| |

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 24 May 2016

Working Together to Address the Impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles on Roads in Staffordshire - Final Report

Recommendation

1. That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee consider the final report of the Working together to address the impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles on roads in Staffordshire, with a view to endorsing its submission to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport for Executive Response.

Report of Scrutiny and Support Manager

Summary

What is the Scrutiny and Performance Panel/Committee being asked to do and why?

2. The Working Together to Address the Impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles on Roads in Staffordshire Scrutiny Review is now complete and the Working Group have produced a final report containing various recommendations. The Committee are asked to consider the report and determine whether they endorse it for submission to Cabinet, for the provision of an Executive Response. In forwarding the report to Cabinet, the Committee are invited to consider if they wish to make any accompanying submission.

Report

Background

3. The review was prompted by the submission to Council in full Council of two petitions from residents in Yoxall and Kings Bromley demanding a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on the A515 and auxiliary roads between Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay through Yoxall and Kings Bromley to Wood End Lane. The matter was referred by full Council to the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, as the relevant scrutiny committee of the Council, to consider the matter further. At its meeting on 24 July 2015 the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee agreed to undertake a review to investigate the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire, as part of its 2014-15 Work Programme. It was agreed to broaden the scope of the investigation beyond the specific issues in regard to the A515 by requesting that Staffordshire County Councillors submit evidence in regard to the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in their own areas. The Scrutiny Working Group's final report containing conclusions and recommendations arising from the review findings is appended. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Working Group, David Loades, will present the report to the Committee for their consideration.

Next Steps

4. Subject to the endorsement of the Committee, the final report, together with any accompanying submission that the Committee may wish make, will be submitted to Cabinet for the provision of an Executive Response to the conclusions and recommendations.

5. The Committee are reminded that if recommendations do not require any Cabinet decisions - in other words they can be dealt with through delegated decision making powers - then final reports are submitted to the relevant Cabinet portfolio holder and Corporate Director only.

6. In this instance, the Committee are advised to send a copy of their final report to those individuals who gave evidence or submitted evidence to the Inquiry Day.

7. **Link to Strategic Plan** - The service area which is the subject of the review is most closely aligned with the Right for Business and Great Place to Live priorities for 2016.

8. **Implications** - The equalities and legal; resource and value for money; risk; climate change and health implications are set out at the end of the attached report.

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Appendices/Background papers

Final Report of the Name of Working together to address the impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles on roads in Staffordshire Scrutiny Working Group – Final Report (appended)

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

**Working Together to Address the Impact of Heavy
Goods Vehicles/HCVs on Roads in Staffordshire
Results of Inquiry Days held on 20 October and 10
November 2015**

Final Report



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Chairman's Foreword/Summary

As a result of residents' concerns communicated to Staffordshire County Council at its Council meeting it was decided to form a Working Party to take evidence from across the County and to use the case history on the A515 as a basis for this report.

Sustainable distribution covers the overall movement of goods from source to destination. The aim of this report was to identify improvements that could be made to ensure that freight is able to move quickly and efficiently through the County without compromising the natural environment, the economy, or affecting the quality of life for residents where ever possible.

The movement of goods within Staffordshire is primarily by road, with over 1 million vehicle kilometres travelled by HGVs in the County each day. Whilst the Trunk Road Primary Route Network is designed to cater for high flows of HGVs, access to the final destination via local roads can have major impacts on the environment and across town centres and rural areas. However, the alternatives of rail and water freight are limited, and whilst the rail network is more extensive, these routes already have severe capacity problems from the expanding services.

The findings of the Working Group demonstrate that the County Council's needs to aim for sustainable distribution therefore concentrate on minimising the impact of road traffic, whilst ensuring that any opportunities that may arise for other freight can be taken up.

It is important to this County Council to ensure the majority of freight movements involving HGVs, and especially those travelling through the county use the Trunk Road Primary Route Network. Primary routes are constructed to the highest standards and usually bypass residential developments and congested urban centres. This, if used, and maintained correctly, does minimise the impact on local residents and can improve the efficiency of such transport as it avoids frequent stops, which does increase fuel consumption and pollution. It is clear that the distribution industry desires the quickest and easiest routes and that in the majority of cases this can be achieved through clear signing of the Primary Route Network and reliable information on traffic conditions.

The County Council needs to be more proactive in its recommendations/requirements when advising district planning authorities on the highways implications of development proposals and can use this to implement its freight policies across Staffordshire rather than just stating no objection. In this respect early discussion with developers can facilitate positive change through the location and operation of freight facilities and other businesses that rely heavily on distribution. Advice in this report gives guidance on what areas need to be considered over the immediate and long term impact on any area around any new planning development.

Each Member can identify community concerns and put them forward for inclusion in their DHP. All suggestions are prioritised, but a well thought out process during any development application by Highways over current and future requirements for highway transport plans will allow these types of requests to reduce. Each Member has a budget to address local highways issues, but this is very limited and the need for new applications to comply under reserved matters or even to allow approval is paramount if we are to manage the movement of all transport across our County. Requests for weight restrictions are considered through the DHP. It must be pointed out that the

funds to fully complete such a project could be covered by only one application by the Member, but if the policies in place were updated, as this report requests, then the Members' DHP would only be needed for those exceptional situations that arise and are normally safety based local community priorities. The member also has many other Highways requests from local residents to consider, so using this avenue does bring its own difficulties.

I would like to thank all members involved in this Working Group and all those individuals and bodies that gave detailed evidence for our consideration. Your input and concern was very evident and I believe that the many recommendations in this report and requests for them to be reported back to the Committee will allow us to ensure a fair and proactive solution can be found in the majority of cases.

This report recommends that the Cabinet Member considers authorising a number of items of work for prioritisation against existing programmed activities to ensure that many current concerns are addressed. It would be unprofessional for this Committee to recommend any future weight restrictions without a response to this report's findings and a further investigation into each area, as all that will happen is that one problem will become another area's concern, which is not a satisfactory outcome for current and long term policy. I am sure you will agree that the Committee working group needs to guide and recommend how to move forward and to ensure that it is kept informed of changes and actions proposed in Cabinet Member's response to this report.



County Councillor David Loades
Chairman of Inquiry Days – Working together to address the impact of Heavy Goods
Vehicles/HCVs on roads in Staffordshire

1. Conclusions and Recommendations

At the outset the Working Group set out a number of key objectives:

1.1 To better understand the impact that heavy good vehicles have on roads in Staffordshire and the impact that they are having on local communities

(A case study example of the impact of heavy goods vehicles use on the A515 was used)

Whilst freight transport and the logistics sector is a major part of the UK and Staffordshire economy, Members were made aware of the impact that the development of this sector and increased freight movement was having on local Staffordshire residents. The significance of freight activity in East Staffordshire Borough and Lichfield District was made clear in the Council's 2011 [Freight Strategy](#). The A38 is recognised as an integral part of the main transport corridor linking the south and north of the country.

As pointed out by the Road Haulage Association much of HGV traffic has a legitimate right of access to a point of delivery or collection and some of it will be related to business operating in the area. The case study focussed attention of the impact that HGVs were having on those living along or near the A515. In this regard views were expressed that most HGVs were using the A515 as a shortcut to Ashbourne, rather than using the A38 and A50, because of traffic congestion and road closures on the A38.

Members heard that there had been an increased volume of traffic and size of vehicles on roads that had not been designed for vehicles of this size. There was now 'round the clock' use of roads by HGVs, leading to more HGVs travelling through villages at night.

The pressure on the haulage industry to deliver 'round the clock' has led to increased use of roads and road congestion at certain road junctions, such as Hilliards Cross. Allegedly the use of SatNavs, has led to drivers avoiding travel along congested routes and finding perceived quicker routes to their destinations.

Some specific concerns were expressed as to whether the A515 fulfilled the width requirements of an 'A' road. The carriageway of a newly constructed 'A' road should be 7.3m but the A515 was reported to be less than 6m in parts with an effective width of only 4m wide at one location. This was causing difficulty of HGVs passing each other at these narrower 'pinch' points on the A515.

Members also heard evidence from other Councillors that SatNav companies may be directing lorries through villages.

The impact of this can be summarised as; impact on the health of local residents (quality of life – lack of sleep caused by noise (detailed information was provided by Yoxall resident, Warren Bradley) leading to health problems, such as anxiety and increased risk of cardio vascular disease and inhalation of CO2 emissions, alleged damage to property (cracked walls and ceilings and damage to building contents); road safety concerns (drivers allegedly exceeding speed limits, going through red traffic lights, mounting pavements to pass other vehicles, damage to a pedestrian crossing and wall; pedestrians being sucked towards lorries because of narrow pavements and proximity to lorries; danger to parents and children walking to the local school) and lack of overnight

parking for HGVs and anti-social behaviour. Evidence was also received that disability scooter users had difficulty navigating the route.

1.2. To identify potential solutions to reduce the impact that heavy goods vehicles have

A **technical** study commissioned by the County Councillor for Lichfield Rural West through his District Highways Fund, from Amey, concluded that a weight restriction should not be considered on the A515. However, the study proposed that if a decision was taken to progress this consideration a number of issues need to be addressed before implementation. The Working Group agreed that these issues should be addressed.

1.2.1 The introduction of a weight restriction on the A515

The County Council's Freight Strategy 2011, had been reviewed in 2014, but a number of actions were still outstanding and the Action Plan lacked detail as to lead responsibility for taking actions and dates of when these should be undertaken. An up-to-date Freight Strategy should address many of the issues raised during the course of this Inquiry. Members considered that it would be helpful to refresh this Strategy and that the views of local people should be taken into account through a targeted consultation process with the outcomes being an integral part of an updated Freight Strategy.

The technical study, commissioned from Amey, concluded that a weight restriction should not be considered. However, if a decision was taken to progress this consideration a number of issues need to be addressed before implementation:

- *That the number of HGVs affected needs to be determined*
- *Further investigation should be carried out of the relative performance of the A515 against the A38 is required to determine if the A38 represents a journey of similar convenience and hence whether the A515 can be removed from the PRN*
- *The impact on the A38 and the other surrounding roads of a weight restriction on the A515 needs to be assessed*
- *A plan to accommodate a temporary suspension of the weight restriction whenever the A515 is being used as the EDR for the A38 would need to be developed. If this is not possible, the A515 would need to be removed from the EDR in consultation with Highways England*
- *Funding would need to be allocated for the modification or replacement of road signs on the A515 and adjacent roads to reflect the weight restriction and removal of the A515 from the PRN*
- *A clear and funded plan for enforcement, agreed and supported by local Police, would need to be developed.*

The 2011 Freight Strategy highlighted that the majority of Parish Councils viewed both the enforcement and review of weight restrictions as a priority.

There was general agreement that the A38 was the most appropriate route for haulage vehicles travelling to and from the North West and North East to business parks along its route.

Local MPs, Andrew Griffiths and Michael Fabricant were unequivocal in their view that a weight restriction on the A515 should be introduced, but the Working Group received no evidence of them lobbying Parliament to address this or the result if they have done so.

Opinion regarding the request for a weight restriction on the A515 was divided amongst County Councillors representing the residents who live on or near the A515.

In reaching a conclusion as to whether the introduction of a weight restriction along the A515 should be supported Members acknowledged the legal and technical guidance offered to them by County Council officers on 20 November, and noted the point made regarding the displacement impact that the introduction of weight restriction on roads could have on other roads in the area.

The process (and cost implications to the County Council) of reclassifying a principal road was described. Clearly caution has to be exercised in introducing such a restriction. Members of the Working Group had difficulty in agreeing a conclusion at this stage, in the absence of more evidence as described in the Amey study, and a Freight Strategy that includes a detailed timed and costed action plan.

1.2.2 Night time ban on the A515

In giving consideration to the introduction of a weight restriction of the A515, Members considered the suggestion made by Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, and some Members, of a night-time ban. Members acknowledged the restrictions that would be enforceable when it needed to be used as an emergency diversion route from the A38 and the evidence from HE that night time was when most roadworks were undertaken on the A38, but were persuaded that a night time ban could go some way to providing respite from noise and CO2 emissions for local residents and would minimise the impact of loss of trade on local businesses. The snapshot of noise levels evidence provided by Warren Bradley was considered (6.2.7). The Working Group proposes that this evidence is qualified by the Council's Noise Engineer.

County Council officers agreed that the Department of Transport traffic counts gave quite a mixed picture of the volume of HGVs using the A515. Members considered the quantitative and qualitative data (including photographic evidence) submitted. Traffic count information did not differentiate the type of vehicle using the A515 and Council officers stated that they would like to do more work to understand the data better.

The information submitted, including details of the impact the traffic was having on local residents, was a cause for concern and Members agreed that prevention of accidents along the route should be a priority.

Members concluded that they would like to understand further the names of companies using their A515, the volume and types of vehicles using the A515 and their origin and destination before making a recommendation regarding a night time ban.

Recommendations:

1. That the County Council's Freight Strategy is updated with a detailed action plan and that it is brought back to the Select Committee for consideration in six month's time. The Committee wishes to emphasize that overnight parking of HGVs in Staffordshire be given thorough reconsideration

2. The evidence submitted regarding noise on the A515 is qualified by the Council's Noise Engineer.
3. That Cabinet Member gives priority to undertaking the work described under 'Further Considerations' in the report [Option Review report](#) undertaken by Amey and a report be brought back to the Select Committee in six month's time.
4. That the Cabinet Member facilitates discussion with local businesses in the A515 area and feeds back information to the Committee regarding the impact that a set route would have in the area if it was enforced.

1.2.3 Routing agreements

For all new developments in Staffordshire plans are submitted to local Councils. The County Council is a statutory consultee. Members were told that developers are asked to provide a transport assessment and/or transport statement (depending on the size of the development).

Some developments require a routing agreement that details the permitted routing for HGV traffic accessing and leaving the site. Travel plans are set and monitored by the local planning authority (borough/district council). The County Council's highways team is responsible for the road safety assessments undertaken within 12 months of substantial completion of the contracts. However, it is the responsibility of the borough/district council to enforce conditions. The RHA stated that representations could be made to the Traffic Commissioner if routing agreements were being breached.

With regard to the Fradley Business Park development planning permission had been given for a different development and no traffic management plan had been put in place for businesses that set up in 1995. Newer businesses have developed routing agreements with the County Council. It is important to note that routing agreements cannot be imposed retrospectively on existing developments or operations.

Recommendations:

5. Members asked to see any routing agreements and road safety assessments and details of cases where breaches of planning conditions relevant to developments near the A515 had taken place in the last three years.
6. That local licensing authorities carefully consider HGV operators' license applications involving property served off the rural network to take into account the impact on the local community.
7. That if breaches of routing agreements take place the local borough/district council is requested to take this matter up with the relevant company and/or the Traffic Commissioner, specifically if the agreements had been subject to an operators' license.

1.2.4 Traffic calming measures and road safety

A local County Councillor gave details of some of the traffic calming measures that had historically been introduced to minimise the impact of HGVs along the A515. The Road Haulage Association stated firmly that haulage drivers using this route were not breaking the law by doing so, but those that were shown to be speeding or going through red traffic lights should be prosecuted. However, the local Police Commander asked to be made aware of public observations of breaches and agreed to take this concern back to his Local Policing Unit.

Members remained undecided on the value of additional traffic calming measures along the A515. They considered that further evidence of the impact of more traffic lights along this route and additional traffic calming measures such as speed cameras should be obtained before reaching a conclusion. In the meantime they agreed that it would be helpful if the Local Police Commander could share with his Local Policing Unit the views expressed regarding alleged breaches of the law along this route and take action where appropriate.

It was reported that accident data indicates that HGVs are not over-represented in accidents along the A515 (although there have been a number of accidents (not HGV related) at Mitre Crossroads) and that average speed cameras had been installed to influence traffic speed. Members were concerned that there were dangers to pedestrians from HGVs and wished the Council to be proactive in accident prevention.

Members remained undecided as to the impact that a further reduction in the speed limits on the A515 would have and were mindful of the problems of enforcement.

An overtaking ban was considered. The provision of solid double white lines is governed by visibility criteria laid down by The Department for Transport (DfT). These state that a system of double white lines should be provided on bends or locations where the forward visibility is 150 metres or less, dependent on vehicle speeds.

In the interests of road safety, Members concluded that consideration could be given to the installation of bollards or railings to prevent lorries mounting the pavement along some parts of the route. They recommended that priority be given to costing and funding these proposed improvements.

Recommendations:

8. The Local Police Commander is asked to share the views expressed by attendees at the Inquiry Days of alleged speeding and traffic offences along the A515, with his Local Policing Unit and take action where appropriate.
9. That the Cabinet Member investigates the installation of bollards or railings to prevent lorries mounting the pavement along parts of the A515.
10. That Council Officers work with staff and the governing body at Richard Crosse School to consider what road safety measures could be put in place to ensure that parents and children travelling to and from Richard Crosse Primary School do so safely.

1.2.5 Road closures and improvements to the A38

Highways England stated that they had an ongoing study looking at the strategic needs of the A38 (the outcomes of which will be subject to a competitive tendering process), a project reviewing the number of road closures on the A38 and a dedicated project looking at the suitability of diversion routes that is currently bidding for funding.

Members considered that this would be very helpful and proposed that MPs could lobby for this work to be prioritised. Going forward HE is reviewing how most priority trunk roads can be improved – a project known as the Expressways concept. Members agreed that a traffic management plan should be included as part of the Expressways concept.

Recommendations:

11. That the Cabinet Member on behalf of the County Council write to MPs to ask for their support in obtaining funding for road improvements to the A38 and all major HGV priority routes across the County and for the project evaluating the suitability of diversion routes.
12. Members recommend that the Cabinet Member asks HE to ensure that a traffic management plan forms part of the Expressways concept.

1.2.6 The Use of Satellite Navigation Systems (SatNavs)

There was a perception amongst some Members that some HGV drivers were using routes not suitable for HGVs as directed by SatNavs and that better destination information may alleviate the problem. It was acknowledged that Highways England had limited influence in this area. HE agreed to take up the specific case quoted by a local County Councillor in her evidence to the Working Group. Members agreed that it would be helpful if HE could take up a more general conversation with SatNav operators on this issue to establish if this is a real or perceptual concern and how it might be rectified due to increasing evidence of HGV drivers using roads that may be unsuitable, but the most direct route on the SatNav. Members considered that it would be helpful to have an update on this matter in the revised Freight Strategy

Recommendations:

13. HE to be asked what influence they could bring to bear on the problems caused by the use of satellite navigation systems for route planning in rural areas.
14. The revised Freight Strategy to include an update on the use of satellite navigation systems.

1.3 How are Staffordshire roads (and communities) likely to be affected in the future

1.3.1 Increase in housing and business developments

The County Council's Economic Partnerships Manager and Partnership Manager for the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent LEP described transport as an expanding area of growth with the County Council investing in employment sites and manufacturers along main 'A' roads in Staffordshire.

In advance of planning developments taking place, each borough/district council develops a Local Plan that describes future developments within its borough/district council area. Lichfield's Local Plan was summarised by Richard King, Director of Democratic, Development and Legal at Lichfield District Council. This Plan describes an additional 9,000 dwellings to be built until 2029, 1250 dwellings at Fradley. An application for 7,500 dwellings between Fradley and Barton under Needwood had been received.

There was a shortfall of 37,500 dwellings across the West Midlands region and pressure to accept plans for additional houses in the area.

His view was that the impact would be an increase in HGVs along the A515.

There will also be some impact on HGVs using the A515/A513 as a result of planned mineral extraction in the area.

In the absence of evidence from East Staffordshire Borough Council we attach a link to the Council's Local Plan here: <http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2012-2031/submission-local-plan>.

The A515 Case Study is considered representative of concerns of local residents across the County and the update of the Freight Strategy must take into account the impact of increases in housing developments across the County.

The Chairman used the example of Travel Plans received by local planning authorities, for new developments, that have not included comment(s) from the County Council's Highways Team, and wished to raise concerns regarding this matter.

Recommendation

15. That the Cabinet Member ensures that the County Council's Highways Team provides clear advice to planning authorities in respect of the highways implications and location of developments likely to generate additional freight movements on the highway network and recommends financial contributions for the highways infrastructure by the relevant developers.

1.3.2 Impact of HS2 traffic

The proposed routing of the HS2 through Staffordshire will have a significant impact on parts of the county including the southernmost tip of the A515. HS2 traffic would not be affected by a weight restriction on the A515 as it would have right of access through the route. A HS2 construction compound is planned for the end of Wood End Lane and its junction with the A515. This could have a significant impact (estimated to be a 50 per cent increase) on the number of vehicles travelling through Kings Bromley on a daily basis. The Council and local residents have petitioned on some of the proposals to minimize disruption on the local community. The Select Committee receives regular reports on the HS2.

Recommendation:

16. That the Select Committee continues to include HS2 in its Work Programme and maintains an overview of this development, specifically its impact on the A515.

17. That the Cabinet Member ensures that the views of local people are taken into account as part of all recommendations the County Council makes concerning major traffic disruption to residents during and after the HS2 project.

1.3.3 HGV Parking

The demand for lorry parking facilities appears to have increased in recent years and the lack of lorry parks is having a reported impact on local residents. The Working Group acknowledged that it is not in the County Council's remit to develop lorry parks. The Working Group and other County Councillors were concerned about the impact of inappropriate parking and the lack facilities for drivers on local communities.

Recommendation:

18. To ask local Borough and District Councils to consider the development of lorry parks and enable overnight parking provision in their areas as part of their Local Plans. Consideration should be given to the creation of designated lorry bays and overnight parking facilities of appropriate size, with clear signage.

1.4 To identify a way forward and to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

In conclusion the Working Group was concerned about the unintended consequence that the pursuit of economic objectives was having on the quality of life and health and safety of Staffordshire residents.

The lack of lorry parks and facilities for HGV drivers is a problem not confined to Staffordshire but clearly has an impact on local residents.

Members welcomed the offer made by Highways England, who stated that they have limited influence over drivers using the A515, but considered that there may be some possibilities for improvements along the route and would suggest that the County Council takes up this offer. In particular mention was made of improvements to the A515 at Fradley south and Hilliards Cross. Such improvements would encourage road hauliers to travel onto the A38 rather than head for the A513 and A515.

This prompted a wider discussion regarding the usefulness, as illustrated by the Inquiry Days, of a more regular meeting between Highways England, the Road Haulage Association, Staffordshire's Chamber of Commerce Transport Forum and Council Members and officers. The Working Group would ask that the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport gives this matter consideration.

Recommendations:

19. That the Cabinet Member undertakes a review of lorry parks and facilities for HGV drivers in the County.

20. The County Council takes up the offer of discussions with Highways England regarding possible improvements along the A515.

21. A number of issues were raised by County Councillors relating to problems in their areas. It is recommended that the Community Infrastructure Managers take up discussions with the relevant County Councillor to address these matters.

22. That the Cabinet Member initiates a forum for regular discussion with Council officers and representatives from Highways England, Road Haulage Association, Staffordshire's Chamber of Commerce Transport Forum in order to develop an understanding of County wide distribution issues and promote constructive solutions which reconcile the need of access for goods and services with local, environment and social concerns.

23. That the Cabinet Member lobbies Staffordshire MPs to act on the issue of the impact that heavy goods vehicles are having on roads and communities in Staffordshire.

A summary of the recommendations is given in Appendix 2.

1.4.1 A weight restriction at Wood End Lane

Members discussed the idea of placing a weight restriction at Wood End Lane. However, any proposal to put a weight restriction on Wood End Lane would require full consultation with HS2 with regard to the potential impact on the routing of construction traffic. Members wished to investigate this further before reaching a conclusion.

Recommendation

24. That the Cabinet Member reports back to the Committee on the outcome of consideration of placing a weight restriction on Wood End Lane, taking account developments in regard to HS2.

2. Setting the Scene

2.1 At its meeting on 24 July 2015 the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee agreed to undertake a scrutiny review to investigate the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire as part of their 2015-16 Work Programme. A Select Committee is not a decision making body, but it can undertake a review and make recommendations to the Cabinet who can make decisions on behalf of the Council.

2.2 An important part of this review was to understand the impact that HGV's have on local communities and our local economy. To take this forward, the Select Committee was asked to consider and agree the Terms of Reference and arrangements for the review, as proposed in this report.

2.3 The identification of this topic for review by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee was prompted by the receipt in full Council in May 2015 of two petitions from residents in Yoxall and Kings Bromley demanding a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on the A515 and auxiliary roads between Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay through Yoxall and Kings Bromley to Wood End Lane. The matter was referred by Council to the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, as the relevant scrutiny committee of the Council, to consider further.

3. Scope of the Work/Terms of Reference

3.1 Following discussion at the Committee meeting on 24 July it was agreed to broaden the scope of the review to consider the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads in Staffordshire. Members stated that the problems recorded in regard to the A515 were being experienced on other roads in the county and asked that the scope be broadened out to include all roads in Staffordshire.

Intended Outcome

- To better understand the impact that heavy goods vehicles have on roads in Staffordshire and the impact that they are having on local communities.
- To identify potential solutions to reduce the impact that heavy goods vehicles have;
- To understand the impact of any future developments;
- To identify a way forward and to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

Key Objectives

- To understand better the current problems caused by the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads (and communities) in Staffordshire; (A case study example of the impact of heavy goods vehicles use on the A515 was used)
- To consider what potential solutions might be considered to reduce the impact on local communities; (A review undertaken by Amey on behalf of the County Councillor for Lichfield - Lichfield Rural West was considered);
- To consider how Staffordshire roads (and communities) are likely to be affected in the future.
- To identify a way forward including potential solutions and to report findings to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

4.Membership

4.1 The following Members agreed to participate:

David Loades - Newcastle Rural (Newcastle)

Len Bloomer – Stafford Trent Valley (Stafford Borough)

Geoff Martin – Etchinghill and Heath (Cannock Chase)

Carol Dean (Bolebridge, Tamworth)

Simon Tagg (Westlands and Thistleberry, Newcastle)

It was agreed to invite County Councillors Tim Corbett (Needwood Forest) and Martyn Tittley (Lichfield Rural West) as they represented the divisions that had petitioned about heavy good vehicles on the A515.

4.2 It was agreed that the following organisations may wish to give evidence, in person, or in writing:

- All County Councillors
- Local residents
- Yoxall, Kings Bromley, Draycott in the Clay and Longdon Parish Councils;
- Local authorities in the area;
- Road haulier and freight representatives;
- Local businesses;
- Local schools/community groups;
- Staffordshire County Council Highways Team (including the Council's Traffic Manager);
- Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue;
- Highways England;

5.Methods of Investigation

5.1 The Committee agreed that the approach to be taken would be to invite key witnesses to give evidence either in person or in writing to a small group of members over two inquiry days. Two inquiry days were held on 20 October and 10 November 2015. The meetings were held in public and they were webcast. An email was sent to all County Councillors asking them for their views on the impact of HGVs on roads in the areas they represent. In addition the Chairman undertook some desk based research.

6. Findings

6.1 Evidence received from Staffordshire County Councillors

In advance of the Inquiry Day on 20 October an email was sent to all Staffordshire County Councillors requesting any information that they had on how HGVs were affecting their local communities. The evidence received is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

6.2 Inquiry Day 1 - 20 October 2015

6.2.1 Option review – A515 Weight Restriction, Wood End Lane to B5017

Councillor Martyn Tittley is the County Councillor elected to serve Lichfield Rural West. This area includes Kings Bromley and Longdon. In response to concerns raised by local residents Councillor Tittley commissioned an independent [option review](#) of a potential weight restriction on a section of the A515 between the junction of Wood End Lane and the B5107 at Stubby Lane. Further details of the concerns are given later in this report.

The request for an independent (technical) review was funded by Councillor Tittley from his District Highway Fund (at the time of writing a sum of £10,000 that is allocated annually by the County Council to each County Councillor to use to address highways issues in their division).

This study was undertaken by Amey on behalf of Staffordshire County Council and was completed in May 2015.

In summary the report stated that:

- The A515 is correctly classified as an A road and as part of the Principal Road Network.
- The percentage of HCVs (Heavy Commercial Vehicles) in A515 traffic ranges from 7.4% to 11.3% which is acceptable for an A road.
- HCVs are not over-represented in accidents for the latest 5 year period of accident available data.
- The implementation of a weight restriction would need to be with access exemptions.
- The number of HCVs affected by a weight restriction is not known without further survey work.
- The A515 would need to be removed from the Principal Route Network (PRN) for a weight restriction to be implemented due to an EU requirement.
- The A515 is part of an Emergency Diversion Route (EDR) for the A38 and there is a conflict between this role and a weight restriction.
- A weight restriction would be difficult to enforce and without enforcement the restriction is unlikely to be effective.

The report concluded that a weight limit should **not** be considered. However, should the decision be taken to progress with the establishment of a weight restriction on the A515, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed before implementation. These were:

- That the number of HCVs affected needs to be determined

- Further investigation should be carried out of the relative performance of the A515 against the A38 to determine if the A38 represents a journey of similar convenience and hence whether the A515 can be removed from the PRN
- The impacts on the A38 and the other surrounding roads of a weight restriction on the A515 need to be assessed
- A plan to accommodate a temporary suspension of the weight restriction whenever the A515 is being used as the EDR for the A38 would need to be developed. If this is not possible, the A515 would need to be removed from the EDR in consultation with Highways England
- Funding would need to be allocated for the modification or replacement of road signs on the A515 and adjacent roads to reflect the weight restriction and removal of the A515 from the PRN
- A clear and funded plan for enforcement, agreed and supported by local Police, would need to be developed.

6.2.2 Evidence received from Parish Councils

In order to better understand the current problems caused by the impact of heavy goods vehicles on roads (and communities) in Staffordshire the Working Group invited the views of local Parish Councils (Kings Bromley, Draycott in the Clay, Yoxall and Longdon) and Yoxall Action Group to attend and give evidence to the Committee. (Longdon Parish Council declined to give evidence). The evidence received is summarised below:

6.2.3 Kings Bromley Parish Council – Councillor Steve Browne (photographs were shown to illustrate the evidence given)

- Since 2011, vehicles travelling through Kings Bromley had increased in size, volume and weight.
- In 2014 Parishioners asked the Parish Council to do something about this and an Action Group was formed with Yoxall and Draycott in the Clay Parish Councils.
- In 1985 the A513 was straightened out and widened which enabled lorries to travel through quicker and faster.
- In 2001 Build Outs were added to slow the traffic down, however at night vehicles went between them.
- In 2009 a pedestrian crossing was installed so that children on the west of the village could cross over safely but this had been knocked down twice in two years by HG/CVs.
- Over 900 signatures were received on a petition demanding a seven and half tonne weight restriction on the A515 and auxiliary roads between Wood End Lane, Kings Bromley and Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay. Kings Bromley consisted of approximately five hundred residences. Everyone supported the petition because, property and health was suffering and people's safety was in danger.
- Grade 2 listed buildings were not designed to cope with the current lorry loads, lengths, vibration and noise. Properties were suffering cracked walls and ceilings.
- People had to sleep with their windows shut due to the noise, vibration and fumes of passing HG/CVs.
- The T-Junction with the A515 and A513 was at the centre of Kings Bromley.
- The T-Junction had been in place since 1922. It was designed when the current lorry was not anticipated. Lorries had to cross and mount the footpath and swing into the other half of the road to negotiate the bend.
- In a twenty four hour period sixteen fully blocked out junctions, where lorries met one another and no one could move, were recorded.

- There is a school in the village with one hundred and thirty pupils. Parents were concerned about the safety of children.
- The Pedestrian Crossing had been knocked down and people had had to risk their lives to get across the road. It was knocked down at 4pm in the afternoon and at 5pm the school had reported this to Highways. At 6am the following morning the situation was reported to the Police via 101 and it was requested that a Police Officer attend to support people to cross the road. This had not however happened. Highways fixed the crossing within a forty eight hour period.
- Pedestrians on the east side of the village had to walk down the road and cross the A513 to get to the school. This was dangerous as there was no crossing. Kings Bromley was an old village with narrow footpaths. Lorries coming past at 30mph caused back draft which sucked people towards the lorry. A case was referred to whereby a lorry had been travelling so close to a pedestrian it had caught her handbag.
- Lorries passed through the village at speed and some drivers did not take note of the red lights.
- A count was undertaken over a twenty four hour period. Ford transits, buses, farm vehicles and waste refuse trucks were excluded. The count did not take place on Mondays which were light days for vehicles and Fridays which was a heavy day. The count was undertaken over a two week period at different timeslots. 931 vehicles over seven and a half tonnes travelled through the village in a twenty four hour period. 64 vehicles weighing over 7.5 tonnes travelled through between 8am and 9am when children were being taken to school. 51 vehicles travelled through as children finished school between 3pm and 4pm. The busiest time for vehicles over 7.5 tonnes travelling through the village was between 4am and 7am. The count was undertaken in three separate directions, these being Lichfield to Yoxall, Alrewas to Yoxall and Lichfield to Alrewas.
- Lorries caused severe damage to buildings. An example was provided whereby the residents had to remove ornaments off the mantelpiece to prevent them falling off due to the vibration of passing vehicles. People were concerned about their properties.
- Ninety-one per cent of vehicles were articulated lorries and therefore had no choice but to mount the pavement and swing over to the other side of the road.
- Lorries were travelling through Yoxall and negotiating the T-Junction to get to the Fradley Industrial Park. They were also taking this route at night when they left the Park to join the A38 in Alrewas.
- Drivers had reported that they could not get up to speed to get on the A38 at Hilliards Cross and it was suggested that this feeder road should be lengthened.
- Alternative routes were available. If Hilliards Cross was improved lorries could get on the A38. Lorries coming out of the Fradley Industrial Park that continued to go up Wood End Lane would have to turn left and go down to the A51 to get to the North West.
- The A515 was considered shorter and more fuel efficient by lorry drivers, however from Fradley Industrial Estate along the A515 there were twenty three gear changes and eighteen obstacles. Travelling along the A50, was nine miles longer, but took only four mins extra to complete and a consistent speed of 50mph could be maintained.
- A professional driver had undertaken a risk assessment and agreed that the better and less risky route to use was the A50 and A38 which avoided Kings Bromley, Yoxall and Draycott in the Clay.

Alan Howard, Kings Bromley Parish Council, described the unanimity of the Parish and strength of feeling about the issue. People felt that the County Council would not do anything about the situation.

6.2.4 Yoxall Action Group, David Harrison stated that:

- The Group had formed eight years ago and had supported the Kings Bromley petition.
- There was a disconnect between the people of Kings Bromley and Yoxall, and the County Council.
- The anger of local people had resulted in the petition.
- It was accepted by all that the road was no longer fit for purpose.
- HG/CV operators were putting profit before safety because the A515 was a quicker and shorter route, however the A50 and A38 were better designed to take HG/CVs.
- The existing roads were compared to the current criteria. The carriageway width should be a minimum of 7.3m but was less than 6m wide throughout the village and at certain points was just 5.25m. HG/CVs were 2.55m wide so it was obvious that two vehicles could not pass one another at the same time.
- Stress points occur at double bends in the village. At these points the effective width of the carriageway is 4m so it is impossible for two lorries to pass one another and they have to mount the pavement and go onto the other side of the road to get round the bends.
- There are 'S' bends next to the school which is also a blind spot.
- In May there were three near misses at the same point in the village. In one instance a mother had had to throw her children over a wall and in another a local resident had had to jump over the wall. There had been a major collision and the church wall had been damaged as a vehicle had mounted the pavement and gone into the wall.
- The only position in the village where there was a crossing was on a double blind bend where lorries mounted the curb and it was impossible for lorries to go round on the right side of the road.
- At one point the carriageway is less than 6m wide and the footpath is 400mm wide. People using mobility scooters cannot navigate from one end of the village to the other.
- A Department of Transport publication issued by the Health & Safety Executive entitled 'Driving at Work Managing work related road asks 'Do you plan routes thoroughly; could you use safer routes which are more appropriate for the type of vehicle doing the journey?'. It stated that; '...although minor roads are fine for cars they are less safe and cause difficulties for larger vehicles.'

6.2.5 Draycott in the Clay Parish Council – Councillor Mark Flavell stated that:

- There was support for the proposed weight restriction and Draycott in the Clay had also gathered signatures. (A petition of 55 signatures was received in November 2015, after the Inquiry Days).
- Up to 1,000 HG/CVs were travelling through Yoxall and Kings Bromley each day. However, the Department of Transport had suggested that 60 per cent more vehicles would be going through Draycott in the Clay than in Yoxall and in Kings Bromley
- The proposed weight restriction would not remove all HG/CV traffic from the village, but would remove the vast majority.
- The negative impact of HG/CVs was significant. They caused a nuisance and danger, particularly to cyclists and pedestrians.
- Footpaths were very narrow and pedestrians would get the back draft from HG/CVs passing by.
- A well used play park was situated in the village and children from the neighbouring village also cycled to it.
- Fifteen noise readings were taken outside a house in the middle of Draycott in the Clay, just by A515, when HG/CVs passed by. All readings were above 85 decibels and in

some cases above 90 decibels. For an exposure limit above 85 decibels it was suggested that people wear hearing protection.

- It was a 24 hour problem with the peak time for HG/CVs passing through the village between 12 and 1am and 5am and 7am.
- The World Health Organisation stated that noise inside should not be above 30 decibels but it is well above this at night time.
- Traffic goes through the village at least 40mph rather than 30mph as in the other villages.
- Most houses were on the opposite side of the A515 to the school but there was no pedestrian/zebra/pelican crossing. The lollipop crossing could not be replaced as it was too dangerous.
- Vibration was a significant issue. Homes shook, pictures wobbled, and ornaments fell as vehicles went past.
- The issue was getting worse with, increased HG/CV movement at night.
- Conditions of the carriageway were described by Staffordshire County Council as a patchwork which increased vibration and noise.
- There was damage to health as a result of sleep disturbance and anxiety which increased the risk of cardiovascular disease. There were serious effects to the health and wellbeing of adults and children.
- Carriageway resurfacing, reducing the speed limit to 30mph and consideration of a night time ban was suggested.
- The Amey report was not a reason to reject the weight restriction proposal. There had been no mention of the impact on people and evidence had been taken from google maps regarding travel time which was incorrect. It was unclear why it was operationally difficult to enforce a weight limit or temporarily disband it when required.
- Staffordshire County Council's mission statement included helping people to be healthy and happy and it was suggested that weight restrictions and other suggestions to ease the problem should therefore be supported.

6.2.6 Yoxall Parish Council – Councillor Robert Keys stated that his views reflected those previously presented. He suggested that the Working Group should consider:

- Why drivers were taking the A515 and where they were going to?
- Why drivers were not getting on the A38 at Hilliards Cross?

6.2.7 Mr Warren Bradley later submitted the following evidence concerning noise levels suffered by residents on the Main Street that runs through Yoxall. While only a 'snapshot', it does reflect widespread concerns expressed by the many frontage residents, and also those of residents in Draycott from whom the Committee has already heard.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION NOISE GUIDELINES GREATLY EXCEEDED MAIN STREET, YOXALL SURVEY RESULT

Background of Mr Bradley's survey

The A515 running through Yoxall is relatively narrow in places and built up on either side with residential property close to the road. It is claimed by residents (of which I am one) that the use of this road by heavy goods vehicles is extensive and in the main unnecessary.

Other reports regarding the use of this road by HGVs have indicated evidence which demonstrates safety issues and the relatively low (if not no) benefit to the time and economy of HGVs using the A515 against the A38 route to Fradley Distribution Park, off the A50.

This report focuses on the noise impact on those living on A515 in Yoxall which can be extraordinarily high day and night. In order to demonstrate this impact, I carried out my own study and have taken a 'snapshot' during the night. The timing has two benefits for the study. 1) The car traffic is lighter and thus creates less 'blur' when calculating HGV numbers and noise produced from HGVs and 2) it demonstrates a cause of significant impact on sleep of residents living on that stretch of road.

To evaluate the validity of this, noise measurements have been made to establish whether traffic noise levels are in excess of guideline noise criteria for sleep disturbance.

Noise assessment

Noise measurements were taken inside my home at Three Houses, Main St, Yoxall, Staffordshire over the night-time period 26th-27th November 2015, using a Class 1 Bruel and Kjaer sound level meter. The meter was calibrated before and after measurement, with no significant drift observed. The noise measurements were undertaken in an upstairs bedroom with windows closed.

Discussion

The analysis and commentary provided below is in relation to noise levels between 2-3 a.m. This period is typical of the noise climate found inside the property between 12 midnight and 6 a.m. that night.

In this time approx. 28 vehicles passed the property, 15 of which resulted in internal maximum noise levels in excess of 60 dB(A) indoors with bedroom windows closed, with the remaining over 50 dB(A). The frequency content of noise from the passing vehicles consisted of a significant low frequency element, with low engine revs and slow acceleration, indicative of high proportion (> 50%) of larger HGV type commercial vehicles.

During a two minute period, approximately 2.46 - 2.48am, five such HGV vehicle movements took place.

The full dataset can be provided.

Conclusion by Mr Bradley of his survey

It is widely recognised that to avoid sleep disturbance, indoor guideline values for bedrooms of more than 45 dB LA_{MAX} should not be exceeded more than 10-15 times a night. Clearly these levels are greatly exceeded and on an hourly basis. This monitoring exercise supports the residents (my) claim that traffic noise is having a significant impact on quality of life and in many cases sleep.

When interpreting the results in terms of decibels, it is important to look at the difference between 45 and 60 dB when considering exceedances of criteria. The decibel scale is logarithmic. A difference in sound level of 10 decibels equates to a doubling of perceived loudness and 3 decibels a doubling of acoustic power.

Whilst this data only considers a brief snapshot of the noise climate in the area, in my opinion it is representative of a typical night's vehicle movement along the A515 in Yoxall.

If the excessive noise is to be dealt with i.e. reduce maximum noise levels to below the 45dB(A) criteria, one of two things would have to happen. 1) Significant structural alterations would be required or 2) a routing solution for the HGVs would need to be found, vastly reducing the occasions the criteria is breached.

I am not an acoustics expert or an Environmental Health Officer, but my job in the police force is to collate, interpret and 'gate keep' evidence from front line officers to the Crown Prosecution Service for criminal prosecutions. My report is based on accurate evidence and advice from associates within the Environmental Health Dept. I therefore envisage that this assessment is of a suitable quality to be used as a basis to encourage further discussion of a wider problem.

6.2.8 Evidence received from local schools - Paul Lovern, Headteacher, Richard Crosse Primary School.

Mr Lovern expressed concern for the safety of children walking to and from school. The school encouraged children to walk to school and to walk to school independently in later years. However parents were reluctant for them to do so due to safety reasons. Parents' increased use of cars to transport their children to and from schools had created a parking issue. The school was Grade 2 listed and the playing fields were adjacent to the A515 subjecting children to traffic pollution. A weight restriction would ensure people in the village had a safer experience.

6.2.9 Evidence from local borough/district councils

Returning to the Case Study of the A515, the Committee wrote to Lichfield District and East Staffordshire Borough Councils to ask for their views. Richard King, Director of Democratic, Development and Legal attended the Inquiry Day on 20 October and gave evidence as to how Staffordshire roads (and communities) are likely to be affected in the future. Mr King referred to:-

- The District Council's adopted Local Plan which provided for an additional 9,000 dwellings up until 2029 and increased employment
- Across the West Midlands Region there was a shortfall of 37,500 dwellings. There were 1250 dwellings at Fradley and increased employment opportunities.
- The Brook Acre consortium had submitted a plan for 7,500 additional dwellings between Fradley and Barton under Needwood and increased employment opportunities, including in the distribution industry. This had not received approval from the District Council however, Mr. King stated that the pressures were there (to accept the plans) and the numbers of HGVs along the route would only increase.
- Other local plans that had been submitted to the Council raised concerns regarding HGVs.
- Referring to the request for a weight restriction on the A515 Mr. King's view was that this would potentially move the problem of HGVs elsewhere.

East Staffordshire Borough Council did not give evidence to the Inquiry.

6.2.10 Evidence received from Inspector Robert Neeson, Staffordshire Police:

- From a policing perspective, problem areas had to be considered

- Narrow roads were an issue and there was a need to look at this
- Enforcement of a weight restriction would not be possible 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- There were rarely accidents on the A515. The main area of concern (in regard to road accidents) was the Mitre crossroads.
- Average speed cameras had been effective in reducing speed from Yoxall to Draycott in the Clay.
- Other areas such as Barton under Needwood and Fradley had similar problems
- All schools had problems between 7.30 a.m. and 9.00 a.m. (school drop off time) and at the end of the school day.
- Due to budget constraints there were less Police Officers, but if there was a need for additional policing in the area this would be considered. Staffordshire Police wanted to keep people safe and reassured and local Police Officers and Community Support Officers should be aware of local concerns. Inspector Neeson would share the concerns of the Committee with colleagues

6.2.11 Evidence received from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue – Station Manager Toby Wilson on behalf of Tim Hyde, Service Delivery lead, stated that:

- Mr. Wilson stated that the Fire and Rescue Service had “making Staffordshire the safest place to be” as a core objective. Supporting employment and prosperity was important as deprivation contributed to vulnerability.
- The data regarding road traffic accidents along the A515 indicated that the HGV use is not causing a disproportionate level of risk when compared with similar roads in the county.
- The Mitre Crossroads is a known ‘hotspot’ for accidents. Data suggests that the characteristics of the junction, rather than the type of vehicle involved, that were the biggest single factor in the incidence of road traffic collisions at this location
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service would not support a weight restriction on the A515 on grounds of community safety.
- The additional traffic on the A515 at night is likely to be as a result of the ‘round the clock’ business at Fradley Business Park and some businesses are busier at night.
- Coincidentally the night time hours are also when the A38/ A50 (the alternative to using the A515) are relatively less busy and so using these as an alternative route for LGV’s at night is less likely to be disrupted by traffic.
- Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service suggested a part-time ban from 7 p.m. to 7.a.m. on HGVs using the A515.

6.3 Evidence received from Members of Parliament

6.3.1 Andrew Griffiths MP

A letter dated 12 November, 2015 was received from Andrew Griffiths, MP supporting the introduction of a weight restriction on the A515. Mr. Griffiths understood that there was a need for local business to be able to transport their goods around, but considered that we needed to plan more strategically the routes that are most suitable to do this in order to alleviate the nuisance to the residents along the A515 and also on other linked routes like Forest Road (Burton upon Trent). Mr. Griffiths acknowledged that Burton is well positioned as a logistical hub and welcomed the investment that this industry brings to the town. However, with further growth in that sector expected, Mr. Griffiths stated

that it was important that we consider the impact on local residents and that we should make sure that HGVs are using the most appropriate routes.

6.3.2 Michael Fabricant MP

A letter dated 18 November, 2015 was received from Michael Fabricant MP supporting the imposition of a weight limit on the A515 from Wood End Lane, Kings Bromley via Yoxall to Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay. Mr. Fabricant accepted that there should be exceptions for emergency vehicles, deliveries and when there are major roadworks on trunk roads.

6.4 Other Evidence Received

6.4.1 Local business – received by email 24.10.15

We own a PO and village store in Draycott-in-the-Clay and like all businesses on or near the road have a high level of custom from lorry drivers. Indeed there is cafe just up the A515 from us which solely caters for HGVs and therefore would suffer enormously.

Like other business people on the A515 we bought our business because it was on an A road and had a high level of traffic. It's vital to us and I'm not sure the residents around here also understand that the custom of HGV drivers keeps their community Post Office alive - as well as providing jobs for villagers.

Quiet roads tend to have few shops along them - do the residents who have signed the petitions understand this?

When the road is closed (i.e. for your Iron Man event) or there are roadworks our business suffers greatly. Any restrictions would have the same impact.

Also all of our goods are brought in by the kind of lorries that the petitions would ban.

We would support any moves that enforced speed restrictions as there is no excuse for speeding but before you impose restrictions on lorries rather than taking the views of residents who just want a bit less noise would you please consider the impact on businesses?

6.5 Inquiry Day 2 - 10 November 2015

The focus of evidence on Day 2 was on the receipt of evidence from County Council officers. Members of the Working Group were keen to understand planned economic developments in the area and to understand the impact that these may have on Staffordshire roads.

6.5.1 Peter Davenport, Economic Partnerships Manager and Partnership Manager for the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Economic Plan was prepared in 2014 and provides a long term vision through to 2030. The Plan is used to draw down investment funding. The objectives of the SEP are:

- Stoke on Trent as a Core UK City.

- Staffordshire as a Connected County - the aim is “super connectivity”, maximising the benefit of existing road, rail and air connections and future strategic infrastructure investments, including HS2.
- Competitive urban centres - the future prosperity of the Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire economy will also be dependent on growth in Stoke-on-Trent and the chain of strategic centres in Stafford, Burton, Cannock, Lichfield, Tamworth and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Business and housing growth in and around these centres will underpin our economic progress.
- Sector Growth - ensuring globally competitive innovation, investment and enterprise-led expansion in large & small businesses across our priority sectors. We have to take advantage of sectors where we have the most strength.
- Skilled workforce - to develop a modern and flexible skills system which enables all people to up-skill and re-skill to meet the needs of our growth sectors, particularly important in manufacturing industries. Staffordshire has strength in this area.

The strategy is built around a series of key sectors which are expected to drive growth in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. These include: Five Advanced Manufacturing sectors: Applied Materials, Agri-tech, Aero-Auto, Medical Technology and Energy Generation

There are two further ‘Barometer’ sectors, which help to benchmark progress towards a more mature local economy: Business and Professional Services, and Tourism and Leisure (e.g. Alton Towers, in spite of recent redundancy announcements).

Applied materials e.g. ceramics; Agri-tech e.g. JCB, important in spite of recent announcements regarding job losses; Medical technologies e.g. Keele Science Park; Energy generation (Stoke and Staffs – GEC based, GEE ABB still very big business internationally); Aero-auto.

Lots of businesses supplying automotive supply chains supplying components across the UK e.g. i54. Fradley – company on the Business Park that is a big manufacturer of electrical components; Business and Professional services - largely in town centres not as strong a presence as we would like; Tourism – a strong sector – particularly, Alton Towers (in spite of the announcement of recent redundancies) has been strong in this area.

Health is the biggest employer in Staffordshire. Transport including storage is the fifth biggest employer accounting for 25,000 jobs and an expanding area of growth.

All allocated employment sites and manufacturers are situated along main ‘A’ roads in Staffordshire. The County Council has been investing in sites along these routes.

The Working Group then heard evidence from a series of County Council officers who explained their roles in regard to the topic under discussion.

6.5.2 David Walters, Regulation and Governance Manager

The role of the Traffic Manager, including network classification and traffic regulation

The best use of the road network is important for economic vitality and society in general. The primary purpose of a road remains facilitating movement. The local road network is a finite resource with legitimate and competing pressures from road users.

Reliable journey times are important to road users. This has to be balanced against the needs of the local transport authorities and utilities and communities in order to maintain and upgrade the network. The Council has a range of duties and powers as the Highway Authority. These are set out in The Highways Act 1980; The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991; the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984; the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Network Management and the Traffic Management Act 2004

Traffic Management Act 2004 (Section 16) places a duty on the local authority to manage their road network to enable traffic to move freely and quickly on their roads and roads of nearby local authorities and the strategic network, such as that managed by Highways England (HE). The responsibility for ensuring this duty is met is that of the Traffic Manager (David Walters). This is a statutory post.

Physical and classification changes to the network and the impact on the network of neighbouring authorities is the responsibility of the Traffic Manager.

Road Classification and the Primary Route Network (PRN)

The PRN designates roads between places of traffic importance across the UK with the aim of providing easily identifiable routes to access the whole of the country.

A series of locations, designated as primary destinations, are identified by the Department of Transport (DfT), which are then linked by roads. From January 2012 local highway authorities have the responsibility for management of the road classification system (with central government approval).

DfT guidance states that the PRN must provide unrestricted access to 40 tonne vehicles. The implementation of a weight restriction would require reclassification to remove its primary route status. A significant change to the PRN would require the Highways Authority to consult with other highways authorities. Where a change has an impact on the strategic road network, the highways authority must consult with HE. Agreement of all affected authorities must be obtained before a change to the PRN can be made. The Secretary of State (SoS) for Transport retains ultimate power over the PRN. The removal of a section of the road from the PRN would require replacement and modification of signage along the local authority network, HE network and adjoining local authority network. The cost of this would be the responsibility of the authority initiating the reclassification.

Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO)

Placing a weight restriction order on a road is done by a TRO (made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984). The SoS for Transport is responsible for authorising TROs on motorway and trunk roads. For authorities outside London the County Council are the relevant authority. The SoS has the power to lay down the procedure to be followed in making orders (Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996). The procedure to make a permanent order requires the authority to consult with organisations and road users.

The Regulations specify the publicity and consultation procedure that must be followed. Whilst consultation with some organisations is only required if the proposed order has an impact on them, the Road Haulage Association (RHA) and Freight Transport Association (FTA) must be consulted on all occasions. The relevant Chief Constable must be consulted before making an order for certain purposes, including prohibiting commercial vehicles from using a particular road. The authority does not have to accept the advice from the Police, but the order could be ignored by motorists if not enforced by the Police. Anyone may object to an order within 21 days of the notice being given. A public enquiry only has to be held if the order affects loading, unloading at certain times of the day or bus services. Whilst the highways authority can make TROs without SoS consent or public enquiry, failure to follow proper procedure could result in a High Court challenge.

Enforcement of TROs

The responsibility for enforcement of a TRO varies depending on the type of Order. The enforcement of a weight limit generally remains the responsibility of the Police. Trading standards and planning services officers may carry out enforcement work.

Enforcement can be time consuming and expensive and requires evidence that access to premises along the route is not required. It was proposed that implementing a width restriction supported by physical measures is easier, but would restrict HGVs with a legitimate need for access.

Parking has been decriminalised and is carried out by highway authorities (Traffic Management Act 2004).

The responsibility for enforcement of moving traffic offences is the responsibility of the SoS (this includes the enforcement of weight restrictions).

Emergency Diversion Route (EDR)

County Councils have the responsibility to reduce, control or mitigate the effects of an emergency (Civil Contingencies Act 2004). This could include closure of part of the strategic road network. The Council also has a duty of care to the public stranded in traffic congestion.

EDRs help Highways England and LAs manage traffic after closure of the strategic network via pre-planned, checked and agreed junction to junction diversion routes. Before introducing an EDR the route is investigated for suitability identifying traffic 'pinch points'. A PRN would generally be considered a suitable EDR. SCC and HE are reviewing EDRs in the county including those associated with the A38.

6.5.3 Clive Thomson, Commissioner for Highways and the Built County Staffordshire County Council's Freight Strategy

As part of Staffordshire Local Transport Plan, Staffordshire County Council published a Freight Strategy in April 2011 following consultation with Parish Councils, freight operators and HGV drivers. The Strategy was reviewed in 2014. All 20 actions and priorities in the Strategy were reviewed against criteria.

A number of actions were outstanding, but the review did not detail who should undertake the actions. Some actions were dependent on partnerships with others. The Strategy should be refreshed. Officers would welcome a steer from the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee.

Recommendation: That priority is given to reviewing the Freight Strategy including a detailed action plan.

6.5.4 Nick Dawson, Connectivity Transport Manager - Integrated Transport Strategy including developments

Each Borough/District council area has a (local) district transport strategy (DITS), published on our website. These strategies form part of Staffordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 3 and are refreshed regularly.

DITS help the Council prioritise expenditure in the districts, and secure contributions and funding e.g. from developers, and influence strategic investment from the rail industry and HE. In this latter regard reference is made to strategies produced by the road and rail industry. DITS also provide advice to local planning authorities on the impact of local developments on transport. Countywide the Council's available funding for integrated transport schemes has fallen to £3m per year (half of what it was) as the government has diverted money into Local Growth Deals. The DITS are informed by quantitative data gathered nationally and locally and include signage, speed safety issues and strategic maintenance issues, but mainly focus on land use planning and development.

In regard to HGVs and traffic SCC generally encourages maximum use of rail freight. The strategies for Lichfield District and East Staffordshire Borough support the development of bypasses e.g. Lichfield Southern bypass and in neighbouring local authority areas e.g. Walton bypass in Derbyshire. SCC supports a number of targeted road improvements on the A38 and A5. The strategies also include mitigation improvements flowing from development proposals e.g. weight restrictions, signing, speeding and safety reviews.

In Lichfield District the Council support the provision of a lorry park at Fradley. Members were shown a slide on Fradley. The junctions at Fradley south and Hilliards Cross are considered inadequate in terms of slip lengths and general arrangements. The slide showed an improvement to Wood End Lane. SCC is lobbying HE for investment to improve both the Fradley junctions in Wood End Lane. Improvements may result from HS2 investment monies.

Engagement of the public is achieved through the Divisional Highways Teams who submit requests for improvements. Members raised concerns regarding how the Community Infrastructure team responded to public feedback regarding problems that had occurred post development. In regard to the impact of the Fradley development, planning permission was granted in 1995 for a different development. This has developed beyond expectations. There was no traffic management plan for the area. Newer businesses on the development have developed routing agreements with SCC and use the A38 for access to the North and North West rather than the A515, albeit the A515 is a primary route on the local highway network.

6.5.5 Dale Arthur, Development and Improvements Manager - Development Control process

SCC is a statutory consultee on new planning developments. 4,000-4,500 applications are received each year, a quarter of which are for the Lichfield/East Staffordshire area.

The role of the statutory consultee is to ensure that the developments do not have a severe impact on the Staffordshire road network. Pre-application advice is given to encourage a better quality formal application. Every application is checked to ensure highways and transportation matters comply with the National Planning Policy Framework, Local Plans and District Transport Strategies. For large scale developments developers are asked to provide a plan and may make financial contributions to mitigate the impact of developments (Section 278 of the Highways Act) and Section 106 agreements.

When a new application is received developers are asked to provide a transport assessment and/or a transport statement depending on the type and scale of the development. A range of factors are considered including trip generations from the development, traffic flows, accidents, road safety, connectivity, accessibility, and sustainability before recommendations are made to the Local Planning Authority. Construction and traffic routing is important and developers are encouraged to direct access away from residential areas where possible. Some developments will require an off-site traffic management plan detailing the permitted routing for HGV traffic accessing and leaving the site. Travel plans are set and monitored as part of the planning process and travel plan monitoring occurs following occupation of the development. Following planning approval of the application, a technical submission is made by the developer's consultant to consider new access arrangements. The developer then enters into a major works agreement with the County.

When the construction contract is let the highways works are supervised and administered by the Highways Team. Following satisfactory completion of the works the public highway is then formally adopted.

Members asked what happened when recommendations made by the Highways Team are not enforced. The Highways Team continually monitor the situation and undertake a road safety assessment within twelve months of substantial completion. If conditions are not met then the local Borough/District council could enforce such a condition under the Town and Country Planning Act. It would be up to the local planning authority to ensure that a planning condition such as a travel plan is enforced.

Members asked what would happen if a company's suppliers breached a HGV routing agreement planning condition. If this occurred, the local borough/district council, i.e. the local planning authority would again have the powers to enforce this.

6.5.6 Richard Rayson, Community Infrastructure Manager - A515 Case Study

SCC receives more requests for improvements than it can meet for financial and practical reasons. In the last two years, 142 requests for weight limits were made from major to minor schemes. 85 requests for major schemes such as the A515 were received.

Each Member can identify community concerns and put them forward for inclusion in the DHP. All suggestions are agreed and prioritised. At the time of writing each Member has a budget of £10,000 to address local highways issues. Requests for weight restrictions are considered through the DHP.

Councillor Tittley prioritised a feasibility study into a weight restriction on the A515 using his DHP monies. Amey completed a technical report (at a cost of approximately £2,000) to determine if the A515 was designated correctly as a principle route; to determine what changes (if any) are required; to determine if a potential weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes on a section of the A515 between the junction with Wood End Lane and the B5017 at Stubby Lane, Draycott in the Clay is feasible and deliverable. The report considered the Freight Strategy and the importance of transport and logistics to the Staffordshire economy; the Council's powers, duties and responsibilities in terms of managing the local highways classifications and restricting HGV use. The Council's duty to ensure traffic can move freely and swiftly on the SCC and HE network and the classification of the A515 as a primary road. It concluded that the A515 contributes to the efficient movement of traffic within the county and the destinations along its route are correctly classified as a primary road.

The implementation of a weight limit would require reclassification of the A515 to remove its status as a principle route. This requires the Council to demonstrate that traffic flows are relatively low or that the journey of similar convenience is available through an assessment of the observed journey times and journey time reliability. Impact of displaced traffic on the alternative route would have to be given full consideration.

Traffic data from 2012-13 shows that the percentage of HGVs using the A515 in Yoxall is 11.3%, and in Draycott in the Clay, 7.4%. It was suggested that the percentage for Kings Bromley would be similar to Draycott in the Clay. Any weight restriction would have to allow vehicles to have access to businesses and premises along its route. The Council has had no data on the number of HGVs that currently travel along the A515 that would be affected by a weight restriction and further evidence would have to be found. The enforcement of a weight restriction is difficult. This would be the responsibility of Staffordshire Police. Personal accident injury analysis shows there is no disproportionate number of road accidents involving HGVs along the A515. Any weight restriction would have to be suspended during these times of emergencies and planned works to the trunk road network.

The Report concludes that the implementation of a weight restriction on the A515 would not be appropriate. If the Council decides to go ahead Amey advises that the following should be initially undertaken:

- Establish the percentage of HGVs using the A515 for access and the number of HGVs not affected by a weight restriction;
- To establish the effect of surrounding roads for displaced traffic, including the A38, through a collection and analysis of traffic data;
- To identify any work required to replace or modify all direction signs indicating the A515 as a primary route;
- To consider the effectiveness of an appropriate enforcement strategy;
- To establish the practicalities of a temporary suspension of a weight restriction when the A515 is required as an emergency diversion route in terms of frequency and signing requirements.

Officers confirmed that none of these actions have been taken as yet.

Members found it disconcerting that we had to wait for accidents to happen before action was taken. Accident data shows that reported accidents on the A515 are low in number. Average speed cameras have been installed on the A515 to influence traffic speed.

Specific solutions could be found using DHP monies to address the issue of HGVs mounting footways along the A515. Some solutions could be identified with local communities.

Members asked if there was an issue regarding the road width of the A515. A primary route should ideally be 7.3 metres wide. This is the case along the majority of the A515 but in parts of Yoxall and Kings Bromley this is not the case.

Members suggested that the origin and destination surveys be carried out. Some limited data was available that indicated that 57% of HGVs travelling to Fradley came from the North West, Warrington, Cheshire West and Cheshire East and Flintshire and 73% of HGVs are going to those destinations. This information could be supplemented by roadside interviews. Members sought reassurance that the HGVs using the A515 were using the correct route and should not be using the A38, and proposed a weight restriction on Wood End Lane.

Further evidence from DfT traffic counts showed that the number of HGVs using the A515 was typical of an 'A' road e.g. 11%. DfT counts are manual counts on a neutral day once a year. Further analysis of datasets going back to 2000, using 12 hour counts (not overnight) shows:

- On the A38 at Fradley and the A50 at Sudbury, traffic volume going up, but less than it was at its peak.
- HGV volume and % of traffic on those roads are below the historic levels, but increasing in percentage in more recent years, probably reflecting the downturn in the economy and the fact that traffic is starting to grow again.

At Kings Bromley there are two DfT traffic count sites, one to the north of the village and one to the south of the village. The traffic volume at the north shows overall traffic volume is less than at its historic peak, but has started to increase in recent years. HGV volumes have been generally reducing in recent years, and the percentage of HGVs has been reducing. To the south of the village, the overall traffic volume is less than the historic peak, but has increased in recent years. HGV volumes have followed a broadly similar pattern. The percentage of HGVs has very slightly increased in recent years.

In Yoxall, overall traffic volume is less than its historic peak but increased in recent years. A similar pattern for HGVs - less than historic levels, fairly constant in recent years.

Between Five Lane Ends and Mitre crossroads, overall traffic volume is less than at its historic peak, but has been increasing in recent years. Volume and % of HGVs - less than historic levels and have been fairly constant in recent years.

Right to the north of the A515, north of Draycott in the Clay, overall the volume of vehicles has increased, the volume of HGVs is generally down and the percentage of

HGVs is generally down over the period. Finally at the A513 west of Alrewas, overall the volume of traffic is less than historic peak and volume and % of HGV quite specifically down.

In summary, officers stated that this data gave quite a mixed picture of the volume of HGVs using the A515 and they would like to do more work to understand this data better.

Data from the Council's own dataset recording data at 12 hour counts from 6 a.m. in the morning to 6 p.m. in the evening and from 6 p.m. in the evening to 6 a.m. in the morning, from our permanent site in Yoxall Road, Kings Bromley shows average hourly traffic flows between midnight and 11.00 a.m. for the last 12 months. 94% of the total flows from 6 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. Peak day time flows show 300 vehicles travelling in each direction. Night time flows varies from day to day, but typically can be down to 5 vehicles an hour but can be up to 40 vehicles, but most of the traffic is in the day time. The counts do not differentiate the type of vehicle.

Members favoured working with local Members to identify safety schemes that make the villages along the A515 less desirable to travel through.

Members did not consider that the DHP was adequate for addressing highways issues that cross Members' divisions and county boundaries. Officers stated that the DHP was a means of identifying and recording issues that had been raised by the public with their Councillors that may be appropriate for minor scale traffic schemes and other issues that it might be appropriate to secure Section 278 or 106 funding.

Members raised the issue of other housing development plans such as Brook Hay and the impact on the A38 and A515.

Trunk Road Emergency Diversion Routes

If a weight restriction were imposed on the A515 it would still be required to be an emergency diversion route for the A38 and A50. A weight restriction on the A515 would have to be temporarily suspended during this time.

HS2

Clive Thomson informed Members that Phase 1 of the HS2 is going through the Hybrid Bill. Information was shared with Members regarding the potential impact of HS2 on this area. The Council have petitioned on some of the proposals to minimise disruption on local residents.

HS2 construction traffic will affect the southernmost 600m of the A515. HS2 traffic would not be affected by a weight restriction and would have right of access through the route.

6.5.7 Rhys Williams, Road Haulage Association

The RHA represents 10,000 members of the haulage industry across the West Midlands, 360 of whom are in Staffordshire. The RHA does not represent lorry drivers from outside the UK.

Hauliers are not committing an offence by using the A515.

The RHA would oppose the implementation of a 7.5 tonne limit. They would suggest introducing traffic calming measures along the route e.g. traffic lights at the pinch points along the A515 and bollards, or railing to prevent trucks mounting pavements.

The RHA could advise drivers to use a specified route, but would not dissuade them from using the A515. If speed is a concern, speed cameras should be installed.

Members reflected on the growing size of trucks, no longer being appropriate for some country roads.

Members stated that if hauliers who were not using the appropriate roads should be fined for breaking the law. The RHA did not disagree.

Members suggested that the RHA advise their Members not to use the A515 as a shortcut to Ashbourne, but to use the A38. The RHA reiterated that drivers were not breaking the law by using the A515, reiterating that volumes of traffic have reduced on the A515 which may indicate that it is not being used as a shortcut.

The RHA stated that if the Council had routing agreements in place that were not being abided by they should take the matter up with the relevant company.

Members raised the issue of (poor provision of) lorry parks and facilities which could dissuade drivers from joining the haulage industry.

Finally Members asked if a ban from using the A515 during certain times of day could be considered.

6.5.8 Letty Askew, Asset Manager, Highways England

Highways England is now a government owned company following the Infrastructure Act that came into force in March 2015. It was formally Highways England, an executive agency of DfT. HE is the highways authority for the strategic road network within England and has funding for five years. Its plans are set out in the Roads Investment Strategy and Highways England Delivery Plan 2015-2020.

HE's network within Staffordshire is comprised of the M6, A5, A38, A5148, A500 and A50 (part of this road is operated by a consultant, Connect Roads, on behalf of HE). HE also has a responsibility to liaise with the M6 toll operator (Midlands Expressway Ltd). However, the Secretary of State remains the highway authority for the M6 toll. The A515 is a local highways authority road and is operated by SCC.

Letty explained that she and her team were responsible for the day to day maintenance of the above 'A' roads, identifying short and longer term needs for improvements, responding to consultations and responses to planning applications and local plans and engaging directly with stakeholders, local highways and planning authorities, private developers, district and parish councils and individual customers who use their network.

The response of HE to the concerns raised regarding the A515 summarised as the quantity of vehicles using the A515; safety; drivers failing to comply with speed limits and signals; narrow carriageway and overrunning junctions; traffic vibration; noise and

property damage. Other concerns were summarised as the A38 needs to be widened, that HGVs are travelling (on the A513) through Alrewas rather than using Hilliards Cross and the A38, and that we need more lorry parks and overnight facilities for drivers.

HE stated that they had no objection, in principle, to a weight restriction on the A515. However, the A515 is used as an emergency diversion route from the A38 and it was the view of the HE that attempts to divert traffic down a longer route would be unsuccessful. Furthermore, in the event of the need for urgent (i.e. unplanned) repairs on the A38, the HE would need a 24 hour contact with SCC to enable the restriction to be lifted and arrangements for signs to be put in place to say that the restriction has been lifted.

Members requested details of the number of road closures on the A38 over the last year. The following information was submitted by HE:

Between January 2014 and 7th December 2015, Highways England had the following closures on the A38:

- 14 closures for Emergency Works;
- 4 closures resulting from Incidents;
- 35 closures for Planned Works.

These do not include single lane closures, which would not have required traffic to leave the A38. These figures include all full carriageway closures between Lichfield and Toyota roundabout, where vehicles may have chosen to use the A515 as a diversion route, regardless of whether the A515 was signed as a diversion route for that closure.

The HE considered that more data was required on how much traffic using the A515 is through traffic.

The HE stated that they could take the following steps to assist.

HE can only influence drivers who use its network, but would agree that the A38 is the most appropriate road for HGV drivers to use.

They have a dedicated project looking at the suitability of diversion routes that was currently bidding for funding. HE is keen to receive feedback from customers and stakeholders. Concerns from both Inquiry Days had been noted and would be fed into the process. HE was looking at ways to reduce the number of closures on the A38. Longer term funding gives the HE the opportunity to look at ways in which the A38 can be improved.

HE has been involved in pre-planning discussions regarding the Brook Hay development.

There is an ongoing study looking at the strategic needs of the A38 from Weeford to the Toyota roundabout. Once the study is complete, any identified needs would be subject to a competitive tendering process. HE would be working with SCC to discuss the findings and how these are taken forward.

HE is also looking at how most priority trunk roads could be brought up to a better standard. This is called the Expressways concept. This work is in its early stages of development.

HE has no responsibility for the provision of service areas and lorry parks.

HE has limited influence over drivers using the A515 but offered to have discussions with SCC officers about possibilities along this route.

HE responded to the suggestion of a night time ban on the A515 by stating that this would clash with when most roadworks are undertaken on the A38.

In response to questions from Members it was clarified that HE agree diversion routes with local authorities. If a diversion route was put on a road there was a need for additional signage to indicate the route and to waive the weight restriction. Diversion routes are only operated when there is a total closure of the carriageway (i.e. not a single lane closure).

In response to Members' question regarding the capacity of the A38, the HE responded that although it did depend on the time of day and the day of the week, overall the A38 was experiencing high capacity.

Members expressed views that legislative changes were needed to address the issue and that MPs should have a copy of the final report. A further view was expressed by Members that qualitative data regarding the impact that HGVs on Staffordshire roads was having on local residents' lives was as valid as quantitative data.

At the end of the receiving evidence on Day 2 the Chairman gave Parish Councils a further opportunity to ask questions

6.5.9 Mark Flavell on behalf of Yoxall, Kings Bromley and Draycott in the Clay Parish Councils had a number of follow up questions:

Do we have quantified data that shows that the Staffordshire economy would be impacted by a weight restriction on the A515?

Would a weight restriction on the A515 be difficult to enforce?

Inspector Neeson, Staffordshire Police, indicated that it would be difficult to enforce the weight restriction 24 hours a day 7 days a week. To secure a successful prosecution the Police would have to have evidence that vehicles were not delivering to premises along the route of the A515.

How do local people feed in their concerns through the DHP process if their local councillor does not agree with the proposal local people have put forward?

The Chairman indicated that if this were the case there were processes that could be followed (contact the relevant Cabinet Member).

What happens if drivers ignore the routing agreement that has been made with their business? Are penalties imposed?

It is for the local planning authority to enforce the condition in the routing agreement.

The Chairman asked for details of the routing agreements in place for businesses on Fradley Park.

Mr Williams from the Road Haulage Association added that representations could be made to the Traffic Commissioner if routing agreements are being breached, specifically if the agreements are subject to conditions of an operators' licence.

6.5.10 Councillor Eagland (Lichfield Rural North) drew Members attention to the fact that road repairs on the A38 had led to a diversion route through Lichfield. Whilst the signage had been adequate, HGV drivers had used their SATNAVs to identify a quicker route to join the A38 through the centre of Lichfield and they have continued to use this route in spite of the road repairs having been completed. This was having an impact also on the safety of old buildings in the town centre. Councillor Eagland asked what influence HE and the RHA had on the routes on SATNAVs.

The level of influence that the HE has over SATNAV operators, once HGV drivers have left the principle road network, is minimal, but the HE representative asked Councillor Eagland to let her have further details and she would take the matter up with them.

6.5.11 Roger Sherrington

Will the final report of this Committee be a report of County Council recommendations, uninfluenced by what HE will allow the Council to do?

Are average speed cameras incapable of identifying a vehicle (apart from its registration number)?

David Walters responded that a speed camera could identify the registration number and type of vehicle but to enable a successful prosecution, the Police would have to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the vehicle was not accessing premises along the route. Local authorities have no powers in this regard.

Mr Sherrington responded that it would be unlikely that a large HGV would be visiting local stores along the A515.

Does traffic management form part of the HE's report?

Letty Askew responded that this there was a possibility that this could form part of the Expressways concept and may also form part of the recommendations from the study.

Mr Sherrington asked for details of the (routing agreement) conditions being placed on new businesses using Fradley Park and on existing businesses that were expanding and if in liaison with hauliers we could ask that they are sympathetic to local residents.

What are your views on a weight restriction being applied to Wood End Lane?

Richard Rayson responded that applying a weight restriction to Wood End Lane would prevent HGVs from using the A515.

Mr Sherrington asked how many hauliers in the RHA were from Europe.
Mr Williams stated that all RHA members were from the UK.

6.5.12 Steve Browne, Kings Bromley Parish Council

The volume of HGV vehicles using the A515 and the A513 was 931 (over a 24 hour period). What would happen in the future when a HS2 construction compound is being erected at the end of Wood End Lane at its junction with the A515, this could result in 2,500 (corrected as 2,400) going through the Kings Bromley junction every day. This information was later qualified as follows:

| | |
|------|---|
| 931 | This is the current volume using the A515 and the A513 |
| 1250 | This is High Speed Train 2s own figure for heavy HGV movements per day when HS2 Phase 1 and Phase 2 is being constructed between 2017 and 2032. HS2 intend creating a large construction site at the end of Wood End Lane at its junction with the A515. If Hilliards Cross is not reconstructed, then all of these vehicles could use the A515 and the A513. |
| 300 | This is the estimated increased figure of HGVs using the A515/A513 should Fradley Park be developed as proposed. This figure also includes HGVs that would use the A515/A513 if aggregates are extracted under the latest proposal by Staffordshire County Council. |

Mr Browne added that for information purposes a limited exercise counting the number of vehicles (light vans, cars and motor cycles) indicate that there are approximately 6,000 other vehicles using the 'T' junction of the A515/A513 through Kings Bromley.

6.6 Information received following Inquiry Day 2

6.6.1 Lichfield resident

A local resident rang following the second inquiry day to ask that he put forward a case to the Working Group regarding the request by some Lichfield residents for a weight restriction on the A5127 in Lichfield town. He asked that Members be referred to the following website: www.l-a-g.co.uk

He stated on the telephone to the Scrutiny and Support Manager that he had been dealing with this issue for the last two years. His experiences were similar to those encountered by local residents who lived along the A515 with some slight differences.

In summary he stated that he had been in touch with HE regarding HGV traffic going through Lichfield town centre and expressed frustration at their inability to influence the situation as it is not part of their road network. A similar response had been received from the RHA, Freight Transport Association and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

He had met with County Council officers and his local MP and Members to discuss the matter. A proposal by residents to the County Council for a temporary traffic order on the A5127 (or weight restriction order) has been refused because it was an 'A' road. He argued that 'A' roads could be declassified. Furthermore he considered that the quality of life of local residents had not been taken into consideration. He was sceptical about whether drivers would use the southern bypass when it is completed. Whilst agreeing that attracting business and employment to the area was important there was a need for an overview of the impact that economic developments (bearing in mind the developments at Friarsgate, Brookhay, Liberty Park and those associated with the HS2).

In spite of the reservations expressed during the Inquiry regarding enforcement, he favoured this approach as the way forward and suggested that the local Police could work with the local community to mount enforcement operations. His view was that enforcements would deter companies from “HGV breaches”.

6.6.2 Councillor Ron Clarke, Burton Town East Staffordshire (by email 4.1.16)

Subsequent to the Inquiry Days Councillor Clarke contacted the Scrutiny and Support Manager to ask if the following matters could be taken into account.

Regarding Henhurst Hill, Burton upon Trent. Staffordshire County Council spent a lot of time and money doing surveys, the result - more signage for HGVs on the outskirts of Burton. Regarding Horninglow Street - complaints of HGVs shaking the properties and speeding empty HGVs early morning making noise. Waterloo St again making properties shake.

Over many years the East Staffs Borough Council have tried to get agreements with the Haulage distributors to use various routes in and out of Burton to no avail. All residents in the most affected areas of Burton want weight restrictions of 7.5 vehicles. Unfortunately once it is given to one area it would create problems for other areas.

The County Council needed to have a clear policy of weight restrictions for all areas; this would save thousands of pounds of wasted officer time and costly survey. The County should again try and reach agreement with haulage distributors on using various routes although it will not solve the problem it could help to reduce the impact. I hope the SCC does not miss this opportunity to give a clear message to all concerned.

6.6.3 Barton under Needwood Parish Council (by email 22.1.16)

- Better Safer Barton project.**

Village enhancement scheme - to mitigate the impact of motorised traffic in the village. The prime objective of the project is to enhance the environment in the centre of the village while maintaining its historic character.

- A Destination Village.** Regeneration schemes and projects in parallel with the Better Safer Barton project can create a Destination Village / increase tourism, leisure pursuits and retail activity in the centre of the village.

- An Alternative Solution to Weight Restrictions along the A515 and elsewhere?**

Better Safer Barton ideas may benefit Yoxall, Kings Bromley, and Draycott-in-the Clay, and other villages.

- Motorised Traffic on Main Street / Residents View / Safety.** 80% of residents felt that reducing motorised traffic along Main Street was a priority. Safety a major concern along Main Street particularly at narrowest points / very little space between heavy goods vehicles and pedestrians. Incidents of pedestrians being “clipped” by wing mirrors from HCVs.

- Quality of the Environment.** Proximity of motorised traffic = fears of diesel emissions and noise on the health of pedestrians + emissions, noise and vibrations - particularly from HCV's - are damaging properties and the general fabric of the village.

- School Population and Safety.** 2000 pupils - frequent instances of traffic – including HCV's and double decker buses – mounting the narrow and crowded pavements.

SUSTRANS National Cycle Route diverted from Main Street because too dangerous

- **Shared Space /Reducing the dominance of motorised traffic.** One of the best means of mitigating the impact/reducing dominance of motorised traffic.
- **Shared Space and the Better Safer Barton project.** Poynton visit. Consultants appointed. Extensive/intensive consulting of village residents. Feasibility study. Design concept. Better Safer Barton scheme.
- **Present Situation.** Trying to raise the funding for Detail Design by AMEY / SCC which will provide overall cost and information for a Request for Quotation. Successful contractor will construct the project.
- **Conclusion.** Better Safer Barton project + concepts of Shared Space may help Yoxall, Kings Bromley and Draycott-in-the Clay / other villages along the A 515 and elsewhere in Staffordshire.

Submission by Barton under Needwood Parish Council

Better Safer Barton project

Barton-under-Needwood Parish Council (BPC) believes the village suffers from the impact of all motorised traffic including heavy commercial vehicles. This motorised traffic affects residents in a number of ways, which we set out below.

BPC, through extensive community engagement, has been trying to promote a village enhancement scheme - The **Better Safer Barton** project - to mitigate the impact of motorised traffic in the village. The prime objective of the project is to enhance the environment in the centre of the village while maintaining its historic character. The Better Safer Barton project will help BPC achieve this objective.

A Destination Village

Using economic regeneration schemes and projects in parallel with the Better Safer Barton project BPC believes that Barton-under-Needwood can become a Destination Village. This will increase tourism, leisure pursuits and retail activity in the centre of the village.

The National Forest, SCC Leader Fund, ESBC and Heritage Lottery are all supporting numerous current regeneration schemes being pursued e.g. , Historic Walks based on the Tudor Church, Art festivals / Exhibitions , Walking / cycling centre using circular routes / Tourist Information Centre using the, "Pub as a Hub" concept.

An Alternative Solution to Weight Restrictions along the A515 and elsewhere?

BPC felt that the Better Safer Barton scheme - to mitigate the impact of motorised traffic in the village centre and thus improve the environment - may be of interest. In addition the scheme may point towards the application of some ideas which may be both beneficial to and applicable in the villages of Yoxall, Kings Bromley, and Draycott-in-the Clay, in other villages with similar problems along the A 515, in other areas of Staffordshire and perhaps throughout the UK.

The Village of Barton-under-Needwood

Barton is a village of approximately 5000 people situated about a mile to the east of the A 38 on the B 5016, which links the A38 in the east, and with Yoxall in the west. It is an

historic village with an extensive Conservation Area at its heart, on either side of the Main Street / Station Road frontage. Traffic counts in 2011 (latest available data) indicate approximately 6000 vehicles a day use Main Street / Station Road - but the proportion of HCVs is unknown. The village lies on the Emergency Diversion Route for the A 38, and as and when there is an accident on an appropriate section, traffic is diverted through the village. These diversions are very difficult for residents on the B5016 – but we greatly appreciate recent attempts by the relevant authorities to divert traffic away from Barton-under-Needwood by starting these diversions at more distant points.

Village Centre Layout

Most of the shops and services in Barton-under-Needwood are located along the north side of Main Street, whereas the majority of the population live in housing estates to the south side. This means that if residents walk to the shops they have to cross the often very busy Main Street at least twice each day. This can be a problem for the elderly and disabled.

Motorised Traffic on Main Street / Residents View / Safety

While the amount of traffic is perceived by residents to have increased with a proportionate rise in HCV traffic, BPC gets the impression that the impact of traffic on the community is not a high priority for Staffordshire County Council.

We are, therefore, grateful that the County Council is now investigating this issue through this inquiry. In a recent consultation exercise (March 2014), respondents were asked to highlight traffic issues. 80% felt that reducing the volume and dominance of motorised traffic along Main Street was a priority. Safety was also a major concern along Main Street - in particular at its narrowest points where there is very little space between heavy goods vehicles and pedestrians. In addition the narrow pavements present obstacles for users of wheelchairs and parents using buggies. There have been a number of reported incidents of pedestrians being “clipped” by wing mirrors from HCVs.

Quality of the Environment

The quality of the environment in the centre of the village in general and the conservation area in particular is deteriorating as a result of the increase in motorised traffic - because they are so close to the motorised traffic there are fears about the impact of diesel emissions and noise on the health of pedestrians. The narrowness of the pavement and carriageway combined with emissions, noise and vibrations - particularly from HCV's - are felt to be damaging properties and the general fabric of the village.

School Population and Safety

Barton is fortunate in having an infant, junior and secondary school all within the village, with a total student population of about 2000. However the village experiences a “lock-down” in the morning and afternoon period when school traffic reaches a peak, albeit for a relatively short period of time. In a recent survey the village schools informed us that typically only two students cycle to school and only occasionally - mainly because of perceived traffic danger.

There are frequent instances of all types of motorised traffic – including HCV's and double decker buses – mounting the narrow and crowded pavements.

On street parking hinders the free flow of traffic through the village. Air pollution has been increasing. The Sustrans National Cycle Route no 54 has been diverted from the B5016 because the route is perceived to be too dangerous.

Shared Space/Reducing the dominance of motorised traffic

BPC has been told on numerous occasions over many years that the County Council will not support a ban on HCV's along Main Street (the B 5016).

Given the increasing amount of motorised traffic of all types - particularly with the expansion of industrial and warehousing facilities along the A38 and the projected new housebuilding in the village and adjacent villages – BPC set up the Village Enhancement Committee whose prime task was to investigate alternative solutions to the traffic problem.

We found that the application of the concepts of, “Shared Space” is one of the best means of mitigating the impact of and reducing the dominance of motorised traffic. “Shared Space is a design concept that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, primarily through lower speeds and encouraging drivers to behave more accommodatingly towards pedestrians” (Department of Transport Note 1/11 Shared Space).

Shared Space is a traffic management concept, but it is also a means of enhancing the environment, because it uses local distinctiveness in its design.

Generally speaking most shared space schemes include a gateway feature, the removal of traffic lights so as to prevent idling traffic causing pollution, the narrowing of carriageways, the creation of public spaces and strategic pedestrian crossing points

Shared Space and the Better Safer Barton project

Following a public meeting in the village in December 2012, addressed by Shared Space proponent Ben Hamilton-Baillie, the Parish Council was sufficiently enthused by the concept to visit Poynton in Cheshire which has a Shared Space scheme in operation.

Poynton Town Council said that prior to the installation of their Shared Space scheme that their town centre was a grimy place in poor repair – “it was dying and we had to revitalise the centre”. At the time of our visit Poynton centre had been revitalised, the decline had been reversed and there had been a 90% increase in footfall - as a direct result of the Shared Space scheme.

Following the visit BPC appointed a firm of Urban Design and Heritage consultants to undertake a feasibility study to test whether or not a Shared Space approach would be approved by the village residents and would work in the village. Following extensive community involvement and support, we now have a design concept for enhancing the environment in the centre of the village. This is the Better Safer Barton scheme.

Present Situation

Barton under Needwood Council is currently trying to raise the funding for the cost of a Detail Design by AMEY / SCC. The Detail Design will then provide us with the overall

cost and information needed to produce a Request for Quotation. The successful civil engineering contractor will then construct the project.

Conclusion

BPC firmly believes that some of the aspects of the Better Safer Barton project and some of the concepts involved in Shared Space may be appropriate for Yoxall, Kings Bromley and Draycott-in-the Clay as well as other villages along the A 515 and elsewhere in Staffordshire.

We submit the idea of the Better Safer Barton project for consideration by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Working Group as both a practical and functional attempt to mitigate the impacts of motorised traffic on villages in Staffordshire faced with similar traffic problems.

7. Implications

7.1 Link to the Strategic Plan

The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of the achievement of the Council's strategic ambitions for promoting prosperity and economic growth and the scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity.

7.2 Link to other scrutiny activity

The Committee has considered a number of key programmes of work and has had the opportunity to scrutinise HS2 and the Transport Review. In 2008-9 a predecessor scrutiny committee undertook a review of Speed Policy Working Group reported to the Corporate Policy Scrutiny & Performance Committee on 20 April 2009.

7.3 Resources and Value for Money

Some of the recommendations require funding and will have to be prioritized against other existing programmed activities through the County Council's Integrated Transport Programme.

7.4 Equalities and Legal

Restricting the routing of HCVs through communities could have a positive impact on social inclusion. There are duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to ensure traffic can move freely and quickly on the county's road network and on roads of nearby local highway authorities, such as Highways England.

7.5 Risk

Restricting the routing of HCVs could lead to issues in terms of displacement, wider accessibility and economic prosperity.

7.6 Climate Change

Vehicle emissions contribute to the concentration of gases in the atmosphere that cause climate change.

7.7 Health

Vehicle emissions are one of the main sources of local air pollution, which, in turn, affects human health. This is a particular issue in urban areas, along busy roads and junctions.

Noise pollution from traffic can also affect human health

Lack of adequate welfare facilities for HCV drivers could affect their health.

The Committee has been made aware of significant road safety issues as a result of their Inquiry.

8. Acknowledgements

8.1 We would like to thank representatives of Draycott in the Clay, Kings Bromley and Yoxall Parish Councils and Yoxall Action Group for the evidence that they have provided to the Inquiry Days and to other contributors to this report including local Members and County Council officers.

**County Councillor David Loades - Chairman of Inquiry Days
March 2015**

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9. List of Background Papers

Option Review – A515 Weight Restriction, Wood End Lane to B5017 May 2015 Amey
<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/documents/s74339/A515%20Weight%20Restriction-%20Rev%2002.pdf>

Staffordshire Freight Strategy April 2011

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/documents/s74966/Freight%20Strategy.pdf>

Review of Staffordshire's 2011 Freight Strategy

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/documents/s74992/Freight%20Strategy%20Review%202014.pdf>

The Strategy for Lorry Parking Provision in England

<http://www.britishparking.co.uk/write/Documents/Library/lorryparking.pdf>

East Staffordshire Borough Council's Local Plan

<http://www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/planning/planningpolicy/localplan2012-2031/Local-Plan-2012-2031-FINAL.pdf>

WORKING GROUP Inquiry Session 1 - Tuesday, 20th October, 2015 10.00 am

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=868&MId=6331&Ver=4>

WORKING GROUP Inquiry Session 2 - Tuesday, 10th November, 2015 10.00 am

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=868&MId=6335&Ver=4>

Philip E Jones Stone Urban (Stafford) – email 23.9.15

The issue is best addressed in two ways. The environmental impact and the economic impact. In Stone we have two major roads both heavily used by HGV's. Some vehicles are in transit others visiting establishments in Stone. The establishments would not exist in Stone if they could not be served by economically effective road transport and their loss would be a major blow to the local economy. I think that all of us in Stone recognise this and accept the side effects on the environment. As for through traffic, of course it would be better if it could be re-routed or better still in the case of bulk minerals e.g. quarry products, is rail carried. But we have to be realistic and accept that often there are no feasible alternative routes and we are left with exploring mitigating measures such as lower speed limits, good signposting, and acoustic barriers.

Susan Woodward - Burntwood North (Lichfield) – email 24.9.15

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Since the opening of the by-pass, this has been far less of a problem around Burntwood than it was before – but we do suffer, as probably elsewhere, by some HGVs ignoring weight limits and the lack of enforcement on these.

Philip Atkins - Uttoxeter Rural (East Staffordshire) – email 28.9.15

The history of the A515 in my and Tim Corbett's division goes back a long time, and we have tried to work together.

However of all the parishes on the A515, ALL the traffic passes through Draycott in the Clay. The A515 is also a high sided vehicle route.

After Draycott the traffic then goes in 4 directions; off on the B5017 at Six Lane Ends, turns at Yoxall towards the A38 through Barton under Needwood or turns at Kings Bromley towards the A38 at Alrewas or continues on the A515 to Lichfield. All the traffic passes through Draycott. All of this also passes through Tim's division. A weight restriction in one place puts extra pressure on the others.

While I understand the principle of sharing the load, for Draycott's sake a number of measures have been put in place over the years to deter HCVs from using the A515 and stay on the A50 travelling towards the A38. From the A50 there are traffic lights on Dove Bridge at Sudbury, a railway level crossing, a 40 mph speed limit from before Dovegate Prison with speed cameras through Draycott in the Clay. Then there is the steep hill out of the village in a 40 mph zone followed by a 50 mph limit at the top with Automatic Number Plate Recognition/Average Speed cameras on the A515. These measures should reduce any time or fuel benefit of taking a short cut to the A38.

If weight restrictions were put in place it would be hard to police as there are many places to deliver to on or just off the road. St Georges Park, Lancaster Business Park, Dovegate Prison, numerous farms, Hoar Cross Hall, Eland Riding School, etc.

The B5017 is used as a short cut to the A515 and Burton from Uttoxeter and has Marchington Industrial Estate and another business park (check name) accessed off it so I also fear displacement. Measures have been put in place in Marchington village to deter prison traffic. When Marchington Camp was used as an intervention grain store in the 1980s, much damage was done to the rural roads by HGVs which cost over £1m to correct some 20 years ago.

While I understand the emotion behind a petition there has to be a solution that helps both all the villagers and the hauliers. Better routing of lorries and deterrence from using the A515 to make it a route of last resort could be a part solution.

John Francis - Stafford South East (Stafford) by email 30.9.15

HGV's especially 44 tonnes are too large for A513 Main Road, this gives us as resident's great concern as the lorries encroach on the opposite carriageway outside Milford Hall where the road narrows. It's now a serious issue and serious accident waiting to happen. We already have the refuges on Milford Road & Main Road being damaged at least twice p.a.

Brian Jenkins – Watling North (Tamworth) by email 1.10.15

We have a problem on the B5404 in Tamworth, we have a 7.5.tonne limit, but it is not enforced. So everyone ignores it and HGVs roll through the village. The problem is the enforcement authority, does not enforce it. We do not have enough staff in trading standards to carry out these functions. The police only have enough staff to carry out their duties. I did make a suggestion to County Council officers has to a possible solution to the problem, but obviously it was not possible because nothing was said to me afterwards and the idea was probably dropped.

Simon Tagg – Westlands and Thistleberry (Newcastle) by email 2.10.15

We are currently experiencing issues with HGV's across the Newcastle area:

1. HGV's (gravel, marl removal) ignoring designated routes and using roads in residential areas even though signs have been put up (by SCC via local Councillors DHP's). This is creating highway dangers and destroying the surface of roads not built for such weights.
2. HGV's (supermarket delivery and Parcel Delivery) using local roads, such as Clayton Road (A519) instead of the A34 to resupply supermarkets and get to delivery depots.
3. SCC seems limited in its response to this and is often ignored by companies - enforcement is an issue. Is it not something MP's could take up and lobby in parliament on behalf of the resident they represent? Legislation is required.

Bob Fraser - Dove (East Staffordshire) by email 5.10.15

Following your request, my feelings on this matter are:

In Staffordshire we are lucky enough to live, and work, in a beautiful part of the country so we have the benefit of many types of road. On the one hand we have country lanes and we must respect those lanes and the restrictions which are applied to them for our benefit, sometimes necessary for our safety. On the other, we have a need for A and B class roads, which are there to allow goods to be transferred to and from factories, warehouses and shops.

I have been driving now for some 50 years in villages, towns and cities. Sometimes professionally, and sometimes for pleasure. 'A' class roads and trunk roads are a requirement. They allow us to go to local shops and buy goods. Goods which have often been delivered by large lorries.

If we restrict those roads, in any way, we increase the cost of those goods.

I strongly dislike the use of so called speed humps. They shake things around and cause drivers to alternatively slow down and speed up, using more fuel in the process, and causing extra noise pollution.

Roads such as the A515, are prime examples of this, and as such I am vehemently opposed to the application of false restrictions on such roads.

On built-up roads in towns and villages, such restrictions can be a requirement. In rural areas they are less valid. I was taught to keep things moving, and I support that. We should share the roads.

Mike Davies - Wombourne (South Staffordshire) by email 6.10.15

People living in Orton Lane (well used) complained that HGVs were using it as a short cut to the quarry in Seisdon delivering demolition type material from a variety of locations in the West Midlands. We discussed the matter with local policing unit for advice. All routes into Wombourne have 7.5 tonne restrictions except for deliveries. We checked that signage was both clear and correctly located. The lorry ownership was identified and received letters from the police cautioning them to cease using Wombourne as a short cut. Things have settled down but I've agreed with the police that any further breach will result in ticketing which carries both a fine and 3 points on their licences. The residents are now monitoring the situation.

**Cheslyn Hay Parish Council – on behalf of Councillor Mike Lawrence by email
9.10.15**

The issue of HGV's was discussed at our Parish Council meeting yesterday evening and the problems encountered in Cheslyn Hay are as follows:-

Not enough enforcement action is taken against height/weight restriction contraventions; HGV's delivering to small estates (Glenthorne shops) do not have enough room to manoeuvre and often drive on pavements as they are too large resulting in objects or cars being damaged (bollards near the shop were taken out regularly until removed permanently);

Satellite navigation systems send HGV's through the Village (ignoring height and weight restrictions) – can any liaison be made with the system providers to update the systems with this information?

Lorries divert down Wolverhampton Road from the quarry in Essington and lorries take a short cut through Cheslyn Hay if the M6 is blocked.

Lack of clarity in enforcement approach – foreign drivers are not arrested as they are unable to leave their vehicles unattended.

Michael Greatorex - Tamworth by email 9.10.15

Watling South (my Division) and Watling North (Cllr Jenkins) and Stonydelph (Cllr Cook and where I live), all border Junction 10 of the M42 and A5.

There are business parks around Junction 10 including a big park east of the Junction in North Warwickshire – this Park (Dordon) will no doubt service places west of Junction 10 and initially travel on the A5.

HGVs from Junction 10 will also service smaller parks in Tamworth such as Amington which mainly use main roads and short cuts through residential streets which are either indicated on Satnav or get known by HGV drivers.

A resident tells me that signs about HGVs on the M42 either side of Junction 10 are poor – I've not checked these myself. No doubt signs may be poor off the A5 bypass.

Junction 10 is the Tamworth Junction and will service traffic to Tamworth, Lichfield and places east of the Junction.

Ventura Park is the major retail park alongside the A5 and sits on the main approach road to Tamworth town centre. Ventura Park is popular as a regional retail park. I have spoken to shoppers there from Burton, Solihull, Nuneaton, Sutton Coldfield etc. etc. It is obviously serviced by HGVs.

Watling Street (the former A5 before the by-pass was built) is still used by HGVs getting to and returning from Wilnecote, Two Gates, Belgrave, Fazeley etc. and this traffic finds shortcuts through residential streets. There are business parks around Ninian Way and Hedging Lane, Wilnecote. There are some local HGV signs but many complaints about HGVs – it might be a shortcut for HGVs coming from Coleshill (a big business park at Hams Hall) and Kingsbury and possibly the eastern part of Birmingham. HGVs use Hockley Road (a main old district service road from Watling Street) which is narrow and

littered with parked cars and there was a residential house wall demolished by an HGV at the southern end near Gorsey Bank Road.

Local business vehicles (light lorries, vans) etc. are often parked by drivers overnight in the residential streets where the drivers live. We need to encourage employers to provide off street parking for their vehicles and encourage them to get their drivers to use others forms of travel to pick up / return their business vehicles at the start/end of the working day.

A local Tamworth Councillor has asked if the Working Group would be able to review issues that are cross boundary falling within Warwickshire viz the junction with Overwoods Road and Trinity Road where the most recent road traffic accident involved a HGV.

About 2 years ago three people were killed in another collision at this junction.

Below is a note provided for me this week from a resident viz

1. as mentioned: lorries driving on Watling Street and surrounding areas where the roads are clearly marked for them not too
2. the section of motorway between J10 and J11 is marked no overtaking for lorries but they still do, thus holding up traffic considerably

As for Trinity Road:

1. getting the speed for that road reduced would help and also slow the lorries down that race along there
2. double white lines in the middle of the road to stop overtaking particularly by the road junctions where the accidents have occurred. This would give better visibility to drivers in those areas
3. Adequate lighting.

And from another resident viz

Fri 2nd Oct 17.40 hrs

Huge articulated truck (details taken) manoeuvring out of Hockley road onto Watling Street B5404. A haulage company responsible but didn't get name on cab.

Mon 20th July 10.37pm

Two trucks (details taken) came from Marlborough Way B5400 onto Watling Street B5404 and then turned right into Hockley Road - residential. They were NOT making deliveries at 10.30pm - using it as a normal driving route. Registration No. recorded

Wed 2nd Sept

Transport co (details taken) - 0161 telephone number proceeding along Hockley Road then turning onto B5404.

David Williams – 9.12.15

Car drivers unaware of differing speed limits of LGV vehicles becoming frustrated.

Many junctions not wide enough for articulated vehicles meaning they have to take up more than one lane.

The sighting of the waiting vehicles on the road being turned into set so turn cannot happen and then conflict with LGV Long driver hours becoming boring to LGV drivers and reduce concentration Poor driving standards similar to car drivers as LGV drivers. Foreign vehicles with drivers sitting on the opposite side with a more reduced visual display.

Unclean vehicles causing vision issues with vehicles behind and opposite direction The use of other LGV's by others to leapfrog on motorways to keep them alert blocking the central lane.

The sheer weight imposed by the vehicle damaging the road Seeing that verges, fencing and lane edges are damaged and spread out around the highway Impatient drivers, too close to the rear, meaning that LGV cannot see them until they pull out.

Recommendations (numbers refer to the number of the recommendation in the main body of the report)

Staffordshire wide

To the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

1. That the County Council's Freight Strategy is updated with a detailed action plan and that it is brought back to the Select Committee for consideration in six month's time. The Committee wishes to emphasize that overnight parking of HGVs in Staffordshire be given thorough reconsideration. 14. The revised Freight Strategy to include an update on the use of satellite navigation systems. 18. To ask local Borough and District Councils to consider the development of lorry parks and enable overnight parking provision in their areas as part of their Local Plans. Consideration should be given to the creation of designated lorry bays and overnight parking facilities of appropriate size, with clear signage. 19. That the Cabinet Member undertakes a review of lorry parks and facilities for HGV drivers in the County.

15. That the Cabinet Member ensures that the County Council's Highways Team provides clear advice to planning authorities in respect of the highways implications and location of developments likely to generate additional freight movements on the highway network and recommends financial contributions for the highways infrastructure by the relevant developers.

17. That the Cabinet Member ensures that the views of local people are taken into account as part of all recommendations the County Council makes concerning major traffic disruption to residents during and after the HS2 project.

21. A number of issues were raised by County Councillors relating to problems in their areas. It is recommended that the Community Infrastructure Managers take up discussions with the relevant County Councillor to address these matters.

22. That the Cabinet Member initiates a forum for regular discussion with Council officers and representatives from Highways England, Road Haulage Association, Staffordshire's Chamber of Commerce Transport Forum in order to develop an understanding of County wide distribution issues and promote constructive solutions which reconcile the need of access for goods and services with local, environment and social concerns.

23. That the Cabinet Member lobbies Staffordshire MPs to act on the issue of the impact that heavy goods vehicles are having on roads and communities in Staffordshire.

To Local Borough and District Councils in Staffordshire

6. That local licensing authorities carefully consider HGV operators license applications involving property served off the rural network to take into account the impact on the local community.

7. That if breaches of routing agreements take place, the local borough/district council is requested to take this matter up with the relevant company and/or the Traffic Commissioner, specifically if the agreements had been subject to an operators' license.

To Highways England

13. HE to be asked what influence they could bring to bear on the problems caused by the use of satellite navigation systems for route planning in rural areas.

Recommendations: Specific to A515

2. The evidence submitted regarding noise on the A515 is qualified by the Council's Noise Engineer.

3. That Cabinet Member give priority to undertaking the work described under 'Further Considerations' in the report Option Review report undertaken by Amey (Appendix 1) and a report be brought back to the Select Committee in six month's time.

4. That the Cabinet Member facilitates discussion with local businesses in the A515 area and feeds back information to the Committee regarding the impact that a set route would have in the area if it was enforced.

5. Members asked to see any routing agreements and road safety assessments and details of cases where breaches of planning conditions relevant to developments near the A515 had taken place in the last three years.

8. The Local Police Commander is asked to share the views expressed by attendees at the Inquiry Days of alleged speeding and traffic offences along the A515, with his Local Policing Unit and take action where appropriate.

9. That the Cabinet Member investigates the installation of bollards or railings to prevent lorries mounting the pavement along parts of the A515.

10. That Council Officers work with staff and the governing body at Richard Crosse School to consider what road safety measures could be put in place to ensure that parents and children travelling to and from Richard Crosse Primary School do so safely.

11. That the Cabinet Member on behalf of the County Council write to MPs to ask for their support in obtaining funding for road improvements to the A38 and all major HGV priority routes across the County and for the project evaluating the suitability of diversion routes.

12. Members recommend that the Cabinet Member asks HE to ensure that a traffic management plan forms part of the Expressways concept.

16. That the Select Committee continues to include HS2 in its Work Programme and maintains an overview of this development, specifically its impact on the A515.

20. The County Council takes up the offer of discussions with Highways England regarding possible improvements along the A515.

24. That the Cabinet Member reports back to the Committee on the outcome of consideration of placing a weight restriction on Wood End Lane, taking account developments in regard to HS2.

| |
|-------------------------|
| Local Members' Interest |
| N/A |

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 24th May 2016

Executive Response to the Infrastructure+ - scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

Recommendations

1. That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee receives the formal response of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport to the recommendations of the Infrastructure + review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements.
2. That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee considers the content of the accompanying action plan.
3. That the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee monitors the action plan and implementation of the agreed recommendations on a six monthly exception basis, until all recommendations have been fully implemented.

Report of Cllr Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport

Summary

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

4. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee are asked to receive the formal response to the final report and recommendations of the Infrastructure + review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements and to make arrangements to monitor the plan for implementing the agreed recommendations – to make sure that action is taken and delivers the intended outcome.

Report

Background

5. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee nominated a Member Working Group to undertake a review into the governance and reporting arrangements of Infrastructure+
6. The findings and recommendations of the review were endorsed by the name of Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee at their meeting 17th December 2015. The report was then submitted to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment with a request for their formal response. The recommendations were agreed.
7. Attached as an Appendix to this report is a table setting out:

- a. each of the agreed recommendations;
- b. the organisation/lead Member or officer;
- c. the action proposed (or already taken) in response to the agreed recommendations;
and
- d. a deadline for completion.

Community Impact

8. The Infrastructure+ contract is complex and diverse. Both capital grant and revenue highway funding resources have reduced significantly in recent years. Value for money is ensured in the various elements through effective business planning to establish prioritised works programmes and service improvement priorities, which are then monitored through effective governance, including benchmarking and robust performance management. Works programmes are prepared in accordance with County Council policies and priorities e.g. Highways Asset Management Plan and Integrated Transport Priorities (e.g. safety, economic growth and accessibility). Annual Capital Programmes are signed off under delegated powers by the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure.

Contact Officer/s

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List of Appendices/Background papers

- Executive Response Action Plan (appended)
- Minutes of meeting of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee held on 17th December 2015
- Infrastructure+ - review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

Infrastructure+ review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – Executive Response Action Plan

Name of Select Committee: Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee

Date: 15 February 2016

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| Recommendation | | Proposed action (or action already taken) | Lead Member/Officer | Deadline |
|----------------|---|---|------------------------|----------|
| No. 1 | Officers review the technical language used in customer feedback report with a view to making it easier for customers to understand (ref 6.1) | Initial improvements have been made to the feedback scripts. Ongoing changes are being made in response to feedback received. | Mary Raftery Anne | Ongoing |
| 2 | A copy of Infrastructure+ organisation chart be made available to all Members on the Members' intranet and be kept up to date (ref 6.3) | <p>The dynamic nature of the Partnership means that the organisation is constantly evolving. The current organisation chart is currently available on the county council's intranet site at the following link: http://www.intra.staffordshire.gov.uk/services/Economy-infrastructure-and-skills/place-delivery-models/Infrastructure/Transition/Organisational-Structure.pdf. A link from the Member's intranet will be pursued.</p> <p>Key contacts for elected Members are the Community Highway Infrastructure Liaison Managers who act as a gateway into the partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Rayson – East Staffordshire Borough and Stafford Borough (except Gnosall and Doxey Ward); • David Greatbatch – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough | Mary Raftery Anne | Ongoing |

Infrastructure+ review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – Executive Response Action Plan

| Recommendation | | Proposed action (or action already taken) | Lead Member/Officer | Deadline |
|----------------|---|---|---------------------|----------|
| | | and Staffordshire Moorlands District; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Heminsley – Tamworth Borough and Lichfield District; and • Mark Keeling – South Staffordshire District, Cannock Chase District, (Gnosall and Doxey Ward). | | |
| 3 | Details of the Members' Guide be placed on the Members' intranet (ref 6.3) | The Customer and Communication Outcome Group of the Infrastructure+ partnership (and part of the overall governance structure) is now established and membership includes representation from Corporate Review Committee. Items 3, 4 and 5 are all being taken in to consideration and prioritised in to a forward improvement programme. Current priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement local Highway Amenity Maintenance Agreements (MTFS measure); • Define the wider marketing / communication strategy; • Development of 'Project Heineken' and associated improved customer 'roadworks' communications/media; • Establish a defined method of reporting I+ performance to Members (<i>subsequent suggestion from PSSC is a Member's Access System</i>); and • Providing greater visibility of planned and cyclical works programmes for Members / public. | Mary Anne Raftery | Ongoing |
| 4 | That the Gulley Emptying programme be added to the Members' Guide (ref 6.5) | | | |
| 5 | That a review be made of highways information available on the Members' intranet to add details of local highways staff contacts, divisional highways programmes, planning applications in Members divisions (ref 6.5), local improvement plans and cyclical highways | | | |

Infrastructure+ review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – Executive Response Action Plan

| Recommendation | Proposed action (or action already taken) | Lead Member/Officer | Deadline |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>programmes (ref 6.6) and that officers investigate if a routine, reactive and cyclical performance pack for each Member's division could be provided (ref 6.6)</p> | | | |
| <p>6 A scrutiny Member (who is not a Member of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee be invited to join the Customer Innovation and Involvement Satisfaction Outcomes Group (6.3)</p> | <p>The Corporate Review Committee nominated Councillor John Francis to join the Group.</p> | <p>Mark Winnington/Tina Randall/Mary Anne Raftery</p> | <p>22th April 2016</p> |
| <p>7 A request is made to Staffordshire Borough and District Council planning officers to ask if they could publish highways (planning) responses that could pertain to housing</p> | <p>A request has been made to provide the information where this is not already published as part of the Planning Committee minutes.</p> | <p>Dale Arthur</p> | <p>22nd April 2016</p> |

Infrastructure+ review of scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – Executive Response Action Plan

| Recommendation | Proposed action (or action already taken) | Lead Member/Officer | Deadline |
|---|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| developments as part of their Planning Committee minutes (ref 6.5) | | | |
| 8 Members recommended that Community Highways Infrastructure Managers be asked to share details of meetings arranged with Parish Councils with elected members (ref 6.6). | Community Highway Infrastructure Managers have where requested by Members been reminded to share details of meetings with Parish Councils, and other relevant communications, with the respective local elected Member. | Mary Anne Raftery | 22 nd April 2016 |



Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Work Programme 2015/16

This document sets out the work programme for the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee for 2015/16. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity, education, learning and skills. As such the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth.

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

County Councillor Simon Tagg

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 by emailing tina.randall@staffordshire.gov.uk

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Economy of Staffordshire Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers/ Steve Burrows | 1 June 2015 | Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire | To consider the detail of the Cabinet's "deep dive" into the economy of Staffordshire and consider what aspects should lead to further scrutiny. <i>(New item suggested by the Cabinet Member at 5/2/2015 Triangulation)</i> | Members agreed further scrutiny around the LEP as well as skills and apprenticeships which will be considered within the Education Trust item (already included on the work programme) |
| Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire: Part 4 Mobile and Travelling Library Review Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead Officer: Janene Box/Catherine Mann | 1 June 2015 This item will be come back to PSSC once the results of the consultation are available. | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | To consider the review of the mobile and travelling library service in Staffordshire. <i>(Part of the wider Library review last considered by PSSC on 23 January 2015)</i> | Members wrote to the Cabinet Member with comments on the consultation, including extending the consultation period to 12 weeks and requesting that the outcome of the consultation be brought back to this committee. |
| Rail Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Clive Thomson/Clare Horton | 1 June 2015 This item will come back to PSSC once the results of the consultation are available. | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | Monitoring progress of delivery <i>(Carry over from 2014/15 Work Programme)</i> | Members requested more detail be included on the County's vision for more affordable rail travel and a better passenger experience. They also requested an appendix identifying the work around HS2 to support the consultation document. The results of this consultation to be brought back to the Committee. |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minerals Local Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Matthew Griffin | 24 July 2015 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | To consider the next draft of the Minerals Local Plan, as part of the consultation, following the Planning meeting of 4 June 2015. <i>(Last considered by the PSSC on 24 April 2014 – following which a working group had been established to produce the select Committee's response to the consultation)</i> | The Select Committee endorsed the Plan and congratulated the officers involved in a good piece of work |
| Adult and Community Learning Strategy Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Tony Baines/Theresa McKenna | 24 July 2015 | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning | New item | The Select Committee agreed to build a regular opportunity for scrutiny at a point in the annual cycle that allowed for greatest influence and impact in shaping priorities for the future. Members also requested smarter targets be used to allow better self evaluation and scrutiny. |
| Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Forecast Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Andrew Marsden (refer to previous | 24 July 2015 | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | The Select Committee have previously looked at school organisation, school places and the development of academies. A further update on the SLIF including locality plans was requested to be brought to the Committee in summer | Members endorsed the SLIF and its approach to planning the necessary infrastructure. They also wish to see an education lead on each district and borough planning committee to ensure that when planning decisions are taken the educational |

PSSC 1/15

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| consideration of School Organisation and Capital On 6 March 2015) | | | 2015. <i>(This was last considered on 6 March 2015).</i> | implications are taken into account. |
| <p>Countryside Estate Management Review Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Wykes</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 140</p> | <p>4 September 2015</p> <p>[This meeting was webcast]</p> | <p>Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets.</p> <p>Enjoying Life Strengthen public confidence in the county as a great place to live with lots of opportunities to enjoy life.</p> | <p>Members requested a further update.</p> <p><i>(Last considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014)</i></p> <p>Arrangements have been made for visits to the Countryside Estate (north) on 17 August and (south) on 29 August. These visits gave an opportunity for members to gain a thorough understanding of the Estate prior to considering the review at its 4 September meeting.</p> | <p>Members gave detailed consideration to the review and the ten options put forward. They supported consideration of options 2,8 and 9. They agreed that option 5 could be supported if the wording was changed to “Transfer the management but retain the ownership of individual sites...”</p> <p>The Select Committee could not support options 3 or 10. A further report will be brought to the October meeting prior to Cabinet decisions on proposals.</p> |
| <p>School attendance, exclusions and participation Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday</p> | <p>4 September 2015</p> | <p>Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.</p> | <p>New item</p> | <p>Members welcomed the progress made by the Attendance Working Group. They asked for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification on whether mapping current spend on attendance had started; • Examples of specific intervention illustrating priorities |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| Page 141 | | | | <p>and principles in the draft document;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison national data on exclusions; <p>They requested their concerns over academy accountability re. attendance be shared with the working group. Further reports were requested on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance Working Group progress, including specific intervention showing how the principles and priorities work in practice; • Post-16 changes and any impact these have on take-up |
| <p>The Growth Fund including the work of the Education Trust Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington and Ben Adams Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers, Anna Halliday and Tony Baines</p> | <p>12 October 2015</p> | <p>Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire</p> | <p>To consider the development of the Growth fund projects.</p> <p><i>(Last considered by PSSC on 5 September 2014)</i></p> <p>After discussions at the 29 July triangulation meeting it was agreed that this item would include detail of the Education Trust - previously a separate work programme</p> | <p>The Select Committee welcomed the progress made in relation to the Growth Fund and Education Trust.</p> |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | | <p>item to look at the development of the Trust's work and the impact it had made to date.</p> <p>Following the PSSC meeting of 1 June 2015 Members requested detail on skills and apprenticeships to be scrutinised as part of their consideration of the Education Trust.</p> | |
| <p>Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire- Part 4 Mobile and Travelling Library Review Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead Officer - Janene Cox/Catherine Mann</p> | <p>12 October 2015</p> | <p>Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology.</p> | <p>To consider the results of the consultation on mobile and travelling library service in Staffordshire.</p> <p><i>(Last considered on 1 June 2015 and part of the wider Library review previously considered by PSSC on 23 January 2015)</i></p> | <p>Members congratulated Officers on the thoroughness of the process and their endeavour in amending proposals where appropriate to accommodate results of the consultation.</p> <p>They requested a report in 12 months time to monitor the outcome of the changes.</p> |
| <p>Countryside Estate Management Review Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Wykes</p> | <p>12 October 2015</p> | <p>Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. Enjoying Life Strengthen public confidence in the county</p> | <p>To consider the reduced option suggestions prior to Cabinet decisions on proposals.</p> <p><i>(Last considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014 and 4 September 2015. PSSC Members also completed visits to</i></p> | <p>The report indicated that the four options now forming the consultation were in line with their 4 September recommendations. This was not the case as option C had not been an option the select Committee had supported.</p> <p>Members requested greater</p> |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | as a great place to live with lots of opportunities to enjoy life. | <i>Countryside Estate sites across the County during August 2015.)</i> | <p>clarity be given to the 4 options to illustrate how they would work, ensuring those taking part in the process fully understand the options under consideration.</p> <p>A further report will come to the Select Committee prior to Cabinet decision in April 2016.</p> |
| <p>Impact of SEND reforms Cabinet Member – Ben Adams Lead Officer – Nichola Glover-Edge</p> | 17 December 2015 | <p>Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education.</p> | <p>To consider the impact of the SEND reforms for Staffordshire children.</p> <p><i>(Carried over from the 2014/15 Work Programme)</i></p> <p>Following the 29 July triangulation meeting it was agreed that an initial report be brought outlining the transfer numbers, whilst the more in-depth report come to 4 March meeting</p> | <p>The speed of transfers from SEN Statements to EHCPs had been slower than hoped for, and the Select Committee requested a progress on this issue and the more general development of the SEND reforms in twelve months time.</p> |
| <p>Pupil Premium Plus Policy Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Sarah Rivers</p> | 17 December 2015 | <p>Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education</p> | <p>One of the recommendation of the Working Group on Children Missing Out On Education was for the Select Committee to receive an account from the Virtual Headteacher of how effective the mechanisms</p> | <p>The Select Committee noted the difficulties in providing good analytical evidence on Pupil Premium Plus funding until electronic systems are in place and asked for a further report in twelve months time.</p> |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | | <p>had been in operating the Pupil Premium Plus Policy</p> <p>Members wish to explore the value of the Pupil Premium in making a difference.</p> <p><i>(The Working Group report was considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014)</i></p> | <p>They also noted the school governor responsibilities relating to looked after pupils and evidencing use of the pupil premium plus funding be noted.</p> |
| <p>Sportshire Strategy and Major Events Evaluation Cabinet Member – Mark Wainwright Head Officer- Jude Taylor</p> <p>Page 144</p> | <p>17 December 2015</p> | <p>Enjoying Life Strengthen public confidence in the county as a great place to live with lots of opportunities to enjoy life.</p> | <p>Following consideration of the Sportshire initiative in 2014 the Select Committee now consider development of the strategy and evaluate the impact of Ironman 2015 and the UK Corporate Games.</p> | <p>Members asked that future evaluation reports include a detailed cost benefit analysis and that any figures used to highlight the success of events should be robust.</p> <p>The negative impact on local communities of Sportshire events was acknowledged and the Select Committee wish to ensure that everything possible is done to mitigate these in future.</p> <p>An evaluation report of the 2017 Ironman event was requested to be brought to a Select Committee meeting approximately three months after the event.</p> |
| <p>Review of Scrutiny of Governance and Reporting</p> | <p>17 December 2015</p> | <p>Great Place to Live Use and maintain our</p> | <p>The Working Group met on three occasions: 8 and 29</p> | <p>Executive Response Action Plan send to Cabinet</p> |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Arrangements on Infrastructure + | | built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | July and 4 September. The final report of the Working Group will be presented to the Committee. | Member for completion and consideration at meeting on 24 May 2016. |
| Education Support Services –Commissioning and Contract Performance Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead officer: Ian H Benson | 22 January 2016 | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education | Monitoring progress of contract with Entrust to ensure that it is delivering intended outcomes. <i>(Previously considered on 5 September 2014)</i> | |
| School Improvement and Attainment Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday | 22 January 2016 | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | Consideration of possible changes to the management of school improvement and the action plan for school improvement. Consideration of attainment is an annual item to brief members on attainment in Staffordshire schools. <i>(Last considered by PSSC on 5 September 2014)</i> | Members are aware of the focus for future improvements around KS2 and 4, tackling variation in districts and for specific groups such as those receiving FSM and Pupil Premium. Post 16 education provision is under review with a need to improve attainment and a report has been requested to consider the conclusions of the review. It is anticipated that this will be in July 2016. |
| Relocation of Lichfield Library Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead Officer: Janene Cox | 4 March 2016 | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and | new item | Having heard that the open library space and PC/tablet devices available would be similar to that of the new Stafford Library, the Select Committee supported the |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| | | technology. | | proposed relocation. Local Members who were present for this item asked for clarification on whether the Chapel space would remain available for civic ceremonies following relocation. |
| Great War Strategy Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Janene Cox | 4 March 2016 | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning | new item | The Select Committee congratulated Officers on the range and success of project undertaken so far and supported proposed future projects. |
| Adult and Community Learning (ACL) Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Tony Baines/Theresa McKenna | 4 March 2016 | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning | Following consideration of ACL on 24 July the Select Committee agreed to build a regular opportunity for scrutiny at a point in the annual cycle that allowed for greatest influence and impact in shaping priorities for the future. | The Select Committee welcomed the work on ACL. They requested that any future review of local priority areas include consultation with local county councillors. They also requested detail of the new Apprenticeship Levy be circulated to them as soon as this becomes available. They also suggested that using Building Resilient Families data would help prioritise those families needing targeted support and that more formalised links with Public Health colleagues would also help target support. |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| Progress of the Attendance Working Group Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Anna Halliday/Sue Coleman Page 147 | 4 March 2016 | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | Item requested by Members following discussion on School attendance, exclusions and participation. <i>(School attendance, exclusions and participation considered at their meeting of 4 September 2015.)</i> | Progress made so far was supported. Members requested that future reports include details of work with unaccompanied asylum seeker (which were not currently identified as one of the "vulnerable" groups). They also asked for details of the working group membership be forwarded to them, the verified figures on exclusions be circulated as soon as these are available and progress of this group's work be included on the work programme for the new municipal year. |
| Elective Home Education Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Julie Stevenson | 24 May 2016 | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning | Item requested at 22 January meeting where the Select Committee were informed that the part of the SDA covering EHE was under discussion with expected outcomes available from May 2016 | |
| Post-16 changes and impact on take-up, staying on rates Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Darryl Evers/Tony Baines | 24 May 2016 NB following 22 January meeting members wish to consider the outcome of the Post-16 education review. | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and | Item requested by Members following discussion on School attendance, exclusions and participation. In particular around Maths and English being included in the curriculum for those | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|--|---|----------------|
| | | providing access to a good education. | students who have yet to reach Level 2 in these subjects. Members wish to consider what impact this change has to take-up and staying-on rates. <i>(School attendance, exclusions and participation considered at their meeting of 4 September 2015.)</i> | |
| Countryside Estate Management Review Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Wykes Page 148 | 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. Enjoying Life Strengthen public confidence in the county as a great place to live with lots of opportunities to enjoy life. | To consider the 4 options and consultation results prior to Cabinet decisions on proposals. <i>(Considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014, 4 September & 12 October 2015. PSSC Members also completed visits to Countryside Estate sites across the County during August 2015.)</i> | |
| Flood Risk Management Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington/Gill Heath Lead Officer: Hannah Burgess | 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | To update Members on the Flood Risk Strategy and specifically how Staffordshire would respond should a similar event happen here to that seen in Cumbria during December. To consider the possibility of a Flood Risk summit | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|---|---|----------------|
| Executive response to Infrastructure+ - scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee | 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | Final report presented to Committee on 17 December 2015 | |
| Shugborough County Museum and Walled Garden Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Janene Cox | 11 July 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | | |
| Impact of SEND reforms Cabinet Member – Ben Adams Lead Officer – Nichola Glover-Edge | tbc | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | To consider the impact of the SEND reforms for Staffordshire children. <i>(Following the initial report taken to 15 October 2015 Select Committee)</i> | |
| Strategic Economic Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Evers | tbc | Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire. | At their meeting of 5 September 2014 Members scrutinised progress on the European Growth Deal submission and agreed to look at the best way to scrutinise the 8 projects, and whether joint scrutiny with Stoke-on-Trent City Council would be appropriate. | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|--|---|---|----------------|
| Car Parking Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: James Bailey and David Walters | tbc | Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire | Following consideration of call-in of the parking strategy by the Corporate Review Committee (9 July 2015) they agreed "that implementation of the Car Parking Strategy be scrutinised following consultation by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee and that the views on implementation be sought from the relevant local district/borough council scrutiny committees" | |
| Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire- Mobile and Travelling Library – monitor Review outcomes Cabinet Member: Mike Lawrence Lead Officer - Janene Cox/Catherine Mann | tbc (12 months after implementation of the service changes) | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | To consider the effects of the mobile and travelling library service review implementation. <i>(Last considered on 12 October, 1 June 2015 as part of the wider Library review previously considered by PSSC on 23 January 2015)</i> | |
| Working Groups | | | | |
| Entrust Service Level Agreement Key Performance Indicator Working group Cabinet Member: Ben | | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | Following consideration of Education Support Services – Commissioning and Contract Performance at the 22 January PSSC Members | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Adams Lead Officer: Karen Coker | | | agreed to set up a working group to consider the review of KPIs and the information they wished to scrutinise in future. | |
| Infrastructure + Working Group Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: James Bailey | 8 and 29 July 4 September Reporting back to Select Committee on 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | Following their 6 March consideration of Infrastructure + Members agreed to set up a working group in June/July to advice on how they wish to scrutinise the governance of the Infrastructure + contract. | This group has met twice with the third and final meeting being held in September. The Working Group will then report back to the Select Committee. |
| Working Together to address the impact that HGVs have on Staffordshire roads and local communities | Reporting back to Select Committee on 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | Following a petition presented at Annual Council the Select Committee agreed to set up a working group to consider the concerns raised around HGVs on the A515. This issue has now been widened to address all Staffordshire roads. Membership of the Working Group has been agreed | |
| Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services Working Group Cabinet Member: Alan White | This Working Group commenced in June 2015 Reporting back to | Living Well Enable positive behaviour and support those who need it most, support independence | The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee have set up a working group to look at the issue of emotional wellbeing and mental health | Mike Worthington is the Select Committee's representative on this Working Group. |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| Lead Officers: Denise Tolson and Dawn Jennens | Select Committee on 4 March 2016 | at all ages and for those with disabilities or illness. | services following their consideration of strategies on these issues. Because of the crosscutting nature of these issues their Chairman has invited a member of PSSC to join the Group. | The Select Committee congratulated the working group on their report, supported its submission to the appropriate Cabinet Member and added a further recommendation to the Cabinet Member, Learning and Skills, that "schools are encouraged to develop their own mental health strategy". |
| Briefing notes/updates and referrals | | | | |
| Superfast Staffordshire (Broadband) Lead Officer: Paul Chatwin Page 152 | July 2015 | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. and Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire | At their October 2014 meeting Members requested a further update in six month's time. | Briefing note sent out |
| A 50 Growth Corridor Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Steve Burrows | | Great Place to Live Create the right conditions to attract and grow business in Staffordshire | To update the Committee on proposals to undertake a major improvement to the A50 in Uttoxeter. <i>(last considered by PSSC on 7 March 2014)</i> Following the triangulation | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| | | | meeting of 29 July it was agreed that this should be addressed via a briefing note rather than a stand alone agenda item. | |
| SACRE Annual Report | | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | To receive the SACRE Annual Report. | |
| <p>Bradwell Lane Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Richard Harris</p> | 12 August 2015 Chairman's informal meeting with Emma Meadon and Sandra Hambleton | Included on the work programme as part of the Petition Scheme process | A petition with over 2,500 signatures requesting traffic calming measures at Bradwell Lane, Newcastle had been presented by Mrs Emma Meadon at the 25 July Select Committee. This issue will be considered again once the Coroners' report on the fatal accident that prompted the petition has been received. | <p>Following the outcome of the Court Case, which judged that the accident had been caused by driver error, it was agreed that a meeting should be arranged between Emma Meadon, Sandra Hambleton (local member), David Greatbatch (Community Infrastructure Liaison Officer) and the Select Committee Chairman to resolve any outstanding issues.</p> <p>Select Committee Members received a briefing paper on the outcome of this meeting at their 4 September meeting.</p> |

Membership

Simon Tagg (Chairman)
David Loades (Vice-Chairman)
Carol Dean
Len Bloomer
Maureen Compton
Tim Corbett
Ian Hollinshead
Geoff Martin
Sheree People
Mike Worthington
Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf (Co-optee)
Paul Woodhead (Co-optee)
Candice Yeomans (Co-optee)

Calendar of Committee Meetings

(at 10.00 am and at County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford ST16 2LH unless otherwise stated)

1 June 2015, 10.00 am
24 July 2015, 10.00 am
4 September 2015, 10.00 am
12 October 2015, 10.00 am
17 December 2015, 10.00 am
22 January 2016, 10.00 am
4 March 2016, 10.00 am

New municipal year:
24 May 2016
11 July 2016
13 September 2016



Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Work Programme 2016/17

This document sets out the work programme for the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee for 2016/17. The Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of highways infrastructure and connectivity, education, learning and skills. As such the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth.

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

County Councillor Simon Tagg

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 by emailing tina.randall@staffordshire.gov.uk

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|--|---|----------------|
| Countryside Estate Management Review Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead officer: Ian Wykes | 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. Enjoying Life Strengthen public confidence in the county as a great place to live with lots of opportunities to enjoy life. | To consider the 4 options and consultation results prior to Cabinet decisions on proposals. <i>(Considered by PSSC on 18 December 2014, 4 September & 12 October 2015. PSSC Members also completed visits to Countryside Estate sites across the County during August 2015.)</i> | |
| Flood Risk Management Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington/Gill Heath Lead Officer: Hannah Burgess | 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | To update Members on the Flood Risk Strategy and specifically how Staffordshire would respond should a similar event happen here to that seen in Cumbria during December. To consider the possibility of a Flood Risk summit | |
| Executive response to Infrastructure+ - scrutiny of governance and reporting arrangements to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee | 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | | |
| Elective Home Education Cabinet Member: Ben Adams | July 2016 | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, | Item requested at 22 January meeting where the Select Committee were | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|--|--|--|----------------|
| Lead Officer: Julie Stevenson | | community and life-long learning | informed that the part of the SDA covering EHE was under discussion with expected outcomes available from May 2016 | |
| Post-16 changes and impact on take-up, staying on rates Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers/Tony Baines Page 157 | July 2016 NB following 22 January meeting members wish to consider the outcome of the Post-16 education review. | Ready for Life Enhance access to high quality family, community and life-long learning Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | Item requested by Members following discussion on School attendance, exclusions and participation. In particular around Maths and English being included in the curriculum for those students who have yet to reach Level 2 in these subjects. Members wish to consider what impact this change has to take-up and staying-on rates. <i>(School attendance, exclusions and participation considered at their meeting of 4 September 2015.)</i> | |
| The future model for the Shugborough Estate - Sub-leases for the Walled Garden and the County Museum Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Janene Cox | July 2016 | Great Place to Live Use and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|---|---|----------------|
| Car Parking Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: James Bailey and David Walters | 13 September 2016 | Great Place to Live Utilise and maintain our built and natural environment to improve health and wellbeing and strengthen community assets. | Following consideration of call-in of the parking strategy by the Corporate Review Committee (9 July 2015) they agreed "that implementation of the Car Parking Strategy be scrutinised following consultation by the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee and that the views on implementation be sought from the relevant local district/borough council scrutiny committees" | |
| Impact of SEND reforms Cabinet Member – Ben Adams Lead Officer – Nichola Glover-Edge/Chris Kiernan | 13 October 2016 | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | To consider the impact of the SEND reforms for Staffordshire children. <i>(Following the initial report taken to 15 October 2015 Select Committee)</i> | |
| Strategic Economic Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Darryl Eyers | tbc | Right for Business Promote the county as the "go to" location through a pro-business mind-set. | At their meeting of 5 September 2014 Members scrutinised progress on the European Growth Deal submission and agreed to look at the best way to scrutinise the 8 projects, and whether joint scrutiny with Stoke-on-Trent City Council would be appropriate. | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---|---|---|--|----------------|
| Libraries in a Connected County – review of progress in changes to static library service Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer - Janene Cox/Catherine Mann | 13 October 2016 | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | Following the changes to the static library service the Select Committee will review progress on the static library service | |
| Libraries in a Connected Staffordshire-Mobile and Travelling Library – monitor Review Outcomes Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer - Janene Cox/Catherine Mann | May/June 2017 (12 months after implementation of the service changes) | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | To consider the effects of the mobile and travelling library service review implementation. <i>(Last considered on 12 October, 1 June 2015 as part of the wider Library review previously considered by PSSC on 23 January 2015)</i> | |
| Working Groups | | | | |
| Entrust Service Level Agreement Key Performance Indicator Working group Cabinet Member: Ben Adams Lead Officer: Karen Coker | | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | Following consideration of Education Support Services – Commissioning and Contract Performance at the 22 January PSSC Members agreed to set up a working group to consider the review of KPIs and the information they wished to scrutinise in future. | |
| Infrastructure + Working Group | 8 and 29 July 4 September | Great Place to Live Support the | Following their 6 March consideration of | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|--|--|---|---|----------------|
| Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: James Bailey | Reporting back to Select Committee on 24 May 2016 | improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | Infrastructure + Members agreed to set up a working group in June/July to advice on how they wish to scrutinise the governance of the Infrastructure + contract. | |
| Working Together to address the impact that HGVs have on Staffordshire roads and local communities Page 160 | Reporting back to Select Committee on 24 May 2016 | Great Place to Live Support the improvement and development of shared resources such as utilities, highways and technology. | Following a petition presented at Annual Council the Select Committee agreed to set up a working group to consider the concerns raised around HGVs on the A515. This issue has now been widened to address all Staffordshire roads. Membership of the Working Group has been agreed | |
| Briefing notes/updates and referrals | | | | |
| A 50 Growth Corridor Cabinet Member: Mark Winnington Lead Officer: Steve Burrows | | Great Place to Live Promote the county as the "go to" location through a pro-business mind-set. | To update the Committee on proposals to undertake a major improvement to the A50 in Uttoxeter. <i>(last considered by PSSC on 7 March 2014)</i> Following the triangulation meeting of 29 July it was | |

| Item | Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered | Link to the Council's Business Plan | Details | Action/Outcome |
|---------------------|---|--|---|----------------|
| | | | agreed that this should be addressed via a briefing note rather than a stand alone agenda item. | |
| SACRE Annual Report | | Ready for Life Focus on school improvement and providing access to a good education. | To receive the SACRE Annual Report. | |

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|---|---|
| <p>Membership</p> <p>Simon Tagg (Chairman) David Loades (Vice-Chairman) Carol Dean Len Bloomer Maureen Compton Tim Corbett Ian Hollinshead Geoff Martin Sheree People Mike Worthington Rev. Preb. Michael Metcalf (Co-optee) Paul Woodhead (Co-optee) Candice Yeomans (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>24 May 2016 11 July 2016 13 September 2016 13 October 2016 15 December 2016 19 January 2017 3 March 2017</p> |
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