

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 4th September 2015

Countryside Estate Review

Recommendation/s

1. To scrutinise the future management of the County Council's Countryside Estate
2. To make recommendations to inform Cabinet's decision of this matter on 21st October 2015

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

Summary

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

3. To scrutinise the future management of the County Council's Countryside Estate based on the update to be presented to the committee at the meeting on 4th September 2015, and further to site visits.
4. To make recommendations which will be reported to Cabinet at their meeting on 21st October 2015, for them to take into account when considering this matter.

Report

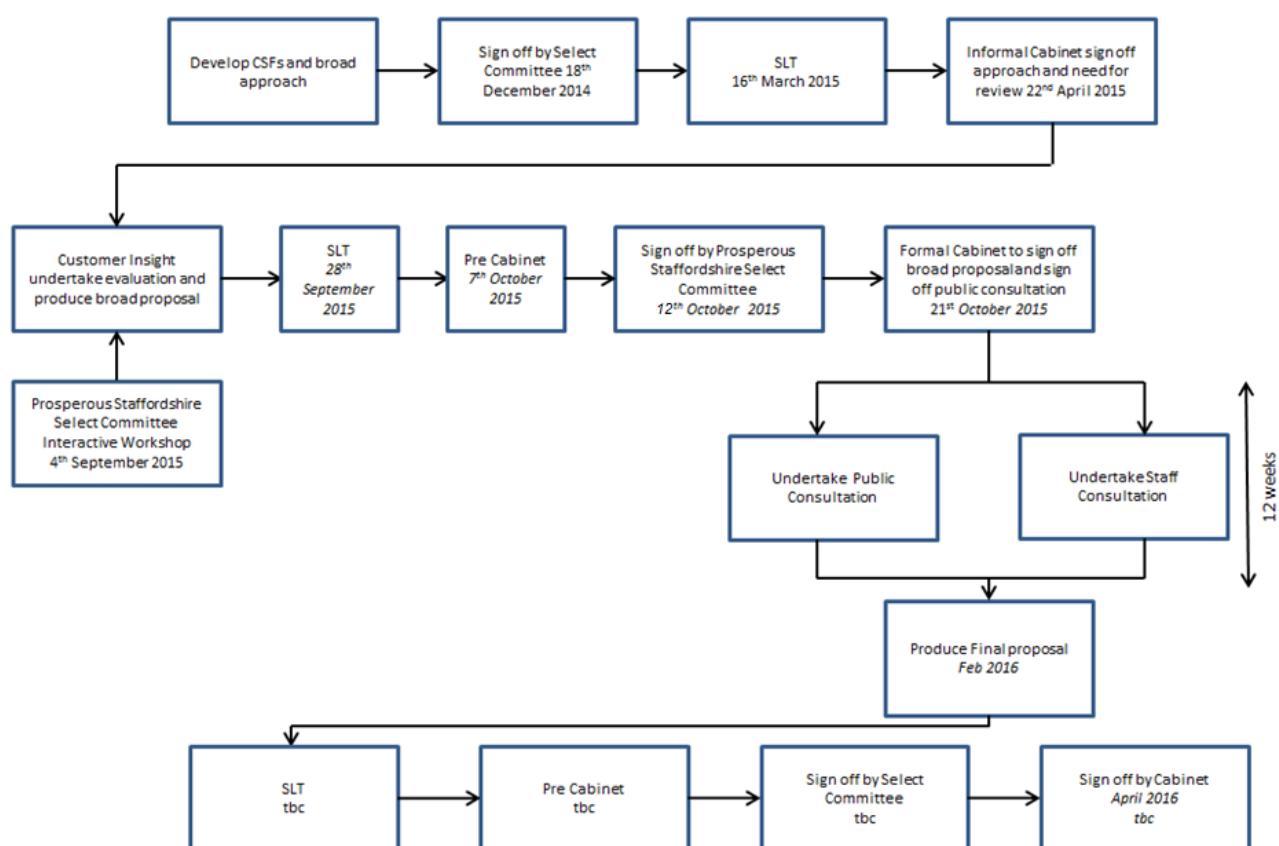
Background

5. A report was considered by Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee at its meeting on 18th December 2014. The committee considered the strategy for reviewing the countryside estate and agreed the adoption of the proposed critical success factors. These were:

- Increased value and prosperity for Staffordshire through a positive impact on local communities and wildlife
- A customer focussed service which enhances customer satisfaction and people's experience of the countryside
- Financially sustainable and resilient services

- The flexibility to meet changing future demands through innovation and development

6. Since this earlier report an engagement exercise has been initiated and Members have been afforded the opportunity to visit the sites. The following flow chart explains the time line of the project through to a final Cabinet decision in April 2016.



7. At the meeting members will be updated on progress and be informed on the initial findings of the engagement exercise. The Committee will be able to make recommendations to shape the review and the options prior to consideration by Cabinet.

8. Initial engagement would suggest that the sites can be considered collectively in four broad categories as follows:

Large Parks	1a	<i>Chasewater Country Park (5)</i>
	1b	<i>Cannock Chase Country Park (6)</i>
Medium sized parks with Visitor Centres	2	This includes four parks all in the north of the county with visitor centres: <i>Apedale Community Country Park (1), Greenway Bank Country Park (2), Deep Hayes Country Park (3) and Consall Nature Park (4).</i>
Smaller “picnic sites”	3	This includes smaller sites mainly used by local communities : <i>Hanchurch Hills (7), Froghall Wharf</i>

		<i>Picnic Area (8), Oakamoor Picnic Area (9), Hanbury Common Picnic Area (10), Wimblebury Road (11)* Hatherton Reservoir (12) Fair Oak Picnic Area (13) Chillington Picnic Area (14), Broad Lane Essington Picnic Area(15)* Brownshore Pools Picnic Area (16) Branston (17)* Sevens Road Picnic Area (18), (*not currently promoted for public access)</i>
Greenways	4	Three disused railways now used as long distance paths (cycling /walking etc.) <i>Stafford to Newport Greenway, Oakamoor to Denstone Greenway and Leek to Rushton Greenway</i>

9. The consequent Cabinet report will be scrutinised by Select Committee at its meeting on 12th October 2015.

Link to Strategic Plan – Great Place to Live

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity –

Community Impact – A detailed CIA will be drafted once the options are better understood. An initial summary is included in the background papers.

Contact Officer

Name and Job Title: Ian Wykes: Commissioner for the Rural County
Telephone No.: 01785 277295
Address/e-mail: ian.wykes@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appendices/Background papers

Countryside Estate Details
Report of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 18 December 2014
Summary Community Impact Assessment