

Dear Members

**Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

A meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee will be held in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside Stafford** on **Tuesday 15 November 2022 at 6.30pm** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown at the top of each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.



Head of Law and Administration

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15 NOVEMBER 2022

Chair - Councillor W J Kemp

## AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 1 September 2022 and 4 October 2022 as previously published on the Council's website.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Public Question Time - Nil
- 4 Councillor Session - Nil
- 5 Members' Items - Nil
- 6 Called In Items - Nil

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## **Membership**

### **Chair - Councillor W J Kemp**

C A Baron	W J Kemp
J A Barron	R Kenney
B M Cross	D McNaughton
R A James	J A Nixon
E G R Jones	M Phillips

## Agenda Item 7(a)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 November 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Interim Head of Development
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Michelle Smith
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01785 619335
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny 15/11/22 (Only)

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## Economic Growth Development and Regeneration Project Updates

### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update Committee on progress across a number of key development and regeneration projects within Stafford and Stafford Borough.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report is noted.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Since Members were last updated in September significant progress has been made on the major projects set out at 5.2. Work continues across the full programme even where individual projects are not contained within this update.

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives

- 4.1 The development and regeneration programme currently underway in Stafford Borough supports delivery of all four Business Objectives in the Council's Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024. It also delivers against the five Growth Priorities in the Economic Growth Strategy for Stafford Borough 2020-2025.

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 Following a comprehensive update across all major projects at September Scrutiny it was agreed that for future Committee meetings there would be a standing item in this matter. The content of the report and updates will vary dependant on individual project milestones.
- 5.2 Projects with significant progress updates within this report are as follows:

### **Future High Streets Fund**

Good progress has been made with the commercial negotiations that support the transformation programme. The first two projects with scheduled on site works have progressed as follows:

#### **a) Market Square Renovation**

The procurement exercise to appoint contractors for the Market Square renovation works closed in October. Evaluation of a number of bids resulted in McPhillips Wellington being appointed. Officers have met with the winning bidders team and continue to work closely with Staffordshire County Council Highways Team and our design team at Xanthe Quayle Landscape Architects.

A detailed programme of phased works is being developed and agreed which will minimise the impact on businesses and activity within the town centre wherever possible. Members are advised that there are considerable lead in times associated with the supply of materials.

A comprehensive stakeholder engagement proposal was prepared by McPhillips Wellington and detailed communications with all affected parties is now underway.

#### **b) Station Approach**

Designs have been finalised and agreed with partners for the Station Approach project. Discussions are ongoing with Avanti and Network Rail on the agreements required for the works, and the Major Works Application has been submitted to Staffordshire County Council to enable the designs to be assessed and approved.

### **Stafford Station Gateway**

Consultation has now closed on a draft Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Gateway scheme which asked for views on the overarching vision and objectives for the site. Consultation began on Thursday 18 August and closed on Thursday 29 September, with residents and local stakeholders invited to have their say via in person pop-up events on 6 September and online. Over 100 people called into the Civic Centre to view the plans and

more than 200 written responses were submitted by the deadline date. The team is now reviewing all feedback received and making updates to the SRF ahead of reporting a revised document to Cabinet in the new year.

### **Meecebrook Garden Community**

Following a funding award for 2022/3 of £330,000 from the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC) consultants have been appointed to produce a strategic outline business case related to potential rail infrastructure to serve Meecebrook.

Masterplanning work has also been commissioned and commenced 31 October 2022. Local residents and Parish Councils will be an integral part of this process as it develops.

As part of the Local Plan Preferred Options consultation which launched on 24 October 2022, details of the proposed Garden Community are now available to view on the council website [Meecebrook - New Garden Settlement | Stafford Borough Council \(staffordbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/meecebrook-new-garden-settlement)

### **Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group Institute of Technology**

A planning application for the development of an Institute of Technology at the Palmbourne site within the Station Gateway in Stafford has been submitted on behalf of the Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group.

### **Westbridge Park, Stone**

Contractors Ground Control have met with officers site for a design review. Following this a planning application for the main works is due to be submitted in November 2022. Whilst further ground contamination surveys were required in respect of the skate park this work has now been procured. Work on site is scheduled to begin in April with some pre-contract works taking place in advance of that.

- 5.3 Members were advised in September that two significant funding streams were awaiting Government decision. The position remains unchanged but for information the schemes are as follows:

### **Levelling Up Fund - Round 2**

A bid for just under £20m was submitted by the 2 August 2022 deadline to support the delivery of the Stafford Station Gateway scheme. If successful the funding will be used to help with land remediation and site preparation works prior to re-development proposals coming forward as per the above described Strategic Regeneration Framework.

## **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

This fund operates slightly differently to the Levelling Up Fund in that a provisional funding allocation of £4.6m for Stafford Borough has already been announced. To access the funding, which covers the period October 2022 until March 2025, the Council needed to draft an Investment Plan with local partners and stakeholders and submit this to Government. The plan, which looks to support business and community projects and initiatives in Stafford, Stone and the wider borough, was duly prepared and submitted by the 1 August 2022 deadline with feedback expected by October 2022.

### **5.4 Rural England Prosperity Fund**

A further strand of funding was announced on 3 September which is an additional strand within the overarching Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). The fund aims to support local business, communities and places in England's rural areas and a provisional funding allocation of £487,936 to Stafford Borough has been awarded. Draw down of the monies is dependent upon the Council preparing an Addendum (mini Investment Plan) to the UKSPF submission explaining how it would seek to use the monies to support rural business and communities in the borough. The addendum must be submitted no later than 30 November which will include input from a Rural Focus Group and MPs. Once accepted funding will then be available for the period April 2023 to March 2025.

5.7 As the projects and funding bids progress further updates will be shared with Members.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

Nil

### **6.2 Legal**

Due to commercial confidentiality some aspects of regeneration projects cannot be discussed in detail at this stage.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

Nil

### **6.4 Human Rights Act**

Nil

**6.5 Data Protection**

Nil

**6.7 Risk Management**

Nil

**6.8 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

**Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

Nil

**Wider Community Impact:**

Nil

**7 Previous Consideration**

Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee 1 September 2022.

**8 Background Papers**

File available in Development.

## Agenda Item 7(b)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 November 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Interim Head of Development
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Martyne Manning
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01785 619470
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning 15/11/2022 (Only)

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## Rural Economy Update

### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the approach of the Borough Council and partners towards supporting rural communities and the rural economy in Stafford Borough.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report is noted.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee has previously been updated on progress with projects and initiatives led by Stafford Borough Council that are aimed at supporting those areas of the Borough outside the main urban centres. This report seeks to summarise current and future planned activity.

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives

- 4.1 The Council's Business Engagement Team and partners continue to deliver a series of rural initiatives which are aligned to and support the following Business Objectives in the Councils Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024:

Corporate Business Objective 1:

“To deliver sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.”

Corporate Business Objective 2:

“To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing.”

## **5 Report Detail**

### **5.1 Stafford Borough - Rural Profile**

Members will be aware that over the past 2 years during the Covid19 pandemic the Borough Council via its Business Engagement and Revenues Teams has been actively supporting local businesses through the distribution of £50 million of grants including £4.5 million of Additional Restriction Grants (ARG). Whilst these funds have now ceased the work continues to support our businesses in many other ways including working with partners across the County.

Stafford Borough is largely rural in character with 91% of the administrative area classified as non-urban, making it the most rural local authority in Staffordshire (81% of Staffordshire is classified as rural).

Whilst Stafford Borough is in the enviable position of having most of its rural commercial properties occupied, our rural economy and the communities it supports continues to face several challenges.

Of the 137,858 people that reside in Stafford 45,315 live in rural areas, this represents a third (33%) of the total population in Stafford and is far higher than the 24% for Staffordshire as a whole. This large rurally based population requires a strong rural economy to support it and research conducted by the Rural Services Network (Rural Cost of Living July 2022 Report) has shown the following difficulties UK wide rural residents face:

- House prices on average (excl. London) are 39% higher in rural areas rising to 55% in rural villages and hamlets.
- Increased demand from renters to live further away from cities since Covid has led to rent levels in suburban and rural areas jumping by 11%. Rural households on low income spend 47% of their earnings on rent compared to 43% for low-income households in urban areas.
- Residents working in rural economies tend to earn much less (6%) than their urban counterparts.
- Rural households spent £65.60 a week on food and non-alcoholic beverages, which is 2% more than urban areas.

- Rural households spend on average £113.90 per week on transport compared to £76.20 for urban households.

## 5.2 Enterprises

Of the 5,325 businesses in Stafford nearly 2,000 are based in rural areas, equivalent to over a third (36%). This is above the 28% average for Staffordshire as a whole.

Our rural enterprises, reflecting the position nationally, face enormous financial difficulties namely increases in energy costs, supply chain issues, costs of raw materials, ingredients and skills shortages.

Many of our rural businesses are not eligible for retail, hospitality and leisure business rate relief nor small business rate relief due to the size of premises.

Agriculture is a key part of the rural economy with approximately 680 farm holdings being present within the Borough covering nearly 46,000 hectares and supporting 500,000 head of livestock.

Although, the Borough's rural industrial and technology parks show high occupation rates which is positive (97%), this also means there is limited space for new or expanding businesses (or those relocating from outside the Borough).

Stoke and Staffordshire LEP produced a market snapshot of the Low Carbon Environmental Goods and Services sector in March 2021 to help identify opportunities in current and future LCEGS markets.

This sector was worth £2.7bn to the Stoke and Staffordshire economy in 2019/20. These sales were generated by over 900 businesses that employed over 18,500 people in the sector in 2019/20.

There is significant difference in the growth rates between Local Authorities, with the strongest growth between 2018/19 and 2019/20 seen in:

1. Staffordshire Moorlands – 18.1%
2. Tamworth – 14.8%
3. Stafford – 11.9%

Stafford hosts 18% of the total number of businesses in this sector across the 8 districts and boroughs, the majority being in our rural areas. These firms will need business support including access to funding and skills to continue their growth.

### **5.3 Entrepreneurship**

Stafford has very good business start-up rates, however, the sustainability of these businesses fell sharply during the pandemic. Of 180 new Stafford Borough businesses registered at Companies House in quarter 2 of 2022, 85 were based in our rural areas.

Whilst we have identified above those businesses that occupy commercial premises, there are many other businesses that operate from domestic premises. These represent a growing proportion of overall businesses in the borough.

The challenges our new business starters and entrepreneurs face include access to grant funding as opposed to loans and a drop off in free business support advice.

A report in August 2022 by NICRE (National Innovation Centre for Rural Economy) highlighted rural businesses have proven difficult and more costly for support agencies to reach and deliver advice to due to large geographic distances and dispersed locations.

Networking is considered vital for developing rural economies and needs to be addressed as does the requirement for new and additional workspaces for businesses to develop and grow.

### **5.4 Community Owned Businesses**

Research into the growth of community owned businesses across the UK reveal an increase in the number of businesses now being managed by local community groups.

In the last 20 years communities have taken control of the businesses that are most important to them and have increased these from just 95 in 2002 to 800 in 2022. These include community owned pubs and shops that are not just the suppliers of goods and services but hubs where communities come together to take part in activities and provide employment and volunteering opportunities.

We need to identify these opportunities in our own rural communities and support entrepreneurship where there is a desire to create community owned businesses.

## 5.5 Employment

Stafford Borough posted more vacancies in the first 6 months of 2022 than any other districts in Staffordshire with the challenge of filling these.

The employment sectors in rural Stafford providing for the highest levels of jobs are:

- Transportation and storage - 3,105 jobs (15%)
- Wholesale and retail trade - 2,820 jobs (13%)
- Agriculture - 2678 (12%)
- Manufacturing - 2,275 jobs (11%)

Skills shortages in the agricultural sector continue to present a challenge. Seasonal workers not returning to the UK post-Brexit in 2021 created huge difficulties for agricultural and horticultural activities. Out-migration of young workers who seek to access employment opportunities in our towns and cities where salaries are higher also effect the availability of labour. Limited public transport availability also plays a part alongside not having local shops within walking distance.

The importance of supporting our local farms cannot be underestimated, given their importance to the local economy.

Elsewhere, the staffing crisis in the hospitality sector is causing major issues in our rural businesses, where there are an unprecedented number of vacancies. Staffing shortages mean either a poor or restricted offer which is not conducive to welcoming visitors. More information on this sector is set out later in this report.

Our rural manufacturing base supports many sectors including Aerospace, Automotive, Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals, Construction, Defence, Electronics, Energy, Food and Drinks, Plastics, Textiles. Attracting a new generation into the manufacturing sector is key and we need to ensure our workforce has the skills required to embrace emerging technology. Upskilling will be vital particularly for employees who may not have the digital skills to prepare them for the evolving jobs of the future.

## 5.6 Visitor Economy

Stafford Borough is the second highest generator of revenues from its visitor economy in the county, just behind Staffordshire Moorlands.

The tourism and hospitality sector is an important part of our rural economy (and to the Borough as a whole). The pandemic had a significant impact over the past two years with the scale of decline in revenues and impacts on businesses highlighting this importance. In this period revenue generated,

directly and indirectly, from tourism fell from £277million pre-pandemic to £97million in 2021.

As we have come out of the pandemic, other challenges have presented themselves including the strain on people's disposable incomes meaning visits and spend in this sector have not fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels. This is added to by increasing energy and labour/materials supply costs affecting businesses in the sector.

## 5.7 Connectivity

Connectivity is a major factor when it comes to our rural areas. Businesses need to have good quality telecommunications to function and ensure that service delivery is not disrupted. A study by the Countryside Alliance revealed that 80% of businesses said that better quality connectivity would be the single largest improvement to their business.

The latest figures available (June 2021) show that the borough has the following coverage (by number of premises) in terms of digital connectivity:

- 95.39% greater than 30 Megabits per second Broadband speed
- 69.60% greater than 1,000 Megabits per second Broadband speed

Of the 28,089 total premises (domestic and commercial) in our rural wards there is disparity of coverage, for example :

- 29.26% of premises in Milwich have less than 30mbps compared to Walton that has 1.64% with less than 30mbps.
- Milford has no premises with full fibre compared to 421 premises in Eccleshall.
- 6% in Barlaston have full fibre gigafast compared to 0% in Walton

Despite the Government announcing a roll out of the 'Project Gigabit' Programme, to help address underperforming areas in terms of digital connectivity, it is expected to be at least 18 months to 2 years, before we see the delivery of this on the ground.

## 5.5 Summary of Current Position

Stafford Borough supports the highest number of businesses across all districts. The table below covers both rural and urban areas combined.

District	Total	%
<b>Stafford</b>	<b>5325</b>	<b>16</b>
East Staffordshire	4930	14
Lichfield	4885	14
South Staffordshire	4360	13
Staffordshire Moorlands	4095	12
Cannock Chase	3910	12
Newcastle under Lyme	3690	11
Tamworth	2280	8
<b>Total for Staffordshire</b>	<b>33475</b>	

36% of Stafford businesses are based in rural areas which is above the 28% average for Staffordshire.

Of the current top 100 employers in Stafford by number of employees on site, (based on the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) for 2021), 72 are based in our rural areas. The list is reflective of private businesses only with public, health and education excluded. 10 businesses employ more than 250 staff on site, 62 employ 50-249 staff on site.

As well as providing for jobs and incomes, our rural economy contributes significantly to the Borough Council's business rates income.

Over 2000 rural businesses pay into the 42.1% of the Borough's overall business rates return. Most of the properties generating business rates are occupied by private enterprises.

## 5.6 Our Response

The support activities provided by the Business Engagement Team deliver against the Economic Growth Strategy for Stafford Borough 2020-2025 which includes the following priorities:

- Enabling new and existing businesses to grow and build confidence in Stafford Borough as a hub of productivity with a balanced economy
- Understanding and unlocking the economic growth opportunities in our rural areas
- Taking pride in our county Town status and maximising our visitor offer in the market towns of Stone and Eccleshall and villages across the Borough

Staffordshire County Council is in the process of adopting a Rural Economy Strategy 2022-2030 (RES). The strategy highlights the number of key

population centres across Staffordshire which support rural areas and the rural economy. The strategy aims for each of these rural 'hubs' to unlock investment opportunities, improve their resilience and develop their visitor offers, drawing on and developing their individual distinctiveness and asset bases.

The strategic priorities are:

- Support Sustainable Intensification in Agriculture
- Recover and grow the visitor economy
- Regenerate the 5 rural 'Hub' towns (Cheadle, Leek Rugeley, Stone, Uttoxeter)
- Improve rural digital connectivity and access to opportunities
- Stimulate Enterprise and Innovation

The Borough Council will be involved in supporting the adopted RES and its implementation where it aligns with the Councils own rural strategy objectives working alongside the County Rural Development Manager and the County Visitor Economy Manager.

It is important that we protect rural businesses and support their ability to grow and develop. Likewise, we need to also encourage new business and employment opportunities. Many European fully funded business support programmes have ceased or will cease in June 2023 leaving a significant gap in both grant provision and fully funded business support.

The Staffordshire Means Back to Business programme is now closed as the Community Renewal Funding ceased at the end of September 2022. The only business support programmes that the County Council has running are Start Up Support such as loans and Get Started and Grow, the Low Carbon Business Evolution Programme and the Business Loans scheme.

The Borough Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) allocation of £4.6m is still awaiting approval from Government. This is in part a replacement for the previous EU funding. An Investment Plan setting how we intend to direct support to a variety of programmes and projects including in respect of rural areas and business was submitted in August. If approved spend of the monies will take place up to March 2025. A 4% allowance is available for additional support to help deliver the new programmes. It is proposed that this will be utilised to recruit an additional officer to the Council's Business Engagement Team.

In addition to the UKSPF the Borough Council has been allocated £487,936 of Rural England Prosperity Funding (REPF). This is a 'rural' top-up to the £4,673,295 in UK Shared Prosperity Funding and is complementary to funding used to support rural areas under the UKSPF allocation.

Stafford Borough is one of 4 districts in Staffordshire to receive this based on our rural population, number of rural businesses, productivity, and the importance of agriculture in the local economy. It is intended to support activities that specifically address the challenges rural areas face focusing on:

- Support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams
- Support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy
- A key issue is that unlike the UKSPF, this new funding stream can only support capital projects. Monies will be made available in April 2023 to be defrayed by 31 March 2025

Separately, the Borough Council is continuing to provide a range of services to businesses and to support our rural economy that include:

- Offering free one-to-one support to businesses looking to relocate to or grow within Stafford Borough.
- Generating new enquiries regionally and nationally for those looking to start or grow a business to bring them into the Borough.
- Launching a business engagement programme to guarantee that our interventions are targeted, co-ordinated, effective, and making a difference.
- Building stronger links with Keele and Staffordshire universities to support business incubation working with entrepreneurs so that the Borough can 'grow our own' innovative businesses.
- Identifying vacant commercial sites and working with commercial agents and developers to attract the right businesses into the right locations.
- Preparing to deliver two fully funded grant and business support programmes to support our rural areas via our UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity funding allocation.
- Targeting specific business and planning policy advice and funding opportunities to inform rural businesses to encourage business growth.
- Exploring the feasibility of supporting rural business hubs, clustering complementary goods and services to build strength into the rural economy.
- Using evidence-based research to understand the depth of impact of rural enterprise on the Borough's economy to build future capacity.
- Working with the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership to ensure that our residents and their family and friends are aware of local

activities to enjoy resulting in an increase in our visitor economy revenue.

- Continuing with the Our Beautiful Borough promotional campaigns to highlight our 3 towns and the wider Borough as a destination with something for everyone. (Subject to government continuing with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).
- Working with our rural enterprise HR managers providing them with our Lifestyle brochure and other information to retain and attract employees.
- Supporting rural start-ups who have remained trading since the pandemic and work with them to develop growth businesses.
- Identifying our 682 farms and providing tailored business support to suit their individual needs
- Working with the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce to develop the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), funded by the Department for Education.
- Supporting the proposed Stafford Institute of Technology by creating an employer engagement programme to ensure local skills needs are fed into the curriculum.
- Developing a relationship with our 'green' enterprises and highlighting Stafford Borough as a place for green skills and innovation.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

The costs of activities outlined in this report are either met by existing budgets and/or via external funding. In the case of the UKSPF the Council is permitted to use a proportion of the funding allocation to ensure there is sufficient capacity to deliver the Investment Plan. It is proposed to use this funding to bring in a fixed term post aligned to the period of spend (to March 2025) for UKSPF. There will be no additional costs to the Council.

### **6.2 Legal**

Nil

### **6.3 Human Resources**

Nil

### **6.4 Human Rights Act**

Nil

### **6.5 Data Protection**

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Nil

**6.6 Risk Management**

Nil

**6.7 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

**Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

Nil

**Wider Community Impact:**

Nil

**7 Previous Consideration**

Nil

**8 Background Papers**

File available in Development

## Agenda Item 7(c)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 November 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Finance
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tim Willis
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01543 464720
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Cabinet 3 November 2022 Economic Development Scrutiny 10 November 2022 Council 22 November 2022

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## Fees and Charges Review 2023

The following report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 3 November 2022 and is submitted to this Committee for consultation.

### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose to the Council the Fees and Charges for 2023.

### 2 Decision of the Cabinet

- 2.1 That the proposed Fees and Charges for 2023 be recommended to Council for approval.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The report sets out the proposed changes to Fees and Charges for 2023. In accordance with the revised financial regulations agreed by Council on the 16 September 2019 the following items are included:
- Where a new charge has been introduced.
  - The proposed increase is above the annual level of inflation.
  - Where the power to set fees and charges has been specifically reserved by the Council.

- 3.2 In addition, this report includes those fees and charges where no increase is proposed for 2023, for noting.

## **4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives**

- 4.1 This report supports all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 The process for setting fees and charges from 1 January 2023 reflects the revised financial regulations as agreed by Council on 16 September 2019. This set out the criteria for fees and charges which would be reported to Cabinet and Council for approval as follows:

- Where a new charge has been introduced.
- The proposed increase is above the annual level of inflation.
- Where the power to set fees and charges has been specifically reserved by the Council.

- 5.2 For 2023, inflation - as defined in financial regulations - is the Retail Prices Index, which currently stands at 12.3%. However, in general, where officers have delegated authority, charges will rise by approximately 5%, allowing for rounding.

- 5.3 Certain fees are set by reference to external bodies or set by legislation/regulations. These are included in the full list of published fees and charges but are not referred to in this report.

- 5.4 Fees and charges are also set after bearing in mind market conditions and the local economy. As a result, some charges where the Council has the power to vary them will not rise, the most significant of which are:

- All car parking charges are frozen.
- All markets charges frozen on the basis of a challenging trading environment and the fact that the number of market stalls/sites has fallen. This includes the Market Square hire, Farmers' Markets and street trading licences.

- 5.5 There are no charges for new services or proposed increases above 12.3%.

- 5.6 A full copy of Fees and Charges will be available on the Members' portal before the Council meeting and published on the website once approved by Council.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

Fees and charges are an important source of income to the Council. As costs rise with inflation, if income from fees and charges does not rise proportionately, this will add to the 2023-24 budget gap - the difference between projected expenditure and income. The Council currently projects a budget gap of £2 million for 2023-24.

### **6.2 Legal**

As set out in the report.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

As set out in the report.

### **6.4 Human Rights Act**

As set out in the report.

### **6.5 Data Protection**

As set out in the report.

### **6.7 Risk Management**

The risk issues contained in this report are not strategic and therefore should not be included in the Strategic Risk Register.

The level of income generated by the Council from fees and charges is a key risk as a number of the Council's main income streams are sensitive to adverse economic conditions and can vary significantly as a result.

### **6.8 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

#### **Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

Nil

#### **Wider Community Impact:**

Nil

## **7 Previous Consideration**

Cabinet - 3 November 2022 - Minute No CAB34/22

## **8 Background Papers**

File available in Financial Services.

## Agenda Item 7(d)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development & Planning
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 November 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Interim Head of Corporate Business and Partnerships
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Tracy Redpath
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01785 619195
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning 17/11/2022 ( <i>Only</i> )

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## Q2 Performance Report

### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an update to members regarding performance reporting for Quarter 2 2022 - 2023 for Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the information is noted

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The performance reporting for Quarter 2 2022 - 2023 for the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee is detailed in the **APPENDIX**.
- 3.2 The demand within the development industry is impacting across a number of indicators within the Development service. Where performance has been affected measures are in place to improve the position over the next quarter.
- 3.3 The end of the Covid related business support schemes has enabled the Economic Growth team to focus on the newly launched UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 3.4 Significant progress has been made across the strategic projects programme with additional funding secured and further funding applications underway.

## **4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives**

4.1 Performance reporting interlinks with all corporate business objectives.

## **5 Report Detail**

5.1 The work of several teams is directly influenced by the external development sector as we have statutory functions in the planning (Development Management), construction (Building Control), addressing (Street Naming and Numbering) and conveyancing (Local Land Charges) elements of the process. Members are aware that the Development Management team continue to deal with high volumes of new applications and this then cascades through the work of colleagues across the later stages of development.

5.2 Government launched both Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund and the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund in Spring and work has been underway to access these funding streams to support the ongoing work on our major projects. Decisions on both schemes is anticipated in the Autumn.

5.3 Narrative updates are contained within **APPENDIX 1**.

5.4 General Fund Budget Monitoring information for the 2022 Quarter 2 Period s contained within **APPENDIX 2**.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

Nil

### **6.2 Legal**

Nil

### **6.3 Human Resources**

Nil

### **6.4 Human Rights Act**

Nil

### **6.5 Data Protection**

Nil

### **6.7 Risk Management**

Nil

## **6.8 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

### **Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

There are no known impacts.

### **Wider Community Impact:**

There are no known impacts

## **7 Previous Consideration**

Nil

## **8 Background Papers**

File available in Corporate Business and Partnerships

**Economic Development & Planning**  
**Q2 Performance Indicators**

No	Indicator	Responsible Officer	Is good high or low	Q1 Actual	Q1 Target	Q1 Performance	Q2 Actual	Q2 Target	Q2 Performance	Year End forecast	Year end target	Direction of Travel
LI1	Number of existing business in commercial premises retained	Martyne Manning	H	10	10	On Track	11	10	Good	50	50	On Track
LI2	Number of new start-ups in commercial premises, shared space or domestic properties	Martyne Manning	H	107	10	Good	193	10	Good	50	50	On Track
LI3	Building Control-Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	Paul Beckley	H	89%	90%	On Track	81%	90%	Below Target	90%	90%	On Track
LI4	Building Control-Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	Paul Beckley	H	79%	70%	Good	76%	70%	On Track	70%	70%	On Track
LI5	Building Control-Site visits completed on day requested	Paul Beckley	H	99%	99%	On Track	99%	99%	On Track	99%	99%	On Track
LI6	Building Control-Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	Paul Beckley	H	91%	85%	On Track	100%	85%	Good	85%	85%	On Track

Performance direction of travel - Key	
Performance 10% or more above target	Good
Doing Well	On Track
Performance 10% or more below target	Below Target

## Q2 Economic Development & Planning

### Narratives

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	End Date	Q2 Performance	Q2 Commentary/Action
1.1.1	Review and assess all key programmes and major projects	Michelle Smith	From April 2021 and then on-going	On Track	Whilst some projects have experienced some delays no critical dates have been missed and alternative action plans are in place
1.2.1	Complete five year land supply statement	Alex Yendole	On-going	On Track	Five year housing land supply statement completed and published
1.2.2	Work with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England to deliver 210 affordable homes per year	Anna Nevin	On-going	Below Target	9 affordable units were delivered in Q2 with a current pipeline of 171 further completions this financial year. Although below target, this reflects the high level of delivery in 2021/22.
1.2.3	Improve and maintain performance of development management	John Holmes	On-going	On Track	Development Management performance is subject to a national league table which is published on a rolling 2 year snapshot. As at 30/09/22 performance is as follows: 65.2% Major applications processed on time (an increase from 60.0% in Q1; national target 60%); 80.5% of non-Major applications processed on time (an increase from 80.2% in Q1; national target is 70%). For Quarter 2 (01/07/22-30/09/22) performance was as follows: Major applications processed on time 87.5% (an increase from 60% in Q1) and non-major applications processed on time 78% (a decrease from 80% in Q1). Incoming applications continued to rise throughout the year peaking in August 2022 at 154 within the month. Validation backlogs reduced from around 16 weeks to around 5 weeks. Agency resource has been focused on assessment of householder applications due to the volume outstanding. Caseloads are still very high in addition to the difficulty recruiting and retaining experienced staff it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure and keep good temporary agency staff.
1.2.4	Improve and maintain performance of local land charges	Victoria Barraclough	On-going	Below Target	0% of searches received in this period were completed within the 10 day target. Of those over 10 days the longest was 36 days. This is a continuation of last quarters issues whereby we are reliant on the County Council, who are taking an extended period of time to respond due to staffing issues.
1.3.1	Delivery of the Stafford Town Centre Transformation Programme	Michelle Smith	31/03/2024	On Track	Public realm projects are progressing in line with individual project plans, with procurement completed for the Market Square scheme in October. Discussions also on-going with third party landowners where land acquisition/control involved but no critical dates have been missed.

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	End Date	Q2 Performance	Q2 Commentary/Action
1.3.2	Delivery of the Stafford Station Gateway	Tara Hollingsworth	From June 2021 and then on-going	On Track	In July Cabinet approved a public consultation on the draft Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Gateway scheme which then ran from 18 August until 29 September. As part of that exercise a public drop in session was held on 6 September where the project team were available to talk through the scheme and answer any questions. Over 100 people attended and over 200 consultation responses were received. These are now being analysed and the SRF is being updated ahead of being reported back to Cabinet. The Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid relating to the Gateway is still awaiting a decision.
1.3.3	Supporting the development of Meecebrook Garden Community	Maxine Turley	On-going	On Track	Meecebrook included within Local Plan Regulation 18 publication as part of the Preferred Option. A key element to this inclusion was the successful completion of land assembly - four major landowners have confirmed their commitment to working with SBC to take forward a Garden Community, conversations with other land owners are ongoing. To support the Local Plan consultation process one to one meeting with Parish Chairs and Clerks of Parishes within or close to the red line have been completed. In addition Meecebrook website, leaflets letter drops completed. Legal advice relating to land allocation via the Local Plan sought. Financial waiver secured to enable direct award of SLC to take forward £250k of HE funded Rail feasibility work. Masterplan consultants appointed to complete Masterplan Framework, contract commences October 2022. Draft Planning Strategy completed. Working with partners to commence Health Impact Assessment moving forward. Transport data collection report procured modal assessment report received. Governance meetings during October will focus on budget setting, governance beyond 2022 and future arrangements for communication and engagement.
1.3.4	Stone Leisure: Westbridge Park	Sally McDonald	On-going	On Track	Preliminary surveys and design works for Main Contract procured and undertaken. Officers met with Ground Control on site for design meeting. Meeting with Planning Officers to confirm which elements require planning. Skate park evaluation complete and moderated, award letter sent and design meeting held with Bendcrete Desk Top ground contamination survey results identified additional intrusive surveys required. Works procured and results expected in 6 weeks. Stone Leisure Board meeting tba end of October. Subject to final designs being agreed, submission of planning application late November 2022

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	End Date	Q2 Performance	Q2 Commentary/Action
1.4.1	Develop Stafford as a hub of productivity to help businesses develop, grow and thrive	Martyne Manning	On-going	Good	Latest information shows an increase in Q2 in the number of individuals who registered a new business in Stafford and we will continue to support and signpost our entrepreneurs to appropriate partners. In addition our UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) will provide financial support to a number of organisations with demonstrable growth plans. We are also working closely with existing businesses to understand their 'ask' of the council and to provide dedicated tailored business support.
1.4.2	Promote our visitor economy to demonstrate the offer in the Borough	Martyne Manning	On-going	Good	Subject to our UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) Investment plan being approved we will be rolling out a number of very focused highly visual promotional campaigns to drive footfall into the Borough. In addition to this the Rural England Prosperity Fund encourages the use of grants to support hospitality tourism and leisure providers to enhance their venues, create visitor trails, expand into new markets and also to create new boutique accommodation. There will also be the opportunity to work with social enterprises and charities to help support their drive to attract visitors to events for example.
1.4.3	Unlock economic opportunities in our rural areas	Martyne Manning	On-going	Good	Of the 5,365 businesses in Stafford 1,910 are based in rural areas, equivalent to over a third (36%) which is above the 28% average for Staffordshire. Of the 59,325 jobs in Stafford 21,070 are in rural areas, equivalent to over a third (36%) which is above the 27% average for Staffordshire. Our monthly survey shows a healthy rural occupancy rate of 97%. Most recently Stafford is one of 4 districts in the County to have been awarded Rural England Prosperity Funding. (REPF) £480,000 has been allocated and we are currently writing our investment plan to enable us to draw down this funding. This will support the UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Fund) Investment plan which is currently awaiting approval. The REPF will support the purchase of capital equipment to address local issues. The programme will run for 2 years from April 2023.
1.4.4	Support the facilitation of lifelong learning to create a local workforce with specialist skills that can respond to growth ambitions	Martyne Manning	On-going	Good	We will be working closely with the Chamber of Commerce, training providers and local business groups to support the delivery of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIPs). We are also discussing with the DMP the issues with the unprecedented amount of vacancies in the hospitality sector and how this can be addressed. Discussions with Stafford College are ongoing with regards to courses that support the needs of local businesses.
1.5.1	Revise and refresh the Local Plan	Alex Yendole	October 2024 Adoption of the Local Plan	On Track	New Local Plan Preferred Option published for Cabinet in October 2022 prior to consultation stage. Full range of evidence based studies prepared including Whole Plan Viability and Sustainability Appraisal. Government's reforms to economic growth and planning matters progressing, subject to on-going assessment for implications on subsequent stages of the Local Plan 2020-2040.

Ref	Key Deliverable	Responsible Officer	End Date	Q2 Performance	Q2 Commentary/Action
1.5.2	Embed high quality design into Planning Policy to ensure that Stafford is an attractive place that people want to live in, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting future investment	Alex Yendole	October 2024 Adoption of the Local Plan	On Track	Site assessment evidence based work completed to inform the Local Plan preferred option. Government's published National Model Design Code being considered at the local level, design emphasis through current National Planning Policy Framework

Explanation for Narrative Performance
Exceptional - Good
Doing well - On Track
Below what it should be - Below Target

## Economic Development & Planning

### Q2 Narrative Improvement Report

No	Measure Detail	RO	Performance	Context for current performance	Improvement actions taken
1.2.2	Work with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England to deliver 210 affordable homes per year.	Anna Nevin	Below Target	2021/22 saw very high delivery of affordable housing, nearly 25% over target. This has had an impact on delivery in the first half of 2022/23.	Delivery in the next two quarters is forecast to be higher than quarters one and two. Work with Registered Providers continues to develop appropriate affordable housing to meet the needs of residents of the Borough.
1.2.3	Improve and maintain performance of local land charges	Victoria Barraclough	Below Target	The issue is due to hold ups with the County Council who we receive information from.	We are aware of the issues with the County and flagging urgent requests and advising of the situation to customers.

### Q2 Performance Improvement Report

No	Measure Detail	RO	Performance	Q2 Actual	Q2 Target	Context for current performance	Improvement Actions Taken	Intervention/Review
L13	Building Control - Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	Paul Beckley	Below Target	81%	90%	There was a large increase in applications in June due to change in Building Regulations. If applications submitted prior to implementation date then they could comply with previous regulation. This resulted in approximately 70% increase in applications.	Validation times improved over subsequent 2 months and by third month the performance target was being met. The backlog has been cleared so it appears no further action is needed but this is monitored every month.	Monthly Review

**Committee:** Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny

**Date of Meeting:** 15 November 2022

### Performance Update

#### General Fund - Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2022

The Council agreed a Net Spending Budget for 2022/23 of £15.475 million in January 2022 when the Council Tax was set for the year. Of this figure, the net Revenue Budget covered by this committee is £1,140,000. The approved budgets show a slight variation within the portfolios reflecting the transfer of centrally held provision for income changes on the Resources portfolio to the individual services.

The signage on the reports has changed for this financial year an underspend is a debit figure and any figures in brackets represent an overspend.

The monitoring position for 2022/23 is illustrated in the following table:

<b>Portfolio</b>	<b>Original Budget 2022/23 £000</b>	<b>Approved Budget 2022/23 £000</b>	<b>Profiled Budget to 30 September £000</b>	<b>Actual Spend to 30 September £000</b>	<b>Variance from Profiled Budget £000</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn £000</b>
Planning and Regeneration	1,140	1,111	1,547	1,291	256	874

The key issues identified in the forecast as at September monitoring are set out below:-

### **Planning and Regeneration**

There is a favourable forecast variance of approximately £256,000 on this portfolio. This is primarily due to:

- Parking increased income £200,000
- Development Management increased income £143,000 (largely reflecting major applications)
- Car Allowances £10,000

Offset by

- Increased Utilities costs (£27,000)
- Additional rates vacant premises (£11,000)
- Land charges decreased income (£6,000)
- Increased parking contract costs (£11,000)
- Reduced markets income (£24,000)
- Legal fees (£7,000)
- Additional supplies and services (£9,000)

### **Forecast Outturn 2022/23**

The forecast outturn provides an indication of what we expect the final outturn to be by the end of the financial year. We currently anticipate that net spending will be £236,000 less than budgeted. This principally reflects increased parking income for the first two quarters of £200,000 and increased planning fee income of £143,000 partly offset by additional full year estimates for utility, legal and contract costs alongside a reduction in market income.

### **Detailed monitoring**

**ANNEX 1** sets out the revenue budget monitoring forecast position based on expenditure to the 30 September 2022 including explanations for individual variances that meet the monitoring criteria. It includes an analysis of services in the portfolio. In addition, capital monitoring information to the 30 September 2022 on the capital schemes is reported at **ANNEX 2**.

## PERFORMANCE UPDATE - PLANNING AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

## Budget Monitoring 2022-2023 - Period 6 - September

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Forecast Outturn	Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	£	
<b>Management and Support</b>							
Expenditure	537,930	196,068	206,084	(10,016)	(5.1%)	535,280	Staffing variations
Income	(28,620)	(10,651)	(11,084)	433	(4.1%)	(28,620)	
<b>Net</b>	<b>509,310</b>	<b>185,417</b>	<b>195,000</b>	<b>(9,583)</b>		<b>506,660</b>	
<b>Building Control</b>							
Expenditure	160,800	80,430	79,350	1,080	1.3%	160,800	
Income	-	-	-	-	n/a	-	
<b>Net</b>	<b>160,800</b>	<b>80,430</b>	<b>79,350</b>	<b>1,080</b>		<b>160,800</b>	
<b>Development Management</b>							
Expenditure	1,126,610	689,558	715,593	(26,035)	(3.8%)	1,186,330	Additional agency fees (£46k), partly offset by staff vacancies £17k
Income	(840,830)	(654,783)	(798,474)	143,691	(21.9%)	(1,020,910)	Additional major planning application fees £405k, partly offset by reduced planning fees (£259k)
<b>Net</b>	<b>285,780</b>	<b>34,775</b>	<b>(82,881)</b>	<b>117,656</b>		<b>165,420</b>	
<b>Forward Planning</b>							
Expenditure	515,860	239,307	242,060	(2,753)	(1.2%)	518,870	
Income	(189,060)	-	-	-	n/a	(189,060)	
<b>Net</b>	<b>326,800</b>	<b>239,307</b>	<b>242,060</b>	<b>(2,753)</b>		<b>329,810</b>	
<b>Land Charges - Local Searches</b>							
Expenditure	120,400	48,535	40,327	8,208	16.9%	120,400	Reduced activity
Income	(94,300)	(51,074)	(45,397)	(5,677)	11.1%	(88,620)	Reduced activity
<b>Net</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>(2,539)</b>	<b>(5,069)</b>	<b>2,530</b>		<b>31,780</b>	

## PERFORMANCE UPDATE - PLANNING AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

## Budget Monitoring 2022-2023 - Period 6 - September

	Latest Budget	Budget to Date	Total Spend to Date	Variance from Budget to Date		Forecast Outturn	Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	£	%	£	
<b>Off Street Parking Services</b>							
Expenditure	1,384,690	1,224,645	1,257,780	(33,135)	(2.7%)	1,414,480	Utilities full year estimate (£5k), system upgrade (£11k) and contract variations (£11k)
Income	(1,980,460)	(894,170)	(1,095,132)	200,962	(22.5%)	(2,180,350)	Additional car park income Off street £102k, Waterfront £65k and Riverside Undercroft £33k
<b>Net</b>	<b>(595,770)</b>	<b>330,475</b>	<b>162,647</b>	<b>167,828</b>		<b>(765,870)</b>	
<b>Land &amp; Properties</b>							
Expenditure	64,360	42,127	52,828	(10,701)	(25.4%)	74,440	Legal costs (£7k) and minor variations
Income	(53,290)	(26,658)	(24,701)	(1,957)	7.3%	(53,290)	
<b>Net</b>	<b>11,070</b>	<b>15,469</b>	<b>28,127</b>	<b>(12,658)</b>		<b>21,150</b>	
<b>Economic Growth &amp; Projects</b>							
Expenditure	1,459,780	561,936	552,048	9,888	1.8%	1,451,780	Staffing variations
Income	(1,194,600)	-	(3)	3	n/a	(1,194,600)	
<b>Net</b>	<b>265,180</b>	<b>561,936</b>	<b>552,046</b>	<b>9,891</b>		<b>257,180</b>	
<b>Borough Markets</b>							
Expenditure	348,730	215,095	208,742	6,353	3.0%	348,470	
Income	(227,570)	(113,520)	(89,347)	(24,173)	21.3%	(181,030)	Reduced rental income
<b>Net</b>	<b>121,160</b>	<b>101,575</b>	<b>119,395</b>	<b>(17,820)</b>		<b>167,440</b>	
<b>Portfolio Total</b>	<b>1,110,430</b>	<b>1,546,845</b>	<b>1,290,675</b>	<b>256,170</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>874,370</b>	

## PERFORMANCE UPDATE - PLANNING & REGENERATION CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

### Budget Monitoring 2022-2023 - Period 6 September

	Latest	Budget to	Total Spend	Variance to	Forecast	Comments
	Budget	Date	to Date	Date	Outturn	
	£	£	£	£	£	
Growth Point	£50,000	£0	£0	£0	£50,000	Project still under discussion
Stafford Town Centre Enhancements	£19,000	£0	£0	£0	£19,000	Project ongoing
Pearl Brook Path Improvements	£75,000	£0	£0	£0	£0	
Gypsy and Traveller Site	£150,000	£0	£0	£0	£150,000	No viable site yet identified
FHSF	£15,319,350	£111,833	£111,670	£163	£2,180,000	
<b>Total for Planning</b>	<b>£15,613,350</b>	<b>£111,833</b>	<b>£111,670</b>	<b>£163</b>	<b>£2,399,000</b>	

## Agenda Item 7(e)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 November 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Law and Administration
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Andrew Bailey
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01785 619212
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning 15/11/2022 ( <i>Only</i> )

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## Work Programme - Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee

### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee considers and comments upon their Work Programme.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The first stage in achieving a Member-led Overview and Scrutiny process is to develop a Work Programme for the Members of the Committee to own.
- 3.2 Accordingly, an up-to-date copy of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme is provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives

- 4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following Corporate Business Objective 1:-

To deliver sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.

## **5 Report Detail**

5.1 Members will recall that one of the fundamental philosophies behind the creation of Overview and Scrutiny is that the process should be Member-led and the first stage in achieving this is to develop a Work Programme that is:-

- Owned by all Members of the Scrutiny Committee;
- Flexible to allow the Committee to react to urgent items;
- Contain aspects of both Overview and Scrutiny.

5.2 Therefore, at each scheduled meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee, an up-to-date copy of the Work Programme will be provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.

5.3 The Work Programme includes provision for the Committee to scrutinise appropriate items delivered through the Council's Service Delivery Plan up to twelve months in advance, whilst maintaining the flexibility to respond to any issues that may arise.

5.4 Accordingly, attached at **APPENDIX** is the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee's current Work Programme to consider or amend as appropriate.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

Nil

### **6.2 Legal**

Nil

### **6.3 Human Resources**

Nil

### **6.4 Human Rights Act**

Nil

### **6.5 Data Protection**

Nil

## **6.7 Risk Management**

Nil

## **6.8 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

### **Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

The Borough Council considers the effect of its actions on all sections of our community and has addressed all of the following Equality Strands in the production of this report, as appropriate:-

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

### **Wider Community Impact:**

Detailed above.

## **7 Previous Consideration**

Nil

## **8 Background Papers**

File available in Law and Administration.

## Appendix

**Committee:** Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny  
Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 15 November 2022

### **Work Programme - Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

**Thursday 5 January 2023 at 6.30pm**

Minutes of Last Meeting: Tuesday 15 November 2022

Officer Items by: Tuesday 13 December 2022

Call-in Deadline: Tuesday 13 December 2022

Member/Public Items by: Friday 16 December 2022

Agenda Despatch on: Tuesday 20 December 2022

Officer Reports: **Economic Development and Planning Portfolio -  
General Fund Revenue Budget 2022-23 to 2025-26  
and Capital Programme 2022-23 - 2025-26**  
Head of Finance

**Garden Communities Project**  
Head of Development

**Projects Update**  
Interim Head of Development

**Final Accounts 2021/22**  
Head of Finance

**Work Programme**  
Scrutiny Officer

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**Tuesday 7 March 2023 at 6.30pm**

Minutes of Last Meeting: Thursday 5 January 2023

Officer Items by: Monday 20 February 2023

Call-in Deadline: Tuesday 21 February 2023

Member/Public Items by: Thursday 23 February 2023

V1 31/10/22 12.58 ASB

Agenda Despatch on: Monday 27 February 2023

Officer Reports: **Projects Update**  
Interim Head of Development

**Performance Update/Budget Monitoring Report**  
Interim Head of Corporate Business and  
Partnerships/Head of Finance

**Work Programme**  
Scrutiny Officer

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### **Future Items:**

- **Stafford Station Gateway**  
Head of Development

## Agenda Item 7(f)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 November 2022
<b>Report of:</b>	Interim Head of Development
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alex Yendole
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	07800 619530
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny 15/11/22 (Only)

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## Section 106 Finance - Update

### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the current financial position on Section 106 monies associated with developer obligations provided for through the planning process.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report is noted.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee has previously been updated as regards S106 agreements (known formally as 'planning obligations') and how they are recorded, managed and monitored by the Borough Council. Members concerns have principally been about those S106 agreements which involve financial payments or contributions from developers.
- 3.2 The purpose of this report is to present the current financial position as at the end of October 2022<sup>1</sup>, which can be summarised as per below. Please note that verified S106 figures are produced annually for the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), which is published in December. The 2022 IFS will present the position as at 31 March 2022. The sums referred to in this report are

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<sup>1</sup> Information to inform this report is drawn from the Council's S106 monitoring tool Exacom.

drawn from Exacom and are not verified by Finance. Therefore, the sums referenced in the report have been rounded and should only be used to illustrate the scale of monies collected, allocated and available rather than exact figures.

Over £13 million Section 106 financial contributions has been collected by the Borough Council:

- Of the total collected, half has been spent on a range of projects within the Borough.
- A quarter has been allocated to identified projects although remains to be spent
- A quarter is available to be allocated and spent on future projects with decisions outstanding

There are also currently £1.1m of invoices that have been raised, in addition to the £13m collected, which are due to be paid by developers.

Furthermore, subject to planning permissions being implemented, there is a future potential of approximately £6m to be received.

- 3.3 “S106” is the shorthand for the legal agreements used to obtain obligations in respect of some planning decisions and relates to the relevant section of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. An agreement may contain multiple obligations which could be financial or non-financial. A non-financial obligation is discharged by the developer carrying out works, or by the developer directly providing for, at a cost to them, specified infrastructure such as affordable housing or public open space as part of a development. In the circumstances described, a financial obligation is discharged by the developer paying a sum to the Council, which the Council then uses to carry out works required to enhance infrastructure as a result of a planning decision, or when required infrastructure is provided. On occasion, the Council may agree alongside a third party (such as a parish) that a third party will deliver / manage the infrastructure works. A Unilateral Undertaking is a legal agreement in which the developer commits to deliver an undertaking (which may be financial) and could be considered as a form of simplified S106 agreement. For the purpose of this report, Unilateral Undertakings are considered to be the same as a S106.

## 4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives

- 4.1 The following key objectives from the Council's Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024 are considered relevant to this report:

*"To deliver sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs."*

*"To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing."*

*"To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives."*

## 5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Members will be aware that a significant programme of work has been undertaken in recent months led by the Strategic Planning and Placemaking team, Development Service to update the Council's Exacom system with information relating to current and older Section 106 agreements. The result of this work is that a comprehensive overview of the financial position of S106 funds is now available. This includes information on existing project allocations and potential future funding which could be allocated to projects, subject to formal decisions being made in that respect.
- 5.2 The following paragraphs set out a breakdown of the current indicative financial position of S106 funding.

### **Breakdown of the current financial overview**

- 5.3 A total of approximately £13m of S106 financial contributions has been collected by the Council.
- 5.4 Of the collected sums, half has been spent on various projects. These projects include:
- Stone Leisure Strategy (Leisure Centre and Westbridge Park proposal)
  - Charnley Road Play Area, Stafford
  - Holmcroft Park Play Area, Stafford
  - Wildwood Destination Park, Stafford
  - Gnosall play areas
  - Stafford Leisure Centre
  - Victoria Destination Park, Stafford
  - Rowley Park, Stafford (sports facilities)

- Riverway, Stafford (sports facilities)
- Doxey play area
- Brook Glen play area, Stafford
- A range of affordable housing schemes across the Borough
- Mitigation projects linked to the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

5.5 Of the approximately £13m collected sums, a quarter remains allocated to projects but not yet spent. A breakdown of these project allocations can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1 - Project allocations**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount allocated £000 (rounded)</b>
Stone Leisure (Westbridge Park)	190
Stone Leisure Phase 2 (Westbridge Park)	815
Charnley Road Play Area, Stafford	13.5
Jubilee Fields recreational improvements, Great Haywood	100
Pearl Brook	19
Yarnfield open space improvements	16.8
Affordable Housing projects, Rough Sleeper Accommodation match funding & affordable accommodation element of the Future High Streets Fund	1,100
Doxey play area	10
Committed Sums (maintenance of open space)	1,300
Cannock Chase SAC	75

5.6 Of the £13m collected sums, a quarter is available and is yet to be allocated to projects. A breakdown of these amounts in terms of what the relevant S106 agreements say the monies are intended to support by theme is shown below in Table 2.

**Table 2 - Available money by contribution type / theme**

<b>S106 Contribution Type</b>	<b>Amount available £000 (rounded)</b>
Affordable housing	155
Allotments	2.5
Biodiversity	45
Cannock Chase SAC	51
Open space - Off-site	1,300
Open space - On-site provision: Playing Field south of Mansell Close, Stafford	16
Sports facilities - 3G pitch	6
Sports facilities – Artificial Turf / 2G pitch	58
Sports facilities – Other / Unspecified	400
Sports facilities - Sports court / hall	755
Sports facilities - Swimming pool	535

5.7 The available money must be allocated to projects that accord with the contribution type in compliance with the relevant S106 agreement(s). There may also be a caveat for the money to be spent within proximity of the development, which is stipulated per individual S106 agreement.

5.8 The Strategic Planning and Placemaking team is working to identify and propose projects which could be supported by the aforementioned sums subject to sufficient funds being available.

#### **Invoiced funds**

5.9 A total of £1.1m has been invoiced for and is yet to be collected. Any overdue payments are dealt with by the Council's debtor's team. Once this money has been received, it will become available to be allocated to a project. A breakdown of these amounts in terms of what the relevant S106 agreements say the monies are intended to support broken down by theme is shown below in Table 3.

**Table 3 - Invoiced money by contribution type / theme**

<b>S106 Contribution Type</b>	<b>Amount available £000 (rounded)</b>
Cannock Chase SAC	305
Open space - Off-site maintenance sum	27.5
Open space - Off-site sum	300
Sports facilities - 3G pitch sum	50
Sports facilities - AT pitch sum	3.7
Sports facilities – Other (bowling green)	1
Sports facilities - Sports court / hall sum	27.5
Sports facilities - Swimming pool sum	360

## **Future funds**

- 5.10 Recording and monitoring S106 agreements via the Exacom system, has enabled the Strategic Planning and Placemaking team to identify future potential S106 income. Subject to planning permissions being implemented, there is a future potential sum of £6m to be received to support local infrastructure.
- 5.11 The Strategic Planning and Placemaking team will continue to monitor the future potential funds and will invoice for financial contributions when / if the developer becomes liable to pay a contribution.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

Verified S106 figures are produced annually for the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS), which is published in December. The 2022 IFS will present the position as at 31 March 2022. The sums referred to in this report are drawn from Exacom and are not verified by Finance, so should be considered as indicative only.

### **6.2 Legal**

S106 agreements or planning obligations are a legal undertaking linked to the granting of a planning permission.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

N/A

### **6.4 Human Rights Act**

N/A

### **6.5 Data Protection**

N/A

### **6.7 Risk Management**

N/A

### **6.8 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

**Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

N/A

**Wider Community Impact:**

N/A

**7 Previous Consideration**

Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee - 30 June 2022.

**8 Background Papers**

Details with Development.