

Dear Members

Cabinet

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Monday 29 September 2025** at **6.30pm** in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford** 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 Governance

CABINET - 29 SEPTEMBER 2025

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 28 August 2025 as circulated and published on 29 August 2025
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Councillors' Question Time (if any)
- 4 Proposals of the Cabinet Members (as follows):-

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(a) COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO	
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Report contains information relating to an individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

Membership

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| A T A Godfrey | - Leader |
| R Kenney | - Deputy Leader (Town Centres Regeneration Portfolio) |
| R P Cooke | - Resources Portfolio |

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------|
| I D Fordham | - Environment Portfolio |
| J Hood | - Community Portfolio |
| G P K Pardesi | - Leisure Portfolio |
| A N Pearce | - Climate Action and Nature Recovery Portfolio |
| A F Reid | - Economic Development and Planning Portfolio |

Agenda Item 4(a)i

Updated Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2025
Report of:	Head of Wellbeing
Portfolio:	Community Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the updated Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 Stafford Borough Council has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with authorities to prevent and reduce crime, disorder and re-offending.
- 2.3 Stafford Borough Council also has a statutory duty to investigate reports and complaints of ASB under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 In addition to our statutory responsibilities, if left unchallenged, ASB can have a significant negative impact upon the lives of our communities - including those who live, work, visit and invest in our borough. It can also be a precursor to more serious crime. It is our belief that no-one should have to suffer ASB.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

Communities and Wellbeing

- A safe and secure place to live for local people
- A safe and cohesive Borough

Prosperous Economy

- Vibrant town centres that are the focus for economic, cultural and community life

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The existing ASB Policy is scheduled a refresh to ensure that the latest national guidance is accurately reflected within it.
- 5.2 The opportunity has also been taken to simplify certain explanations of legal tools, whilst providing new visual aids to clarify the processes we follow.
- 5.3 The updated policy ensures the Council's legal duties are met, whilst setting out Stafford Borough Council's commitment to tackling ASB and improving the quality of life for residents and visitors by:
- Placing victims and witnesses at the core of our procedures;
 - Ensuring that all reports of ASB are treated seriously and dealt with professionally;
 - Making effective and appropriate use of the tools and powers available to us, to allow ASB to be addressed firmly, fairly and proportionately;
 - Co-ordinating joint working with partner agencies to deliver the most effective service;
 - Raising awareness of what constitutes ASB and empowering our communities, and;
 - Publicising, and promoting, support and diversionary services.
- 5.4 The new proposed policy:
- Clarifies definitions and subcategories of ASB;
 - Provides enhanced clarity and assurance to professionals and members of the public regarding roles, responsibilities, reporting routes, timescales, enforcement options and escalation pathways;
 - Is robust, and has been independently verified as complying with best practice;
 - Shall be reviewed annually, and updated immediately in cases of legislature or national policy changes.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Cases progressing to court would attract legal costs, but the Council would seek to retrieve these upon prosecution.

6.2 Legal

We will continue to consult with Legal Services regarding advice around cases, and appropriate and proportionate escalation methods.

Where escalation to court is necessary, consideration will need to be given to the capacity within the Legal Services team, and whether the work will need to be outsourced or can be carried out in-house.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The policy ensures the Council are complying with their statutory duties surrounding crime and disorder.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

The policy's effect on the community, and of all equality strands, has been considered.

Any vulnerabilities identified will be actioned using existing mechanisms within the Community Safety Partnership.

6.6 Health

The impact of ASB on individuals and communities is well documented, and is known to impact upon both physical and mental health. By seeking to address these issues via a robust policy, it is hoped that these negative effects shall be minimised.

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Corporate ASB Policy

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Oliver Greatbatch

Telephone Number: 01543 464477

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 29 September 2025 (Only)

Key Decision: Yes

DRAFT
Anti-social Behaviour Policy
2025 to 2028

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Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy Approval Date	TBC
Policy Last Reviewed	TBC
Next Review Date	TBC

Policy Statement and Commitment

This Policy sets out Stafford Borough Council's commitment to reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and supports the Council's Corporate Plan, in particular the objective to ensure that Stafford is a "safe and cohesive Borough".

ASB can devastate the lives of individuals and communities - including those who live, work, visit and invest in our Borough. It can also be a precursor to more serious crime.

No-one should have to suffer ASB, and to support our commitment to reducing ASB we will:

- Place victims and witnesses at the core of our procedures;
- Ensure that all reports of ASB are treated seriously and dealt with professionally;
- Make effective and appropriate use of the tools and powers available to us, allowing ASB to be addressed firmly, fairly and proportionately;
- Co-ordinate joint working with partner agencies to deliver the most effective service;
- Raise awareness of what constitutes ASB and empower our communities, and;
- Publicise and promote available support and diversionary services.

This is a Corporate ASB Policy, under the remit of the Community Safety Team. For specific Service Area procedures, please refer to the relevant departmental policies.

Definitions and Explanations of Anti-social Behaviour

The legal definition of ASB is provided within several Acts:

- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
(www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents)
- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
(www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/38/contents)
- Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011
(www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/13/contents)

- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents)

In general, ASB is considered to include behaviour capable of causing nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to any person; or an act that causes, or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons, not of the same household.

There are three main types of ASB. These are:

- Personal
- Nuisance
- Environmental

Personal ASB

These are usually incidences that deliberately target an individual or group of people, rather than the community. For example:

- Intimidation or harassment
- Violence or threats of violence
- Abusive or insulting behaviour

Nuisance ASB

These are usually incidences that affect the community, rather than an individual victim. For example:

- Drug or substance misuse
- Vehicle nuisance (reckless driving, damage, abandonment)
- Noise nuisance

Environmental ASB

These are incidences when individuals or groups impact their wider surroundings. It includes environmental damage and the misuse of public spaces or buildings. For example:

- Accumulations of waste
- Littering
- Fly-tipping

The topics and behaviours listed may fall into more than one category.

What isn't ASB?

Some examples of behaviours which aren't considered anti-social are listed below. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list:

- People playing in parks and gardens (with no associated anti-social behaviour)
- Reasonable domestic noise
- Disagreements between members of the same household
- Inconsiderate parking. Please refer to information on the County Council website for additional information - Parking and Enforcement (www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Highways/Parking-and-enforcement/Home.aspx)
- Disputes over property and boundaries
- Private use of CCTV and smart doorbells

Our Responsibilities

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Stafford Borough Council, as a Local Authority, has a statutory responsibility to work in partnership with other Responsible Authorities to reduce crime, disorder, substance misuse and re-offending in their locality. Responsible Authorities are defined as the Local Authority, County Council, Police Service, Fire and Rescue, Probation Service and the Integrated Care Board.

We also have a statutory duty to consider and investigate ASB, courtesy of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and, where appropriate, have a range of powers to tackle it. We shall liaise with, and signpost to other agencies, such as the police or housing associations, where relevant.

We are also required to conduct an ASB Case Review where a victim requests one, and where their case meets the locally determined threshold. Further information regarding this process is listed under the 'Case Review' section of this Policy.

1 Reporting Anti-social Behaviour

There are several ways in which you can report ASB to Stafford Borough Council.

Online: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/community-safety-anti-social-behaviour

Email: ASBEnquiries@staffordbc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01785 619000

Reports of ASB can be made by those directly affected or by a third party, for example, a local Councillor, Member of Parliament, or social worker, for example. If a report is made via a third party, we will always seek the consent of the individual concerned to communicate and share information with the third party.

It should also be noted that Registered Social landlords also have powers that they can utilise. If you feel you are a victim of ASB and live in a property that is managed by a social landlord, it is recommended that issues are reported to them in the first instance.

The police also have the same, and in some cases, additional powers as the Council under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. ASB can be reported to the police via the following methods:

- By telephone on 101
- Online at Report antisocial behaviour (<https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/ro/report/asb/asb-v3/report-antisocial-behaviour/>)
- If anyone is seriously injured, or if there is an immediate danger or risk to public safety, a call must be made to 999.

2 The Process

When a report of ASB is made, we will endeavour to discuss the alleged issues with the reporter, any other persons directly impacted, the alleged perpetrator (if safe and appropriate to do so), and any other relevant partner agencies. This will help us gain an understanding of what is occurring and the persistence of the behaviour.

Consent for this will be sought from the individual concerned, but information can legally be shared without consent if it is in relation to the prevention and detection of crime and disorder, or if there is an overriding safeguarding concern.

We adopt a harm centred approach and will also consider the impact that the ASB is having on individuals, families, and the community. This enables us to better understand the harm that may be being caused.

Each ASB case is individual. As a result, we cannot provide fixed timescales following the 'Report assessment' stage.

Report received - Acknowledgement within 5 business days.

Initial triage - Where it is determined that cases are more appropriately dealt with by other Council departments (for example, Environmental Health), we shall forward onwards, and update the individual concerned. This will be actioned within 7 business days.

Report assessment - An officer will assess if the report reaches the criteria for investigation. If so, a case will be logged, a risk assessment will be completed, and incident logs will be provided. This shall be actioned within 7 business days, but any urgent advice or Safeguarding issues will be actioned immediately.

Ongoing case management - Following receipt of incident logs, a decision will be made regarding how to manage the case (Note that if incident logs are not returned within 21 days, the case will be closed and the reporter updated). Officers will usually conduct a wider investigation with partner agencies such as Staffordshire Police, or via multi-agency meetings. During most investigations, contact will be made with the alleged perpetrator to allow them a fair opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Officer will explain the consequences of carrying out ASB and summarise the next steps in the investigation.

Throughout the process, we will:

- Record all complaints received;
- Remain in regular contact, and offer advice/support - this can include referring and signposting to appropriate agencies, and is not limited to the reporter;
- Agree an action plan of proposed, proportionate steps, detailing what is expected from all parties at each stage.

Appendix A details the process in flowchart form.

3 Action we can take - Tools and Powers

The Officer will assess each case individually, and the actions taken will be proportionate to the circumstances of the case.

Tools and powers are usually implemented incrementally, and many complaints can be resolved through early intervention. Legal action will only usually be approved where early intervention methods have not been successful, or where there is a serious risk of harm. However, for the most serious cases we reserve the right to commence legal action immediately.

Most anti-social behaviour investigations take place within civil law, meaning a civil standard of proof is applicable. The Council needs only to be able to demonstrate that the incident(s) is more likely than not to have happened. When civil legal action has been taken and a Court Order has been disobeyed i.e., breach of an Injunction, Closure Order, or prosecution for breach of a Community Protection Notice; the criminal standard of proof applies. This means that the Council will need to demonstrate that the incident(s) happened “beyond reasonable doubt”.

No Action

In some cases, no action will be taken. These reasons may include:

- Establishing that the incident did not happen
- Not having sufficient evidence to prove the matter to the relevant standard of proof
- Assessing that the issues reported are not what the Council considers antisocial
- Being unable to investigate fully due to non-cooperation of the reporter/witness
- The ASB has stopped and the likelihood of further ASB is low

The Council recognises that individuals have different tolerance thresholds, so we would expect both parties to work together to discuss any minor issues or disagreements before a complaint is made - if it is safe to do so.

Letters and or Word of Advice

Occasionally a letter or phone call with an alleged perpetrator of low level ASB is all that may be required to resolve some issues. The perpetrator will be informed of the nature of the complaint about them; along with potential consequences should their behaviour continue or escalate. In many cases, awareness of the impact of their

behaviour on victims, and the threat of more formal enforcement tools, can be a sufficient incentive for an individual to change their behaviour

Informal interventions should be considered first in most cases, particularly when dealing with young people, as they can stop bad behaviour before it escalates. This should be determined by professionals on a case-by-case basis.

Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

These are voluntary written agreements which are signed by an individual committing anti-social behaviour. The agreement can be with agencies such as the Council, housing provider, education and police - and can include both restrictions and positive requirements. They are most regularly issued to young people over the age of 10, with parent/guardian involvement.

These agreements are not legally binding; however, they are useful in highlighting children's behaviour to their parents and letting them know the consequences if they continue to act in an anti-social manner. Multiple breaches can be used to illustrate that non-legal tools have been unable to tackle the problem and that escalation to enforcement may be required.

The contract normally lasts for six months but it is recommended that it is reviewed at approximately three months to ensure it is still fit for purpose and does not require amending.

Mediation

Mediation can play a key role in anti-social behaviour issues and can be seen as a medium between self-resolution, and more formal tools and powers. Mediation can be offered to parties involved in an ASB case, where it is deemed appropriate and accepted by both parties.

Noise Monitoring

Sound monitoring equipment has been purchased by the Council, to utilise for some of their anti-social behaviour cases.

Before installing any sound monitoring equipment, the relevant officers would need to have received completed diary sheets and spoken to a representative from Environmental Health. This is to prevent duplication of work and to ensure that the most appropriate powers are utilised.

Sound monitoring equipment will be installed in a premises on a maximum of three occasions. If behaviour which warrants further action is not detected on any of these occasions, then equipment will not be installed again, except in exceptional circumstances.

We would need to notify any parties that we have received complaints, before the installation of any monitoring equipment. This ensures compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

Community Protection Warning / Community Protection Notices

The Community Protection Notice (CPN) is designed to stop a person aged 16 or over, business or organisation committing anti-social behaviour which spoils the community's quality of life.

The anti-social behaviour has to:

- have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality;
- be of a persistent or continuing nature; and
- be unreasonable.

A Community Protection Warning (CPW) must be served before a CPN can be issued.

Both positive requirements and prohibitions can be included in both the CPW and the CPN and could include reasonable timescales for certain actions to be carried out, or for behaviours to cease.

Breach of a CPN is a criminal offence. The punishment for a breach is a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £100, reduced to £75 if paid within 10 days, which discharges all liability for the offence. If the FPN remains unpaid after 14 days we will seek to prosecute, whereby the maximum penalty is a fine of up to £2,500 for individuals, or £20,000 for businesses.

The FPN is a discretionary stage of the process, and we will consider progressing directly to prosecution for any further or subsequent breaches of a CPN. The Council will also pursue all costs relating to the case.

Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)

PSPOs are aimed at ensuring public spaces can be enjoyed free from anti-social

behaviour. They are intended to provide a means of preventing individuals, or groups, committing anti-social behaviour in a public space where the behaviour:

- is having, or is likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life for those in the locality;
- is persistent or continuing in nature;

- is unreasonable, and;
- justifies the restrictions being imposed.

Councils can use PSPOs to prohibit specified activities within a defined public area. PSPOs differ from other tools introduced under the Act as they focus on the identified problem behaviour in a specific location, as opposed to targeting specific individuals.

A breach of a PSPO can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100, reduced to £75 if paid within 10 days, which discharges all liability for the offence.

If the FPN remains unpaid after 14 days we will seek to prosecute, whereby the maximum penalty is a fine of up to £1,000.

The FPN is a discretionary stage of the process, and we will consider progressing directly to prosecution for any further or subsequent breaches of a PSPO. The Council will also pursue all costs relating to the case.

Further information on Stafford Borough Council's PSPOs can be found at: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/pspo.

Closure Powers

This power can be used by the police and authorised officers from Stafford Borough Council, where there are high levels of nuisance, disorder, or illegal activity - either currently ongoing, or expected imminently. A closure notice prohibits access to the premises for up to 48 hours. A Closure Order can then be requested through the court for the property to be closed for up to 3 months.

This power will only be considered where other tools i.e. CPN's have failed to stop behaviour, or where the behaviour is so significant that the only way to stop it would be to close the premises. We will consult with colleagues in the Housing Options team at the earliest opportunity to prevent vulnerable people becoming homeless.

It is a criminal offence to breach the conditions imposed by a closure notice or order, with up to three months imprisonment for a Notice and six months/unlimited fine for an Order.

Criminal Behaviour Orders

Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBO) give agencies the power to deal with persistent ASB from individuals, who are also engaged in criminal activity.

A (CBO) can be issued by a court and is available on conviction for any criminal offence. The order is aimed at tackling the most serious and persistent offenders.

The CBO can deal with a wide range of anti-social behaviours following the individual's conviction for a criminal offence, for example, threatening violence against others in the community, and persistently being drunk and aggressive in public.

Civil Injunctions

Civil Injunctions are a court order which can be issued to stop individuals engaging in ASB. It can be used to prevent someone from doing something, but positive requirements can also be added to encourage the perpetrator to change their behaviour. These are generally used when the level of harm is significant, and other tools have been utilised without effect.

Injunctions can be used for anyone from the age of 10 years old. For juveniles, the Youth Offending Team must be consulted.

A power of arrest can be attached to an injunction, but this is normally reserved for instances where the offender has been violent, threatened violence, or where there is a reasonable chance that violence could occur.

Breach of an injunction can result in an unlimited fine, or imprisonment for up to 2 years. For young people under 18 the court can issue a supervision order or detention of up to 3 months.

4 Case Review

The ASB Case Review, formerly known as the Community Trigger, is a process which allows for victims of ongoing, persistent ASB to request a multi-agency review of their case. Any person has the right to activate a multi-agency review if they feel their complaint(s) regarding ASB has not been dealt with appropriately.

The Review is designed to ensure the Council, and our partners, are responding appropriately to cases of persistent ASB, especially where the victim is vulnerable or at greater risk.

This is not a complaints escalation procedure, its purpose is to identify if any further actions can be taken amongst agencies to address the ASB, with an Action Plan being formulated.

In Staffordshire, the agreed threshold for activating a Case Review is:

- Three separate incidents have been reported in the last 6 months to the police, council, or social landlord;
- The ASB was reported within 30 days of it taking place, and;

- The ASB is continuing.

Staffordshire Police are the single point of contact for a Case Review and a victim of ASB, or someone acting on their behalf, can ask to activate the review in one of the following ways:

- By telephoning Staffordshire Police on 101 and request that you wish to apply for a Case Review
- By using the Live Message service on Staffordshire Police's website - www.staffordshire.police.uk/
- By completing an online Case Review application here - www.staffordshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/asb/nw/request-asb-case-review-community-trigger/
- By writing to the Central Disclosure Unit, Staffordshire Police HQ, Weston Road, Stafford, ST18 0YY

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 places a duty on the relevant bodies to respond to the victim at points in the Case Review process. These include:

- The decision as to whether or not the threshold is met;
- The outcome of the Review, and;
- Any recommendations or actions agreed, as an outcome of the Review.

More information on the Case Review, including the full policy, can be found here - www.staffordshire.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/asb/sf/asb-case-review/

Safeguarding Our Staff

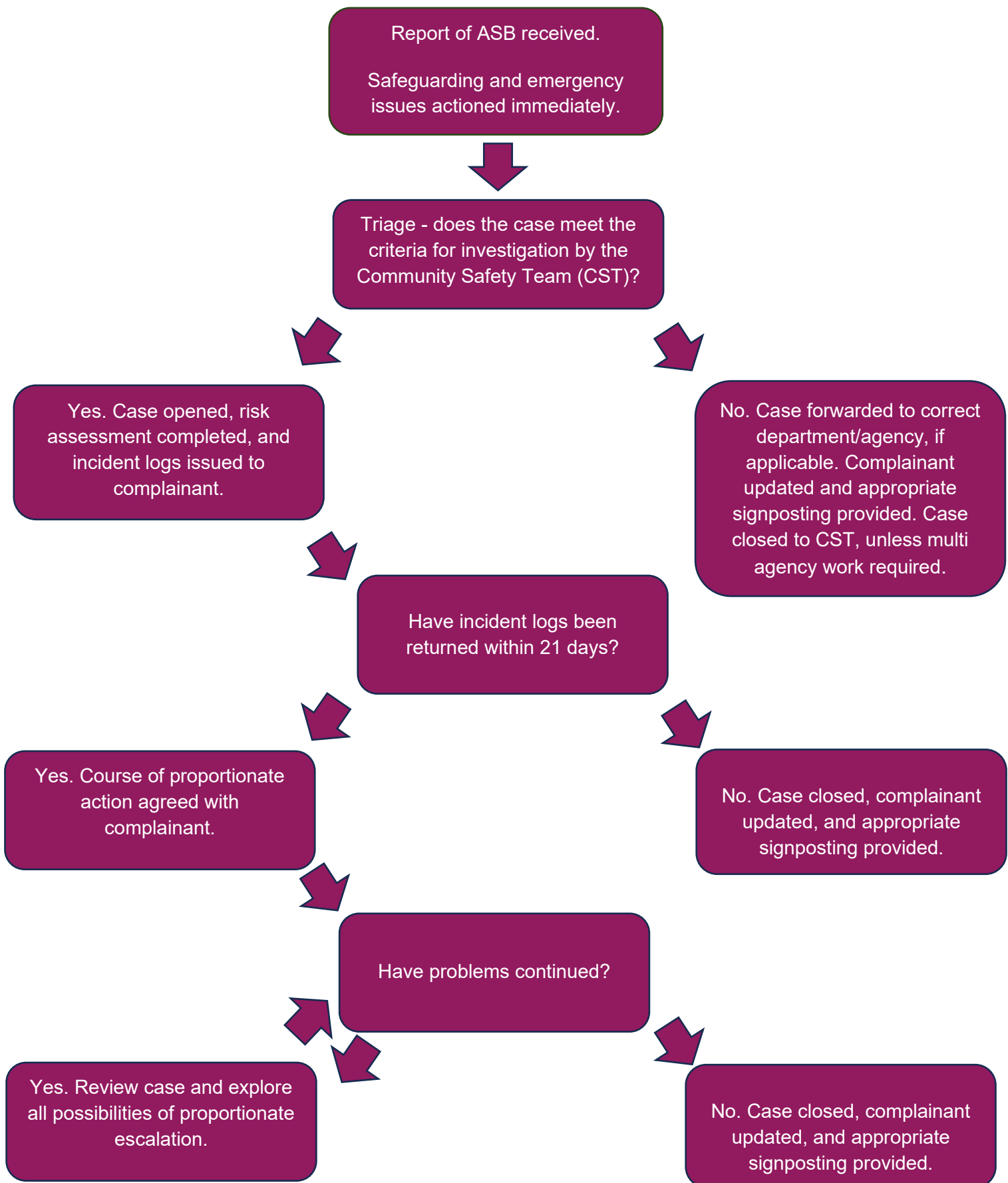
Stafford Borough Council will not tolerate, under any circumstance, any threats, violence or abusive behaviour towards our staff or contractors. We will act against any person who shows acts of aggression towards any person carrying out their work in respect of this ASB Policy or any other service. We may involve the police if it is decided that this course of action is appropriate, and we may also stop investigating the case.

Complaints

The Council is committed to handling complaints of ASB in a professional manner. If anyone is not happy with the way we have managed their case, we would welcome feedback so that we can review and improve our service.

Full information of the Complaints Procedure can be found here -
www.staffordbc.gov.uk/complaints

Appendix A - ASB Complaint Process



Agenda Item 4(b)i**Quarter 1 Performance Report for 2025-26**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2025
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress in delivering the Council's priorities and performance at the end of the quarter 1 for 2025-26.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress made during quarter 1 in the delivery of the Council's priorities and performance as set out in **APPENDICES 1 AND 2**.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and operational services.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Corporate Business Plan 2025-28 sets out the Council's priorities and strategic objectives. The plan is supported by Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) which set out the key projects and actions for delivery each year.
- 3.2 Overall, 100% of the key actions scheduled for quarter 1 have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in section 5 of the report and set out in detail in **APPENDICES 1A TO 1D**.
- 3.3 With regard to the operational performance of the key services of the Council, 88% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.6 and in **APPENDIX 2**.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The indicators and actions contribute individually to all of the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

5.1 The Corporate Business Plan 2025-28 sets out the Council's priorities and strategic objectives. There are four overarching priorities which focus on:

- the economy of the Borough;
- the health and wellbeing of residents;
- climate change and our environment; and
- being an effective Council.





5.2 The priorities are supported by a number of objectives that set out what the Council is aiming to achieve, how we will deliver these and how we will measure our performance.

Priority Delivery Plans

5.3 The Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) set out in **APPENDICES 1A TO 1D** to this report are the annual documents that set out how the Council will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; these plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery that are the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework.

5.4 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the actions set out in the Delivery Plans is given in **APPENDICES 1A TO 1D**. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of progress in delivery of key projects/actions for Quarter 1

Performance Rating	Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Actions due in Quarter 1	Actions not yet due	Total Number of Actions
Priority						N/A	
Prosperous Economy	3				3	16	19
Communities and Wellbeing		1			1	7	8
Climate Change and Environment	3	3			6	11	17
Effective Council		4			4	3	7
Total	6	8	0	0	14	37	51





5.5 At the end of quarter 1, of the 14 projects/actions due for delivery in this period:

- 43% have been completed; and
- 57% are on target to be completed;

Key Performance Indicators

5.6 In addition to the Priority Delivery Plans, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in **APPENDIX 2**. In summary:

Table 2 - Summary of key performance indicators for Quarter 1

Priority					N/A	Total Number of KPIs
	Performance exceeds target	Performance on target	Performance < 5% below target	Performance > 5% below target	Not Available / Annual	
Prosperous Economy	1	1			5	7
Communities and Wellbeing	2				4	6
Climate Change and Environment	5				2	7
Effective Council	3	2	2		4	11
Total	11	3	2	0	15	31

5.7 Of the 16 indicators due to be reported on in quarter 1:

- 69% indicators show performance above target;
- 19% indicators show performance on target; and
- 12% indicators show performance below target.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual services areas and by undertaking equality impact assessments for projects and programmes of work where this is necessary and appropriate.

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1A: The Economy
 Appendix 1B: Community
 Appendix 1C: Climate Change
 Appendix 1D: The Council
 Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2025-28

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 46411

Ward Interest: All





Report Track: Cabinet 29/09/25
 Resources Scrutiny Committee 23/09/25
 Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny 01/10/25
 Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 24/09/25

Key Decision: No

Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 1

				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
3				16	19

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 1
Successful attendance at UKREiiF event in May 2025 Completion of Station Approach project Agreed list of UKSPF projects for 25/26 and submission of return to MHCLG

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 1
None

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of regeneration schemes	Stafford Town Centre Transformation						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete work on Station Approach project 	X				Work on site completed in May 2025. Initial feedback on the improvements has been positive.	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete demolition works to Guildhall shopping centre and former Co-operative department store 			X			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree preferred development delivery option for cleared development sites 			X			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop wider masterplan/development framework for Stafford town centre 				X		
	Stafford Station Gateway						
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence stakeholder engagement on delivery of the strategic vision for the site 		X				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete land acquisition 		X				





Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Levelling Up Funded activities 				X		
Economic Growth Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and re-draft Economic Growth Strategy for consultation 				X		
Promotion of the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Stafford town centre development prospectus at UKREiiF 2025 	X				Investment Prospectus produced and launched at UKREiiF development event in Leeds, May 2025 with significant interest generated in the regeneration of Stafford town centre.	★
Pipeline of projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop pipeline of future economic development and regeneration projects 				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree programme of projects for UKSPF for 2025/26 	X				The programme was agreed with the Leader in advance of submitting to Government in May 2025. Full details are being reported to Cabinet in July 2025.	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete delivery of UKSPF programme for 2025/6 				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete review of section 106 policy and allocations 				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme and Project Allocations for section 106 funding through evidence for Cannock Chase SAC and Leisure 				X		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of planning services to enable economic growth	• Publish revised Local Development Scheme				X		
	• National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) assessment and New Local Plan implications			X			
	• Prepare New Local Plan and updated evidence base,				X		
	• Implement improvement plan for Development Management			X			
	• Full introduction of a chargeable pre-application service		X				

Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26

Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing


Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 1

				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
	1			7	8

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 1

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 1

Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing





Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of council owned temporary accommodation	Scope the acquisition of council owned temporary accommodation and options for management of the properties.		X				
	Cabinet approval for the acquisition and management of temporary accommodation units			X			
	Start of property acquisition				X		
Strategic Housing and Homelessness	Start procurement of a Stafford Housing Strategy.		X				
	Award contract for Housing Strategy			X			
Community Wellbeing	Work with partners and the Integrated Care Partnership to develop priorities for reducing health inequalities	X				Community Wellbeing Partnership and wider partners including NHS primary care network representatives have developed priorities under the CORE20+5 framework.	
	Complete Community Wellbeing Strategy, setting out priorities across community safety and health (2025-2028).			X			

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
	Deliver a small grant scheme to voluntary, community and social enterprises, to support delivery of the corporate plan and Community Wellbeing Strategy			X			

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Annual Delivery Plan for 2025-26

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 1

				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
3	3			11	17

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 1

During quarter 1 work has been taking place on the multiphase master plan for Rowley Park, Stafford, to improve and update the park and play area towards it becoming a main/destination type park. A significant sum of money has been identified from within existing s106 funds to contribute towards the above improvement works.

Climate Action education program with Keele University is now complete, delivered over three workshops senior managers and elected members learnt about ways in which the Council can work towards meeting its net zero ambitions and other climate actions.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 1

None



Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of Climate Change Action Plan	Training to be carried out for Senior Officers and Elected Members	X				Keele University delivered three training workshops in the first quarter to senior service managers and elected members	★
	Delivery of the Climate Change School Engagement Project	X	X	X	X	Work has begun to identify and develop relationships with appropriate schools in the Borough. Initial work has been carried out in some schools and will continue in next academic year	✓
	Decarbonisation Plans for SBC owned Sites will be commissioned that will provide options for the decarbonisation of our buildings.				X		
Local Plan with positive climate change policies	Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation study				X		
Biodiversity in new developments	Implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with statutory requirements	X				A BNG guidance note has been produced and has been published on the Council's website.	★
Nature Recovery	Produce a nature recovery strategy				X		
	Develop an action plan to deliver the nature recovery strategy				X		

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Minimise Household Waste - Introduction of Mandatory weekly food waste collections	Complete procurement of food waste caddies	X				Food waste caddy procurement has been completed with orders placed with the successful bidder. Deliveries expected late 2025/early 2026.	★
	Launch of communications plan for food waste introduction with residents			X			
	Distribute new food waste caddies and new service information to residents				X		
Tree Management	Secure approval and funding for integrated tree management system and tree inspections		X				
	Begin procurement of joint tree management system (including Open Customer Facing Public Portal)		X				
	Commence procurement of outsourced routine health and safety tree inspections			X			
	Implement joint tree management system				X		
	Prepare joint investment strategy and work programme as part of the budget setting process				X		





Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Investment in Parks, Play Areas and Open Spaces	Carry out play area development in accordance with play area improvement programme, agreed by Cabinet during 2024/25	X	X	X	X	Work is being undertaken on the multi-phase master plan for Rowley Park, Stafford, as a main/destination park.	
	Prepare Cabinet Report to identify S106 and other capital funding to enable the implementation of the Councils play area/parks improvement programme	X	X	X	x	A significant sum of s106 funding has been identified for use within Rowley Park to enable improvements, subject to Cabinet and Council approval.	

Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26

Priority 4 - Effective Council




Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 1


				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
	4			3	7

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 1
Progress is being made across all of the actions scheduled for quarter 1 but none of them have been completed in full.





Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 1
None

Priority 4 - Effective Council





Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Provide more services online and improve accessibility	Work with services to produce a work programme		X				
	Delivery of the work programme (key actions will be added once the plan has been developed and approved)			X	X		
Delivery of the Value for Money Improvement Plan (now referred to as the Governance Improvement Plan)	Complete delivery of the actions set out in the VFM improvement plan (this is reported on separately to Cabinet and the Audit and Accounts Committee)	X	X	X	X	Working is ongoing to deliver the actions set out in the improvement plan - this is the subject of a separate report	
Code of Governance	Review and update the Code of Governance	X				Work is in progress. The Code has been reviewed but Cipla have recently issued updated guidance and this needs to be reflected in the revised Code of Governance. It is intended to complete the review in Q2	
Consultation	Undertake consultation/engagement with the public and stakeholders on key projects that affect our communities eg the production of the local plan. These will be determined each year as part of the development of the annual priority delivery plans.	X				Work is ongoing with regard to undertaking consultation for specific projects but the development of the programme for the year has been delayed due to the work on LGR consultation taking priority	

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Local Government Reorganisation	Develop an action plan to respond to the Government's Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation.	X				At the moment the focus is on the development of the detailed proposal due to be submitted in November 2025. This is being developed collaboratively by the 6 district and borough councils in Southern and Mid Staffordshire. The working groups supporting this only met for the first time in June/July and the work programme is still evolving. It is intended to provide Cabinet with a report in Q2.	
	Delivery of the action plan (key actions will be added once the plan has been developed and approved)		X	X	X		



Summary of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2025/26

Symbol	Description	Prosperous Economy	Communities and Wellbeing	Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment	Effective Council	Total
	Performance exceeds target	1	2	5	3	11
	Performance on target	1			2	3
	Performance < 5% below target				2	2
	Performance > 5% below target					0
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	5	4	2	4	15
	TOTAL	7	6	7	11	31

KPIs for Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy





Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
	Performance exceeds target	1				
	Performance on target	1				
	Performance < 5% below target					
	Performance > 5% below target					
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	5				
	TOTAL	7				

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Regeneration									
Employment rate	79.8%	80%							Annual figure released by ONS. % relates to working age population (16-64) economically active i.e. in work or training.
Town centre vacancy rate	N/A	N/A							Data not available; indicator to be reviewed.
Number of housing completions	612	749							Annual figure at year end (1 April 25 to 31 March 26)
Planning Services									
Major Planning Applications determined within time	93.3%	60%	60%						
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	85.3%	70%	78.6%						

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	Forecast < 10%	< 10%	N/a						No major appeals determined
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined	Forecast < 10%	< 10%	N/a						No non-major appeals determined

KPIs for Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing





Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
	Performance exceeds target	2				
	Performance on target					
	Performance < 5% below target					
	Performance > 5% below target					
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	4				
	TOTAL	6				

Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Strategic Housing, Homelessness and Assistance									
% households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6 + months	62%	39%	58%					★	The target is the national percentage, allowing comparison to local performance
Delivery of affordable housing per year working with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England (Annual)	200 homes	210 homes						N/A	Annual figure rather than quarterly reporting
No of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) completed	160	125	28					★	
Annual report on delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grants service	N/A							N/A	
Leisure, Culture & Heritage									
Annual Report from Freedom Leisure setting out the performance of all facilities and the wider wellbeing work and events they facilitate.	N/A							N/A	To be produced at year end.

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Health and Wellbeing									
Total value of financial outcomes achieved as a result of the Citizen's Advice contract	£4,797,117	N/A Measure only	£674,929					N/A	Contextual information only

KPIs for Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment





Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
	Performance exceeds target	5				
	Performance on target					
	Performance < 5% below target					
	Performance > 5% below target					
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	2				
	TOTAL	7				

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment





Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Climate Change									
Climate Action Plan progress is monitored via the Climate Action Board and reported quarterly to Cabinet.	New measure								Data has been collected to enable review of the Action Plan but delays in recruiting to Climate Change roles has affected officer capacity in this part of the service.
Waste and Recycling									
% collections completed first time	99.97%	99.90%	99.96%					★	
Number of missed bin collections (including assisted) / 100,000 / qtr.	38 per 100,000	<40 per 100,000	38.12					★	
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	46.23%	48%	49.20%					★	
Amount of household residual waste collected per household (Kgs)	449.05 Kgs Ave. 112.26 kgs	<448 kgs or 112 kgs / qtr.	103.88kg					★	



Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Streetscene									
% residents' satisfied with the appearance of town centres (Stafford, Stone and Eccleshall)	95%	90%	98.3%					★	
Satisfaction with the quality of our parks, play areas, and open spaces.		New							Annual Measure


KPIs for Priority 4 - Effective Council

Symbol	Description	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	End of Year
	Performance exceeds target	3				
	Performance on target	2				
	Performance < 5% below target	2				
	Performance > 5% below target					
N/A	Reported Annually / Not Applicable	4				
	TOTAL	11				

Priority 4: Effective Council

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Good Customer Experience									
Days taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Claims	19.3	20 days	20						
Days taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax change of circumstances	4.9	9 days	2.1						
% of calls answered	96.7%	95%	97.1%						
Number of calls answered			15036					N/A	This is not a measure but gives context to the performance in call handling
Average call wait time	59 seconds	90 seconds	44 seconds						
Number of services (forms) available online	New	N/A	55					N/A	This year will be used to establish a baseline

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Number of online transactions	New	N/A	10,218					N/A	This year will be used to establish a baseline
Funding Council Services									
% of Council Tax collected annually	97.8%	98% at end of year	28.6%						Compares to 28.7% at Q1 last year
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98.6%	98% at end of year	28.9%						Compares to 31.2% at Q1 last year. The dip is caused by a number of retail, hospitality and leisure premises facing a sharp increase in their bills and also £1.2m (2%) of new assessments being rated and billed later than the annual bill round.

Indicator	Year End 24/25	Target 25/26	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 25/26	Rating Symbol	Comments
Good Governance									
Freedom Of Information requests within time i.e. 20 working days	79.4%	85%	83%						Late responses are not attributable to a specific department in this quarter. FOI officers will send reminders out to all departments prior to response deadlines.
Number of public consultations/engagement exercises undertaken		New							Annual measure

Agenda Item 4(b)ii**Updated Strategic Risk Register**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2025
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out details of the Council's Strategic Risk Register as at end of June 2025

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve the Strategic Risk Register and considers the progress made in the identification and management of the strategic risks.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 Cabinet are required to approve the Strategic Risk Register.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 All strategic risks and associated action plans have been reviewed, and the Council's risk profile is summarised in the table below:

Risk Status	Number of Risks at 1 April 2025	Number of Risks at 30 June 2025
Red (High)	5	5
Orange (Medium)	4	4
Yellow (Moderate)	0	0
Green (Low)	0	0
Blue (Negligible)	0	0
TOTAL	9	9

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 Risk Management as a process supports the Council's Effective Council priority

4.2 The Risk Register supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

- (i) Risk management is a systematic process by which key business risks/opportunities are identified, prioritised, and controlled so as to contribute towards the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives.
- (ii) The strategic risks set out in the Appendices have been categorised against the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

5.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 state that:

"A relevant body must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control which:-

- (a) facilitates the effective exercise of its functions and the achievement of its aims and objectives;
- (b) ensures that the financial and operational management of the authority is effective; and
- (c) includes effective arrangements for the management of risk."

5.2 Risk can be defined as uncertainty of outcome (whether positive opportunity or negative threat). Risk is ever present and some amount of risk-taking is inevitable if the council is to achieve its objectives. The aim of risk management is to ensure that the council makes cost-effective use of a risk process that has a series of well-defined steps to support better decision making through good understanding of risks and their likely impact.

Management of Strategic Risks/Opportunities

5.3 Central to the risk management process is the identification, prioritisation, and management of strategic risks/opportunities. Strategic Risks are those that could have a significant impact on the Council's ability to deliver its Corporate Priorities and Objectives.

5.4 A new risk management framework was approved for implementation by Cabinet on 28 November 2024 and this has been used to do a fundamental review of the Council's Strategic Risks. This resulted in a fully revised risk register being produced for 1 April 2025. This has been reviewed and updated at the end of the first quarter of 2025-26 and a summary is attached as **APPENDIX 1**.

5.5 Work continues to enhance and refine the risks and actions identified to manage them as the Strategic Risk Register matures. As such it is anticipated that risks and wordings may change as Leadership Team have a better understanding of the risks.

5.6 The risk summary illustrates the risks/opportunities using the “traffic light” method i.e.

Red High risk, score 12 and above (action plan required to reduce risk and/or regular monitoring by Cabinet/Audit Committee)

Orange Medium risk, score 6 to 9 (action plan required to reduce risk and monitored by Leadership Team)

Yellow Moderate risk, score of 3 to 4 (risk within risk appetite, no action plan required but watching brief to ensure controls are effective and operating)

Green Low risk, score below 3 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

Blue Negligible Risk, score of 1 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

5.7 Cabinet are receiving summary level information on all the risks as they stand at 30 June **APPENDIX 1** and detailed information of risks which are red at a residual level **APPENDIX 2**.

5.8 Leadership Team have reviewed all risks in detail and are monitoring all of the orange risks in addition to the red risks.

5.9 At the end of June some actions had been completed but there was no change in risk scores for any of the risks.

5.10 As the risk register continues to develop and mature some of the risks have been updated to reflect the current position or to provide a clearer picture of the risk. This has seen a reassessment of the target scores on a number of risks to reflect the current environment. A summary of the key changes is set out below:

- Risk 3 has been reworked based on current position and the actions have been rewritten to reflect the appointment of consultants to support the 6 southern and mid Staffordshire Councils develop a business case.
- Risk 6 has had the target score changed from an 8 to a 12 due to a limited market for key professionals making recruitment difficult, the uncertainty around Local Government Reorganisation and the number of Major Projects which are impacting core services. It is unlikely that the risk score can be further lowered even with the current planned actions.
- Risk 16 has had an implementation date changed for one action from Quarter 1 to Quarter 2 due to a change in the project delivery timescales.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Risk Management implications are included within the body of the report and appendices.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Summary of Strategic Risks - 30 June 2025

Appendix 2 - Strategic Risk Register Red Risks - 30 June 2025

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

File of papers held by the Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager.

Contact Officer: Stephen Baddeley

Telephone Number: 01543 464415

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 25/9/2025

Audit and Accounts Committee 30/9/2025

Key Decision: N/A

Stafford Borough Council Summary of Strategic Risk Register as at 30 June 2025

Risk Ref	Risk Owner	Risk Name	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score April	Residual Risk Score June	Direction of Travel in Period	Target Score
2025-03	Chief Executive	Local Government reorganisation	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-06	Chief Executive	Corporate capacity	16	12	12	↔	12
2025-09	Operations	Safe Management of Trees	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-16	Economic Development and Planning	Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Project	16	12	12	↔	8
2025-08	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Financial Stability - SBC	16	9	9	↔	9
2025-04	Transformation and Assurance	IT Resilience	16	8	8	↔	8
2025-10	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Failure to deliver good governance	16	8	8	↔	4
2025-02	Housing and Corporate Assets	Health and safety arrangements for properties	12	12	12	↔	8

[SBC]

Risk Ref	Risk Owner	Risk Name	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score April	Residual Risk Score June	Direction of Travel in Period	Target Score
2025-12	Chief Executive	Health and safety arrangements for people	12	8	8	↔	4

Key to Direction of Travel

↓	Risk has decreased	↔	Risk level unchanged	↑	Risk has increased
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Appendix 2

Stafford Borough Council Strategic Risk Register as at 30 June 2025

Risk Ref	2025-02
Risk Owner	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
Risk Name	Health and safety arrangements for properties
Risk Description	Operational property procedures including CDM compliance, maintenance and management of properties is not sufficient to adequately ensure they are safe for tenants, employees, leaseholders or visitors leading to death or serious injury.
Consequences	Death or serious and minor injury and prosecution by HSE and private legal action. Reputational damage. Deterioration in condition of buildings Depreciation of buildings
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Health and Safety

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	3	12
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		8
Comment on Target Score: There are situations outside of the control which will lead to accidents and a large housing and property portfolio means that a risk score of 4 is unlikely as accidents and incidents will still happen.		

Controls	Assurances
Compliance data is held for all properties	Monthly data validation by managers
Policies approved by Leadership Team and published online, regularly reviewed.	Monitoring of spreadsheets by management
Updated policies and procedures for compliance areas.	Internal Audit Reviews

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Monthly validation of corporate assets data	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2025/26	Contact has been made with tenants of leased properties and compliance documents/certificates have been requested
Review of Health and Safety Compliance Records of Contractors	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2025/26	In progress - information is being requested from key contractors
Appoint Contractor to undertake Building Condition Surveys (prioritise top 5 - 60 in total)	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2024/25	Building Condition Surveys - 23 sites completed, Consultant prices received, and an order has been placed with Lambert Smith Hampton for a further
Appoint Contractor to undertake Fire Risk Assessments	Interim Asset Manager	Q3 2025/26	Contractor appointed to undertake Fire Risk Assessment (FRA's) All FRA's will be completed by the end of July 2025
Lease and Asset Reviews	Interim Asset Manager	Q4 2025/26	In progress

Progress Updates

Current Position	<p>Primary Contractors have been contacted for up-to-date insurances, qualifications and industry registration details (as required) along with risk assessments and method statements for generic works. Site or job specific RAM's will be requested as needed.</p> <p>Building Condition Surveys - 23 sites completed, Consultant prices received, and an order has been placed with Lambert Smith Hampton for a further 7 at a cost of £22,400. To include M&E at the Crematorium and Civic Centre.</p> <p>Contractor appointed to undertake Fire Risk Assessment (FRA's) All FRA's will be completed by the end of July 2025.</p> <p>Compartmentation Surveys and Fire Door Surveys to be commissioned in QTR 2 for Civic Centre, Crematorium, Stone Office</p> <p>19 Re-Instatement Valuations Completed and the remainder will be picked up as part of the Building Condition Surveys.</p> <p>Lease reviews continue.</p>
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[SBC]

Risk Ref	2025-03
Risk Owner	Chief Executive
Risk Name	Local Government reorganisation
Risk Description	The Council has to divert resources to the management of the Council's response plans for Local Government re-organisation which threatens the ability to maintain the quality of services at a time when capacity is already stretched.
Consequences	Core Services and major projects fail to be delivered Reputational damage
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Capacity/Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		8
Comment on Target Score: As planning for LGR is still in its infancy, it is too soon to be confident that we can mitigate this risk fully and reduce it to a 4. At present it is considered we can reduce the likelihood to a 2 giving a target score of 8. As planning and work progresses, actions and the target score will be reviewed. Progress with this risk is also linked to the risk regarding capacity (ref 2025-06).		

Controls	Assurances
LGR lead officers identified	Cabinet
	Scrutiny Committee
	Leadership Team

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Consultants to be appointed to support the development of the business case and work plan to deliver this	Chief Executive	Quarter 1 2025/26	The Southern and Mid Staffs Councils have collectively appointed consultants to support the development of the business case for submission to Government in November 2025.
Work plan for LGR Submission	Chief Executive	Quarter 1 2025/26	A workplan has been prepared by the consultants supporting the preparation of the business case

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Assessment of resources needed to deliver the respective work plans	Chief Executive	Quarter 1 2025/26	5 workstreams have been set up to support the development of the business case. Members of Leadership Team have been identified to be the Council's representative on each of the workstreams; the focus is on corporate functions to lead this work
Communications and Engagement Strategy to be prepared	Communications Manager	Quarter 1 2025/26	The Communications Working Group is looking to coordinate across the Southern and Mid Staffordshire Councils.

Progress Updates

Current Position	<p>The planned actions have been updated to reflect the appointment of consultants to support the development and preparation of a business case for submission to the Government in November 2025 in conjunction with the five other councils in southern and mid Staffordshire.</p> <p>Working groups comprising representatives from each Council have been set up to support this work. Initial meetings have taken place of all 5 groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications; • Finance and Data; • Legal and Governance; • Service Design and Transformation; and • People and Workforce <p>A first draft of the business case is scheduled to be completed by the end of August.</p> <p>One of the first key tasks has been to collate data; capacity to do this has been a challenge but has been completed. The working groups are meeting regularly and this is also impacting on senior officers time. It is anticipated that this will continue into Quarter 3 when the business case has to be submitted.</p> <p>This has only impacted on corporate services to date and there has been no impact on front line service delivery.</p>
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Risk Ref	2025-06
Risk Owner	Chief Executive
Risk Name	Corporate capacity is insufficient to maintain provision of core services and deliver major projects
Risk Description	The inability to recruit and retain staff particularly in statutory and other core areas threatens service delivery across the Council. This risk is exacerbated by other factors such as the number of high priority projects, large procurement exercises, demand for new software, competing priorities and Local Government Reorganisation.
Consequences	Projects are delayed or not implemented Operational services are delivered to a lower standard, backlogs arise or service not delivered at all Complaints/damage to reputation Wellbeing of staff who are under pressure to deliver
Corporate Objective SBC	Effective Council
Main Risk Category	Capacity/Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		12
Comment on Target Score:		
<p>Due to the limited market in key professions such as Finance, Legal, Planning etc, the uncertainty created by Local Government Reorganisation and the volume of major projects in progress, it is considered that the residual risk score cannot be reduced further and actions planned are focussed on maintaining the current position.</p>		

Controls	Assurances
Corporate Plan sets out priorities and key projects	Performance reporting
Use of agency staff and contractors to cover posts which are difficult to recruit to	
Market supplements to enhance salary to attract candidates	
Management of absences	Oversight by HR

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Assessment of capacity, pinch points and reductions in workload consequentially	Leadership Team	Q1 2025/26	Assessment of current vacancies completed and work underway to review work plans / major projects
Management of expectations/discussion with Cabinet	Chief Executive/ Leadership Team	Q2 2025/26 and ongoing	

Progress Updates

Current Position	<p>Work has started to assess capacity and workload issues. An assessment has been completed of vacancies and work has started to identify all of the current and planned projects for 2025/26. This will be completed in Q2.</p> <p>From the work done so far, it is considered that the actions planned are unlikely to reduce the residual risk score so the target has been reviewed and aligned with the residual score. Action will continue to be taken to maintain the position at current levels and prevent it from deteriorating.</p>
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[SBC]

Risk Ref	2025-09
Risk Owner	Operations
Risk Name	Safe Management of Trees
Risk Description	Risk of a tree or part of a tree falling on an individual/s causing death or serious injury. Risk of a tree or part of a tree falling onto a building causing severe damage to a property or the death or serious injury of an individual/s.
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death/Serious Injury • Damage to property • HSE Investigation/Prosecution • Corporate Manslaughter • Insurance Claims
Corporate Objective SBC	Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment
Main Risk Category	Capacity/Service Delivery

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
Target Score		8
<p>Comment on Target Score: Given the number of trees and the unpredictability of the weather, and the increase in the number of severe weather events, it is considered the current residual likelihood score sits at a 3. With the residual impact score remaining at a 4, it makes the overall residual risk score a 12. It is unlikely that the impact score can be reduced below a 4. Due to its categorisation, the nature, and the subject area it may also be difficult to reduce the likelihood from a 3 to a 2. The residual risk score will remain high for some time at a 12 until re-inspections have been undertaken, and resultant work programmes are well established. Given the circumstances of the risk, while currently higher than preferred at 12, an overall goal of a residual risk score of an 8 is considered acceptable in the longer-term.</p>		

Controls	Assurances
Trained Manager, Tree Officers, and Arboriculturists.	IA Reviews.
Tree Surveys	Management Information
Policies and Procedures for Tree Management	
Trees maintained using recognised tree risk management process	
SBC - Urban Forestry Strategy	
Allocation of semi-dedicated management resource.	
Knowledge of tree locations	
Historic/recent tree inspections	
Rudimental tree database/systems in place	

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Agree and secure long-term funding and resourcing	DCE(Resources) /Operations	Q1 2025/26	Report to be presented to Cabinet 24 July 2025 to secure funding for joint integrated ICT tree system and outsourced routine health and safety tree inspections
Review tree policy and procedures	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2025/26	
Implement new full risk-based tree management procedure	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2025/26	
Implement risk-based programme of tree works around inspection results	Natural Environment Manager	Q3 2025/26	
Implement new joint tree management ICT GIS based system	Natural Environment Manager	Q3/Q4 2025/26	
Outsource next round of tree inspections for all trees to create new baseline data (78,000 trees)	Natural Environment Manager	Q4 2025/26	
Implement procedure for on-going risk-based inspections of trees	Natural Environment Manager	Q4 2025/26	
Deliver and monitor tree risk-based works and ongoing inspections	Natural Environment Manager	Q1 2026/27	

Progress Updates

Current Position	Report to be presented to Cabinet 24 July 2025 to secure funding for joint integrated ICT tree system and outsourced routine health and safety tree inspections
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Risk Ref	2025-16
Risk Owner	Head of Economic Development and Planning
Risk Name	Delivery of Town Centre Regeneration Project
Risk Description	<p>There is a risk that the high profile large regeneration projects may not deliver as anticipated, to time or to budget, leading to reputational risks to the Council and creating financial risks that impact on the Council's financial position and could impact on service delivery and hinder the Council's wider ambition to secure economic prosperity for the District.</p> <p>There is a risk that either the Council may not be able to deliver the demolition phase of the project or secure a development partner to re-develop the cleared sites.</p>
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major reputational risk for the Council in terms of not delivering the schemes that local residents expect; potential that Council may be unsuccessful with future funding bids • Reduced growth and economic prosperity for local residents • Decline of town centres/impact on major redevelopment proposals • Council exposed to unplanned financial risks and pressure on revenue resources which impacts on delivery of core services • Clawback of funding for non-delivery • Increased pressure on already stretched services/functions of the council which have capacity issues. • Cleared sites could sit empty for indeterminate period if developer interest doesn't materialise
Corporate Objective SBC	Prosperous Economy
Main Risk Category	Reputation, Customer/Public Perception

Inherent Impact	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Risk Score
4	4	16
Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
4	3	12
	Target Score	8

Comment on Target Score:

Inherent nature of the risk profile of the regeneration schemes makes it difficult to reach a score of 4, therefore a target score of 8 has been set at this stage. External influences may affect the ability to get a long term provider.

It should be noted that the risk profile of the scheme will change over time as the Council completes the demolition works and secures development partners/operators to bring forward development on the cleared sites.

Controls	Assurances
Monitoring/finance returns being prepared and submitted to MHCLG in line with timescales in agreed memorandum of understanding	Project Sponsor Statutory Officer Meetings
Key decisions taken by Cabinet in relation to the project with relevant delegations and budget approvals in place	Statutory Officer Meetings Project Sponsor
Business cases to support key acquisition with quantification of costs and risks	Review by Statutory Officers Project Sponsor
Procurement using approved frameworks to select and appoint key contractors	SCC Procurement team Internal Audit Reviews Project Sponsor
Detailed risk registers and project plans to Operational Group	Project Board Project Sponsor Internal Audit reviews. External Audit overview Statutory Office Meetings
Governance arrangements to ensure oversight of programme delivery, spend and risks; with Programme Boards, Steering groups and project delivery meetings taking place on a regular basis	Project Board Project Sponsor Internal Audit reviews. External Audit overview. Statutory Officer Meetings External Audit
Ensure that the Council is effectively managing contractors and consultants	Project Sponsor Statutory Officer Meetings
Ensure that the Council has sufficient Programme/project management arrangements and capacity to deliver the projects	Statutory Officer Meetings Project Sponsor
Ensure that the Council's Health and Safety/CDM requirements are met, and demolition/construction works are managed safely and in line with regulations	Review by Statutory Officers Project Sponsor

Actions

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Monthly Risk Registers and Dashboards to Leadership Team and Project Board	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Q1 2025/26	Performance Dashboards and Risk Registers have been produced and reported to Project Boards.

Actions Planned	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress/Comments
Communications to stakeholders, partners and the public - development of Comms Strategy and Plan	Head of Economic Development and Planning, Communications Manager	Q2 2025/26	Target date revised from Q1 to Q2. The revised date was necessary due to a change in the project, with the Council acquiring additional properties which expand the scale of the regeneration opportunity.
Finalise town centre investment prospectus to set out the Council's vision for the cleared site and undertake soft market testing/early market engagement	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Q2 2025/26	Town Centre prospectus was produced for the UKREiiF event in May 2025; the prospectus was well received with the Council organising meetings with 12 x developers and operators. There was strong interest in the regeneration opportunity being created by the Council.
Agree approach to securing development delivery	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Q3 2025/26	Follow up meetings are being arranged with developers post UKREiiF. Officers are commissioning consultants to produce a Development Framework which can be used to guide development within the cleared regeneration site.
Formal procurement process to appoint development partner(s)	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Q1 - 2026/27	Officers are currently researching Procurement Frameworks that could be used to select suitable development partners/operators.

Progress Updates

Current Position	<p>Performance Dashboards and Risk Registers have been produced and reported to Project Boards.</p> <p>Meetings with developers/operators are being organised to discuss the regeneration opportunity being created by the Council utilising the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) grant.</p>
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[SBC]

	<p>The Council is progressing further acquisitions to expand the footprint of the regeneration scheme which will create a more viable opportunity for developers/operators.</p> <p>Procurement frameworks are currently being researched with the view to taking a paper to Cabinet in the autumn to recommend a preferred approach to proceeding with a competitive developer selection process.</p>
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Agenda Item 4(b)iii

Governance Improvement Plan - Progress Report for Quarter 1 2025-26

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2025
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress in the delivery of the Governance Improvement Plan at the end of Quarter 1 2025-26.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress made in the delivery of the Governance Improvement Plan set out at **APPENDIX 1**.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The information allows Cabinet to ensure that all appropriate steps are being taken to improve the Council's governance arrangements.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The findings of the annual review of the Council's governance arrangements for 2024-25 were reported to the Audit and Accounts Committee on 25 June 2025. The report included an action plan to address the findings.
- 3.2 This report sets out the progress made in delivering the action plan up to the end of quarter 1 of 2025/26. Of the 27 actions due to be completed, 48% have been completed or are on target.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities





- 4.1 Good governance and financial management specifically links to the Council's priority to be "an effective Council" and the objectives relating to:
- Value for money to local taxpayers.
 - Good governance across the Council.

It also underpins the delivery of the Council's other corporate priorities and operational services.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, which includes the system of internal control and to publish an “annual governance statement” with the annual accounts.
- 5.2 In reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements, the Council has to identify any ‘significant governance issues’ and what action will be taken to address these. There is no single definition as to what constitutes a ‘significant governance issue’ and judgement has to be exercised. Factors used in making such judgements include:-
- the issue has seriously prejudiced or prevented achievement of a principal objective;
 - the issue has resulted in a need to seek additional funding to allow it to be resolved, or has resulted in significant diversion of resources from another service area;
 - the issue has led to a material impact on the accounts;
 - the Chief Internal Auditor has reported on it as significant, for this purpose, in the Internal Audit Annual Report;
 - the issue, or its impact, has attracted significant public interest or has seriously damaged the reputation of the Council;
 - the issue has resulted in formal action being taken by the Chief Financial Officer and/or the Monitoring Officer.
- 5.3 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2024-25 was approved by the Audit and Accounts Committee on 25 June 2025. The statement sets out details of the review undertaken, the “significant governance issues” identified and the actions to be taken to address them. This includes the outstanding actions identified during the VFM review undertaken by the External Auditors.
- 5.4 This report provides an update on the progress in delivering the planned actions at the end of quarter 1 (30 June 2025). Details of the progress is given at **APPENDIX 1** and overall performance is summarised in the table below:

Table 1: Summary of Progress - Governance Improvement Plan

Quarter					No longer applicable	Total Actions
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	N/A	
2024/25	3	2	3	4	1	13
Q1 2025/26	3	5	6			14
TOTAL	6 (22%)	7 (26%)	9 (33%)	4 (15%)	1 (4%)	27 due to date

5.5 At the end of Quarter 1 of the 27 actions due for delivery:

- 13 (48%) have been completed or are in progress;
- 13 (48%) of actions are behind schedule; and
- 1 (4%) is no longer applicable/outstanding.

5.6 Steady progress continues to be made in completing the actions set out in the improvement plan.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

A failure to deliver good governance, which includes the delivery of the improvement plan, has been included in the Council's Strategic Risk Register.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Governance Improvement Plan - Summary of Progress

8 Previous Consideration

None





9 Background Papers

Report to Audit and Accounts Committee 25 June 2025

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers
Telephone Number: 01543 464411
Ward Interest: All
Report Track: Cabinet 29 September 2025
Audit and Accounts Committee 30 September 2025
Key Decision: No





Governance Improvement Plan - Progress Report



Summary of Progress at 30 June 2025





Quarter					No longer applicable	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	N/A	
2024/25	3	2	3	4	1	13
Q1 2025/26	3	5	6			14
Q2 2025/26						5
Q3 2025/26						5
Q4 2025/26						3
TOTAL	6 (22%)	7 (26%)	9 (33%)	4 (15%)	1 (4%)	27 due to date




Commentary on Progress





Steady progress continues to be made with 48% of actions either completed in full or on target. Progress on 48% of the actions continues to be impacted by capacity and the work on Local Government Reorganisation is exacerbating this.



No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
VFM	Significant Governance Issues from the former VFM Improvement Plan				
VFM1	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Recommendation 1)				
17.	Regular performance monitoring to be re-established with budget managers and Leadership Team.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	The outturn for 2024/25 has been completed and will be reported on shortly.	
26.	Lesson learnt exercise to be undertaken of implementation of the finance system	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	Work on this has been deferred again due to the ongoing capacity issues in the Finance Team and the need to close down the accounts. It has now been rescheduled for Q3.	
27.	Training of managers in budget management and use of the new finance system.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	Completed	
28.	Review of Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not started on this due to other priorities taking precedence. This has been rescheduled for Q3.	
29.	Training for managers on Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
54.	Implementation of remaining module of the finance system, ongoing development and maximising use of system functionality	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		



No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
55.	Performance reporting for Cabinet and Scrutiny to be developed. This will be done alongside the review and development of performance and risk reporting.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
42.	Follow-on zero-based budgeting session with managers to continue work started as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 3 - 2025/26 for 26/27 budget setting		
VFM2	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Recommendation 1)				
44.	Consultation and engagement to be embedded into the planning for the delivery of key projects where appropriate to ensure schemes meet community needs eg regeneration projects, redevelopment of play areas	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work is ongoing with regard to undertaking consultation for specific projects but the development of the programme for the year has been delayed due to the work on LGR consultation taking priority	
VFM3	IT / Technology (Key Recommendation 2)				
19.	Update IT security policy and adopt a cyber security policy.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 3 2024/25	Completed	




No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
30.	Develop assurance reporting for IT eg report on outcome of annual health check/penetration testing to Leadership Team and Audit Committee	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work has commenced on the IT Assurance report, but is behind schedule. This will now be reported in Q2.	
31.	Review of what we include in procurements re ICT controls and information governance	Head of Transformation and Assurance, Chief Technology Officer, Head of Law and Governance and Information Manager	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work is in progress, but behind schedule. This will now be completed in Q2	
VFM4	Fraud (Key Recommendation 3)				
56.	Assess fraud risks and include in risk registers as appropriate	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work in progress as part of the development of directorate and operational risk registers,	
45.	Review Anti - Fraud and Bribery Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not yet started on this due to the work on developing and embedding risk management across the Council. It has been rescheduled to Q3.	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
46.	Review of Confidential Reporting Policy	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not yet started on this due to the work on developing and embedding risk management across the Council. It has been rescheduled to Q3.	
47.	Assess compliance against Cipfa 2014 Code for Fraud and develop an action plan as necessary	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not yet started on this due to the work on developing and embedding risk management across the Council. It has been rescheduled to Q3.	
61.	Review the information we report on fraud work (including data matching) to the Audit Committee.	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has not yet started on this due to the work on developing and embedding risk management across the Council. It has been rescheduled to Q3.	
VFM5	Performance Management (Key Recommendation 4)				
33.	Establish corporate project resources to support transformation work (funding allocated in 2024/25 budget)	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 3 2024/25	Proposals for a Transformation Team were approved by Cabinet as part of the Transformation Strategy (5 December 2024). However, this work is under review in light of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. It was planned to report to Cabinet in Q1 on the future direction on transformation and LGR but the working groups supporting the development of the LGR model and proposals in Southern & Mid Staffordshire only met for the first time in June/July. It is now intended to provide Cabinet with an update report in Q2.	N/A

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
34.	Review of all projects, the current governance arrangements and establish project reporting to Leadership Team	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Deputy Chief Executive (Place)	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work on this has not yet commenced - review to be undertaken in Q1 to set the framework for 2025/26	
57.	Develop and adopt a performance management framework to establish golden thread from Corporate Plan to service plans through to employee reviews. Framework to include protocols for ensuring data quality	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work has commenced on this and it is anticipated that this will be completed in Q3	
58.	Review our performance report style - delivery plans and KPIs. To consider the development of performance outcome measures	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	This will be completed as part of the work on the performance management framework	
59.	Performance reporting for waste and leisure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of KPIs for monitoring and reporting on performance; • establish internal validation process of contract performance; and • review information reported to Cabinet/Scrutiny 	Head of Transformation and Assurance, Head of Operations and Head of Wellbeing	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	The waste contract performance reporting has been reviewed and processes are in place to validate the contractor's data. The contractor will be required to present an annual report to the Scrutiny Committee in Q3 for the preceding year. Annual performance reporting for the leisure the contract has also been reviewed. The contractor is to be asked to present their report to the Scrutiny Committee in Q3.	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
32.	Establish a Corporate Project Management Methodology. Provide templates, guidelines, and training for key officers (LT, Service Managers and key Principal Officers/Team Leaders).	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
VFM6	HR related issues (Improvement Recommendations 1 and 3)				
23.	Complete review of hybrid working. This will inform the development of the workforce strategy and the review of the Code of Conduct as well as support the development of an asset strategy.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 3 2024/25	Report is to be discussed at Leadership Team on 15 July 2025	
22.	Establish our culture, values and type of organisation we want to be. This work will inform the following actions	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Put on hold pending further discussion in light of Local Government Reorganisation. Considering a light touch approach.	
48.	Develop a hybrid working policy and review other related policies and processes.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 2 - 2025/26		

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
49.	Review and update the Employee Code of Conduct	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 3 2025/26		
62.	Development of a workforce strategy that links to long term transformation/shared services	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		
VFM7	Risk Management (Improvement Recommendation 2)				
24.	Training for Leadership Team, managers, team leaders/principal officers on risk management	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Completed	
35.	Develop risk registers for each Directorate and ICT	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	The risk registers are being developed. A first draft of the risks has been completed but they need to be scored and action plans prepared	

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
36.	Establish escalation process between other risk registers and the SRR eg services, projects	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	This is being developed as part of the work on the Strategic Risk Register, the Directorate Risk Registers, etc.	
VFM8	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Recommendation 5)				
15.	Update the contracts register and ensure it is compliant with transparency requirements	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25	Work on this has slipped and will now commence in Q2.	
39.	Provide training for managers on procurement and contract management	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Training on Procurement and the new Regulations was completed in Q4	
50.	Work with managers and the County's Procurement Team to develop a procurements pipeline	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 2025/26		
51.	Process to be established for publication of key data on the Council's website to meet transparency requirements re spend data, contracts register	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 3 2025/26		

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
VFM9	Other Related Actions				
41.	Preparation of a transformation plan for Development Management to further reduce the backlog of planning applications and to manage this within the approved budget. (From AGS 2023-24)	Head of Economic Development and Planning	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	The review of Development Management has been completed and a transformation plan has been produced.	★
60.	Review of Code of Governance	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 1 - 2025/26	Work is in progress. The Code has been reviewed but Cipfa have recently issued updated guidance and this needs to be reflected in the revised Code of Governance. It is intended to complete the review in Q2	✓
53.	Review of Scheme of Delegations as part of shared services transformation. (From AGS 2023-24)	Monitoring Officer and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 2025/26		
52.	Establish an inventory of key policies and a programme of periodic reviews	Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		
63.	Development of Assurance Model	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2025/26		

No	Action	Lead Officer	Revised Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
New Significant Governance Issues Arising from the 2024/25 Governance Review					
GOV	Governance Framework				
GOV1	Training and reminders for managers on good governance and key components of the framework	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Initial session Quarter 2 - 2025/26		
GOV2	Monitoring compliance with the governance framework	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Mid Year Review to be undertaken in Q2		

Agenda Item 4(b)iv**Revenues and Benefits Collection Report -
Quarter 1**

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2025
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources
Portfolio:	Resources Portfolio

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform Cabinet of the performance of the Revenues and Benefits Service as regards:

- The collection of Council Tax during quarter 1 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
- The collection of Business Rates during quarter 1 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
- The recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit during quarter 1 of the 2025-2026 financial year.

1.2 To seek approval to the write off of the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES**.

2 Reason(s) for Report being 'Not for Publication'

2.1 In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the report is considered 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:

- Exempt Paragraph 1 - Information relating to any individual.
- Exempt Paragraph 2 - Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- Exempt Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the information regarding collections be noted.
- 3.2 That the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES** be written off.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.3 Efficient collection of the Council's revenues is of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by our preceptors.
- 3.4 Whilst our collection rates are traditionally good, regrettably not all of the monies owed to the Council can be collected and this report contains a recommendation to write off bad debts which cannot be recovered.

4 Key Issues

- 4.1 Council Tax due for the 2025/2026 year amounts to £111.8M of which some **28.6%** was collected by the 30 June.
- 4.2 Business Rates due for the 2025/2026 year amounts to £59.6M of which some **28.9%** was collected by the 30 June.

5 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 Not Applicable.

6 Report Detail

Council Tax

- 6.1 Council Tax is collected on behalf of the Borough Council, Parish Councils and our Major Preceptors (Staffordshire County Council and Commissioner for Police, Crime, Fire and Rescue). The effect of the Collection fund arrangements means that Stafford Borough Council retains around 10% of the council tax collected.
- 6.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounted to £111.8M and we have collected 28.6% of this up to the end of quarter 1. The collection rate for the same period last year was 28.7%.
- 6.3 The team will be increasing our efforts to collect older council tax debts due to the Council and this may impact some residents' ability to pay current charges.

- 6.4 In accordance with the Council's approved policies, all reasonable and lawful attempts are made to recover all amounts due. In the first instance this involves the issue of bills, reminders and final notices, followed by Summonses in the Magistrates Court where the warning notices are not effective. At all stages of this process, debtors are encouraged to engage in voluntary arrangements to repay their arrears, to prevent the need for formal action.

Where necessary and when Liability Orders are granted by Magistrates, the Council uses its powers to make deductions from earnings and benefits of debtors, where it can, and instructs Enforcement Agents where such deductions are not possible or appropriate.

In the most severe cases and for debts exceeding £5,000, the Council will consider personal bankruptcy action against individuals.

- 6.5 The recovery powers available to the Council are considerable but not completely infallible. There are occasions when bills are not paid and the debts cannot be recovered.
- 6.6 Statutory safeguards such as Debt Relief Orders, Individual's Voluntary Arrangements exist to protect debtors suffering hardship, to attempt to the expensive, stressful and sometimes ineffective process of personal bankruptcy. Where a debt is included in such an instrument, or when a debtor is bankrupt, our ordinary recovery powers cannot be used.
- 6.7 For any of our powers to be effective we need to know the whereabouts of a debtor, and this is not always the case. Where debtors abscond, we will use all reasonable endeavours to trace them and are often successful in doing so. Unfortunately, on occasions this is not so and we must submit a debt for write off.

Our trace procedures include:

- Checking our internal Council systems and following any information which may help us to trace the debtor.
- Use of credit reference agency data.
- Trace and collect facilities offered by our Enforcement Agencies
- Visits to the last known address by the Council's Property Inspector and use of external tracing agents.

Unfortunately, legislation does not currently permit access to DWP or HMRC records to trace Council Tax debtors or their employers, though a Cabinet Office project is currently reviewing this.

Data protection legislation allows us to receive information as to a debtor's whereabouts, but we cannot disclose information to other creditors.

Reciprocal arrangements with utility companies and similar are not therefore workable.

1 irrecoverable Council Tax debt in the sum of £11,441.76 are listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX** to this report.

Business Rates

- 6.8 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £59.6M of which **28.9%** was collected by the 30 June. This is a small decrease on last year's collection 31.2%
- 6.9 Repeating last year's performance in the coming year will be challenging as many retail, hospitality and leisure establishments are facing increased bills as the government relief to these premises has reduced from 75% last year to 40% this year. Additionally a number of new and increased rating assessments since the start of the financial year have increased the amount that we have to collect by another £12.m (2%). The bills in respect of the increases, having been issued later than the annual billing round, are due for payment, later in the year.
- 6.10 The recovery powers available to us are again contained in the Council's approved policies and are used in full. Those powers and our procedures are similar to the council tax powers described above, with the exception that deductions from individuals' benefits and earnings are not permissible, even if the debtor is an individual.
- 6.11 Where rates are owed by an individual, similar safeguards exist for the debtors and trace facilities are used by the Council for absconding debtors, as described above.
- 6.12 Additionally, in the case of business rates, as has been reported to Cabinet previously, our collection efforts are sometimes frustrated by weaknesses in legislation. Rates are due from the occupiers rather than the owners of property and where the occupier is a company, we can only recover from that company. Some proprietors will strip a company of its assets, or dissolve the company before we have had an opportunity to implement our recovery procedures. A new company is then formed in a similar style, to trade from the same premises.

Central Government has previously undertaken to review the loopholes that exist in rating and company legislation, though no changes have yet been received. Officers continue to actively monitor these issues.

- 6.13 2 irrecoverable Business Rate debts in the sum of £34,673.43 are listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX** to this report.

Housing Benefit Overpayments

- 6.14 The Council manages the Housing Benefit scheme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, who fund the cost of benefits paid to claimants.
- 6.15 Sometimes a claimant will be paid too much Housing Benefit, for example when the Council does not become aware of a change of circumstances until after the claimant has been paid the benefit. This is called an Overpayment of Housing Benefit. The Council is expected to recover these overpayments from the claimant in all but a few limited circumstances. DWP will fund only 40% of benefit which is overpaid as a result of claimant error or fraud.
- 6.16 Where an overpayment occurs as a result of a local authority error, DWP will provide 100% funding provided our error rate remains below a threshold of 0.48% of benefit paid, as it has routinely done for many years.
- 6.17 Recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit continues to progress well, with some £92.2K being collected in the first quarter of this financial year. This income is received into the General Fund, in addition to the Government subsidy and is not shared with preceptors.

7 Implications

7.1 Financial

Council Tax write offs are losses to the Collection Fund and, as such, form part of the cost of collection incurred by this Council.

The amounts being recommended are well below the value of the bad debt provision, which the Council includes within its accounts in expectation that some amounts owed will not be paid and cannot be recovered.

The cost of collecting the debts has been considered as part of the decision to put them forward for write off. If further information does come forward about the whereabouts of any of the individual debtors the Council will pursue recovery action.

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommenced.

7.2 Legal

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommended.

7.3 Human Resources

None

7.4 Risk Management

None

7.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

7.6 Health

None

7.7 Climate Change

None

8 Appendices

Appendix 1: Council Tax to be considered for Write Off - **CONFIDENTIAL**

Appendix 2: Business Rates to be considered for Write Off - **CONFIDENTIAL**

9 Previous Consideration

None

10 Background Papers

None

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Ward Interest:	Nil
Report Track:	Cabinet 29 September 2025 (Only)
Key Decision:	No