![Stafford Borough Council logo]

Dear Members

Cabinet

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Thursday 6 June** at **6.30pm** in the **Sheridan 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 - 6 JUNE 2024

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

AGENDA

1   Minutes of 7 May 2024 as circulated and published on 10 May 2024.

2   Apologies

3   Councillors' Question Time (if any)

4   Proposals of the Cabinet Members (as follows):-

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

Staffordshire Leaders Board – Terms of Reference

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 June 2024
Report of:	Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Leader of the Council

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To ask the cabinet to note and agree to the updated Terms of Reference for the Leaders Board (see Appendix 1) to enable Stoke on Trent City Council to join the Board as a constituent authority.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That the Cabinet note and agree to the updated Terms of Reference for the Leaders Board (**APPENDIX 1**).

Reasons for Recommendations

2.2   The County, City and Staffordshire's eight District and Borough Councils have worked together over a number of years in many ways to benefit residents. This includes our collective response to the pandemic, supporting businesses and the economy, creating jobs and opportunities, delivering nationally important employment sites (such as Redhill Business Park and Primepoint 14), working to reduce waste and increase recycling, tackling climate change, and by reimagining and reshaping the future of Stafford Town Centre and Station Gateway.

2.3   The Leaders Board was created to build on this collaboration by recognising that a formal joint committee would be able to speak to central Government for the area and our communities. It also provides the foundation for exploring the potential of a deal with government, when the right time comes to do so, for the devolution of powers and funding to the area.

2.4   Although Stoke on Trent were not one of the original members of the Leaders Board it was always hoped that they could be brought on board at some point, and agreement has now been reached to enable this to happen. This will

however require a number of amendments to be made to the Terms of Reference of the Board, and these amendments need to be considered and agreed by all parties, hence this report.

3 Terms of Reference Updates

3.1 Further to the previous Cabinet agreement of the Terms of Reference (2022), the key changes to note are summarised below:

(a) Stoke-on-Trent City Council are added as a 'constituent authority', with the Board comprising of all ten authorities across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

(b) The Terms of Reference now include a clause allowing the Board to exercise additional functions given to it by members.

(c) The remit section has been reworded in a number of places largely to change the emphasis around the Board's role (e.g. "oversee" rather than "lead and oversee").

(d) Health, Housing and Homelessness remain in the Terms of Reference but with the Board's role being one of coordination.

(e) The Terms of Reference now make clear that the scope of any potential Devolution Deal is not limited by the Terms of Reference themselves.

(f) The Terms of Reference now reserve the co-option of additional non-voting members and winding up the Board to the constituent authorities rather than being dealt with by unanimous voting at the Board.

(g) The notice period for exit has been reduced to three months.

The remit for the Leaders Board will be:

(a) To develop options for a devolution deal or deals for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent with HM Government.

(b) To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability.

(c) To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for enterprise development and organisation of business voice.

(d) To coordinate the alignment of local authority interaction with the Health sector in Staffordshire.

(e) To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for future development and infrastructure.

(f) To coordinate the alignment of relevant local authority plans in relation to Housing and Homelessness.

(g) To develop Staffordshire-wide joint initiatives to enhance local government efficiency and effectiveness.

(h) To develop plans and coordinate delivery for strategic economic growth that spans local boundaries.

(i)   To develop opportunities for joint action with respect to addressing social inequalities across the geography.

(j)   To act as a conduit for coordinated engagement with other sub-regional and regional bodies the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect.

(k)   Where appropriate, to agree shared priorities and bids for funding to existing and new external funding sources.

(l)   To monitor and evaluate projects and programmes of activity commissioned directly by the Committee.

(m)   To communicate and, where collectively agreed, to align activity across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on a range of other key public priorities that affect citizens.

(n)   To prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Committee may influence or control.

The full updated Terms of Reference proposed for the Leaders Board are attached as Appendix 1.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   The priorities agreed by the Leaders Board are consistent with those of the Borough Council.

5   Implications

5.1   Legal

The Joint Committee will continue to act as a Joint Committee under Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant Regulation of the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

5.2   Human Resources

There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report.

5.3   Risk Management

There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

5.4   Equalities and Diversity

There are no immediate and significant financial implications arising from the updated Terms of Reference for the Leaders Board in itself. The Board will continue to derive its support from its constituent members. As and when individual projects are commissioned the Board will consider the resource requirements necessary to deliver those projects.

5.5   Climate Change

As noted above a key remit of the Board is to oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability. This will further benefit the Borough Council's and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's joint Climate Change challenges and opportunities.

5.6   Community Impact Assessment

As and when individual joint projects are commissioned by the Board, and where appropriate, Council consideration will be given to any specific Community Impact Assessment requirements.

6   Appendices

Appendix 1: Updated Terms of Reference for the Staffordshire Leaders Board.

7   Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Tim Clegg

Telephone Number: 01785 619200

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Cabinet 6 June 2023 (Only)

Key Decision: N/A

The Staffordshire Leaders' Board
Constitution for the Joint Committee

1. Purpose

1.1 To establish a Joint Committee of the local authorities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to explore opportunities for improved joint working and to develop plans for potential devolution of powers from Government through a County Deal or similar arrangements.

2. Governance

2.1 The Joint Committee will act as a Joint Committee under Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

2.2 The Joint Committee will be known as the Staffordshire Leaders' Board ("the Leaders' Board").

2.3 The Leaders' Board will comprise the local authorities within the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area: Cannock Chase District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, South Staffordshire District Council, Stafford Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Tamworth Borough Council ("the constituent authorities").

2.4 Political Proportionality rules will not apply to the Leaders' Board as constituted.

2.5 The Leaders' Board will be a legally constituted body with powers delegated to it by the constituent authorities in the following areas:

a) to prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Leaders' Board may influence or control.

b) to review future governance requirements and delivery arrangements and develop options as to how these can be best achieved in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent for consideration by the constituent authorites.

c) to have direct oversight of the projects and initiatives which the Leaders' Board has initiated or over which it has control of the funding.

d) to jointly discharge any function expressly given to it by any or all constituent members

e) to have oversight of other key projects and initiatives within its remit as set our herein.

2.6   The Leaders' Board will not hold funds or monies on behalf of the constituent authorities.

2.7   Should the Leaders' Board work plan necessitate a change in the delegated powers and terms of reference of the Leaders' Board any such change would require the approval of all the constituent authorities.

2.8   These terms of reference will be reviewed on a biennial basis or sooner if necessary.

3. Remit

3.1   The remit of the Leaders' Board will be:

 i.   To develop options for a devolution deal or deals for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent with HM Government. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not intended that these Terms of Reference place any restriction on the form or scope such a deal or deals.

 ii.   To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability.

 iii.   To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for enterprise development and organisation of business voice.

 iv.   To coordinate the alignment of local authority interaction with the Health sector in Staffordshire.

 v.   To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for future development and infrastructure.

 vi.   To coordinate the alignment of relevant local authority plans in relation to Housing and Homelessness.

vii. To develop Staffordshire-wide joint initiatives to enhance local government efficiency and effectiveness.

viii. To develop plans and coordinate delivery for strategic economic growth that spans local boundaries.

ix. To develop opportunities for joint action with respect to addressing social inequalities across the geography.

x. To act as a conduit for coordinated engagement with other sub-regional and regional bodies the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect.

xi. Where appropriate, to agree shared priorities and bids for funding to existing and new external funding sources.

xii. To monitor and evaluate projects and programmes of activity commissioned directly by the Committee.

xiii. To communicate and, where collectively agreed, to align activity across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on a range of other key public priorities that affect citizens.

xiv. To prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Committee may influence or control.

4. Membership

4.1 One member from each constituent authority (such member to be the Leader from each constituent authority) and for the purposes of these terms of reference this member will be known as the principal member.

4.2 Each constituent authority to have a named substitute member who must be an executive member.

4.3 Where both the principal member and the substitute member attend a meeting of the Leaders' Board the principal member shall be deemed as representing their authority by the Chair or Vice Chair.

4.4 In the event of any voting member of the Leaders' Board ceasing to be a member of the constituent authority which appointed him/her, the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.

4.5 Where a member of the Leaders' Board ceases to be a Leader of the constituent authority which appointed him/her or ceases to be a member of the Executive of the constituent authority which appointed him/her, he/she shall also cease to be a member of the Leaders' Board and the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.

4.6 Each constituent authority may remove its principal member or substitute member and appoint a different member or substitute as per that authority's rules of substitution, and by providing twenty-four hours' notice to the Chair or the Secretary.

4.7 The Leaders' Board may from time to time co-opt additional non-voting members ("co-opted members") with the agreement of all the constituent authorities but such co-opted members will not be members or officers of the constituent authorities.

4.8 Each constituent authority may individually terminate its membership of the Leaders' Board by giving three months written notice of its intent to leave the Leaders' Board to the Chair or the Secretary. At the end of these three months, but not before, the authority will be deemed to no longer be a member of the Leaders' Board.

4.9 Where an authority has previously terminated its membership of the Leaders' Board it may rejoin the Leaders' Board with immediate effect on the same terms as existed prior to its departure.

5. Quorum

5.1 The quorum shall be 5 members. No business will be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum exists at the beginning of a meeting. If at the beginning of any meeting, the Chair or Secretary after counting the members present declares that a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.

6. Chair and Vice Chair

6.1 The Chair of the Leaders' Board will be the principal member of Staffordshire County Council (subject to para 6.3 below)

6.2 The position of Vice Chair shall be filled by the principal member of Stoke-on-Trent City Council (subject to para 6.3 below)

6.3 The Leaders' Board will vote annually at its first meeting after all the constituent authorities' annual meetings as to whether the Chair should continue to be the principal member of the County Council. An annual vote will also take place as to whether the Vice-Chair should continue to be the principal member of Stoke-on-Trent City Council, or in each case, should be the principal member of one of the other constituent authorities, with the option to rotate both roles annually.

6.4 The Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair or in their absence the member of the Leaders' Board elected for this purpose, shall preside at any meeting of the Leaders' Board.

6.5 Appointments will be made in May of each year.

6.6 Where, at any meeting or part of a meeting of the Leaders' Board both the Chair and Vice Chair are either absent or unable to act as Chair or Vice Chair, the Leaders' Board shall elect one of the members of the Leaders' Board present at the meeting to preside for the balance of that meeting or part of the meeting, as appropriate. For the avoidance of doubt, the role of Chair and Vice Chair vests in the principal member concerned and in their absence the role of Chair or Vice Chair will not automatically fall to the relevant constituent authority's substitute member.

7. Voting

7.1 One member, one vote for each constituent authority.

7.2 All questions shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present, the Chair having the casting vote in addition to their vote as a member of the Committee. Voting at meetings shall be by show of hands.

7.3 On the requisition of any two Members, made before the vote is taken, the voting on any matter shall be recorded by the Secretary so as to show how each Member voted and there shall also be recorded the name of any Member present who abstained from voting.

8. Sub-Committees and Advisory Groups

8.1 The Leaders' Board may appoint sub-committees from its membership as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities

effectively and may delegate tasks and powers to the sub-committee as it sees fit.

8.2   The Leaders' Board may set up advisory groups as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively and may delegate tasks as it sees fit to these bodies, which may be formed of officers or members of the constituent authorities or such third parties as the Leaders' Board considers appropriate.

9. Hosting and Administration

9.1   The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will be the host authority, and the Head of Democratic Services (or equivalent post) from that authority shall be Secretary to the Committee ("the Secretary").

9.2   The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the s151 Officer role

9.3   The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the Monitoring Officer and Legal Adviser to the Leaders' Board.

9.4   The administrative costs of supporting the committee will be met equally by the constituent authorities, with each authority being responsible for receiving and paying any travel or subsistence claims from its own members.

9.5   The functions of the Secretary shall be:

a) to maintain a record of membership of the Leaders' Board and any sub-committees or advisory groups appointed

b) to publish and notify the proper officers of each constituent authority of any anticipated "key decisions" to be taken by the Leaders' Board to enable the requirements as to formal notice of key decisions as given under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to be met;

c) to carry out such notification to and consultation with members of any appointing constituent authority as may be necessary to enable the Leaders' Board to take urgent "key decisions" in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities

(Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012;

d) to summon meetings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups;

e) to prepare and send out the agenda for meetings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups; in consultation with the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Committee (or sub-committee/ advisory group);

f) to keep a record of the proceedings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups, including those in attendance, declarations of interests, and to publish the minutes;

g) to take such administrative action as may be necessary to give effect to decisions of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups;

h) to perform such other functions as may be determined by the Leaders' Board from time to time

10. Meetings

10.1 The Leaders' Board will meet no less than every four months and meetings will be aligned where necessary with deadlines for decisions on resources and investment plans.

10.2 Meetings will be held at such times, dates and places as may be notified to the members of the Leaders' Board by the Secretary, being such time, place and location as the Leaders' Board shall from time to time resolve.

10.3 Meeting papers will be circulated five clear working days in advance of any meeting. The Chair may choose to accept or reject urgent items that are tabled at any meeting.

10.4 Additional ad hoc meetings may be called by the Secretary, in consultation, where practicable, with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, in response to receipt of a request in writing, which request sets out an urgent item of business within the functions of the Leaders' Board, addressed to the Secretary:

(a) from and signed by two members of the Leaders' Board, or

(b) from the Chief Executive of any of the constituent authorities.

10.5 The Secretary shall settle the agenda for any meeting of the Leaders' Board after consulting, where practicable, the Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair; and shall incorporate in the agenda any items of business and any reports submitted by:

(a) the Chief Executive of any of the constituent authorities;

(b) the Chief Finance Officer to any of the constituent authorities;

(c) the Monitoring Officer to any of the constituent authorities; or

(d) any two Members of the Leaders' Board.

10.6 The Leaders' Board shall, unless the person presiding at the meeting or the Leaders' Board determines otherwise in respect of that meeting, conduct its business in accordance with the procedure rules set out in paragraph 13 below.

11. Access to Information

11.1 Meetings of the Leaders' Board will be held in public except where confidential or exempt information, as defined in the Local Government Act 1972, is being discussed.

11.2 These rules do not affect any more specific rights to information contained elsewhere under the law.

11.3 The Secretary will ensure that the relevant legislation relating to access to information is complied with. Each constituent authority is to co-operate with the Secretary in fulfilling any requirements.

11.4 Any Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests received by the Leaders' Board should be directed to the relevant constituent authority(s) for that authority to deal with in the usual way, taking account of the relevant legislation. Where the request relates to information held by two or more constituent authorities, they will liaise with each other before replying to the request.

12. Attendance at meetings

12.1 The Chair may invite any person, whether a member or officer of one of the constituent authorities or a third party, to attend the meeting and speak on any matter before the Leaders' Board.

12.2 Third parties may be invited to attend the Leaders' Board on a standing basis following a unanimous vote of those present and voting.

12.3 Where agenda items require independent experts or speakers, the Officer or authority proposing the agenda item should indicate this to the Secretary and provide the Secretary with details of who is required to attend and in what capacity. The participation of independent experts or speakers in Leaders' Board meetings will be subject to the discretion of the Chair.

13. Procedure Rules

13.1 Attendance

13.1.1 At every meeting, it shall be the responsibility of each member to enter their name on an attendance record provided by the Secretary from which attendance at the meeting will be recorded.

13.2 Order of Business

13.2.1 Subject to paragraph 13.2.2, the order of business at each meeting of the Leaders' Board will be:

i. Apologies for absence

ii. Declarations of interests

iii. Approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting

iv. Matters set out in the agenda for the meeting which will clearly indicate which are key decisions and which are not

v. Matters on the agenda for the meeting which, in the opinion of the Secretary are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public

13.2.2 The person presiding at the meeting may vary the order of business at the meeting.

13.3 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

13.3.1 If a Member is aware that he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, the

Member must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held:

(a) in the case where paragraph 13.3.2 below applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

(b) in any other case, wherever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;

(c) unless the Member has obtained a dispensation from their own authority's Standards Committee or Monitoring Officer. Such dispensation to be notified to the Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting.

13.3.2   Where a member has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any business of the Leaders' Board, the Member may attend the meeting (or a sub–committee or advisory group of the committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

13.4 Minutes

13.4.1   There will be no discussion or motion made in respect of the minutes other than except as to their accuracy. If no such question is raised or if it is raised then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chair shall sign the minutes.

13.5 Rules of Debate

13.5.1   A Member wishing to speak shall address the Chair and direct their comments to the question being discussed. The Chair shall decide the order in which to take representations from members wishing to speak and shall decide all questions of order. Their ruling upon all such questions or upon matters arising in debate shall be final and shall not be open to discussion.

13.5.2   A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:

i. To amend the motion

ii. To adjourn the meeting

iii. To adjourn the debate or consideration of the item

iv. To proceed to the next business

v. That the question now be put

vi. That a member be not further heard or do leave the meeting

vii. To exclude the press and public under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972

13.6 Conduct of Members

13.6.1   Members of the Leaders' Board will be subject to their own authority's Code of Conduct.

14. Application to Sub-Committees

14.1   The procedure rules and also the Access to Information provisions set out at paragraph 11 shall apply to meetings of any sub-committees of the Leaders' Board.

15. Scrutiny of decisions

15.1   Each constituent authority which operates executive arrangements will be able to scrutinise the decisions of the Leaders' Board in accordance with that constituent authority's overview and scrutiny arrangements.

16. Winding up of the Leaders' Board

16.1   The Leaders' Board may be wound up immediately by the unanimous agreement of all constituent authorities.

17. Amendment of this Constitution

17.1   This Constitution can only be amended by resolution of each of the constituent authorities.

Stafford Station Gateway

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 June 2024
Report of:	Head of Economic Development and Planning
Portfolio:	Economic Development and Planning

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   At their meeting on 7 March 2024 Cabinet resolved that appropriate governance structures and programme/project management arrangements be developed to support the delivery of the Stafford Station Gateway, Levelling Up Fund (LUF) project, including the establishment of a Stafford Station Gateway Programme Board, subject to a further Cabinet report.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That Cabinet approve the principles of the Stafford Station Gateway governance structure set out in **APPENDIX 1.**

2.2   That Cabinet delegate authority to the Head of Economic Development and Planning, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Planning to establish the governance arrangements set out in this report and to agree and implement associated Terms of Reference.

Reasons for Recommendations

2.3   The recommendations enable the implementation of governance arrangements that will support the timely delivery of both the Stafford Station Gateway LUF project and the associated delivery of the Gateway masterplan within the adopted Strategic Regeneration Framework.

3   Key Issues

3.1   This report sets out a governance structure for the Stafford Station Gateway programme including group roles and responsibilities, and in general terms group membership arrangements. The requirement for a governance structure that is appropriate and adopted by Cabinet is essential to enable the timely progress of the programme and is particular robustly support the process of land acquisition and spending of secured grant funding.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   Stafford Station Gateway supports delivery of Business Objectives 1,2 and 3 in the Council's Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024. The scheme supports the delivery of sustainable economic and housing growth.

Objective 1: Delivering sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.

Objective 2: Developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing.

Objective 3: to continue work towards our Climate Change and Recovery objectives, integrating them into our activities and strategic plans.

4.2   It also delivers against Growth Priority 1 in the Economic Growth Strategy for Stafford Borough 2020-2025.

4.3   The proposal is also consistent with and supportive of the Council's adopted development strategy as set out in The Plan for Stafford Borough (adopted 2014) and the emerging Local Plan 2020-2040 Preferred Options document.

5   Report Detail

5.1   The Stafford Station Gateway mixed use redevelopment proposals represent a significant investment opportunity, maximising potential economic benefits. The Stafford Station Gateway project has been developed over a number of year and culminated in the adoption of the SRF in 2023 via partnership working between Stafford Borough Council (SBC), Staffordshire Country Council (SCC), placemaking and regeneration expert LCR and Network Rail (NR).

5.2   The SRF, published in February 2023 presents a vision, illustrative masterplan and a set of design and development principles that will guide the future development of Stafford Station Gateway. The document responds to existing and emerging planning policies and seeks to nurture the assets and opportunities that are unique to this part of Stafford, including its green and blue infrastructure, major development site opportunities and exceptional connectivity.

5.3   Cabinet received a detailed update report on the progress of the Stafford Station Gateway at its meeting on the 7 March 2024 at which it accepted the £19,998,144 Levelling Up funding awarded by Government to support site remediation and enabling works and delegated authority to progress with the delivery of the LUF project. Cabinet agreed that this funding should be included within the Council's Capital Programme. Further delegations to enable commencement of negotiations to acquire land within the Gateway site were also approved.

5.4   Cabinet agreed to receive details of an appropriate governance structure to support the delivery of the LUF project, including the establishment of a Stafford Station Gateway Programme Board. The associated workstreams relating to land acquisition and delivery of the masterplan also require appropriate governance therefore Cabinet are asked to consider a single governance structure that captures all aspects of the Gateway scheme, whilst respecting the specific requirements of the LUF grant conditions.

5.5   There is a requirement to put in place a formal governance structure that is operationally robust without creating an administrative burden for SBC. The existing governance structure for the Gateway project as a whole supported the development of the SRF and focused on a Programme Borad and a Working Group which has been attended by partners whose relationship had been cemented by collaboration agreements and includes SBC, SCC and LCR. The working group reported to the Board consisting of the partner organisations plus strategic stakeholders Network Rail and Homes England. This tiered governance arrangement also exists across other strategic programmes including Future High Streets Fund and the Garden Community.

5.6   The Stafford Station Gateway Levelling Up Fund bid submission (**APPENDIX 1**) included a proposed governance structure. Following the funding announcement this structure has been reviewed and considered by officers who endorse the principles with one addition, the inclusion of a Landowners Forum. This dedicated Forum addresses the wider remit of the Gateway governance structure which is not limited solely to the LUF project and will support delivery of the wider aims set out within the SRF.

5.7   The proposed Stafford Station Gateway governance structure is set out below in detail and **APPENDIX 1** shows the relationship between the various workstreams and groups. It is proposed that a Programme Board will be established, and formal terms of reference will be developed to set out the parameters for both the Board and the wider governance groups. Project Delivery teams will be formed to manage overall delivery the LUF project, alongside the Council's land acquisition and more broadly delivery of the vision for the Gateway within the adopted SRF.

5.8   Stafford Station Gateway Programme Board will ensure the coordination of the programme as a whole. Key decisions remain subject to Cabinet approval and subsequent Scrutiny, the Programme Board will operate in alignment with all previously secured approvals and delegations attached to Stafford Station Gateway. It is expected that this group will be supported by small officer working groups focused on identified short term actions. **APPENDIX 1** sets out workstreams that will be facilitated by Stafford Borough Council. These will change over time depending on programme requirements and needs. The detail of the associated roles and responsibilities and membership of each group will be set out in individual group Terms of Reference.

5.9   There will be a requirement for a time limited working group, LUF Workstreams. The delivery of the LUF grant funding on budget within fixed timescales accompanied with the need to achieve approved outputs and outcomes will require focused resource. Resources to support actions from this group will be sourced from SBC, SCC and LCR.

5.10   The Landowner Forum will focus on the progression of the overall ambitions set out within the SRF providing a forum to facilitate the coordinated development of land parcels and associated equalisation of infrastructure requirements. The Landowner Forum will include landowners and their agents supported by a small number of Borough Council Officers.

5.11   Following consultation attached to both the development of the SRF and the New Local Plan Preferred Options 2020-2040, it is clear that the communities and local stakeholder groups within and close to the site have valuable local knowledge and an understanding of the opportunities that the Gateway could provide their communities. Timely, consistent and transparent communication with opportunities for local knowledge to influence and scrutinise is essential. An elected member and Community Forum is proposed to be created which will link to the Stafford Station Gateway Programme Board and Stafford Station Gateway Working Group via elected member representation.

5.12   It is noted that some organisation will have positions on all groups. In addition, it is noted that organisations will have their own external reporting mechanisms and therefore **APPENDIX 1** relates to SBC constitutional requirements and associated delegations.

5.13   The Council will need to ensure it has the capacity to administer the programme governance and appropriately support the delivery of all elements of this ambitious and transformational project.

6   Implications

6.1   **Financial**

Programme/project management requirements will be met through existing resources, this includes the administration of the governance structure set out within **APPENDIX 1.**

6.2   **Legal**

None

6.3   **Human Resources**

The Council will need to ensure it has the capacity to administer the programme governance and appropriately support the delivery of all elements of this ambitious and transformational project.

6.4 **Risk Management**

As this report focuses on the governance arrangements for the delivery of the Gateway scheme the risk management considerations relate to the implementation of appropriate controls.

In terms of the LUF grant award it is essential that robust governance is both in place and evidenced. As such the content and adoption of appropriate Terms of Reference are a priority action reflected in the risk register for the programme. All risk management actions will be reported to the Programme Board.

Whilst there are three distinct projects within this programme (LUF, land acquisition and SRF delivery) dependencies exist that must be transparently communicated and milestones monitored closely. As such, an overall programme plan will be reported to the Programme Board and any issues or concerns escalated as appropriate.

6.5 **Equalities and Diversity**

None

6.6 **Health**

Whilst there are no health considerations specifically related to the implementation of governance arrangements this is a key consideration in the delivery of the scheme as a whole. As such a Health Impact Assessment of the Gateway scheme as a whole is currently underway and the outcome will be shared with Cabinet.

6.7 **Climate Change**

Climate change will be embedded into the terms of reference for the governance structure.

7   **Previous Consideration**

Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 21 January 2016
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 4 August 2016
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 6 July 2017
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 3 October 2019
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 5 March 2020
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 1 July 2021
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 4 August 2022
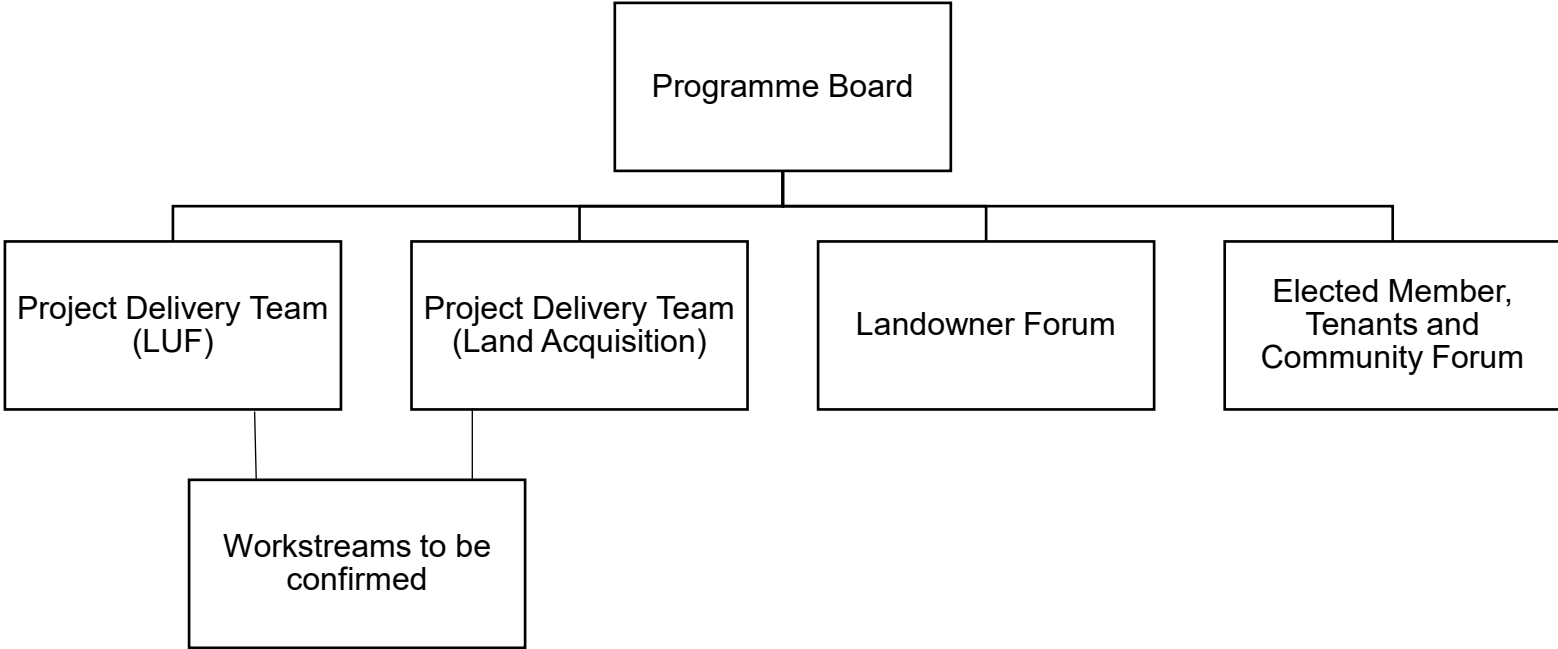Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 19 January 2023
Stafford Station Gateway Cabinet - 7 March 2024

8   Background Papers

Strategic Regeneration Framework www.staffordbc.gov.uk/stafford-station-gateway

Contact Officer: Maxine Turley

Telephone Number: 01785 619335

Ward Interest: Doxey and Castletown and Rowley

Report Track: Cabinet 6 June 2024 (Only)

Key Decision: No

Appendix 1: Stafford Station Gateway Proposed Governance Structure

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                          │   Programme Board     │
                          └──────────┬───────────┘
          ┌──────────────┬───────────┼───────────────┬──────────────┐
┌─────────────────┐ ┌─────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐ ┌──────────────────┐
│ Project Delivery│ │ Project Delivery│ │                  │ │ Elected Member,  │
│   Team (LUF)    │ │ Team (Land      │ │ Landowner Forum  │ │ Tenants and      │
│                 │ │ Acquisition)    │ │                  │ │ Community Forum  │
└────────┬────────┘ └────────┬────────┘ └──────────────────┘ └──────────────────┘
         └───────────────────┤
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                   │ Workstreams to be│
                   │    confirmed     │
                   └──────────────────┘
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Agenda Item 4(c)(i)

VFM Progress Report 2023/24

Committee: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 6 June 2024

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 VFM Improvement Plan at the end of 2023-24. This is the first progress report since the Improvement Plan was approved.

2   Recommendations

2.1   To note the progress at the end of the 2023-24 in the delivery of the VFM 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 address the findings of the External Auditors and improve the Council's governance arrangements.

3   Key Issues

3.1   The Council's External Auditor's Annual Report (AAR) for 2021/22 and 2022/23, highlighted several significant issues relating to the Council's financial, governance and asset arrangements and made recommendations for addressing these.

3.2   An improvement plan to address the issues was drawn up and approved by the Audit and Accounts Committee (13 February 2024) and subsequently by Council (27 February 2024).

3.3   This report sets out the progress made at the end of 2023-24 and is the first progress update since the improvement plan was approved.

3.4   Good progress has been made in delivering the actions set out for quarter 4 of 2023-24, with 47% of the actions having been completed in full and work is in progress on the remaining actions.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   Good governance and financial management specifically links to the Council's priority to be "a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the need of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our outcomes". It also underpins the delivery of the Council's other corporate priorities and operational services.

5   Report Detail

Background

5.1   As part of the work of the External Auditors, they are required to undertake a review of the Council's arrangements for Value for Money and their finding are set out in the Annual Audit Report for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

5.2   The AAR for 2021/22 and 2022/23 identified several areas of concern primarily:

(i)   the delay in preparation of and audit of final accounts and budget monitoring; and

(ii)   weaknesses in our arrangements for our IT systems, fraud, procurement, performance management and managing our workforce.

5.3.   None of the issues themselves are new; they were identified in the previous AAR, have been raised in reports issued by Internal Audit and/or have been raised as significant governance issues in the Annual Governance Statement over the same period. However, the External Auditors have raised the profile of these issues and the need to address them to prevent significant governance failings. One statutory recommendation has been made and this is being progressed as a priority.

5.4   The External Auditors acknowledged that there has been a lack of capacity in key service areas to address these issues. The Council has sought to address this by agreeing additional funds as part of the budget process for the Finance and Transformation Teams.

5.5   A VFM improvement plan has been produced to address the issues raised in the AAR and this is attached at **APPENDIX 1.**

5.6   A commentary on progress for each of the actions for quarter 4 of 2023-24 is set out in **APPENDIX 1.** Overall progress is summarised in the table below:

Table 1: Summary of Progress - VFM Improvement Plan

Quarter	★	✔	🔺	❌	No longer applicable	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule		
Q4 2023/24	7		7		1	**15**

5.7   At the end of quarter 4, of the 15 actions planned for delivery in 2023/24:

- 47% have been completed;
- 47% are being progressed but are slightly behind schedule; and
- 6% are no longer applicable.

Good progress has been made in 2023/24 with 7 key actions having been completed. Work is in progress on the other 7 actions. Most of these relate to the updating of policies and work is nearing completion on these; it is anticipated that they will be submitted to Leadership Team for approval in Quarter 1.

5.8   Progress in delivering the actions set out in the improvement plan are being overseen by:

- The Leadership Team; and
- Audit and Accounts Committee.

The Audit and Accounts Committee will escalate any concerns to Cabinet and the Cabinet will also receive periodic updates.

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

Failure to deliver the improvement plan and address the External Auditor's recommendations 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: VFM Improvement Plan - Summary of Progress

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

Report to Audit and Accounts Committee 13 February 2024

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 464411

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Cabinet 6 June 2024

Audit and Accounts Committee 19 June 2024

Key Decision: No

VFM Improvement Plan - Progress Report

Summary of Progress at 31 March 2024

Quarter	★	✔	△	✖	No longer applicable	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule		
Q4 2023/24	7		7	0	1	15
Q1 2024/25						9
Q2 2024/25						15
Q3 2024/25						18
Q4 2024/25						7
2025/26						3

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
	Quarter 4 2023-24					
1.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 drafted and approved by Cabinet and Council. Modelling, assumptions and risk assessment included as part of the budget report. MTFS includes assessment of likely future government funding.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	★
2.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Capital Strategy to be updated in accordance with the revised Prudential Code.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	★
3.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Bring treasury strategy and its reporting to members up to date	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	★
4.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Produce draft financial statements in line with statutory requirements and working with external auditors to deliver audits effectively. (Decision to be made on outstanding audits as there is a consultation taking place	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	This is to be discussed with Azets as to approach	Agreed with Azets not to audit the 21/22 and 22/23 accounts. This is in line with the national statutory dispensation.	N/A

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
		as to how to clear the backlog of audits nationally at present)				
5.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Draft accounts published up to 2023/24	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Publication of the draft accounts is currently under review due to competing demands on the Finance Team from the wider organisation.	▲
6.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	Consultation to take place with stakeholders as part of development of new corporate plan and priorities.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	To be done for new Corporate Plan (s) and any savings exercises going forwards	Work on the new corporate plan has been delayed to Q1.	▲
7.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	Align the MTFS to the corporate priorities in the Council's Business Plan including the costed climate change actions	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance		Completed as part of budget setting 2024/25

To be revisited in Quarter 2 2024/25 | ★ |

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
8.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Implement outstanding recommendation from Cyber and Network Security Audit - staff to complete cyber training	Chief Technology Officer and Information Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	In progress - chasing small number of outstanding staff who haven't completed training. To be brought to LT in May	▲
9.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Finalise the change management strategy	Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Currently in draft to be presented to Leadership team in May	▲
10.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Finalise Information Governance Framework	Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Completed - approved by Cabinet	★
11.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Review of risks in annual budget report to be consistent with corporate process	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer		Completed	★
12.	Other Related Actions	Review of Audit Reporting to Leadership Team and escalation protocols	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 4 2023/24	Completed - quarterly progress reports to be discussed at Leadership Team	★

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
13.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Review of risk management policy and framework - includes review of format of the Strategic Risk Register (SRR)	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Currently in draft to be presented to leadership team in May/June 2024)	▲
14.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Review of guidelines on risk implications for committee reports	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 4 - 2023/24	Currently in draft to be presented to leadership team in May/June 2024)	▲
15.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Update the contracts register and ensure it is compliant with transparency requirements	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2023/24 (this will be the first draft to be revisited Quarter 3 2024/25)	Work in progress. Draft to be issued to Heads of Service for updating in June.	▲

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
Quarter 1 2024-25						
16.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Restructure of the Finance Team and creation of additional capacity	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Restructure agreed and job descriptions being drafted	✔
17.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Regular performance monitoring to be re-established with budget managers and Leadership Team.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25		
18.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Reporting on the delivery of savings to be established and discussed at Strategic Leadership Team meetings. Where appropriate, project plans will be developed to support the delivery of significant/complex savings.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25		
19.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Update IT security policy and adopt a cyber security policy	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Technology Officer	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Policy being updated and will include cyber security	✔

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
20.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Provide refresher training to ensure compliance with process for 3rd party data transfers and completion of privacy impact assessments	Chief Technology Officer and Information Manager	Quarter 1 - 2024/25		
21.	IT (Key Rec 2)	Complete the IT strategy	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Quarter 1 - 2024/25	Strategy drafted - to come to LT in June 24	✔
22.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	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 1 2024/25		
23.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	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 1 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
24.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Training for Leadership Team, managers, team leaders/principal officers on risk management	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 1 - 2024/25		
	Quarter 2 2024-25					
25.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Commence recruitment to new Finance team structure	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer and Deputy S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		
26.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Lesson learnt exercise to be undertaken of implementation of the finance system	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
27.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Training of managers in budget management and use of the new finance system.	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25	Presentation drafted	✔
28.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Review of Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		
29.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Training for managers on Financial Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources)	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		
30.	IT (Key Rec 2)	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 2 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
31.	IT (Key Rec 2)	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 2 - 2024/25		
32.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	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 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
33.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	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 2 - 2024/25	Job descriptions are being drafted	✔
34.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	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 2 - 2024/25		
35.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Develop risk registers for each Directorate and ICT	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Deputy Chief Executive (Place) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
36.	Risk Management (Improvement Rec 2)	Establish escalation process between other risk registers and the SRR eg services, projects	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		
37.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Review and update the Procurement Regulations	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources), Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		
38.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	The key elements of the procurement strategy will be built into the procurement regulations rather than as a stand-alone document.	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		
39.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Provide training for managers on procurement and contract management	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 2 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
Quarter 3 2024-25						
40.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	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 - 2024/25		
41.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	Process to be established for developing a service transformation and efficiency programme. Initial steps for both: • a discussion with the Cabinet to review priorities and key projects; • engagement with Heads of Service and Service Managers to review current service levels for statutory and discretionary services (to include high level benchmarking) - this will be a pre-cursor to bringing the services together and establish the baseline for service transformation (this will build on the initial work done on SLAs). • Range of options for efficiency savings and transformation	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 3 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
		Transformation: • Transformation options to be assessed and added to transformation programme for prioritisation. Will need to consider any investment required to deliver savings/service improvements; resourcing to deliver the changes, etc • Project Manager and Project support officer to be recruited to support delivery of transformation programme, funding allocated in budget 2024/25 to fund posts; • Training of managers and key officers in transformation techniques				
42.	Corporate Service Transformation and Efficiency Programme (Key Rec 1)	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 3 - 2024/25		
43.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Review Anti - Fraud and Bribery Policy	Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
44.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Review of Confidential Reporting Policy	Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25		
45.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Assess compliance against Cipfa 2014 Code for Fraud and develop an action plan as necessary	Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	Quarter 3 - 2024/25		
46.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Develop a hybrid working policy and review other related policies and processes.	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	Quarter 3 2024/25		
47.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Review and update the Employee Code of Conduct	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Head of Law and Governance	Quarter 3 2024/25		
48.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	Work with managers and the County's Procurement Team to develop a procurements pipeline	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
49.	Procurement and Contract Management (Improvement Rec 5)	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 - 2024/25		
50.	Other Related Actions	Establish an inventory of key policies and a programme of periodic reviews	Leadership Team	Quarter 3 - 2024/25		
Quarter 4 2024-25						
51.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	Implementation of remaining module of the finance system, ongoing development and maximising use of system functionality	Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and S151 Officer	Quarter 4 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
52.	Financial Sustainability (Statutory Rec 1)	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 4 - 2024/25		
53.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Assess fraud risks and include in risk registers as appropriate	Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager and Leadership Team	Quarter 4 - 2024/25		
54.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	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 4 - 2024/25		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
55.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Review our performance report style - delivery plans and KPIs. To consider the development of performance outcome measures	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25		
56.	Performance Management (Key Rec 4)	Performance reporting for waste and leisure: • 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 4 - 2024/25		
57.	Other Related Actions	Review of Code of Governance	Head of Transformation and Assurance	Quarter 4 - 2024/25		
2025-26						
58.	Fraud (Key Rec 3)	Review the information we report on fraud work (including data matching) to the Audit Committee.	Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	2025/26		

No	Theme	Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Progress Update	Progress Rating
59.	HR related issues (Improvement Recs 1 and 3)	Development of a workforce strategy that links to long term transformation / shared services	Head of Transformation and Assurance and HR Manager	2025/26		
60.	Other Related Actions	Development of Assurance Model	Head of Transformation and Assurance and Chief Internal Auditor and Risk Manager	2025/26		

Agenda Item 4(c)(ii)

Performance Report for 2023-24

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 June 2024
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 for 2023-24.

2 Recommendations

2.1 To note the progress made during the year 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 2021-24 sets out the Council's priorities and the key actions to deliver these.

3.2 Overall, 74% of the key actions have been delivered. Progress in delivering the corporate priorities 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, 57% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at section 5 and in **APPENDIX 2**.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The indicators and actions contribute individually to the Council's priorities as set out in the Corporate Business Plan 2021-24.

5   Report Detail

5.1   The Corporate Business Plan 2021-24 sets out the Council's priorities and the key actions to deliver these.

Delivery Plans

5.2   The Delivery Plans set out in **APPENDICES 1A to 1D**, to this report summarise how the Council will achieve progress against its Corporate Priorities; these plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery and form the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework. The appendices summarise performance in delivery of the actions at the end of 2023-24.

5.3   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 2023-24

Corporate Business Plan Priority	★ Action completed	✔ Work on Target	⚠ Work < 3 months behind schedule	✖ Work > 3 months behind schedule	N/A No longer applicable	Total Number of Actions
The Economy	8		5			13
Community	11		1		1	13
Climate Change	5		1			6
The Council	2			1		3
Total	26		7	1	1	35

5.4   At the end of 2023-24, of the 35 projects/actions due for delivery:

- 74% of have been completed;
- 20% have slipped slightly by less than 3 months;
- 3% have slipped by more than 3 months; and
- 3% are no longer applicable.

5.5   The key achievements during 2023/24 have been:

- the progress made with the transformation of Stafford Town Centre, in particular:
  o the completion and opening of the refurbished market square;
  o the purchase of the Guildhall shopping centre site and the planned purchase of the former Co-op store for redevelopment;
  o the securing of funding for the Station Gateway project

- the completion of work on the new play facilities, multi-use games area wheeled sports facility, woodland play area and toilets at Westbridge Park;
- The new Disabled Facilities Grant Shared Service with South Staffordshire has assisted a record number of people in the year and timescales for for those new into the service are significantly reduced.
- The new supported accommodation provided by Turning Point is now open and is having a positive impact on the quality of people's lives.
- The launch of the new customer portal with user friendly forms, which will act as the basis for future transformation of our customer service.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

5.6   In addition to the 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 2023-24

Corporate Business Plan Priority	★ Performance exceeds target	✔ Performance on target	✖ Performance below target	Data not available	Total Number of KPIs
The Economy	3		2	3	**8**
Community	8	3	3		**14**
The Council	2		4		**6**
Total	**13**	**3**	**9**	**3**	**28**

- 46% indicators show performance above target;
- 11% indicators show performance on target;
- 32% indicators show performance below target; and
- 11% of indicators are awaiting data.

5.7   The notable key successes during 2023/24 have been:

- Improvements in the turnaround time for planning applications;
- The number of households referred for advice on energy efficiency and energy efficiency measures;
- The number of DFGs completed; and
- The number of empty homes brought back into use.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. The financial management of the Corporate Plan and the Delivery Plans is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations. All actions are budgeted for accordingly.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

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 2021-24

Contact Officer: Judith Aupers

Telephone Number: 01543 46411

Ward Interest: Nil

Report Track: Cabinet 06/06/24
Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny 27/06/24
Community Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee 26/06/24
Resources Scrutiny Committee 02/07/24

Key Decision: No

The Economy - Delivery Plan for 2023 - 2024

Business Objective 1: To deliver sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 4

★	✔	▲	✖	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	
8		5			13

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 4
Significant reduction in the planning backlog and total number of applications on-hand.
Good progress made in committing year 2 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) spend and delivery of outputs
Stafford town centre transformation - contractors appointed for Station Approach and work set to start on-site in Q2 2024-25.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 4
Delay to Local Plan with timetable currently being reviewed.

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
1.1	**Assess the economic implications for the Borough over the medium and long term**							
1.1.1	Review and assess all key programmes and major projects	Review of key projects and delivery plans	X				Key projects reviewed and delivery plans prepared for 2023/24. Details of key projects are referred to through the actions set out below	★
1.2	**To facilitate the delivery of 500 new homes in the Borough per year including 210 affordable homes**							
1.2.1	Complete five year land supply statement	Data extract Site visits complete Publication of statement	X				Statement completed and published - July 2023	★
1.2.2	Improve and maintain performance of development management	Develop Recovery Plan to tackle current backlogs of applications	X				Backlog of applications has decreased significantly with total number of applications on-hand standing at 442. For comparison purposes the figure at the end of March 2023 was 946. Work is now being undertaken to develop an improvement plan to sustain performance going forward.	★
		Produce quarterly updates setting out progress in reducing the backlog.		X			Quarterly updates have been provided.	

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
1.3	**Deliver key projects and infrastructure proposals that will promote economic growth and investment for the Borough**							
1.3.1	Delivery of the Stafford Town Centre Transformation Programme	Completion of Market Square renovation			X		Market Square renovation completed and re-opened on 28 October 2023.	▲
		Appointment of onsite contractors for Station Approach project		X		X	Contractor appointed and work set to start on site in Q2 2024.	
		Completion of Station Approach project				X	Contractor appointed and work set to start on site in Q2 2024 subject to regulatory approvals. Materials on order.	
		Conclusion of discussions with third party landowners to progress commercial projects		X			The Council has acquired the Guildhall shopping centre and is in the process of acquiring the former Co-op department store. The Council is seeking to procure specialist professional advice to commence work on design, planning and procurement of demolition contractors for both sites and appointments will be made Q1 2024/25.	

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
1.3.2	Delivery of the Stafford Station Gateway	Completion of station access feasibility study		X			Work continuing to be progressed with Network Rail and key operational partners to understand rail/access/and gateway development opportunities. Commitment to take Governance arrangements to Cabinet in Q1 2024. Delivery programme and scoping exercise completed. Exercise and outputs rigorously challenged and scrutinised as part of the DLUHC validation process.	▲
		Completion of delivery programme scoping exercise			X			
1.3.3	Supporting the development of proposed Meecebrook Garden Community	Completion of Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)for the railway station		X			SOBC completed, final account invoice received, commission closed.	▲
		Completion of remaining technical studies (excluding transport modelling)				X	Ongoing, however significant progress in relation to the Health Impact Assessment which has been completed.	

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
			Completion of detailed master planning and viability studies				X	Detailed masterplanning and viability studies have not yet completed.	
			Completion of collaboration agreement				X	Work on collaboration agreements has commenced.	
1.3.4		Stone Leisure	Delivery phase for Westbridge Park initiated			X		All works completed at Westbridge Park - Play facilities and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) opened to public in October 2023. Wheeled Sports opened 1 December 2023. Car parks works completed and building in place. Formal opening scheduled for April 2024	★
			Planning consent granted.	X					
			Work on site commences	X					
1.4		**Work in partnership to generate economic and sustainable growth for the long-term prosperity of our residents, visitors and businesses**							
1.4.1		Develop Stafford as a hub of productivity to help businesses develop, grow and thrive	New and existing businesses supported to grow and build confidence in Stafford as a hub of productivity with a balanced economy.	X	X	X	X	Delivery of UKSPF financial support via grants to existing businesses in Stafford. Year 2 completed. Delivery of non-financial business support to existing Stafford businesses Year 2 completed.	★

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
								Signposting support to pre and post start-up businesses across Stafford. Financial support to Staffordshire County Council Green Solutions programme to deliver grants and energy efficiency reports. Inward investment activities to support organisations looking to relocate or expand. Skills support to assist organisations looking to recruit and retain employees.	
1.4.2		Promote our visitor economy to demonstrate the offer in the Borough	Relaunch Our Beautiful Borough (OBB) visitor economy campaign	X	X	X	X	The roll out of the campaign continues to gain traction with significant interactions over the past 12 months. There are 860 unique listings of things to see and do including food and drink in the Borough on the OBB website	★

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
								1400 hits to the 'Plan your Visit' page	
								Business support (both financial and non financial) to tourism hospitality and leisure providers.	
			Development of a Local Visitor Economy Partnership in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council				X	LVEP Board Recruitment and Growth Plan presented in March. Ongoing progress.	
1.4.3		Unlock economic opportunities in our rural areas	Launch of Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) grant programme		X	X	X	Year 2 REPF community grants delivered to approved applicants	★
			Grant awards made under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund rural business to business grant programme		X	X	X	Expressions of interest received and 10 identified projects to go forward for REPF funding in 2024/25 allocation.	
			Completion of UK Shared Prosperity Funded rural hub feasibility study			X	X	Delivered and shared with SPF Board and stakeholders.	
								Working within the SCC Rural Economy Steering group to look at interventions identified within the Rural Economic Strategy	

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
								including supporting market towns such as Stone.	
1.4.4		Support the facilitation of lifelong learning to create a local workforce with specialist skills that can respond to growth ambitions	Delivery of grants to support apprenticeships and training via UK Shared Prosperity Fund business to business rural grant scheme		X	X	X	Grants delivered to take on apprenticeships and upskill employees Referrals to Stafford College	★
1.5		**Develop a new Local Plan that reflects our Corporate ambitions for growth**							
1.5.1		Revise and refresh the Local Plan	Appropriate sites for future development for housing, employment and open space identified Updated evidence base completed that includes infrastructure, viability and economic recovery issues.		X	X		The approved Local Development Scheme sets out the key stages leading to the adoption of new Local Plan (2023/24), subject to review. New Local Plan Preferred Option completed and implications of Government planning reforms on subsequent stages of the Local Plan 2020-2040 progressing.	🔺
1.5.2		Embed high quality design into Planning Policy to ensure that Stafford is an attractive place that people want to live in, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting future investment.	Local design codes linked to New Local Plan progressed	X				Government's proposals through NPPF for local design codes confirmed and work progressing aligned to Local Plan during Spring 2024	🔺

Community - Delivery Plan for 2023 - 2024

Business Objective 2: To improve the quality of life of local people by providing a safe, clean, attractive place to live and work and encouraging people to be engaged in developing strong communities that promote health and wellbeing.

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 4

★	✔	⚠	✖	N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	No longer applicable	
11		1		1	13

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 4
The Disabled Facilities Grant Shared Service with South Staffordshire has been operating for a year. Despite a challenging handover from the previous provider the successes of the first year are clear. A strongly performing team are in place who have assisted a record number of people in the year and, timescales for assistance for those new into the service are significantly reduced. This provides an excellent platform to continue developing the service in 2024/25. The new supported accommodation provided by Turning Point is now open and is having a positive impact on the quality of people's lives. This year has seen significant funding invested in reducing health inequalities, these projects are well underway and delivering tangible results for residents.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 4

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
2.1		**Work in partnership to sustain support for vulnerable residents**							
2.1.1		To work in partnership to provide support to our communities and the voluntary sector	2 rounds of the Stafford Borough Grants Scheme implemented	X		X		Slight changes have been made to the small and sports grants criteria to remove barriers to applicants.	★
			2 rounds of the Stafford Borough Small Grants Scheme and Sports Grants implemented, grants agreed and awarded	X		X			
2.2		**Keep the streets and parks clean and attractive for everyone to enjoy**							
2.2.1		Deliver high quality Neighbourhood Services to ensure that town centres, parks and open spaces are clean, tidy, and attractive	Continue to participate in Annual National Performance Benchmarking for Street Cleansing and Parks and Open Spaces		X		X	Benchmarking information submitted to APSE	★
			Support Community groups undertaking litter picks		X		X	16 groups supported with litter pickers and bin bags distributed to the groups and refuse collected by Streetscene where required	

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
2.2.2		Monitoring of construction works associated with major infrastructure projects (e.g. M6 Smart Motorways and HS2) to minimise the potential for nuisance being caused to the reasonable amenities of local residents.	To determine the adequacy of Section 61 notices and 'Statement of Intent' submitted by HS2 within prescribed timescales.	X	X	X	X	Nothing to report. HS2 has been cancelled by central Government (October 23), as a result of this the only S61 notices submitted are minimal and related to 'making good ground works'	N/A
			To respond to all complaints concerning pollution incidents, or non-compliances with approved method as per Section 61 or 'Statement of Intent'.	X	X	X	X		
2.3		**Support and promote community health and wellbeing to all our residents and businesses**							
2.3.1		Support partners to offer and deliver initiatives to improve and enhance health and wellbeing of residents	Support partners to offer and deliver initiatives to improve and enhance health and wellbeing of residents	X	X	X	X	15 venues across the borough have been open as a Warm Space providing residents a period of relief and/or an opportunity to not feel isolated. Grant funding has been received by the Council. Work is underway with partners to implement the agreed projects that aim to tackle health inequalities.	★

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
2.3.2	Support the co-ordination of high-profile events run by Freedom Leisure	Appropriate support for Freedom Leisure in the implementation and evaluation of significant events such as the Shakespeare Festival, Stafford Half Marathon, Christmas lights switch on, Stafford 10k and the Pancake race.	X	X	X	X	Events delivered as per the contract specification. The Stafford Half Marathon event took place on 17 March	★
2.3.3	Providing a safe place for residents to live and work by enabling all food and drink businesses to be compliant with environmental regulations.	All food businesses to be inspected under Food Safety legislation on risk-basis and actions taken as appropriate.				X	82% of all programmed inspection have been undertaken. The remaining 18% have been brought forward into 2024-25, and are on target to be completed within the first quarter of 2024-25.	🔺
2.3.4	Providing a safe and clean place for residents and businesses to thrive, by monitoring and assessing air quality within the Borough.	To monitor and assess air quality within the Borough to determine whether air quality is within prescribed limit values.				X	Air Quality Assessment completed, indicating that air quality is satisfactory (no need to declare an Air Quality Management Area).	★
		To prepare an annual report upon findings to DEFRA.			X		Report issued to DEFRA.	

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
2.4		**Work with partners to ensure the borough is a safe place to be at all times**							
2.4.1		To assist in the operational delivery of, and lead on, the implementation of specific initiatives that support the reduction of crime and vulnerability in the Borough (as per the recommendations in the Community Safety Strategic Assessment)	Focus groups established for ASB hotspot locations Partnership plan developed Progress made on delivery plan	X	X X	X X	X X	Partnership plans for the 2 targeted areas, Town centre and Stafford south, along with the successes presented to Scrutiny Committee. Focus group held with businesses to test if the plans are working.	★
2.4.2		To ensure that the authority adheres to its statutory responsibility in respect of the Prevent, Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse	Safeguarding Policy up to date Training and awareness rolled out to elected members, staff	X			X	Prevent Training has been rolled out to all staff. Safeguarding refreshers have started in March, all elected members have been sent a link to complete Safeguarding training. Plans are being drawn up with regards to Act and Scan training	★
2.4.3		Utilise procedures and processes to investigate reported incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB)	Increased reporting ASB campaigns formulated, implemented, monitored and evaluated. On-going review of investigations in place.	X	X	X	X	We have received 21 new complaints in Q4. These are all risk assessed as soon as they are triaged and then again once any additional information is received.	★

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
								Most of the new cases require a partnership approach involving Registered Social landlords and police to resolve. Continuing to promote the service and the use of the Case review.	
2.5		**Work towards everyone having access to safe and suitable accommodation**							
2.5.1		Provide a comprehensive housing options service to prevent homelessness and support people into sustainable accommodation	Continuous focus on upstream prevention to minimise crisis intervention	X	X	X	X	Housing Options continue to work with cross-sector agencies to upstream homeless prevention where possible, including prisons and hospitals. Ongoing conversations with the County Council continue to embed system changes to prevent homelessness.	★
			Robust housing pathways for all client groups in place	X	X	X	X	Specialist accommodation for rough sleepers, provided by Turning Point, opened and the first cohort of rough sleepers have successfully moved in	

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Systems change approach to supporting rough sleepers implemented		X	X	X	Systems changes have been focused on improving systems for rough sleepers with multiple and complex needs with support from adult safeguarding and Turning Point, with successful outcome achieved on two high profile cases	
2.5.2	Ensure good housing standards are delivered in the private sector	Advice and support provided to landlords, tenants and home owners	X	X	X	X	Reactive responses at their peak as is normal for Q4, with significant demand for response to damp and mould complaints.	★
		Licensing of properties and sites	X	X	X	X	Proactive work to begin Heathy Homes project, with staff recruited to post and underpinning work to support handyperson element of the scheme started.	
		Enforcement of standards Proactive Inspection of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)	X	X				

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
2.5.3		Provide an effective and efficient service to deliver Disabled Facilities Grants	Embed new shared service delivery	X	X			The new in-house DFG team have experienced significant growth and development throughout the year, which results in increased pace and efficiency of service delivery that we expect to continue.	★
			Update the Housing Assistance Policy to enhance the DFG offer to residents				X	The data from the first year of in-house delivery will now be analysed and used to support policy change proposals which enable us to deliver a quality service in a timely manner	

Climate Change - Delivery Plan for 2023 - 2024

Business Objective 3: To continue work towards our Climate Change and Green Recovery objectives, integrating them into our activities and strategic plans

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 4

★	✔	⚠	✖	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	
5		1			6

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 4
The Council continues to work closely with its Community Panel and has started work on a Mowing and Sowing protocol which ties into the Bee Friendly Campaign, which is currently ongoing.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 4
Climate Change continues to be priority for the Council but has been hampered by the loss of the permanent Climate Change Officer in 2023. Plans are being developed to ensure enough resources are channelled to this area of work to ensure this resource is strengthened for 2024/25.

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
3.1		**Reduce emissions from our own activities**							
3.1.1		Reduce emissions from our own activities	Undertake an annual audit of the council's carbon footprint to derive the council's carbon equivalent inputs and output.			X		A report has been prepared to illustrate Stafford Borough Councils overall carbon footprint for 2022-2023. The report illustrates a reduction from 2285 tCO2e last year to 1306 tCO2e this year.	★
			Embed climate change actions into council and partnership policies and plans				X	Engagement with key officers to influence policies and plans (e.g., Asset Management Strategy) is ongoing.	
			Carry out feasibility studies around reducing energy usage in Council assets (i.e. battery storage; solar array; LED lighting; passive infrared sensors; renewable energy etc)				X	Works are ongoing re the replacement of LED light fittings at the Waterfront Car Park. Initial reports have been received from the Midlands Net Zero Energy Hub which identify where renewable energy technologies can be installed across the council estate.	

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Work on carbon reduction feasibilities studies with partners in contracted out services, (i.e. Freedom Leisure)				X	These reports will be used to support the submission of a Salix funding application when the window for opportunities opens during Autumn 2024. A budget allocation has been made available for future installation subject to final engineering and technical appraisal.	
		Prepare an evidence base enabling funding to decarbonise the Council's estate to be obtained.				X	Feasibility study complete via Midlands Net Zero Hub (MNZH) and Maloney Associates. Aim is to identify opportunities for renewable technology at council-owned sites.	
		Switch to a 100% renewable energy tariff.			X		Further works required, with regards to engineering possibilities. The Council has now switched over to 100% renewable Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certified electricity.	

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Low Emission Vehicles - Explore the feasibility of the use of electric vehicles and alternative fuels such as Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in the Council's and its waste collection fleets. Reduce the energy and petrochemical usage within the Council's Street Scene service in vehicles, plant and equipment by changes to working practice, vehicles, plant equipment, and operations. Continue to install Electric Vehicle charge points across council owned car parks, where practicable and funding becomes available.			X	X	Research is completed and determined HVO fuel is no longer a viable solution. The council have also had an EV vehicle on trial to determine its feasibility in everyday use.	
						X	Anti-idling campaign in place with Streetscene vehicles. All idling monitored and reported monthly through in-house performance report. Additional electric equipment purchased.	
						X	There are currently 42 Electric vehicle charge points in use across the borough, and there are 8 additional charge points proposed.

There is also a £39.3m bid for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding available to Staffordshire County Council, whereby Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) will grow from 336 to 3000 over the next 7 years in Staffordshire. | |

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
3.2		**Work in partnership to raise awareness of and identify opportunities to implement sustainable low carbon initiatives and promote community action on reducing emissions**							
3.2.1		Work in partnership with Staffordshire Sustainability Board and others to determine best practice and increase awareness of climate change in our council, communities, businesses, and contractors	Nature Recovery Declaration and base pledge agreed and incorporated into relevant policies and plans		X			Nature recovery declaration has been completed.	★
			Supporting the Climate Change Community Panel made up of community representatives to support formulation and delivery of community-based initiatives and to develop and deliver sustainability projects with residents and wider stakeholders throughout the Borough	X	X	X	X	The Council continues to work with the community panel and the work they are doing will greatly benefit how the public view climate change. The group help to provide a perspective on bottom-up, community-led, initiatives relating to Climate Change.	
								Some of these initiatives involve practical input and support from frontline services such as Streetscene (e.g., Grass verges project). Also, the group acts a critical friend to help the Council to assess its own performance.	

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
			Active participation in the Countywide Sustainability Board and Officers Groups.	X	X	X	X	The Council continues to actively contribute towards the County's Sustainability Board	
3.3		**Mitigate and adapt to climate change**							
3.3.1		Deliver the measures identified in the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy	Climate Change Adaptation Strategy implemented and monitored	X	X	X	X	The Council adopted its Climate Change Adaptation Strategy in January 2023. Work to progress the delivery of the actions is underway. This includes: • Projects looking to provide nature-based solutions to climate change on council owned green spaces, I.e. The Bee Friendly Project. • A resilience project looking to encourage businesses to consider how future impacts of climate change might impact their premises and operations. • A Local Area Energy Plan has been produced which identifies areas for the roll out of renewable energy within the Borough.	★

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
3.4		**Continue to implement our green recovery objectives**							
3.4.1		Develop blue and green infrastructure and public realm	Develop/implement new Open Space Strategy			X	X	Part of the Green Infrastructure Strategy work. Ongoing from Autumn 2023	★
			Involvement with Stafford Brooks Project			X	X	Project lead is National Highways, with SBC partnering. Funding is approved and works will start summer 2024, carried out by Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.	
			Strategic Green Infrastructure assessment including investigating green network enhancements in Stafford and Stone			X	X	Strategic green infrastructure identified in Local Plan preferred options at Stafford and Stone. Site assessment work – Autumn 2023	
3.4.2		Protect and enhance our environment	Deliver Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) projects, including education and car parking enhancements	X	X	X	X	Planning consent approved for National Trust to deliver new visitor facilities at Shugborough. Initial studies for punchbowl car park redevelopment – Spring 2024. Education engagement projects progressing	★

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
			Assessment of air quality / nitrogen dioxide for Southern Staffordshire SACs leading to data monitoring and strategic mitigation assessment				X	Air quality monitoring and analysis of nitrogen levels continuing with collaborative mitigation programme progressing - Spring 2024	
			Deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements through the Environment Act 2021			X	X	BNG requirements now mandatory from 12 February 2024.	
			Develop and implement a Biodiversity Strategy				X	Progress is being made through County Local Nature Recovery Strategy, leading to Biodiversity Net Gain requirements – Spring 2024	
3.4.3		Adopt the New Local Plan to meet climate change mitigation and adaptation, and environmental measures through new development – Delivered by Business Objective 1	Identify the appropriate policies and mitigation measure through future development in sustainable locations for services and facilities aligned to energy efficiency standards and renewable sources		X	X	X	Evidence base published for the New Local Plan, together with work alongside other Staffordshire authorities. Next stage of New Local Plan, refer to Local Development Scheme webpage.	

	Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Develop local design codes for high quality new developments				X	Consideration of Government's proposals through National Planning Policy Framework for local design codes and green infrastructure strategy - Spring 2024.	

The Council - Delivery Plan for 2023 - 2024

Business Objective 4: To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation, responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 4

★	✔	⚠	✖	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	
2			1		3

Summary of Successes as at Quarter 4
The new customer portal has gone live this year. The number of forms available on the system has expanded in Q4 and will continue to grow in 2024/25.

Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 4
There has been slippage on the 2 HR related projects due to capacity issues in the team. The focus has been on supporting the restructuring of the manager tier as part of the shared service development and transformation. This will set the foundations for work to progress in 2024/25.

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
4.1		**Use our resources in the most effective and efficient way by focusing on financial recovery, reform and sustainability**							
4.1.1		Determine a medium term financial strategy to maintain the financial resilience of the Council	A rolling Medium Term Financial Strategy produced				X	The Medium Term Financial Strategy was approved by Council in January 2024	★
4.2		**Continue to work towards organisational and transformational change, integrating equality objectives into everything we do**							
4.2.1		Consider the impact of change and future ways of working on the Council workforce, members and customers	Pilot of the Way We Work completed and evaluated	X				The review of the pilot has slipped due to capacity issues within the HR team. Intention is to complete this in Q1 2024/25	❌
			Overarching framework for workforce plan to be developed		X			Cabinet has approved deferring this to 2024/25	
			Review of digital strategy and development of action plan	X				A new digital strategy has been drafted and will be brought to Leadership Team in May and to Cabinet for approval in June 2024.	
			Implementation of new Customer Portal System Phase 1		X			The new system went live in Q3 with garden waste permits.	

		Objective and Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
								During Q4 a range of revenues and benefits forms have been added and work is ongoing on developing other waste related forms such as missed bins.	
4.2.2		Investigate the opportunity for further shared services with neighbouring authorities	Implementation and transformation of shared services including the delivery of savings	X	X	X	X	The new joint Leadership Team was established at the beginning of the year. Consultation has now been completed on the manager tier and the new structure for this will come into effect from 1 June 2024.	★

▪

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2023/24 - as at end of Quarter 4

KPIs for Business Objective 1 - The Economy

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	3
Performance on target	✓	
Performance below target	✗	2

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	Economic Development and Planning								
	Major Planning Applications determined within time	**60%**	90.9%	100%	84.6%	100%		★	
	Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	**70%**	75.9%	81%	80.6%	79.6%		★	

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	Regulatory Services								
L13	Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	**90%**	99%	100%	100%	N/A			Data not currently available
L14	Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	**70%**	85%	96%	86%	N/A			Data not currently available
LI15	Building Control-Site visits completed on day requested	**99%**	99%	99%	100%	N/A			Data not currently available
LI16	Building Control-Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	**90%**	88%	100%	100%	100%		★	
	Turnaround time for land charges searches (excluding personal searches) – average no. of working days	**100% within 10 working days**	22%	37%	55%	19.7%		✖	There were issues with County returns previously in the year these have been resolved. We received 3 requests for large portfolios of searches to be done around 80-100 per request which has impacted turnaround times. This expectation was set with the requestor. The longest search took 21 days.
	Deliver 210 affordable homes per year working with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England	**210 homes**					163	✖	Delivery is in line with the anticipated pipeline for the year. Forecast figures for next year are also below the 210 figure set out in the local plan.

KPIs for Business Objective 2 - The Community

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	8
Performance on target	✓	3
Performance below target	✗	3

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	Regulatory Services								
LI3	No of Enviro-crime complaints acknowledged and initial investigation completed within 72 hours of receipt.	**94%**	96%	99%	95.5%	98.4%	**97.5%**	★	This KPI relates to complaints about abandoned vehicles; dog fouling; fly posting; and fly tipping.
	Operations								
LI4	No of residents who think the town centres are clean and tidy	**90%**	97%	97%	96%	**98%**	**97%**	★	Consistent satisfaction levels throughout the year.
LI5	Residual Household Waste Collected per household (Kgs) (target maximum given)	**110**	109.47 (act)	110.45 (act)	108.70 (act)	**110.10 (est)**	**109.68 (est)**	★	

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
LI6	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	**51%**	52.13% (act)	51.36% (act)	46.46% (act)	**41.30% (est)**	**48.16% (est)**	❌	Following national trend for reducing recycling rates (eg) lighter, smaller packaging. Prolonged wet weather has also affected garden waste tonnages.
LI41	No of sites with green flag status	**6**	6	6	**6**	**6**	**6**	⭐	
	Wellbeing								
LI7	% of homeless cases resolved through prevention	**35%**	39%	29%	21%	**19%**	**27%**	❌	Although it is not uncommon to see a seasonal increase in demand over winter, the pressures have increased when compared to previous years.
LI8	% of homeless cases resolved through relief	**65%**	61%	71%	79%	**81%**	**73%**	❌	

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
LI9	No of DFGs completed	**35**	12	23	23	**67**	**125**	★	As anticipated, works completed before the Christmas break were signed off in the New Year which has contributed to increased completions in Q4.
LI10	No of households referred for energy efficiency measures	**8**	13	7	11	**21**	**52**	★	
LI11	Empty Homes brought back into use following Officer interventions	**10**	12	17	14	**12**	**55**	★	
LI12	No of households given advice on energy efficiency	**15**	113	129	106	**119**	**457**	★	
LI52	Overall reported crime in the Borough	**8410**					**8860**	✓	There have been changes in the way police record data. Some incidents types that previously fell under ASB are now categorised as Crime, such as stalking

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
LI53	Reported incidents of domestic abuse	2959					2647	✔	Changes in reporting
LI54	Reported incidents of ASB	2031					1763	✔	

KPIs for Business Objective 4 - The Council

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	2
Performance on target	✓	
Performance below target	✖	4

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
	Local Taxation and Benefits								
L13	Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	20 days	33.7	42.5	24.2	15	29.1	✖	Processing of new claims has been better than target since November. Due to the problems encountered earlier in the year, relating to staff turnover and a high proportion of new starters in the service, the annual average time was higher than target.
L14	Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	9 days	7.5	8.7	6.9	5.0	7.0	★	Performance on changes of circumstances was better than target all year.

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
	% of Council Tax collected annually	98% by year end	28.8%	56.0%	83.1%	96.8%	96.8%	❌	Council tax collections are considerably improved on the previous year of 95.9% and showing a gradual return to pre-pandemic levels. A target of 97.5% should be achievable in 2024-25.
	% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98% by year end	28.9%	60.4%	83.9	97.3%	97.3%	❌	Business Rate collections are also considerably improved on the previous 96.6%. We would hope to revert to 98% in 2024-25.
Calls									
	% of calls answered	94%	94%	94%	88%	87%	92%	❌	The high call volumes for the Garden Waste subscription service during December and January affected performance in Quarters 3 and 4
	Average call wait time	2 min	1.21	1.18	1.36	2.18	1.42	★	Despite the high call volumes for the Garden Waste subscription service resulting in longer wait times during December and January, the average call wait time for the year is lower than the target

Agenda Item 4(c)(iii)

Strategic Risk Register

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 June 2024
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 1 April 2024

2   Recommendation

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

Reasons for Recommendations

2.2   Cabinet are responsible for the approval of the Strategic Risk Register produced by Leadership Team and to monitor the progress made in relation to the management of the risks identified.

3   Key Issues

3.1   All Strategic Risks and associated action plans have been reviewed and the Council's current risk profile is summarised in the table below:-

Risk Status	Number of Risks 30 September 2023	Number of Risks 1 April 2024
Red (High)	1	2
Amber (Medium)	4	5
Green (Low)	0	0
TOTAL	**5**	**7**

3.2   One red risk has been added to the Risk Register in relation to Meeting the Homelessness Statutory Duty and one Amber Risk has been added in relation to Governance Risk.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

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

(a)   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.

(b)   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   The Council's approach to risk management (including its risk appetite) is set out in the Risk Management Policy and Strategy (March 2016).

5.4   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 Business Plan Objectives.

5.5   The risk register has been updated as at 1 April 2024 and a summary is attached as **APPENDIX 1**.

5.6   The risk summary illustrates the risks/opportunities using the "traffic light" method ie:-

RED risk score 12 and above (action plan required to reduce risk and/or regular monitoring)

AMBER risk score 5 to 10 (action plan required to reduce risk)

GREEN risk score below 5 (risk tolerable, no action plan required)

5.7 As part of this review the following changes have been made-

Two new risks have been added to the Risk Register

(a) A red risk have been added in relation to "Meeting its Homelessness Statutory Duty" specifically "Demand on the Homelessness Service is at the highest level recorded with an increase in presentations of over 100% between 2021/22 and 2023/24. The ability to place households in settled accommodation is increasingly challenging and the Council is incurring significant temporary accommodation costs and may fail to deliver its statutory duty."

(b) An amber risk has been added in relation to "Governance" following on from the VFM Report. This is to cover the risk that "If the recommendations from the External Auditor's VFM report are not implemented it would lead to a failure in the Council's governance arrangements".

All other risks have remained at the same score but comments detail the progress made to deliver the identified controls.

The key information and progress for each risk is set out in the strategic risk register attached at **APPENDIX 2**. A full strategic risk register including detailed controls and actions for each risk is held on file by the Chief Internal Auditor Risk Manager.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

As set out in the report

6.5   Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6   Health

None

6.7   Climate Change

None

7   Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of the Strategic Risk Register

Appendix 2: Strategic Risk Register Key Information

8   Previous Consideration

None

9   Background Papers

File available in Internal Audit and Risk Section including the full Strategic Risk Register action plan.

Contact Officer: Stephen Baddeley

Telephone Number: 01543 464415

Ward Interest: None

Report Track: Cabinet 6 June 2024
                              Audit and Accounts 19 June 2024

Key Decision: No

Stafford Borough Council
Summary of the Strategic Risk Register as at 1 April 2024

Summary of Red Risks

Risk No	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Date Added to Register	Residual Risk Score at Sep 2023	Residual Risk Score at April 2024	Direction of Travel over period reported
C1	Finance Risk	Deputy Chief Executive Resources	May 2020	20 RED	20 RED	↔
2024-02 (New)	Meeting Homelessness Statutory Duty	Head of Wellbeing	April 2024	N/A	12 Red	N/A

Summary of Amber Risks

Risk No	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Date Added to Register	Residual Risk Score at April 2023	Residual Risk Score at April 2023	Direction of Travel over period reported
C2	Economy Risk	Head of Economic Development & Planning	May 2020	9 Amber	9 Amber	↔
C5	Key Contractors Risk	Head of Operations / Head of Wellbeing	May 2020	10 Amber	10 Amber	↔
C6	Organisational Resilience Risk	Chief Executive	May 2020	9 AMBER	9 AMBER	↔
C7	Cyber Attack Risk	Head of Transformation & Assurance	May 2020	9 AMBER	9 AMBER	↔
2024-01 (New)	Governance Risk	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources	April 2024	N/A	9 Amber	N/A

Key to Direction of Travel

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

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	C1
Risk Name	**Finance Risk**
Risk Description:	The funding available to the Council from central Government resulting from potential changes to Business Rates, New Homes Bonus etc. will not be known until the autumn at the earliest. This together with increases in inflation and interest rates makes accurate budget planning difficult, resulting in a risk of over commitment of financial resources or inappropriate use of reserves.
Risk Owner:	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources
Portfolio:	Resources
Gross Risk Score (Without Controls in Place)	Likelihood: 4 Impact: 5 Total Score: 20 - RED
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 4 Impact: 5 Total Score 20 - RED**
Overall Progress Summary:	The medium-term financial stability of the Council is dependent upon its ability to set a 2025-26 budget that minimises the use of reserves, and the impact of changes arising from the future funding regime for local government. Details in relation to the implementation of 50% Business Rates Retention, a Business Rates Reset and Fair Funding are still awaited. A consultation document in relation to the Future of New Homes Bonus was published in February 2021 (a response from the Council was submitted in advance of the closing date). The Council is awaiting details of the financial Settlement for 2025-26, including New Homes Bonus, to be provided by Central Government, likely in the Autumn. Recent events have included Geopolitical uncertainty, energy crisis, inflation creating a cost-of-living crisis and interest rate rises. These issues, as well as uncertainty regarding national fiscal and monetary policy, the direction of the new Government and the impact on the local government financial settlement, have created substantial risk to financial sustainability.

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	**C2**
Risk Name:	**Economy Risk**
Risk Description:	**The economy of the Borough is adversely impacted limiting the ability to deliver the Economic Growth Strategy for the Borough**
Risk Owner:	Head of Economic Development & Planning
Portfolio:	Economic Development & Planning
Gross Risk Score (Without Controls in Place)	Likelihood: 3 Impact: 5 Total Score: 15 - Red
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 3 Impact: 3 Total Score: 9 - Amber**
Overall Progress Summary:	Immediate and longer terms interventions identified and being implemented; minor disruption to major projects and Future High Streets Fund bid updated to reflect changes to projects and revised programme for delivery. Local Plan progression under regular review. Emerging pressures linked to global supply chain issues and costs of goods, services and labour impacting on contracts/delivery.

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	**C5**
Risk Name:	**Key Contractors Risk**
Risk Description:	**The Council's key contractors remain sustainable and continue to provide value for money**
Risk Owner:	Head of Wellbeing
Portfolio:	Leisure / Resources
Gross Risk Scout (Without Controls in Place	Likelihood: 4 Impact: 5 Total Score: 20 - RED
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 2 Impact: 5 Total Score: 10 - Amber**
Overall Progress Summary:	• Risk is not at the same level with all contractors. • We are concentrating on the monitoring and financial support to the Leisure contractor which currently carries the highest risk. • Services have been re-introduced following the lifting of Government Covid-19 restrictions/return of work force. • Prioritisation of service have been reintroduced based on "open book" process. • The other emergent issue has been the significant increase in energy prices coupled with rising inflation arising from marked increases in the prices of fuel, goods and services. During the Covid pandemic lockdown periods and associated restrictions the Council worked with its contractors to support them in implementing their recovery plans However, the rises in energy prices, taken together with rising inflation, emerged as a significant risk, particularly to the Leisure contractor. The Council has provided support to its leisure and culture service provider with its energy costs, based on an open book approach. The Government announced plans to provide a level of support for leisure providers with swimming pools, as part of the last budget. Along with the above, the forecasted energy costs for 2024 seem more positive. At the last review of this risk the likelihood of service failure was reduced, it is proposed that it remains at this level given the ongoing uncertainty in energy markets. Freedom Leisure have been asked to produce a Strategic Investment Plan for the contract that, subject to agreement from the Council, will provide a strategic direction for the contract, outlining key financial and participation priorities. The Plan will aim to ensure that the contract works towards a stable financial position, whilst driving quality of service and meeting the needs of our residents.

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

	The Council successfully applied for the first round of the Swimming Pool Support Fund (revenue) in August 2023 that was launched to provide financial assistance with rising energy costs. The second round of the Swimming Pool Support Fund (capital) was launched in September 2023 and Stafford Leisure Centre has been successful in receiving funding for measures to reduce energy costs and carbon output. The Council's waste and recycling collection contract (2018-2028) is considered to continue to offer an appropriate level of service and value for money. The contract for the disposal of garden waste has been returned to Staffordshire County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority. The Council is working alongside the County Council on future procurement of the disposal service to ensure a satisfactory result in terms of disposal point selection. Discussions are underway with the Council's waste collection contractor around the future requirement for the statutory introduction of weekly food waste collections from 2026 for all domestic properties across the borough. This will also require the procurement of containers for the collection and storage of food waste from all domestic dwellings including communal properties.

As at April 2024

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	**C6**
Risk Name:	**Organisational Resilience Risk**
Risk Description:	**Reduced Organisational resilience may lead to reduced resources to support Council's service delivery and transformation.**
Risk Owner:	Chief Executive
Portfolio:	Resources
Gross Risk Scout (Without Controls in Place	Likelihood: 3 Impact: 5 Total Score: 15- RED
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 3 Impact: 3 Total Score 9- Amber**
Overall Progress Summary:	A number of services are continuing to experience capacity issues due to vacancies and problems in recruiting new staff. The major capital schemes funded by Future High Street monies and the Levelling Up Fund, together with the outcome of the recent Value for Money report have all resulted in significant demand on both front line and support services. Officer capacity continues to be reviewed and work prioritised. Funding for additional capacity in the Finance and Transformation Teams has been agreed and work has commenced on the preparation of job descriptions ready to go out to advert. The Council's shared leadership team structure came into effect on 1 April 2023 and all posts are filled. Work is nearing completion on the consultation for the proposed new shared service manager tier and this is due to be implemented with effect from 1 June 2024. Additional staffing resources are being identified to address key areas of demand.

As at April 2024

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	**C7**
Risk Name:	**Cyber Attack Risk**
Risk Description:	**Failure to repel or recover from cyber-attack including targeted ransomware, malware, and Distributed Denial of Service attacks**
Risk Owner:	Head of Transformation & Assurance
Portfolio:	Resources
Gross Risk Scout (Without Controls in Place	Likelihood: 4 Impact: 5 Total Score: 20 - RED
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 3 Impact: 3 Total Score 9 - AMBER**
Overall Progress Summary:	Cyber-attacks are a global issue, and the operating environment means that new risks and challenges are always developing, and attacks are becoming more sophisticated. The Technology Team has achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation for 2024; this is a government-backed, industry-supported scheme to help organisations protect themselves against common online threats. About Cyber Essentials - NCSC.GOV.UK A Security Officer role has been created within the team as part of the localised restructure. Cyber Essentials Plus renewal will be performed every December/January. PSN certification is due to be renewed in June 2024 following the IT health Check in May. Mobile Device management is in place and used to manage all our mobile devices, in the event of a lost or stolen device we can remotely wipe the machine/phone of any council data. We have recently set up a network monitoring tool which enables the Security Officer to monitor network activity proactively. The infrastructure hardware refresh is to be completed in 2024 providing an modern up to date infrastructure with enhanced security features.

As at April 2024

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	**20024-01 (New Risk)**
Risk Name:	**Governance Risk**
Risk Description:	If the recommendations from the External Auditor's VFM report are not implemented it would lead to a failure in the Council's governance arrangements
Risk Owner:	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources
Portfolio:	Resources
Gross Risk Score (Without Controls in Place)	Likelihood: 4 Impact: 5 Total Score: 20 - RED
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 3 Impact: 3 Total Score: 9 AMBER**
Overall Progress Summary:	The Improvement Plan to address the External Audit recommendations was approved in February 2024. Progress has been made against a number of actions and the first update is due to be reported to Cabinet and the Audit & Accounts Committee in June 2024. Progress on this is also a standing item on the Cabinet Briefing agenda.

As at April 2024

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

Ref No:	20024-0 (New Risk)
Risk Name:	**Meeting Homelessness Statutory Duty**
Risk Description:	Demand on the Homelessness Service is at the highest level recorded with an increase in presentations of over 100% between 2021/22 and 2023/24. Most are approaching the service having been served notice from their private rented accommodation, or, having been asked to leave their home by friends or family. The ability to place households in settled accommodation is increasingly challenging with delivery of affordable housing lower than previous years and the private rented sector being largely unaffordable for those on benefits. There is an increasing number of people approaching the service with many complex needs. The Council is incurring significant temporary accommodation costs and may fail to deliver its statutory duty, in particular relating to families in B&B for less than 6 weeks.
Risk Owner:	Head of Wellbeing
Portfolio:	Communities
Gross Risk Score (Without Controls in Place)	Likelihood: 4 Impact: 3 Total Score: 12 RED
Residual/Net Risk Score (i.e. with controls in place)	**Likelihood: 4 Impact: 3Total Score: 12 RED**
Overall Progress Summary:	Good quality data gives a clear understanding of the challenges facing the service.
	The increase in the local housing allowance to the 30th percentile on 01 April 2024 may enable some more placements into the private rented sector.
	The Renters Reform Bill is still in Parliament but in the meantime, eviction from the private rented sector remains the principal cause of homelessness.
	Out of area placements are increasingly challenging to secure and, there is no direct access accommodation in Stafford Borough. Grant arrangements are in place for limited local accommodation provision with work progressing to consider alternative options and long-term funding arrangements.
	Constructive discussions are ongoing with partner agencies to address the high level of support needs seen by many of the households presenting to the service. This needs to translate into joint commissioning of accommodation or, contributions towards support provision within accommodation.

STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER KEY INFORMATION AS AT 1 APRIL 2024

	Positive work continues with Registered Providers to ensure access to social housing for those presenting to the service. In 23/24 most homeless applications ended with an offer of either social housing or supported housing.
	Forward projections of new affordable housing are lower than previously delivered. When the new Local Plan is in place, it is anticipated there will be increased opportunities for delivery.
	Work ongoing to ensure correct housing benefit levels to minimise risk to the General Fund.

Agenda Item 4(d)(i)

Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 June 2024
Report of:	Head of Regulatory Services
Portfolio:	Climate Action and Nature Recovery Portfolio

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1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To raise awareness and seek approval for Stafford Borough Council's (SBC) ongoing involvement in the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Programme, working in partnership with Staffordshire County Council and other neighbouring District and Borough Councils.

2   Recommendations

2.1   That Cabinet agrees to continue the collaborative partnership with Staffordshire County Council and others to facilitate and coordinate the delivery of Electric Vehicle infrastructure in District and Borough locations with LEVI funding.

2.2   That Cabinet notes any formal consideration or use of the LEVI programme (including funding draw-down), will be subject to business case and further report(s) will be required to come to Cabinet for decision and formal approval requirements. At this stage, the Council is not under any contractual commitment.

2.3   That Cabinet notes the draft list of potential sites that may be considered in future for the LEVI programme (See **APPENDIX 1**).

2.4   To note and acknowledge the timescale and key dates around the next stages of the LEVI programme and for SBC to participate across these next stages including the draft list of potential sites for consideration (See **APPENDIX 2).**

Reasons for Recommendations

2.5   The opportunity to access this funding enables the ongoing improvement to the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure in the Borough and helps to support the sustainability aspirations to move to Carbon Net Zero by 2040.

3   Key Issues

3.1   The Council is working alongside key partners to support the delivery of the LEVI Programme across Staffordshire. The timeline of significant dates can be seen in **APPENDIX 2**.

3.2   The Council has two options:

1. Continue to participate in the Programme and recognise the potential benefits to residents and those visiting and working in the Borough.

2. Not to be part of this Programme. This will not assist the Council in achieving its priorities or support residents in movements towards the use of less polluting modes of transport, that support improvement in air quality and reduction in noise pollution.

3.3   To continue involvement in the Programme, allows the Council access to future funding across the life cycle of the project Tranche One will bring over £4 million worth of funding across the County. Should it wish to opt out later the Council can do so; this will not affect delivery of the wider project.

4   Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1   The work contributes to the delivery of Corporate Business Objective 2:

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

4.2   Through facilitating the switch from petrol and diesel vehicles to carbon zero fuelled vehicles, such as EVs, the Council will not only contribute to the reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions across the county but also contribute towards the reduction in the amount of harmful air pollutants such as volatile organic compounds and sulphur dioxide.

4.3   This also supports Corporate Business Objective 3:

'To tackle Climate Change by implementing our Climate Change and Green Recovery objectives.'

4.4   Throughout Staffordshire, transport contributes 35% of the 6.5 million tonnes of annual carbon emissions. EV adoption forms a critical part in tackling climate change, and the decarbonisation of transport across Staffordshire and

the Borough is recognised as an important factor in this. Reducing emissions by supporting infrastructure for zero emissions vehicles like charge points is one of several actions that will contribute to an improvement in emissions.

5   Report Detail

5.1   The National Strategy (Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy) published in March 2022 acknowledges that not everyone has access to off-street parking enabling them to charge an electric vehicle. In recognising this, the strategy document emphasises that the government will focus efforts on installing more charge points, providing convenient and affordable charging, ideally on the street where residents live. Within the document, the government sets out its role which is to set the right foundations for an equitable nationwide charging roll-out, removing barriers along the way (Taking Charge, 2022).

5.2   In January 2023, Staffordshire County Council's (SCC) Cabinet approved the SCC Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (See Appendix 3). It was acknowledged within the Strategy that Staffordshire County Council can enable and facilitate the development of a charging infrastructure network across the county. This position aligns with recent Department for Transport communication which outlined that *"As the market develops, we expect private investors to fund a growing proportion of the cost of charge point roll out. But there will continue to be a central role for local authorities, ensuring charge point rollout meets local needs (DfT, 2024)."*

5.3   The strategy assists in enabling electric vehicles (EV) to be a viable option for residents, visitors and businesses whilst helping to support the aims of SCC's Strategic Plan and the vision of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board, which aligns with the Borough's own aspirations through contributing towards achieving carbon net zero and improving the quality of life for residents through a reduction of noise and air quality impacts.

5.4   As of 31 January 2024, there are 428 public charge points in Staffordshire with 54% (233) of the charge points being rapid chargers (>=50kWh). CENEX who are a LEVI support body estimates that Staffordshire will require 5,140 electric vehicle charge point sockets by 2030.

5.5   The SCC Strategy identifies that collaborating with District and Borough Councils to install EV infrastructure at areas of off-street parking where residential needs are considered, should be a focal point.

6   Implications

6.1   Financial

None at this stage, there is no formal contractual commitment to LEVI.

6.2   Legal

None at this stage - there may be a future need to assess land ownership if SBC is not landowner for the planned sites. All legal due diligence to be undertaken as part of any future consideration, business case and further reports to Cabinet as part of the formal decision making and governance approval process.

6.3   Human Resources

Resource will be required but only minimal at this stage.

6.4   Risk Management

None at this stage. All risk will be considered as part of any future business case and Cabinet reports, as part of the formal decision making and governance approval process.

6.5   Equalities and Diversity

None.

6.6   Health

This is a positive step for the health of those in the Borough.

6.7   Climate Change

6.7.1 This funding opportunity securing additional EV charging points will facilitate electric vehicle use, helping to support the Council's facilitation of more sustainable travel methods of transport across the Borough.

6.7.2 Through facilitating the switch from petrol and diesel vehicles to carbon zero fuelled vehicles such as EVs, the Council will not only contribute to the reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions across the Borough and beyond but also contribute towards the reduction in the amount of harmful air pollutants such as volatile organic compounds and sulphur dioxide.

7   Appendices

Appendix 1: SBC Potential Future LEVI Programme Sites

Appendix 2: Key Timescale and Key Dates - LEVI Programme Next Steps

Appendix 3: SCC-Public-EV-Charging-Strategy-V3-3.pdf

8   Previous Consideration

A report sharing the Staffordshire CC Electric Vehicle strategy was brought to Cabinet on 3 August 2023 (Minute No CAB14/23 refers).

9   Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer: Gabrielle Whitehouse

Telephone Number: 01785 619240

Ward Interest: All

Report Track: Cabinet 6 June 2024 (Only)

Key Decision: N/A

Appendix 1

Local Authority	Parish	Ward	Name	Postcode (Est.)	# of Residents (within 3 minutes walk)
Stafford	Stone	St Michael's and Stonefield	Christchurch Way	ST15 8ED	86
Stafford	Stone	St Michael's and Stonefield	Crown Street	ST15 8EF	167
Stafford		Forebridge	South Walls	ST16 2LP	33
Stafford		Coton	Charnley Road Playing Fields (Check)	ST16 3JE	109
Stafford	Stone	Walton	New Car Park - Canalside	ST15 0GX	41
Stafford	Stone	Walton	New Car Park - Riverside	ST15 0GX	41
					477

Appendix 2

Second Midlands EVI Consortium – Stage 3 (upto tender)
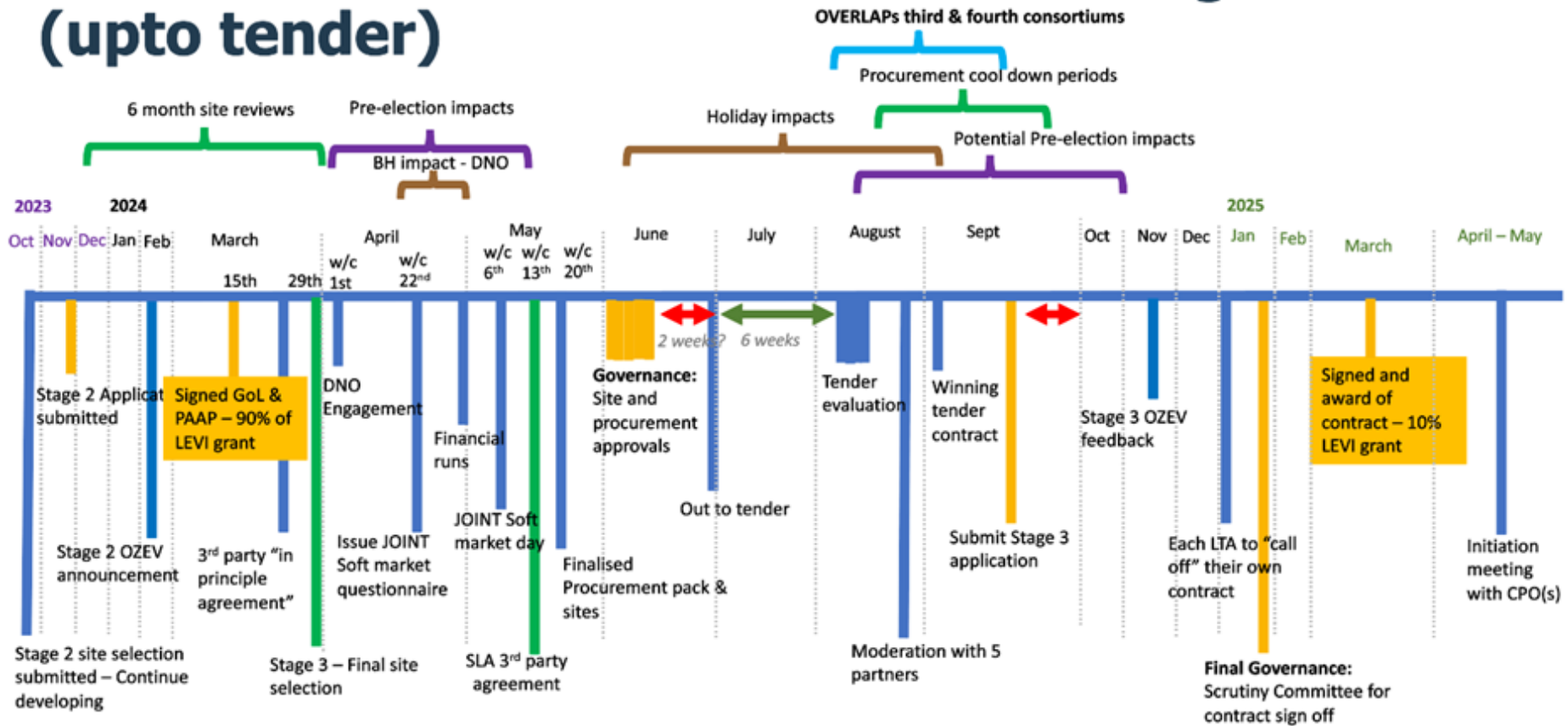
Staffordshire County Council Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

Please see the Staffordshire County Council EV Charging Strategy at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Transport/Sustainable-Travel/Electric-vehicles/02-SCC-Public-EV-Charging-Strategy-V3-3.pdf.