

31 March 2025

Dear Members

Council Meeting

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the Council will be held in the **Council Chamber, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford** on **Tuesday 8 April 2025 at 7.00pm** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.



Tim Clegg
Chief Executive

COUNCIL MEETING - 8 APRIL 2025

Mayor, Councillor Frank James

AGENDA

- 1 Approval of the Minutes of the meeting of Extraordinary Council held on 18 March 2025 as published on the Council's website.
- 2 Apologies for Absence
- 3 Declarations of Interest
- 4 Announcements (Paragraph 3.2(iii) of the Council Procedure Rules)
- 5 Public Question Time - Nil
- 6 Councillor Session - Nil
- 7 Notice of Motion
 - (a) A Notice of Motion pursuant to Paragraph 13.1 of the Council Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillors D P Rouxel and E L Carter as follows:-

Net Zero 2035

In 2019, Stafford Borough Council declared a climate emergency and agreed a target date of 2040 to achieve net zero carbon emissions.

Good progress has been made towards achieving this goal. However, it is clear that global warming is increasing at a faster pace than anticipated with weather-related disasters occurring with greater frequency.

The Council's new climate strategy and Action plan set out the structure and mechanisms needed to take forward our approach to carbon reduction.

Given the growing threat posed by global warming we are determined to be more ambitious in reducing our carbon footprint and therefore agree to adopt a target of 2035 for achieving net zero carbon emissions.

- (b) A Notice of Motion pursuant to Paragraph 13.1 of the Council Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillors M J Winnington and K M Aspin as follows:-

Supporting our Farmers

We, the undersigned, call on the Government and the Members of Parliament covering the Stafford Borough area to protect the interests of all of Stafford Borough's Farmers, and ultimately consumers, by calling on the government to:-

- Reverse the damaging changes to inheritance tax relief on agricultural property (the Family Farm Tax) introduced in Labour's Autumn Budget
- Reverse using agricultural land for solar panels rather than farming, to maintain food security for our country and locate solar in other more appropriate locations
- Restart the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) with immediate effect, as the flagship green farming scheme

And to more generally support and protect the farming industry from attack and the erosion of the industry itself.

We ask that the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the three local MPs, to outline the Council's dismay at the decision to change inheritance tax, turn farm land over to solar panels and close the Sustainable Farming Incentive and ask that they reverse these decisions with immediate effect and bring in greater support for rural areas and in particular the farming community in Stafford Borough, who need support not attack.

- (c) A Notice of Motion pursuant to Paragraph 13.1 of the Council Procedure Rules has been proposed by Councillors F Beatty and J M Pert as follows:-

Supporting our communities against the democratic deficit in the Planning and Infrastructure legislation

Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Angela Rayner MP, has recently published a Planning and Infrastructure Bill designed to liberalise planning rules. Some adverse spin-offs for the borough of the government's centralising ambitions to build 3.5 million homes include:-

- Denying our local communities their voice over decisions which have a profound impact on their lives.
- Stifling the powers of elected members to determine applications at planning committee meetings, severely restricting the role of elected members; and consequent removal of democratic accountability.

This will additionally remove the right of our communities to be heard in committee when decisions are made.

- Removal of councillors' ability to discuss, debate or vote on key developments in their localities, because of the proposed national scheme of delegation [Clause 46].
- Re-introduction of mandatory housing targets.
- More than doubling of housing delivery numbers in the Borough to 826 per annum.
- Loss of settlement boundaries around our Key Village Settlements, which manage development.
- Supposed justification for the failure of Stafford Borough to produce any new Local Plan in the past twenty-four months, despite inheriting a Plan at Regulation 18 stage.
- Lack of guarantees that new homes will be built to high quality standards to support rather than undermine people's health, wellbeing and life chances, nor to meet the needs of climate change, perpetuating the failings of the current large developer led poor-quality housing.

We believe that this legislation will cause a mass of unrestrained speculative development especially in the rural areas of our Borough, denying the authorities and neighbourhoods the care and attention to allow settlements to grow in a balanced and planned way, and critically without the appropriate infrastructure to meet these needs.

We ask that the Leader of the Council writes to the Deputy Prime Minister to request that the democratic role of local councillors is upheld, mandatory housing targets are made non-binding objectives based on actual determined local need rather than a notional moving of housing numbers from the Southeast and London and out of the cities to the rural areas; and that the voice of our communities in Stafford Borough is not marginalised over decisions which have a profound impact on their lives.

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10 Any items referred from Scrutiny Committee(s)	-

Chief Executive

Civic Centre
Riverside
Stafford
ST16 3AQ

Agenda Item 8

Corporate Plan 2025-26 to 2027-28

Committee:	Council
Date of Meeting:	8 April 2025
Report of:	Head of Transformation and Assurance
Portfolio:	Leader of the Council

The following matter was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 6 March 2025 and is submitted to Council as required.

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose to the Council the new Corporate Plan for 2025-26 to 2027-28 and the supporting priority delivery plans (PDPs).
- 1.2 The report also sets out the results of the consultation on the draft corporate plan.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the following be recommended for approval:-
 - (i) The Corporate Plan 2025-26 to 2027-28; and
 - (ii) The outline Priority Delivery Plans for 2025-26 to 2027-28.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 The adoption of a corporate plan, provides clarity in what the Council is seeking to achieve and allows for a framework to be put in place to deliver this and for performance to be reported against it.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The current corporate plan ran from 2021-24 and was extended for 12 months pending a review of priorities and production of a new plan.

3.2 There has been considerable change both locally and nationally since the current plan was developed. A full review has been undertaken of progress over the last few years and consideration given to aspirations for the future. This has been used to frame the proposed vision, priorities and objectives for the new corporate plan.

3.3 Consultation has taken place with the community and our stakeholders to seek their views on the proposed vision, priorities and objectives for the new Corporate Plan.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The process of producing a new corporate plan will determine the Council's priorities for the next three years.

5 Report Detail

5.1 The Council's current Corporate Plan was developed four years ago. Whilst good progress has been made in the delivery of our priorities, there has been considerable change both locally and nationally.

5.2 Good corporate planning will ensure that the Council has a clear framework within which actions can be taken and which achieve the greatest impact on agreed priorities and objectives within the resources available. This is increasingly important due to the challenges the Council is facing.

5.3 Four overarching priorities are proposed which focus on:

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

5.4 The priorities are supported by a number of objectives that set out what the Council is aiming to achieve, how we will deliver these and how we will measure our performance. The new corporate plan is set out in detail in **APPENDIX 1**.

5.5 In order to performance manage the delivery of the corporate plan, priority delivery plans (PDPs) will be used. These plans will set out the key actions/milestones and target dates for delivery. A high level PDP for each priority setting out the key milestones for the next three years is attached at **APPENDIX 2**. A more detailed PDP will be produced annually setting out the actions to be delivered in the forthcoming financial year. A range of key performance indicators (KPIs) are also included in the corporate plan. Performance in delivering the annual PDPs and the KPIs will be reported quarterly to the Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Committees.

- 5.6 A consultation exercise has been undertaken to seek the views of the public and our stakeholders on the Council's priorities. This was undertaken via a survey on the Council's website and was promoted through the press and social media.
- 5.7 In total, there were 68 responses to the consultation. Overall respondents were supportive of the proposed vision and priorities. In particular, respondents are:
- The Economy - supportive of the work to transform the town centre, but would also like to see support for the outlying towns and villages, the rural economy and small/independent businesses;
 - Communities and Wellbeing - supportive of the 'safe and secure places to live and work and facilities to maintain a healthy outlook' but expressed concerns about the volume of house building and the current leisure contract.
 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment - supportive of improving the appearance of the borough (clean, tidy and well maintained open spaces) but expressed concerns about the Council's ability to improve climate change.
 - Well Managed Council - felt this should be a given.

The results of the consultation are set out in **APPENDIX 3** and includes a representative selection of the comments made.

- 5.8 Whilst it has not been possible to take on board all of the comments made, we have:
- changed the priority from being a well managed council to an effective Council
 - included an action to review the current leisure contract;
 - added in an objective and actions to support future consultation on key projects; and
 - added reference to the Government's proposals for the restructuring of the local government and the work associated with this.
- 5.9 Feedback was received around the proposed Climate Change priority. The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and is working towards Net Zero. To enable this to happen Climate Change considerations must be an important factor in the way that we operate. Whilst the tangible benefits of our actions may not be seen for many years, we have a duty to future generations to take this issue seriously and act now.
- 5.10 A number of the consultation comments referred to issues that the Council has no or little control over; for example:

- house building - the Council is given targets by the government for new housing building which have to be delivered; and
- roads, transport, flooding social care, health care are the responsibility of other organisations (the County Council, NHS and the Environment Agency).

5.11 Since the corporate plan was drafted and the consultation launched the Government has announced plans to restructure local government which will see the creation of unitary councils and the end of district, borough and county councils. The corporate plan has been updated to make reference to this has and an action included to develop a plan to respond to the proposals and prepare for a smooth transition. The corporate plan has also been reduced to a three year plan to reflect the target date of 2028 for the new Councils in the 2nd phase.

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications as this stage in the development of the new corporate plan. A number of the proposed priorities/objectives have ongoing schemes for delivery which already have budget allocated to them.

Where new projects come forward as part of the development of the delivery plans, these will need to be costed and consideration given to whether this can be accommodated withing existing budgets or whether additional funding will be required.

6.2 Legal

The Local Government Act 1999 requires local authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which their functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (the Best Value Duty). Regard must be had to the statutory guidance which advises authorities to set clear and achievable priorities, to review corporate plans to ensure they are current and realistic, and to ensure resources are used effectively considering the resources available.

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities. This will be updated to reflect the new priorities in due course.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken as part of the delivery of the actions set out in the Corporate Plan and the supporting priority delivery plans, particularly those which relate to the development of policies and strategies.

6.6 Climate Change

Climate change is a priority for the Council and this is recognised in the corporate plan.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Corporate Plan

Appendix 2: Priority Delivery Plans (PDP)

Appendix 2a - Prosperous Economy PDP

Appendix 2b - Communities and Wellbeing PDP

Appendix 2c - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment PDP

Appendix 2d - Effective Council PDP

Appendix 3: Summary of Consultation Responses

8 Previous Consideration

Cabinet 6 March 2025 (Minute Number CAB65)

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer:	Judith Aupers
Telephone Number:	01543 464411
Ward Interest:	All
Report Track:	Cabinet 6 March 2025 Council 8 April 2025
Key Decision:	Yes

Stafford Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2025/26 to 2027/28

Foreword from the Leader:

Stafford Borough Council has been hard at work starting ambitious projects to improve economic success, environmental sustainability, and healthy living within the area. These schemes range from the completion of the Westbridge Park play area in Stone to the start of the transformation of Stafford town centre.

The improvement of our town centres is of the highest importance. We are now seeing our major regeneration plans for the County Town starting to take shape. We will be working closely with partners, such as Stafford College and local businesses, to help regenerate our town centres, and will be seeking the views of the public for our new developments.

We expect the environment and sustainability to be at the heart of all new investment schemes in the borough.

We want to encourage healthier lifestyles taking a 'prevention is better than cure approach' to health issues. Good housing is essential for the wellbeing of those living here. Working with others we will oversee the building of much needed new affordable and social housing. We will build council houses again while ensuring other social housing providers improve the quality of existing properties and the building of new accommodation.

It will be an extremely challenging time for local authorities with proposed changes from the Government that could see Stafford Borough Council merged with neighbouring authorities over the next few years - but we will be not lose sight of achieving our goals.

So, to achieve all that we have set out to do, it is essential our finances are sound, not only now but for future years - allowing us to continue delivering the great services to our communities, day in, and day out.

We will restore pride back to the County Town and Borough.

Councillor Aidan T.A. Godfrey

Leader of the Council

Our Vision:

To be an effective Council that promotes a growing economy, strong, healthy communities and a sustainable environment.

Priorities:

Our vision is underpinned by 4 interlinking priorities that reinforce each other

Our priorities are:

- Prosperous Economy
- Communities and Wellbeing
- Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment
- Effective Council

Employment, a safe and attractive environment, good quality housing, community safety and an active population all play a huge part in achieving a prosperous and thriving local economy, as well as being vital to good health and wellbeing and protecting our natural environment.

Context:

In determining the Council's priorities we have considered the Government's initial priorities for local government which are:

- New house building targets
- Creation of new towns and housing affordability
- Speed up and streamline the planning process
- Up-to-date local plans (national planning policy framework)
- Private rented sector - abolition of no-fault evictions
- Building Safety
- Ending homelessness
- Devolution proposals.

These will be kept under review and we will adapt our corporate plan where necessary.

Core Principles/How we will deliver:

We have identified a number of core principles which will underpin our approach to delivering the corporate plan and our priorities:

- Put our residents / customers at the centre of everything we do.
- Climate change to be considered in all of our decisions and embedded in our service delivery.
- Show leadership in our communities.
- Improve service delivery, through the effective use of technology.
- Promote good governance - integrity, accountability and transparency.
- Promote a culture of one team that gets things done.

Partnership Working:

The Council works in partnership with a wide range of public, private and voluntary organisations to deliver our priorities and objectives. We work closely with:

- Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce, businesses and education providers such as Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group to improve skills and create business growth;
- The County Council and Integrated Care Partnership on health and care issues;
- Central government via the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Homes England, housing associations, housing developers and support providers to deliver new and better houses and supported accommodation;
- The voluntary sector and community groups whose role is critical in providing support to communities;
- Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to promote community safety; and
- the Environment Agency, English Heritage and voluntary bodies to protect and conserve our natural environment.

The Borough Council works closely with the other district and borough Councils in Staffordshire, the County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council and the Leader sits on the Staffordshire Leaders' Board.

Profile of the Borough Council:

Stafford Borough Council is a democratically accountable body with 40 elected Councillors. Local elections to these positions occur every four years.

The Council has unique responsibilities defined by Parliament for delivering a range of services, functions and responsibilities. These are quite extensive by their nature but the core responsibilities include:

- Planning Authority - the Council determines planning policy for the Borough via Local Plans and also makes decisions on most planning applications.
- Strategic Housing and Homelessness duty - the Council has a responsibility to plan the housing needs of the Borough; to approve a Homelessness strategy and deal with individual cases to assess whether they are homeless and what support they are entitled to.
- Billing Authority - the Council is responsible for collecting Council Tax and Business Rates on behalf of all public bodies in the Borough.
- Licensing Authority - the Council is responsible for the licensing of taxis, food outlets, alcohol outlets, tattoo parlours, street trading etc.
- Waste Collection Authority - the Council is responsible for collecting domestic waste and recycling materials from every residential building in the Borough.

The Council also undertakes a range of optional responsibilities where there is no requirement in law to do so. These activities are aimed at promoting economic prosperity, community wellbeing and safety in the Borough. Examples of these include:

- The funding / provision of leisure, sporting and cultural facilities and services.
- Provision of support to businesses to help them to grow and expand
- Funding advice services such as Citizen Advice.
- Floral displays in town centres and grass cutting
- Provision of CCTV service
- Maximising opportunities for public and private investment

Staffordshire County Council is responsible for social care provision, libraries, education and roads/highways etc.

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy

Why this is important:

Stafford Borough has a strong economic base and plays a major role in the growth of the wider Staffordshire economy and beyond.

Stafford is a major economic hub and has seen significant investment and growth over the last decade with major investors and businesses attracted to the area due to the availability of sites, infrastructure, affordability, and quality of life. The Borough is home to over 5,000 businesses, employing around 70,000 people and is Staffordshire's largest and most populous borough covering around 230 square miles and with a population of 138,670.

The Council has an important role to play through its Economic development and planning functions in creating the right conditions for economic growth and prosperity for its residents.

Over the last few years, the Council has secured a significant amount of Government funding to support its regeneration plans, with funding secured from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support economic growth projects, Future High Street Fund to deliver the transformation of Stafford town centre including the acquisition and demolition of the former Co-op and Guildhall shopping centre, the award of funding to unlock the development of the Stafford Station Gateway, releasing land for housing and commercial opportunities and investment in a new state of art Institute of Technology.

The new Government has identified house building as a major priority and has announced reforms to the planning system, with the restoration of mandatory housing targets for local authorities.

Going forward, Stafford Borough will need to develop a new Local Plan and plan for an increase in house building and new employment opportunities. With more homes comes greater opportunities for inward investment and demand for education, employment and leisure facilities and a continued need to transform and regenerate our town centres, ensuring that they are vibrant and diverse, and cater for a wider range of opportunities than just retail.

There is a need for the Council to work in partnership to support our local businesses to grow including businesses in our main towns, rural areas and key service villages and to continue to position the Borough as an excellent place to invest, to create new high quality and well-paid jobs for our local residents and in particular for our younger population.

To support the Council's ambitious agenda, it is vitally important that the Council continues to deliver well run and efficient services, and it is a priority to improve the performance of the planning service, with a focus on providing high levels of customer service and re-positioning of the service from being seen as a regulator to an enabler of growth.

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. A prosperous economy where the workforce has the skills to drive growth to benefit our communities.
2. Vibrant town centres that are the focus for economic, cultural and community life.
3. Ensure new housing is well designed and built in the right place.

How we will deliver this:

1. Complete the delivery of our ambitious regeneration schemes to transform Stafford town centre.
2. Work with our partners to develop a new Economic Growth Strategy with a compelling and dynamic vision for the future of the Borough's economy.
3. Promote the Borough as an excellent place to do business and invest.
4. Develop a pipeline of economic projects that attract funding from the private sector and government investment.
5. Deliver planning services that identify sites for homes, including affordable housing, with good infrastructure, land for employment, protection of our green spaces and policies that reduce the impact of climate change.

How we will measure our performance:

Regeneration
Employment rate
Town centre vacancy rate
Number of housing completions
Planning Services
Major Planning Applications determined within time
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined

Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing**Why this is important:**

Stafford Borough is an attractive, relatively affluent place to live, but there are pockets of deprivation and disadvantage where health inequalities exist and crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is higher than it should be.

The population is ageing, bringing with it new challenges for agencies to address. Healthy life expectancy is unequal, depending where in the Borough you live and the circumstances you live in.

Homelessness has increased over the past 5 years as housing is increasingly unaffordable, in short supply and people are experiencing multiple support needs that make sustaining a tenancy challenging. Despite historic strong delivery of affordable housing, that is now reducing as housing associations face a more financially challenging environment with increased obligations to their tenants.

Recent years have seen Stafford Borough welcoming and resettling those who have fled conflict. Sufficient suitable accommodation will continue to be needed to support formal resettlement schemes and asylum requirements. Working with partners to support cohesive and safe communities is essential.

The Borough benefits from of a wide range of community groups and voluntary organisations that provide support, friendship and advice to residents. Their contribution is recognised and highly valued by all partners.

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. A safe and secure place to live for local people, including affordable housing for those who need it.
2. The opportunity for local people and communities to enjoy healthy lifestyles by providing good leisure and cultural services.
3. A reduction in health inequalities.
4. A safe and cohesive Borough

How we will deliver this:

1. Work towards delivering social housing that contributes to meeting the needs of the local population as recognised by the emerging Housing Strategy.
2. Reduce and prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, by delivering the commitments set out in the new Homelessness Strategy 2025 and commit to reducing the number of households in B&B accommodation.
3. Review of Leisure, Culture and Heritage provision and ensure it promotes healthy empowered communities.
4. Agree a Community Wellbeing Strategy setting out delivery of community safety priorities and, how health will be embedded in all we do.

How we will measure our performance:

Strategic Housing, Homelessness and Assistance
% households had a positive outcome and secured accommodation for 6 + months
Delivery of affordable housing per year working with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England (Annual)
No of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) completed
Annual report on delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grants service
Leisure, Culture and Heritage
Annual Report from Freedom Leisure setting out the performance of all facilities and the wider wellbeing work and events they facilitate.
Health and Wellbeing
Total value of financial outcomes achieved as a result of the Citizen’s Advice contract
Further indicators will be developed as part of the Community Wellbeing Strategy

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Why this is important:

The impacts of Climate Change are well recognised and as a Council we need to demonstrate our commitment to adapt the Council's operations and mitigate the effects of Climate Change in the Borough.

We recognise that limiting the harmful effects of Climate Change cannot be achieved by any single organisation and the effort requires changes in the way we live and work.

Living and working in a clean and green local environment and having access to good quality green spaces and nature, directly contributes to improving individuals' health and wellbeing, by promoting both their physical and mental health, such as through the reduction of stress and anxiety.

Clean and green environments improves individuals' satisfaction with that area and their lives and fosters a strong sense of community.

Ensuring good air quality leads to better respiratory health and can lower the risk of long-term diseases, such as asthma, coronary heart disease, and some cancers.

Protecting nature, minimising waste, increasing the use of waste resources, and ensuring nature recovery, significantly contributes towards not only the health of our local area but our entire planet, making it more sustainable for our future generations.

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. To reduce the Council's Carbon Footprint and work towards Net Zero.
2. A smaller community carbon footprint and reduced borough wide carbon emissions.
3. Natural and built environments that are sustainable, protected, and enhanced.
4. Less waste and improved use of waste resources.
5. Public areas that are clean and tidy.
6. Improved public open spaces, play areas, parks and landscapes, including increased biodiversity, and wild flowering and pollinators.

How we will deliver this:

1. A new Climate Change Strategy and associated Action Plan will be in place in 2025 and delivered over the next four years.
2. Increase awareness of climate change and its causes with residents, organisations and businesses and encourage action to mitigate it.
3. Adopt an up-to-date Local Plan with positive policies that reduce carbon emissions and minimise the impact of climate change.
4. Promote biodiversity in all new development.
5. Produce a Nature Recovery Strategy.

6. Work with residents and partners, including Staffordshire Waste Partnership to support households to minimise the waste they produce and maximise their reuse and recycling.
7. Introduce weekly food waste collections to all domestic properties and Simpler Recycling initiatives.
8. Invest in our parks, play areas, and open spaces.

How we will measure our performance:

Climate Change
Indicators will be developed as part of the Climate Change Strategy
Waste and Recycling
% collections completed first time
Number of missed bin collections (including assisted)/100,000/qtr.
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting
Amount of household residual waste collected per household (Kgs)
Amount of food waste collected
Streetscene
% residents' satisfied with the appearance of town centres (Stafford/Stone)
Satisfaction with the quality of our parks, play areas, and open spaces.

Priority 4: Effective Council

Why this is important:

Meeting the needs of our local community are our priority. We are here to provide services that matter to our residents. Customer expectations are changing with the development of technology and there is a need to ensure that services are available online 24/7 for those that wish to access our services in this way.

The Council is funded by local residents and we are accountable for spending wisely and effectively. The Council has been facing increasing challenges over the last few years in balancing its budget. The Council has seen its core funding from Government reduce year on year since 2008 and faces ongoing uncertainty as to future funding, with financial settlements only being given for a year at a time. Like households across the Borough, we have seen our costs increase. Furthermore, demand for some services such as homelessness is increasing.

Prudent financial management has meant there has been no significant service reductions and we will look to maintain this position. Savings have been delivered since 2011 through the sharing of back office services with Cannock Chase Council. More recently we have delivered savings from the sharing of a management team and further savings are expected from the sharing of front line services. This will be achieved through a transformation programme and investment in technology to drive efficiency savings.

The Council has a duty be open, honest and responsible in its decision making and to consider the views of residents and stakeholders when taking important decisions that affect the future of services and the community.

The recent central government White Paper setting out proposals to reorganise local government would see the abolition of district and borough councils as well as county councils. With the announcement only made on 16 December 2024 and limited detail available currently, it is too early to speculate with any certainty the impact this will have on the delivery of the priorities and actions set out in this corporate plan but it will undoubtedly have an effect.

As part of our priority for being an effective Council, we will develop an action plan to respond to the Government proposals and prepare for a smooth transition. This will include assessing the impact on our current corporate priorities and identifying new work streams. Where necessary we will adjust or pause our proposals so that we do not waste resources on actions that will no longer deliver a benefit for local residents and businesses in the borough.

What we want to achieve (our objectives):

1. Good customer experience;
2. Value for money to local taxpayers;
3. Good governance across the Council;

How we will deliver this:

1. Provide more services on-line, through the implementation of our digital strategy, whilst maintaining telephone and reception services for customers.
2. Complete delivery of the value for money improvement plan.
3. Review our Code of Governance.
4. Consult with the public and/or stakeholders on key projects that affect our communities.
5. Develop a plan to respond to the Government’s proposals for the re-organisation of local government, assess the effect on the delivery of the corporate plan and adjust our actions accordingly.

How we will measure our performance:

Good Customer Experience:
Days taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Claims
Days taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax change of circumstances
% of calls answered
Average call wait time
Number of services (forms) available online
Number of online transactions

Funding Council Services
% of Council Tax collected annually
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected
Value for Money
Completion of Value for Money Improvement Plan
External Auditor's Value for Money Opinion (reported separately)
Good Governance
Freedom Of Information requests within time i.e. 20 working days
Number of public consultations/engagement exercises undertaken
The Annual Governance Statement (reported separately)

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy
Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26 to 2027-28

Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
Delivery of regeneration schemes	Stafford Town Centre Transformation			
	• Complete work on Station Approach project	X		
	• Complete demolition works to Guildhall shopping centre and former Co-operative department store	X		
	• Agree preferred development delivery option for cleared development sites	X	X	
	• Develop wider masterplan/development framework for Stafford town centre	X		
	Stafford Station Gateway			
	• Commence stakeholder engagement on delivery of the strategic vision for the site	X		
	• Remediation works	X		
	• Agree preferred development delivery option for cleared development sites		X	
Economic Growth Strategy	• Refresh Economic Growth Strategy	X		
Promotion of the Borough	• Promote Stafford town centre development prospectus at UKREiiF 2025	X		
Pipeline of projects	• Develop pipeline of future economic development and regeneration projects	X	X	X

Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy

Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete review of section 106 policy and allocations Programme and Project Allocations for section 106 funding through evidence for Cannock Chase SAC and Leisure 	X		
		X	X	X
Delivery of planning services to enable economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish revised Local Development Scheme National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) assessment and New Local Plan implications 	X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare New Local Plan and updated evidence base, 	X	X	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Plan (Regulation 18) consultation 		X	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Local Plan Publication and Submission 			X
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement improvement plan for Development Management 	X	X	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full introduction of a chargeable pre-application service 	X		

**Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing
Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26 to 2027-28**

Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
Delivery of social housing	Prepare commission to scope the feasibility of housing development on a Council owned site.	X		
	Completion of feasibility work on developing housing on a Council owned site.		X	
	Develop work programme to deliver housing on Council owned site, subject to feasibility			X
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping	Start procurement for a Stafford Housing Strategy including scoping the development of Council Housing.	X		
	Completion of Stafford Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy	X		
	Stafford Housing Strategy and Council Housing technical support completed.		X	
	Plan for the development of Council Housing completed, including details of arrangements in place for stock management		X	
Leisure, Culture and Heritage Provision	Review of Stafford's leisure, culture and heritage provision	X		
	Decision on scope of Stafford's future commissioned service in context of end of initial 10 year term in November 2027	X		

Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing

Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
Community Wellbeing	Work with the Integrated Care Partnership and Staffordshire County Council to reduce health inequalities	X	X	X
	Complete Community Wellbeing Strategy, setting out priorities across community safety and health (2025-2028).	X		
	Deliver a small grant scheme to voluntary, community and social enterprises, to support delivery of the corporate plan and Community Wellbeing Strategy	X		
	Agree a delivery plan with the Community Wellbeing Partnership, to guide the activity on community safety and health.	X		
	Complete the actions in the delivery plan and evaluate impact on Community Wellbeing.		X	X
	Evaluate the impact of the small grant scheme on an annual basis		X	X

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment
Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26 to 2028-29

Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
Delivery of Climate Change Action Plan	Training to be carried out for Senior Officers and Elected Members	X		
	Delivery of the Climate Change School Engagement Project	X		
	Further actions will be added each year from the Climate Change Action Plan	X	X	X
Local Plan with positive climate change policies	Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation study	X		
	Draft Plan (Regulation 18) consultation includes draft climate change and renewable policies		X	
	New Local Plan Publication and Submission			X
Biodiversity in new developments	Implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with statutory requirements	X	X	X
Nature Recovery	Produce a nature recovery strategy	X		
	Develop an action plan to deliver the nature recovery strategy	X		
	Delivery of the nature recovery action plan		X	X
Minimise Household Waste	Procurement and distribution of food waste caddies for the introduction of new mandatory domestic weekly food waste collection service	X		

Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
	Commence new weekly food waste collection service and Simpler Recycling initiatives		X	
	Monitor and action waste resource reduction	X	X	X
Investment in Parks and Open Spaces	Report to Cabinet on recommended play area/parks improvement programme	X		
	Identify funding and implement play area/parks improvement programme	X		
	Continue to identify funding and implementation of play area/parks improvement programme		X	X

Priority 4 - Effective Council
Priority Delivery Plan for 2025-26 to 2027-28

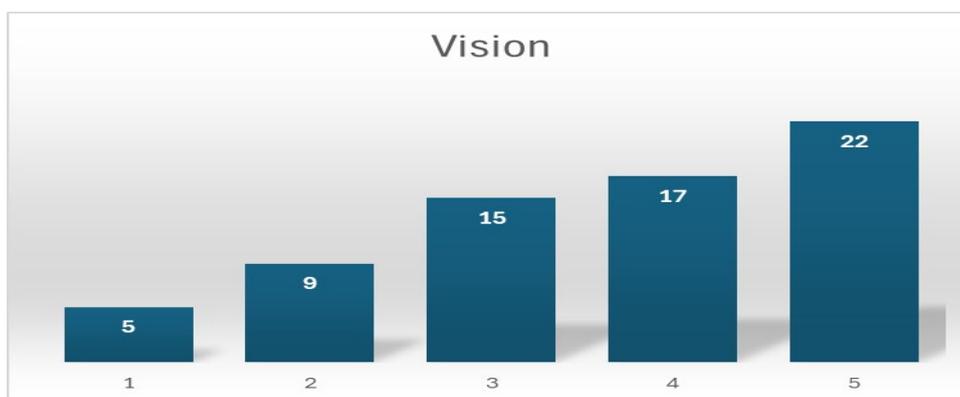
Project	Actions and Milestones	25-26	26-27	27-28
Provide more services on line and improve accessibility	Work with services to produce a work programme	X		
	Delivery of the work programme (key actions will be added once the plan has been developed and approved)	X	X	X
Delivery of the Value for Money Improvement Plan	Complete delivery of the actions set out in the VFM improvement plan (this is reported on separately to Cabinet and the Audit and Accounts Committee)	X		
Code of Governance	Review and update the Code of Governance	X		
Consultation	Undertake consultation/engagement with the public and stakeholders on key projects that affect our communities eg the production of the local plan. These will be determined each year as part of the development of the annual priority delivery plans.	X	X	X
Local Government Reorganisation	Develop an action plan to respond to the Government's Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation.	X		
	Delivery of the action plan (key actions will be added once the plan has been developed and approved)	X	X	X

Consultation Responses on Stafford Borough Council's Corporate Plan

Questions:

Q1 Vision: To be an effective Council that promotes a growing economy, strong, healthy communities and a sustainable environment.

(a) **Do you agree with the proposed vision;** please score from 1 to 5 where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.



Rating	Response	Percentage
1	5	8%
2	9	13%
3	15	22%
4	17	25%
5	22	32%
Total responses	68	

(b) **What words would you choose to describe how you would want Stafford Borough to be in four years' time?**

"A nicer place to live"

"Forward looking, sustainable, cost effective, efficient"

"A council that cares about its own residents, in its borough, rebuilt a county town to be proud of"

"Vibrant, safe, prosperous, active, green"

"Innovative, consultative, customer-focused, financially-astute"

"Pro-active, sustainable, thriving, independent."

"A vibrant, safe go to destination with entertainment and leisure at the heart of its foundation"

"Strong healthy honest and forward thinking council for the community"

"A well managed and progressive council who listens to local needs, understands them and puts in place an action plan to fulfill those aspirations"

Q2 The 4 proposed priorities for the new corporate plan are:

(a) Do you agree that these should be our priorities?

Please score: 5 strongly agree; 4 agree; 3 neither agree nor disagree; 2 disagree; 1 strongly disagree

Priority	1	2	3	4	5	Overall	Average	Rank
Well Managed Council	9	1	4	12	42	281	4.13	1
Prosperous Economy	6	3	4	22	33	277	4.07	2
Communities and Wellbeing	7	1	7	16	37	279	4.10	3
Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment	5	6	17	13	27	255	3.75	4

(b) Is there anything that you would remove from the list of priorities?

The two priorities receiving the most comments were:

- Climate Change (respondents either felt that the Council has limited ability to have a meaningful impact on this or don't believe that it is an issue);
- Well Managed Council (the majority of respondent considered this should be a given)

(c) Is there anything else that you think we should add to the list of priorities?

"Focus on better lives for residents

Doing simple things well

Reducing expenditure and services."

"Something practical around encouraging new businesses in the area.

"Integration of service provision, making sure regeneration is sustainable and inclusive to all people.

"Being realistic in objectives rather trying to tackle everything. Small steps forward do make a difference."

"'local voice' priority. Local people need to have more say in what happens in their community"

"General improvement to leisure facilities"

"leveraging partnerships."

(d) **Which of the 4 priorities do you think the Council should spend more money on?** (Please rank these in priority order where 1 is the priority you would spend the most money on and 4 is the least money)

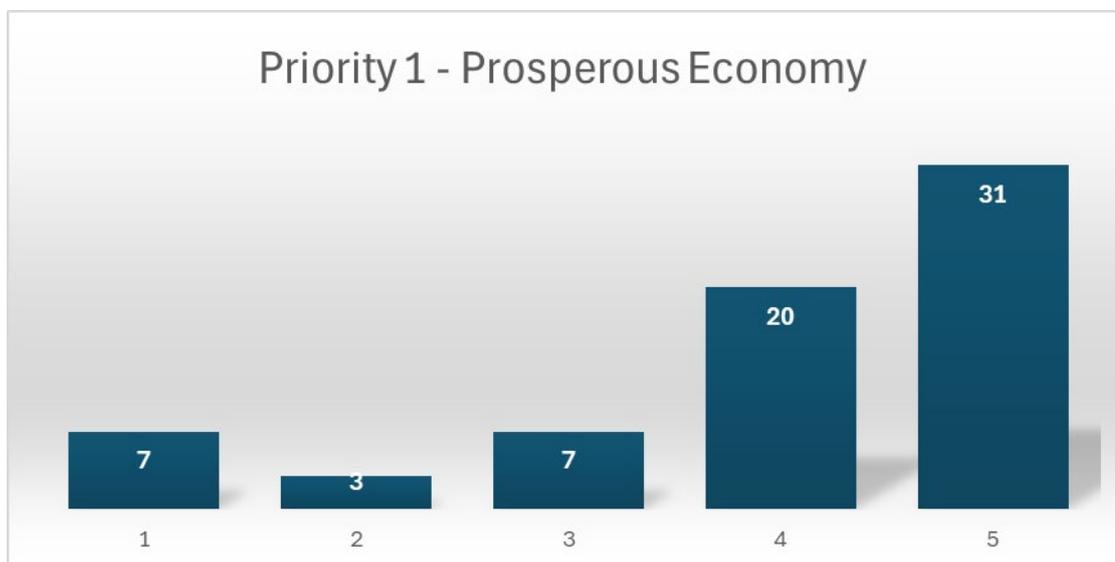
Priority	1	2	3	4	Overall	Average	Rank
Communities and Wellbeing	23	26	14	5	137	2.01	1
Economic Prosperity	28	14	16	10	144	2.11	2
Well Managed Council	10	12	17	29	201	2.95	3
Climate Change	7	16	21	24	198	2.91	4

Q3 Priority 1 - Prosperous Economy - What we want to achieve (our objectives):

- A prosperous economy where the workforce has the skills to drive growth to benefit our communities.
- Vibrant town centres that are the focus for economic, cultural and community life.

(a) **Do you agree that these should be our objectives?**

Please score: 5 strongly agree; 4 agree; 3 neither agree nor disagree; 2 disagree; 1 strongly disagree



Rating	Response	Percentage
1	7	10%
2	3	5%
3	7	10%
4	20	29%
5	31	46%
Total Responses	68	

(b) If you disagree or strongly disagree, please tell us why.

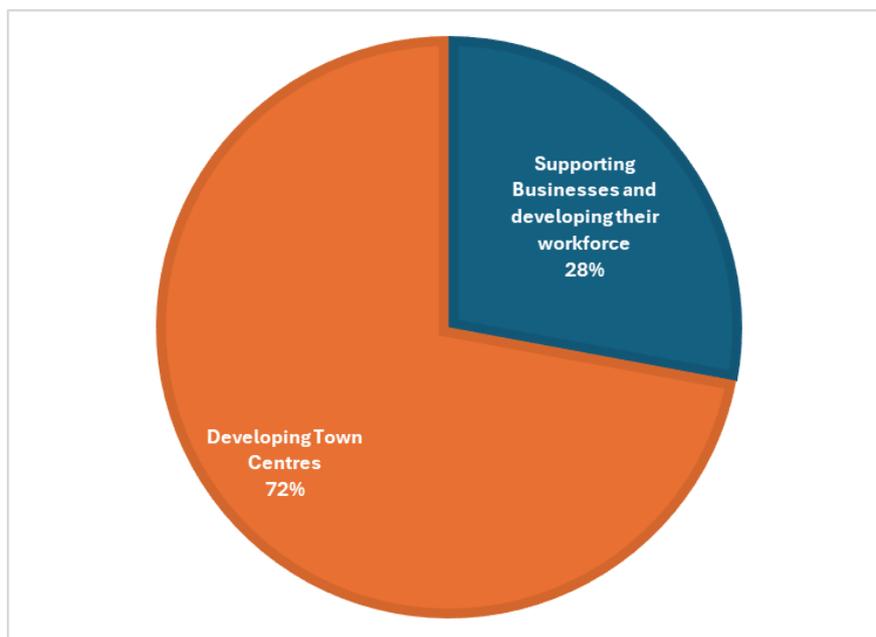
“A prosperous town centre should be the focus. Creating a town centre with a vibrant and thriving High Street will create a prosperous economy in Stafford. Too much emphasis is put on Stafford being a commuter town and most of the new housing feeds that. We need far more accessible business rates for shop owners, grants to re-open the many empty shops and retail units, redevelopment of the larger retail spaces.”

“Stafford Town centre is badly in need of regeneration. I know that there are plans in progress but time is of the essence. A lot of new properties have and are being built around the area but at present Stafford Town centre is not a very appealing place to go. Some great improvements are planned, just need to get on with the ASAP.”

“It is important but there is no mention of town centres outside of Stafford - what about Stone and Eccleshall. Where is the recognition of the importance of the rural economy, in an area that has a large rural area.”

(c) Do you think we should spend more money on:

- supporting businesses and developing their workforce; or
- developing town centres

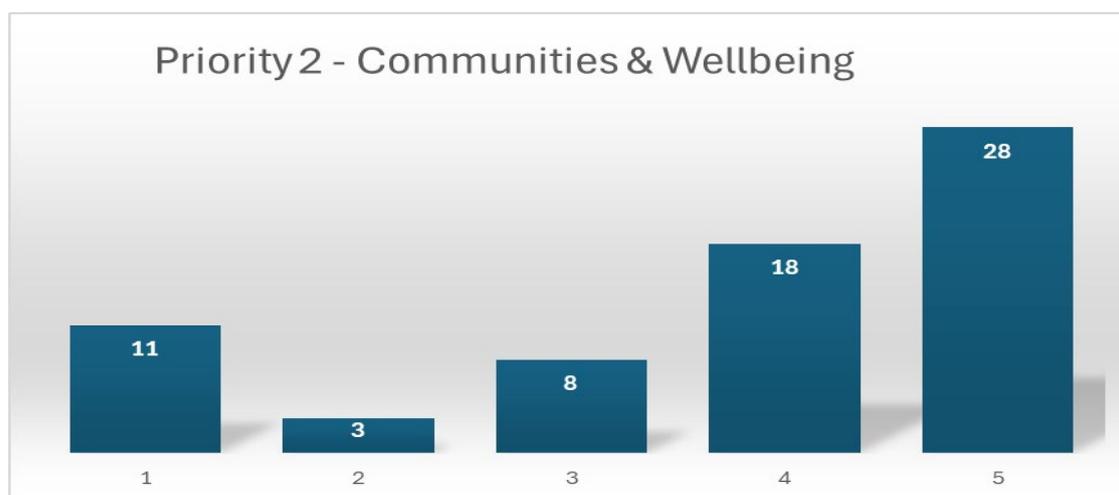


Q4 Priority 2 - Communities and Wellbeing - What we want to achieve (our objectives):

- A safe and secure place to live for local people, including social housing for those who need it.
- The opportunity for local people and communities to enjoy healthy lifestyles by providing good leisure and cultural services.
- A reduction in health inequalities and greater equality and inclusion.
- A safe and cohesive Borough

(a) Do you agree that these should be our objectives?

Please score: 5 strongly agree; 4 agree; 3 neither agree nor disagree; 2 disagree; 1 strongly disagree



Rating	Response	Percentage
1	11	16%
2	3	4%
3	8	12%
4	18	27%
5	28	41%
<i>Total Responses</i>	68	

(b) If you disagree or strongly disagree, please tell us why.

“Remove the bit about greater equality and inclusion, it is not a metric that has any meaningful end point and is a waste of resource. Health inequalities are equally vague. Focus on opportunities for communities to meet and a focus on crime reduction.”

“There are now too many houses in Stafford. The focus should be on making the borough safe, cleaning the waterways to make them usable for leisure, investing in the high street/market to create jobs in retail/independent businesses.”

(c) Which of the 4 objectives do you think the Council should spend more money on? (Please rank these in priority order where 1 is the priority you would spend the most money on and 4 is the least money)

- A safe and secure place to live for local people, including social housing for those who need it.
- The opportunity for local people and communities to enjoy healthy lifestyles by providing good leisure and cultural services.
- A reduction in health inequalities and greater equality and inclusion.
- A safe and cohesive Borough

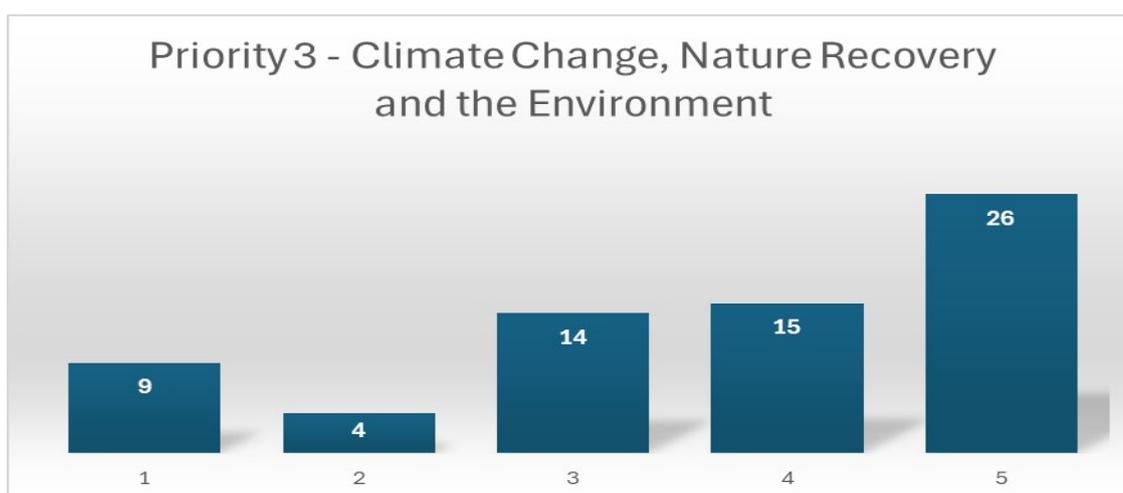
Objective	1	2	3	4	Overall	Average	Rank
Safe and Secure place to live	31	9	13	15	148	2.18	1
Healthy lifestyles	17	28	14	9	151	2.22	2
Safe and Cohesive Borough	15	17	17	19	176	2.58	3
Equality and Inclusion	5	14	24	25	205	3.01	4

Q5. **Priority 3 - Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment - What we want to achieve (our objectives):**

- Natural and built environments that are sustainable, protected, and enhanced.
- Public areas that are clean and tidy.
- Less waste.
- Reduced carbon emissions from the Council's activities.
- A smaller community carbon footprint and reduced borough wide carbon emissions.
- Improved public open spaces, play areas, parks and landscapes, including increased biodiversity, and wild flowering and pollinators.

(a) **Do you agree that these should be our objectives?**

Please score: 5 strongly agree; 4 agree; 3 neither agree nor disagree; 2 disagree; 1 strongly disagree



Rating	Response	Percentage
1	9	13%
2	4	6%
3	14	21%
4	15	22%
5	26	38%
<i>Total Responses</i>	68	

(b) If you disagree or strongly disagree, please tell us why.

“Clean and tidy is good. Increased health of the local environment is good. Everything else is just going to be a cost sink.”

“Little point exists in stringent Stafford Borough measures on emissions and environmental targets when China, India, Russia etc do nothing towards these ends.”

Q.6 The Council has included £250,000 in the budget to spend on climate change, which of the objectives would you like to see this money being spent on:

Please rank them from 1 to 5 where 1 is the most money and 5 is the least money

- Natural and built environments that are sustainable, protected, and enhanced.
- Less waste
- Reduced carbon emissions from the Council’s activities.
- A smaller community carbon footprint and reduced borough wide carbon emissions.
- Improved public open spaces, play areas, parks and landscapes, including increased biodiversity, and wild flowering and pollinators.

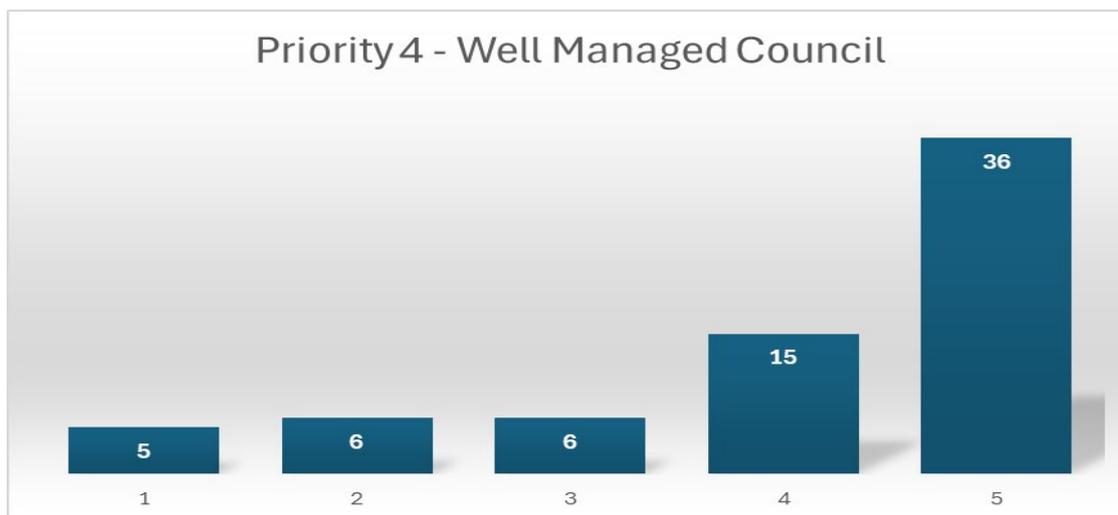
Objectives	1	2	3	4	5	Overall	Average	Rank
Improved open spaces	31	20	2	6	9	146	2.14	1
Sustainable, protected and enhanced	19	17	18	4	10	173	2.54	2
Less waste	9	17	30	10	2	183	2.69	3
Reduced emissions	4	9	6	29	20	256	3.76	4
Smaller carbon footprint	5	5	12	19	27	262	3.85	5

Q7 Priority 4: Well Managed Council - What we want to achieve (our objectives):

- Good customer experience;
- Effective management of Council finances
- Value for money to local taxpayers;
- Effective use of our assets
- Good governance across the Council;

(a) Do you agree that these should be our objectives?

Please score: 5 strongly agree; 4 agree; 3 neither agree nor disagree; 2 disagree; 1 strongly disagree



Rating	Response	Percentage
1	5	7%
2	6	9%
3	6	9%
4	15	22%
5	36	53%
Total Responses	68	

(b) If you disagree or strongly disagree, please tell us why.

“Top should be value for money”

“this shouldn't be a 'priority' this should just be what is expected as a general fact of running a council!”

“This should be achieved by keeping council tax increases at or about the level of inflation. Preferably the tax should be reduced by efficiency savings and looking to share services with more districts.”

Q8 Are there any other comments you would like to make on the Council's corporate plan or where it should spend more/less money?

“Cleaning the streets. Over grown grassed areas. Weeds in pavements and gutters
The towns look very untidy and reflected badly on the council”

“Spend more money investing in businesses and infrastructure and less on green initiatives and inclusion. Instead focus on practical elements such as reducing pollution in our green spaces and keeping communities safe.”

“Less on sustainability/climate change - no good to anyone if they have no money due to paying high bills”

In Summary

The 4 priorities in order of feedback are:

Priority	Rating					Overall	Average	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5			
Well Managed Council	5	6	6	15	36	275	4.04	1
Prosperous Economy	6	7	3	7	20	269	3.95	2
Communities and Wellbeing	11	3	8	18	28	253	3.72	3
Climate Change	9	4	14	15	26	249	3.66	4

Examples of comments on each of the Priorities:

Prosperous Economy

Town Centre

“Focus should be on the development of the town to encourage economic growth.”

“Vibrant town centre with a strong, long term retail base along with leisure facilities sustainable for 7 day week daytime and evening economy that will provide new long term employment for local residents”

Instead of more pound shops, McDonald's and B&M using the large retail spaces for things like climbing walls, indoor golf, trampoline spaces etc. places we can get kids into and doing something not just on streets”

“Visitors to the town are discouraged by lots of empty shops, fancy murals etc fool nobody. Stop wasting money.”

“a council that looks after the existing businesses and residents and preserves the heritage and character of the town”

“Business Involvement in town centre development.”

The town centre as a concept is dead. It would cost 100 million to revive, per town, every few years. You would need plentiful free parking, 0% business tax, strong commitment to promoting events, easy quick planning applications, its a pipe dream.”

Too many empty buildings in town. Building things just outside the town centre will not help this strategy.”

I would like to see that the town is made cleaner and safer, and I'd also hope that its historic routes play a role in any renovations that are done. (also more public bathrooms would be splendid.)”

“We should have more of a focus on locally grown produce and less focus on the superstores. In fact I'd like to see that the council prompts local growers setup shop in the town centre and the also promote local people to visit them by either scrapping the parking charges in town or having days where it's free.”

Prioritise the high street. Look to Shrewsbury for inspiration. Encourage small businesses and market stall holders. Offering cheap rent rates while business grow is better than boarded up premises. Look to Manchester and Chester for social food and drink courts to include independent food vendors. Clean the waterways and remove litter.”

“Money should be spent improving the town centre by bringing disused buildings back into use either as retail or accommodation premises. Preserve the character of heritage buildings in particular and tear down eyesores like the old job centre of Greyfriars so the land can be put to good use. Continue to focus on using brownfield sites for housing. Do not encroach on the greenbelt for housing or other development.”

Businesses and Jobs

“You should consider the impact of creating more jobs in the town by promoting small businesses. By the introduction of small local businesses providing local jobs. Balanced with the new developments which allow commuting. The wealthy people who may move to this town and can commute have families who would benefit from local jobs. Growing a closer community spirit.”

“Encouraging new businesses should be a specific goal.”

“Businesses need investment and encouragement. Lower rates for the shops.

“Growing the small business opportunities should be the focus. If you do that you will bring more people into the town. Don't waste money on building more multi-story car parks because the income stream looks good. They won't come if there is nothing to do. Focus on things for kids and families. Activities that will bring the whole family into town. Then provide a safe secure space with visible police to promote psychological safety. Then the town will grow.”

More needs to be done to make Stafford inviting and affordable, for small independent retailers to open up shop. Lower business rates and taxes, incentives, grants and refurbishment assistance. No point having spent millions on a town square in a dead town. All the proposed development seems to be outside of town.

From an economy perspective, skills are critical so the role of the new Institute of Technology will play is critical, so I am surprised there is no reference to it, as it will bring aspiration, skills and employment and partners have an active role.”

General

“A prosperous economy can only be driven by investment and attracting people to the local area to spend and invest in the facilities in the town. We need to provide reasons for this investment and make Stafford Borough an attractive place to visit and an aspirational place to live in. I would like to see support to Arts in the local area centering on the Gatehouse theatre, and with the new history centre and library nearby could form the embryo of a “cultural quarter” for the town centre regeneration, bringing in both local and regional people to increase footfall and spending in the town centre. Theatre and performing arts is very much an inclusive local activity which needs to be understood and funded by local people. Good facilities in the town centre will attract people and investment and the Gatehouse theatre is a Jewel in the Crown already there, it just needs to be managed and funded locally to enable the full potential to be realised.”

“I think good parking needs to be considered. I think things to encourage people to within the town need to be looked at, and to stop pulling people away from the town with pockets of shopping areas. The town needs to be the hub of Stafford.”

“Thriving towns attracting people from inside and outside of the area as Lichfield does. A place where culture and leisure drives investment, skills and opportunity. The area is already an attractive place to live and work and this needs shouting about more. A place

where our children can thrive and our old people are supported to live independently for as long as possible. A place that feels safe.”

“I would like Stafford Borough to be a place where people could be proud to live, and proud to say that this is where they live. The town has been decimated, dragged from one end to the other. I would like Stafford to be thriving, a hub of entertainment with a young and exciting vibrant community, built on positivity, growth and diversity.”

“Break larger disused buildings into smaller units at low rents/rates to encourage small independent retailers. Abandon the idea of building retail and offices behind the goods yard/railway. This will either result in a lot of unused buildings in that area or lead to further decline in the town centre. If it does happen to be successful I envision an awful lot of additional traffic on already congested roads. Focus all efforts on complete regeneration of the existing town centre to make it a 'destination'. In 4 years Stafford needs to feel safe, vibrant and a place that people want to go to rather than avoid. Please restore the market square to a place with flower beds and benches.”

Communities and Wellbeing

Housing and Communities

“...stop building more and more housing estates with no facilities, ruining the character of the town and turning it into one giant faceless housing estate”

“I think housing should be the lowest priority. There is far too much building development in Stafford without sufficient infrastructure to accommodate it.”

“Ensure that any new housing is environmentally friendly and sustainable eg well insulated with heat pumps and sited only in existing suburban and urban areas. No more destruction of green spaces and building on agricultural land which should instead provide nature a home. Employment land must be developed in a way that maximises employment per square metre and minimises destruction of nature and local communities. No more warehousing.”

Equality/Health Inequalities

“Seeing the words equality and inclusion” tends to infer that current minorities get given better treatment than current majorities.

“Help small local Gyms, clubs, communities by supporting their needs so they can pass on in health and wellbeing to local people”

“If you look at marginalised groups you will see there is a lot of hate no matter what is being done, that's a massive challenge for anyone to try and battle”

Leisure, Culture and Heritage

“Please run the theatre and high house and take it back from the current company”

“This facility should not be outsourced to Freedom Leisure and should be returned to the borough as Freedom are not investing in its people, the properties and upkeep. The Theatre should be in a trust.”

I really do hope that when their contract is up that you will consider a Trust so that a local board can decide what happens to our theatre and how improvements are made so that the people who support this venue will also enjoy the improvements.”

“Healthy lifestyles - this so important the park and play area in the town is lovely but we do need more outside areas for people walk, cycle and socialise. Regarding the leisure centre

it's a great place but unfortunately poorly run it really needs a revamp it's dated the swimming area is dirty this is not because it's not cleaned it is but there are not enough people employed to keep this facility up to the standards it needs this is again poor management and commitment from the non profit organisation organisation Freedom Leisure who really do not care ! Please consider having local companies to run our facilities who care about the area and the people and they are serving.

"Every council should aspire to provide a safe and secure place to live and work, which meets the requirements of it's local community. Of importance also is a leisure and support facilities to help people with a cost effective means to maintain a healthy outlook. Also of importance is a cultural requirement to art, film and drama within the local community provide cost effective access to both watching and participating in."

More swimming opportunities than just the leisure centre.

I also feel that local sports clubs, nor actually run by the council, but provide opportunities to both young and old alike, and run and managed by very hard working volunteers looked favourably on by the council when development opportunities arise."

Climate Change, Nature Recovery and the Environment

Climate change

"Climate change and the Environment should be removed, they are not things you are capable of meaningfully impacting as a council. Instead focus on Nature recover, pollution reduction and clean outdoor spaces. You can barely keep public bins from overflowing, maybe deal with that before you start going on about fighting climate change."

"You will not improve climate change and nature by building on brown belt land. The council need to properly listen to the Stafford people. This will allow you to understand what it is we want."

"Whilst I agree Climate change should be considered I don't think it should be a stumbling block. Everything evolves over time. The climate changes naturally."

"Nature and the environment is thriving - it is always good to ensure that we support the local habitat and animals but ultimately it's doing well without us. The council should be more considerate of which areas they allow development to be undertaken to ensure unnecessary destruction of wildlife areas doesn't happen.

"Whilst I agree that the natural environment needs improving and maintaining I think greater care in rewilding areas needs careful consideration as the management of these areas needs careful consideration."

Environment/Appearance

"I don't know what a sustainable environment is but the borough needs to concentrate on how the environment looks - everyone feels better is their surroundings are attractive. Don't use sustainability/wilding as an excuse for not cutting the verges etc"

"Stafford looks dirty and littered. The high streets could invest in visual appeal with the support of local garden centres to provide hanging baskets and flower boxes. Make Stafford visually appealing to visit"

"Sadly public opinion tends to be 'someone else can clear my mess up' coupled with our more throw away society means that waste management is an increasing issue. However if something is clean and tidy then there is less likelihood of rubbish building up than if the

place is littered. It's a difficult one to process. Supporting local communities to manage themselves periodically could help."

"Maintaining open spaces by grass mowing, shrub pruning etc to prevent them from being taken over by brambles

"They need to improve the parks on the housing estates... we have a few parks but they are all run down, not looked after and not suitable for children to play on. It's like they have been abandoned. Which is a shame as kids need to spend more time outside"

"safer walking areas. places for dogs to go off lead. benches for older people to use."

"Clean, Litter free. Graffiti free.

Well Managed Council

"A well managed council should be a given."

A well managed council should also save money through efficiency savings, not cost more money."

"If you look after your staff and provide them with a positive working environment they will be more inclined to provide a good service. If you don't treat them well they become disengaged."

"Employees need a can do approach as opposed to a can't do and I'll pass the problem on to someone else whilst ticking the box."

General Comments on the Corporate Plan

"Under current Government proposals you may be forced to become part of a larger unitary authority. Your plan should include a priority around managing that transition competently in a way that ensures the delivery of your other priorities!"

"It is great that you are consulting on this. I would like to see more locally managed and funded items where the people in charge of the finances really understand the requirements, rather than through nationwide management companies to then allocate those funds as they may see fit."

Comments on services/functions that are not SBC's responsibility:

"Apart from providing Leisure and cultural services the priorities are for others eg the health service and the police. Social housing should be for the housing association to deliver. Why can it be sensible to duplicate an existing resource."

"Improve present infrastructure e.g. Empty home refurbished, road improvements, 24hr hospital A&E, Flood defences in place"

"... employ your own care workers instead of paying private care agencies. Look back to when there were Home helps, trained and employed by the council. Retention of staff was not a problem due to good working practices and pay, giving rise to job satisfaction and client satisfaction"

Prioritise walkability with Cycle Routes and Public Transport around the town to reduce car dependence."

"Concentrate on highways, roads and pathways are dangerous and an eyesore"

"Rebuild the roads and probably bike more cut throughs"

“Reduce traffic congestion - in itself this will reduce carbon emissions from queuing traffic.”

“Please can we have fewer roadworks, less development. Just stop and focus on making what we have better without digging up and and starting anew, do what you do really well before starting anything new.”

“Not in your remit, but you can bring pressure to bear. There are No rehabilitation/assessment hospital beds locally.”

“Spend money on preventing flooding rather than surface fixes. Seriously consider the negative effect of this. For example I do not bother going anywhere near town when heavy rain occurs as carparks flood and I don't want my car trapped, I can't get back home easily due to diversions with floods, some shops are hard to access due to floods.”

“The rivers in Stafford need a good cleanup including dredging to help reduce flooding. Drainage needs to also be improved on Staffords roads, as many are inaccessible in winter months.”

“More money spent on improving education and SEN services including assessments to reduce long waiting lists and stress on families.

More money on mental health services.

More money spent on adoption services including the Uttoxeter office which is not fit for purpose, a new location is needed.”

Social care particularly dementia care and mental health for young people”

Agenda Item 9

Review of the Constitution

Committee:	Council
Date of Meeting:	8 April 2025
Report of:	Head of Law and Governance
Portfolio:	Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Council with details of the proposed amendments to the Constitution as recommended by the Resources Scrutiny Committee.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the amendments to the Constitution as detailed in the **APPENDIX** be approved for implementation in the new Municipal year.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 Article 15.1 of the current Constitution requires the Monitoring Officer to review the Constitution on an annual basis.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Article 15.1 of the current Constitution requires the Monitoring Officer to review the Constitution on an annual basis.
- 3.2 Accordingly, the Resources Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Task and Finish Review Group to undertake a Review of the Constitution.
- 3.3 The Constitution Task and Finish Review Group have recommended amendments to the Constitution during the course of their review, which were subsequently endorsed by the Resources Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.4 Council are therefore requested to approve the amendments to the Constitution as detailed in the **Appendix** for implementation in the new Municipal Year.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

4.1 The Constitution supports all of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

5 Report Detail

5.1 Attached as an **Appendix** is a list of the amendments to the Constitution that the Resources Scrutiny Committee has recommended following their review.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

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

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

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix: Review of the Constitution

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

File available in Law and Governance

Contact Officer: Jackie Allen
Telephone Number: 01785 619552
Ward Interest: All
Report Track: Council 8 April 2025

Appendix 1

Amendments to Constitution: 2024 Annual Review

[NB. Wording to be added is shown within a grey box and wording to be deleted is shown as ~~struck through~~].

- a) Split functions of Public Appeals Committee between Licensing Committee and Planning Committee (Taxi Driver appeals would go to Licensing Cttee and TPO objections to Planning Cttee)

Part 2, Article 8

8.1 Planning Committee

Constitution

The Planning Committee shall be a Committee of the Council with 11 Members.

Terms of Reference

To consider and determine or make recommendations on:

- (a) applications in respect of development control, building regulation and advertising regulations, listed building control and all related matters;
- (b) enforcement in relation to the above matters.
- (c) **Objections to** Tree Preservation Orders, ~~other than hearing representations from members of the public.~~

To agree or approve:

- (a) Planning Applications Validation Criteria
- (b) Development master plans, development briefs, and other planning guidance as material planning considerations.

Delegation

The Planning Committee shall have delegated power to act on any matter within its terms of reference which may lawfully be delegated to it.

~~8.3 Public Appeals Committee~~

Constitution

The Public Appeals Committee shall be a Committee of 5 Members who shall sit to hear and determine each matter.

Terms of Reference

To hear and determine appeals and representations from members of the public in relation to licensing and registration (excluding Public Entertainment Licensing) tree preservation orders and housing conditions.

Delegation

The Public Appeals Committee shall have delegated power to act on any matter within its terms of reference which may lawfully be delegated to it.

8.34 Licensing Committee

Constitution

The Licensing Committee shall be a Committee of the Council with 10 Members. Three members of the Committee may sit as a Licensing Sub-Committee with the authority to carry out any of the Committee's functions.

Terms of Reference

- (a) To discharge the Council's Licensing Functions under the Licensing Act 2003 except the determination of its Licensing Policy and publication of the licensing statement under Section 5 of that Act.
- ~~(b) To deal with Public Entertainment Licensing (together with Public Entertainment Licence appeals while these Licences still exist).~~
- (b) ~~(c)~~ To discharge the Council's functions under the Gambling Act 2005 except for the functions specified in sections 166, 212 and 349 of the Act.
- (c) To determine any issues relating to the approval, revocation, suspension or variation of licences, other than those submitted under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005.

Delegation

The Licensing Committee shall have delegated power to act on any matter within its terms of reference which may be lawfully delegated to it.

Part 3, Section 2, Council Functions:

Public Appeals Licensing Committee: 107 Members of the Authority: See Part 2, Article 8.3

Audit and Accounts Committee: 6 Members of the Authority: See part 2, Article 8.54

Part 4, Section 6

6.1 Planning Committee Procedure Rules

Order of Business

The Order of business at ordinary meetings of the Planning Committee shall be:-

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes of the previous ordinary meeting and any other meetings since the last ordinary meeting
- (c) Declarations of interest and Lobbying on matters on the Agenda
- (d) Reports from the Officers of the Council The reports from the Officers will normally be taken in the order in which they appear on the agenda but the Chairman may at their discretion alter the order in which the reports are taken.

Rules of Debate

- (a) The planning officer will provide a brief description of the matter and the relevant considerations and update the Committee on any matters arising on the item since the agenda was published
- (b) The Chairman will invite those members of the public entitled to speak under the Council's Protocol on Making Representations to Planning Committee to address the Committee in the order:-

Objector

Supporter

For a maximum of 3 minutes each.

NB. In relation to consideration of objections to TPO's, at this point in the proceedings members of the public in attendance should be invited to speak. Where a member of the public wishes to speak, full details of their name and address should be noted and it must be explained to the person in question that questions may be asked of them by both the Committee and relevant officer of the local authority. Only one objector and one supporter may be entitled to speak at the meeting for a maximum of 3 minutes each. Where a group of residents wish to speak then they should be asked to nominate a spokesperson

- (c) The Chairman will invite those Members representing a ward in which the matter is located or a neighbouring ward that is affected by the matter to speak, provided that no individual Member should speak, for more than 5 minutes, or longer at the discretion of the Chairman. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Ward Member may contribute during the debate to correct any inaccuracies and misunderstandings. When a Member representing the Ward is unable to attend they may nominate another Member to speak on their behalf. Any Ward Member may provide photographs and/or written material for presentation at the Committee at least 2 clear working days prior to the meeting.
- (d) A member moving a proposition must state the reasons for the proposition at the time of moving it. No debate on a proposition shall take place until it has been seconded.
- (e) A member moving an amendment to a proposition must state the reasons for the amendment at the time of moving it. No debate on an amendment shall take place until it has been seconded.
- (f) Speeches including those made by Councillors who are not members of the Committee speaking on Appendix Items, shall be a maximum of 5 Minutes long
- (g) No member may speak for a second time on an item other than in right of reply except with the permission of the Chairman for a maximum of 2 minutes on a point arising out of another member's speech since they last spoke
- (h) The mover of a motion or amendment may reply to the debate for a maximum of 2 minutes at the end of the debate immediately before the vote.
- (i) If a proposition to determine or defer a matter is lost a further proposition to determine or defer the matter with reasons must be put to the Committee to conclude the item. If no other member puts a further proposition the Chairman shall put such proposition, as they consider appropriate and this proposition need not be seconded.

- (j) If a motion or an amendment that the Committee undertake a site visit in respect of an application is moved and seconded, the debate will continue on that motion or amendment. If the motion is carried, at the meeting following the site visit these rules of debate will apply with the following provisos:-
- The ~~planning~~ officer will confine their presentation to matters arising from the site visit and updating the Committee on any matters which have arisen since the previous meeting.
 - The members of the public and the ward members will confine their remarks to matters arising from the site visit and any new matters raised by the planning officer.
- (k) At any point during the debate a member may, through the Chairman ask the officers for information, clarification or advice. If at any point during the debate an officer indicates that they wish to give advice to the Committee the Chairman shall call the officer to speak.
- (l) All speeches must be directed to the planning merits of the matter under debate.
- (m) A member who has been lobbied on a matter should declare the nature of the lobbying to the Committee before speaking or voting on the matter.
- (n) The Chairman may at their discretion extend the time limit for any speech where the exceptional complexity or potential impact of the matter under consideration merits it. In doing so the Chairman will have regard to the need to give a fair opportunity to the hearing of all speakers.

Paragraph (b) shall not apply to any matter other than the determination of an application for planning permission.

Taking the Vote

When the chairman concludes the debate, the vote is taken. Only Members of the Committee are allowed to vote, not visiting Members. If the votes are equal the Chairman has a casting vote.

Reasons for a Decision

The reasons for a decision as stated in the proposition will be recorded in the minutes. If they are unclear the officers will ask for clarification before the vote is taken.

Additional Points (including Members Interests)

Members of the public and media are allowed to attend the committee. However, members of the public and media are not entitled to speak on any of the items on the agenda except in accordance with the Council's scheme. Members of the public and media are not allowed to remain where a confidential item (in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972) is to be determined.

Where a prejudicial interest in an application is declared by a Member of the Committee or a Visiting Member they will leave the room for the duration of consideration of that item.

The Planning Committee Site Visits follows the same procedure except it does not deal with the minutes from the previous meeting.

Site Visits

No committee member should attend and take part in the debate on a matter considered at a site visit meeting unless they have also been present throughout the debate on that matter at the meeting which called for the site visit.

The site visit is under the control of the Chairman of the Planning Committee. Accompanying Officers, Members of the Committee and any visiting Members may only speak at the discretion of the Chairman. Applicants, agents or third parties are not allowed to address the Committee on site visits and Members should not enter into discussions with them. If approached at the meeting Members should refer the person to one of the Officers present.

At the Chairman's discretion, Members may ask the Officers questions or seek clarification from them on matters which are relevant to the site inspection. A ward member may attend the site visit but must follow the rules applying to committee members. Ward members may, with the permission of the Chairman, point out relevant matters on site or request the committee to view the site from particular points but should not otherwise address the committee or enter into discussions with committee members, applicants, agents, objectors or others during the visit.

The purpose of the visit is to examine the site in relation to the proposal and not to enter into a debate concerning the merits of the proposal. The opportunity for debate is at the meeting afterwards. Members should ensure that they do not express opinions or views to any one during the site visit.

The Committee undertakes the site visit as a formal group and will enter and leave the site as such and should remain together throughout. Members should not enter into discussions with applicants, agents or third parties.

Members declaring an interest in any matter should not attend the site visit in relation to that matter. If there is more than one site visit a member with an interest in one may attend the visits but must remain on the coach at the site in which an interest has been or will be declared.

A meeting of the Committee will follow the site visit. This will take place at the Council offices and will follow the normal Committee rules.

Right of Reply

At the conclusion of a debate and before a vote is taken a ward member who has previously addressed the committee may speak for a maximum of two minutes in response to the debate. The mover of the proposal under debate shall have the right to speak for a maximum of two minutes after the ward member.

Procedure Rules for Major Applications

- 1 This procedure will apply only to all large scale major applications (LSMs) and such other major applications as the Head of Development, in consultation with the Chairman, consider appropriate other than applications to renew or amend previously permitted applications.
- 2 LSMs will be excluded from the scheme of delegation and must be determined by the Planning Committee.
- 3 A special meeting of the Committee will be arranged for the purpose of determining each application referred to in paragraph 1 above, and no other business will be on the agenda for the meeting.
- 4 The Committee will undertake a site visit before the meeting.
- 5 At the meeting the time limit for the applicant and objectors to address the Committee will be extended to 10 minutes. This time may be split between more than one speaker providing the total time of 10 minutes is not exceeded. The applicant and objector will be allowed to make a presentation to the Committee as part of the address. The presentation must not introduce new material that has not been submitted as part of the planning application or public consultation exercise and the materials to be used must be submitted to the Development Manager at least 2 working days before the Committee meeting.
- 6 Following an address by the applicant or objector the Committee may ask questions of clarification only through the Chairman.

- 7 The Chairman will invite those Members representing a ward in which the matter is located or a neighbouring ward that is affected by the matter to speak. Those members shall between them speak for no longer than 10 minutes or longer at the discretion of the Chairman. In the absence of agreement between those members each shall be allowed a proportionate part of the 10 minutes. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Ward Member may contribute during the debate to correct any inaccuracies and misunderstandings. When a Member representing the Ward is unable to attend they may nominate another Member to speak on their behalf. Any Ward Member may provide photographs and/or written material for presentation at the Committee at least 2 clear working days prior to the meeting.

6.2 Licensing Committee Procedure (matters other than Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005) ~~Public Appeals Committee Procedure~~

Introduction of the Case

- 1 The Head of Law and ~~Governance Administration~~, or their representative, advising the Committee will commence by outlining the procedure to be followed.

The Case for the Local Authority

- 2 The Local Authority's representative will state the Authority's case and may call witnesses.
- 3 The applicant or advocate may ask questions of the Authority's representative or any witness.
- 4 The Members of the Committee may then ask questions of the Authority's representative or any witness.

The Case for the Applicant

- 5 The applicant or advocate will state the applicant's case, and may call witnesses.
- 6 The representative of the Local Authority may ask questions of the applicant or advocate, or any witness.
- 7 The Members of the Committee may then ask questions of the applicant or advocate, or any witness.

Members of the Public can have the Opportunity to Speak

~~8 At this point in the proceedings members of the public in attendance should be invited to speak. Where a member of the public wishes to speak, full details of their name and address should be noted and it must be explained to the person in question that questions may be asked of them by both the advocate for the applicant and the advocate for the local authority. Only one objector and one supporter may be entitled to speak at the meeting for a maximum of 3 minutes each. Where a group of residents wish to speak then they should be asked to nominate a spokesperson (the above procedure will apply).~~

Summing Up

8 9 The Authority's representative will then be invited to sum up; no new material may be introduced at this stage.

9 10 The applicant or advocate will then be invited to sum up; no new material may be introduced at this stage.

Members Deliberations and Decision

10 11 The parties will then withdraw whilst the Committee considers the case.

11 12 The Committee with the Head of Law and Governance Administration or their representative to the Committee will deliberate in private only recalling the parties to clear points of uncertainty on evidence already given. If recall is necessary both parties will return notwithstanding that only one may be concerned with the point giving rise to the recall.

Decision of the Council

12 13 The Committee will, if possible, announce the decision to the parties at the end of the hearing; the decision being confirmed in writing afterwards.

Additional Points

13 14 If it is appropriate to do so the Committee can be adjourned for a short time, or members of the public and media may be excluded, if matters to be discussed are confidential in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

14 15 Where a matter before the Committee relates to a hackney carriage or private hirers licence then an additional procedure dealing with "spent" convictions may need to be followed. Where the officer feels that a person's spent convictions are relevant then the procedure to follow will have to form part of the proceedings:-

The Procedure

When the PNC record is received the "live" convictions will be addressed first. Following this, the "spent" convictions will be reviewed and those which are considered to be relevant will be marked. Relevant in this context means relevant to the question of whether or not the appellant is a fit and proper person to hold a hackney carriage or private hire drivers licence. In practice, this consideration of the relevant "spent" convictions will be carried out in consultation with a Principal Officer and in certain cases with a Council Solicitor. However, only the Licensing Officer will know the identity of the appellant, the other Officers will consider only the relevance of the convictions.

When the application is considered by the Committee, any "live" convictions will be detailed in the usual way. If there are "spent" convictions that the Officers consider are relevant, the following paragraph will be included on the Committee report:

"The record shows that the appellant has "spent" convictions m ...(dates of convictions just the year). Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, in accordance with Section 7(3) of the Act, these matters should not be admitted unless the Committee feels that justice cannot be done except by admitting them or requiring evidence of them."

When the report is considered by the Committee, the Solicitor providing advice to the Committee will advise the Committee that it is considering whether or not the appellant is a fit and proper person to hold a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle driver's licence and it must consider whether it wishes to hear further details of the "spent" convictions mentioned in the report. The appellant will be given the opportunity to address the Committee on this question. At this stage the Committee will only know that there are "spent" convictions and the years of each conviction.

If the Committee decide, after hearing the appellant's representations, that for justice to be done they need to hear further details of these "spent" convictions, the Head of Regulatory Services or their representative ~~Operations~~ will provide further details. These further details will provide general information to the Committee relating to the class, age and gravity of each "spent" offence. After the Committee has heard this general information, the appellant will be able to address the Committee regarding this information. If, after hearing the appellant's submissions, the Committee is satisfied that justice would be done by hearing exact details of the "spent" convictions, then the Head of ~~Operations~~ Regulatory Services or their representative will provide the Committee with the exact details of the "spent" convictions for its consideration. In considering whether to hear the details of any "spent" convictions, the Committee must weigh the interests of the public against those of the appellant in order to reach a fair conclusion.

Once the Committee has heard the details of the "spent" offences together with any "live" convictions, the matter will be progressed as before with the Head of Operations Regulatory Services or their representative putting forward their case and the appellant responding. The case will be heard without the media present. The appellant's name will not appear on the Committee report and only "live" convictions and the paragraph set out above alluding to "spent" convictions (if relevant) will be included on the report and made public. The decision of the Committee to refuse or grant the licence will be reported in the Digest.

Site Visits

~~No committee member should attend and take part in the debate on a matter considered at a site visit meeting unless they have also been present throughout the debate on that matter at the meeting which called for the site visit.~~

~~The site visit is under the control of the Chairman of the Public Appeals Committee. accompanying Officers, Members of the Committee and any visiting Members may only speak at the discretion of the Chairman. Applicants, agents or third parties are not allowed to address the Committee on site visits and Members should not enter into discussions with them. If approached at the meeting Members should refer the person to one of the Officers present.~~

~~At the Chairman's discretion, Members may ask the Officers questions or seek clarification from them on matters which are relevant to the site inspection.~~

~~A ward member may attend the site visit but must follow the rules applying to committee members. Ward members may, with the permission of the Chairman, point out relevant matters on site or request the committee to view the site from particular points but should not otherwise address the committee or enter into discussions with committee members, applicants, agents, objectors or others during the visit.~~

~~The purpose of the visit is to examine the site in relation to the proposal and not to enter into a debate concerning the merits of the proposal. The opportunity for debate is at the meeting afterwards. Members should ensure that they do not express opinions or views to any one during the site visit.~~

~~The Committee undertakes the site visit as a formal group and will enter and leave the site as such and should remain together throughout. Members should not enter into discussions with applicants, agents or third parties.~~

~~Members declaring an interest in any matter should not attend the site visit in relation to that matter. If there is more than one site visit a member with an interest in one may attend the visits but must remain on the coach at the site in which an interest has been or will be declared.~~

~~A meeting of the Committee will follow the site visit. This will take place at the Council offices and will follow the normal Committee rules."~~

(b) Update definitions of Cabinet and Executive at the start of the Constitution

Part 1: Summary and Explanation

Glossary of Terms Found in the Constitution

Cabinet	The five Councillors who, together with the Leader and Deputy Leader, form the Executive.
Executive	The leader, Deputy Leader and the five -portfolio holding Councillors collectively form the executive, and are legally responsible for implementing council policies within the budget and policy

(c) Add clarity to the current public speaking at Planning Committee protocol regarding the need for speakers to give further notice if they wish to speak at a deferred meeting.

Part 5 - Codes and Protocols: Protocol on Making Representations Direct to Planning Committee

8 Items which reach the Planning Committee but are then deferred before a decision is made

The Planning Committee may wish to defer consideration of a planning application to either seek further clarification/information from the applicant or to visit the site. When the matter is reported back to Committee the order of business will remain as set out in Paragraphs 3 and 4 above. For the avoidance of doubt this means that the same speakers will be allowed to speak again but will first need to contact the Council to notify it of their intention to do so. If the speaker is unavailable on the deferred date they may nominate a substitute to speak on their behalf.

(d) Add reference to licensing delegations previously approved by Council in respect of sex establishments and pavement licences

Part 3 - Responsibility for Functions, Section 6: Scheme of Delegations

Head of Regulatory Services

3.4.14 The Council's powers and functions relating to the following licensing matters:-

- (m) Determination of unopposed applications to renew and/or transfer a licence for a sex establishment under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

(n) Determination of Pavement Licence applications under the Business and Planning Act 2020

(e) Move authorities for dealing with High Hedge complaints from the Head of Law to the Head of Planning

Head of Economic Development and Planning

Add: 3.6.3(i) Authority to deal with complaints under Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (High Hedges) including any resulting notices, appeals, prosecutions and enforcement action arising from those complaints.

Head of Law and Governance

Delete: 3.3.18 ~~Authority to deal with complaints under Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (High Hedges) including any resulting notices, appeals, prosecutions and enforcement action arising from those complaints.~~

(f) Add the following paragraph to the Officer Scheme of Delegation:

Add: 3.4.70 The Head of Regulatory Services is designated as the 'Proper Officer' for the carrying out of the following functions:

- (a) Maintaining the local land charges register and responding to queries.
- (b) As local registrar under Section 15 of the Land Charges Act 1925.

(g) Update the scheme of delegation in respect of TPO and Hedgerow functions

Delete 3.59, 3.6.10 and 3.6.11 and replace with new 3.59:

3.59 Matters relating to Tree Preservation Orders, Trees in Conservation Areas and Countryside Hedgerows

1. To make, vary, modify, revoke, (and confirm unless there are substantial unresolved objections) tree preservation orders under section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
2. To determine applications made under tree preservation orders (TPO's) and determine notifications made in respect of trees in Conservation Areas (S211 notices).

3. To exercise all powers in relation to the duty to replace trees protected by TPO or within Conservation Areas.
4. To deal with any appeals in relation to the determination of TPO applications.
5. To exercise all powers relating to countryside hedgerows as set out in the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 and the Environment Act 1995
6. To exercise all powers in relation to the enforcement of Tree Preservation Orders and of the protection of Trees in Conservation Areas including the use of injunctions and temporary stop notices.