

Dear Members

**Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

A meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee will be held in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside Stafford** on **Thursday 24 August 2023 at 6.30pm** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

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



Head of Law and Governance

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 AUGUST 2023

Chair - Councillor F Beatty

## AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 4 July 2023 as previously published on the Council's website.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Public Question Time - Nil
- 4 Councillor Session - Nil
- 5 Members' Items - Nil
- 6 Called In Items - Nil

		Page Nos
7	Officers' Reports	
ITEM NO 7(a)	<a href="#"><u>Presentation on the Development Management Update</u></a> HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING	-
ITEM NO 7(b)	<b>Economic Growth Development and Regeneration Project Updates</b> HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING	3 - 6
ITEM NO 7(c)	<b>Performance Update</b> HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING	7 - 21
	To receive the end of Quarter 1 Performance Information for 2023/24	
ITEM NO 7(d)	<b>Work Programme</b> HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE	22 - 26

## Membership

Chair - Councillor F Beatty

J A Barron	D M McNaughton
F Beatty	M Phillips
B M Cross	J S Powell
P C Edgeller	J P Read
A R McNaughton	D P Rouxel

## Agenda Item 7(b)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	24 August 2023
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Economic Development and Planning
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Michelle Smith
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01785 619335
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny 24/08/23 (Only)
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No

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## Economic Growth Development and Regeneration Project Updates

### 1 Purpose of Report

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

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report is noted.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 This report sets out the main updates that have occurred since Committee was last updated in July. Work continues across the full programme of projects even where individual projects are not contained within this update.

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives

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

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 Following a comprehensive update across all major projects at September 2022 Scrutiny it was agreed that for future Committee meetings there would be a standing item on this matter. The content of the report and updates will vary dependant on progress against individual project milestones.
- 5.2 Projects with significant progress updates within this report are as follows:

### **Future High Streets Fund**

Further progress has been made with the commercial negotiations that support the transformation programme. Once this is concluded Members will receive a detailed update. The first two projects with scheduled on-site works have progressed as follows:

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

Since Members were last updated the paving works have moved into the public highway and the herringbone pattern now being laid shows the realignment of the road around the Square itself.

Works are still on track for an Autumn completion.

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

The closing date for tenders for the on-site contractors for this project was 12 July and the evaluation process concluded in early August. Confirmation of the appointed contractor will be shared shortly.

### **Meecebrook Garden Community**

Members were advised in July of the work underway on the Strategic Outline Business Case for a new railway station at Meecebrook. The draft business case was completed during July and contractors SLC are now reviewing the detail with officers.

### **Westbridge Park, Stone**

Works are progressing on Westbridge Park with the new Woodland Play Trail now open to the public. The sunken garden is nearing completion and the new play area and Multi Use Games Area are underway. The new wheeled sports area work is due to commence shortly and works are on target for November completion.

### **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**

On 5 July the Council received notification on behalf of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities that, following the assessment of

our end of year report, the Secretary of State has allocated the funding for financial year 2023/2024 in respect of UKSPF. This is split between capital of £625,538 and revenue of £508,757 and enabled the following projects within the approved Investment Plan to get underway:

- Continuation of funding the Crown Wharf Theatre
- Stone Scout Hut building improvements
- Westbridge Park car park works
- Investment into the Staffordshire History Centre project
- Rural business to business grant scheme
- Green Solutions business grant scheme
- Rural Enterprise Feasibility Study

5.3 Members were updated in July that an additional funding stream was awaiting Government decision. The current position is as follows:

### **Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)**

The Investment Plan addendum submitted in November 2022 was approved and funding totalling £121,984 was received in July for this additional strand of funding within the UKSPF programme. This enabled a call for projects from the community sector with press releases, social media and email marketing raising awareness of the fund.

The call for projects closes on 30 September. As at 15 August 5 key projects that meet the eligibility criteria have been identified and will be now progress to full application stage. Should these projects be approved by the REPF panel then in the region of £100,000 of grants will be issued.

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

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

N/A

### **6.2 Legal**

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

### **6.3 Human Resources**

N/A

**6.4 Human Rights Act**

N/A

**6.5 Data Protection**

N/A

**6.7 Risk Management**

N/A

**6.8 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

**Impact on Public Sector Equality Duty:**

N/A

**Wider Community Impact:**

N/A

**7 Previous Consideration**

Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee July 2023.

**8 Background Papers**

None.

## Performance Update

### The Economy - Delivery Plan for 2023 - 2024

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

##### Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 1

				N/A	Total Number of Projects
Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule	Action not yet due	
<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>13</b>

<b>Summary of Successes as at Quarter 1</b>
Stafford Town Centre transformation - good progress made with renovation of Market Square with work on track to complete by the autumn.
Good progress made with the allocation and spend of UKSPF funding allocation and imminent launch of Rural business grants

<b>Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 1</b>
Stafford Town Centre transformation - slippage in terms of commercial negotiations to progress re-development schemes.

	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Assess the economic implications for the Borough over the medium and long term</b>							
1.1.1	Review and assess all key programmes and major projects	Review of key projects and delivery plans	X				Key projects reviewed and delivery plans prepared for 2023/24. Details of key projects are referred to through the actions set out below	★
<b>1.2</b>	<b>To facilitate the delivery of 500 new homes in the Borough per year including 210 affordable homes</b>							
1.2.1	Complete five year land supply statement	Data extract Site visits complete Publication of statement	X				Statement completed and published – July 2023	★
1.2.2	Improve and maintain performance of development management	Develop Recovery Plan to tackle current backlogs of applications  Produce quarterly updates setting out progress in reducing the backlog.	X		X		Recovery plan has been developed and is being implemented.	✓
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Deliver key projects and infrastructure proposals that will promote economic growth and investment for the Borough</b>							
1.3.1	Delivery of the Stafford Town Centre Transformation Programme	Completion of Market Square renovation			X		Paving and kerbing work is now well underway with the realigned highway taking shape. Works are still on track for an Autumn completion.	✓

	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		<p>Appointment of onsite contractors for Station Approach project</p> <p>Completion of Station Approach project</p> <p>Conclusion of discussions with third party landowners to progress commercial projects</p>		X		X	<p>The procurement process for onsite contractors closed on 12/07/23 with an appointment scheduled for September</p> <p>Negotiations are ongoing with land owners and report to Cabinet will follow in Q3</p>	
1.3.2	Delivery of the Stafford Station Gateway	<p>Completion of station access feasibility study</p> <p>Completion of delivery programme scoping exercise</p>		X		X	<p>This work is being carried out in partnership with Staffordshire County Council (SCC), Avanti and London and Continental Railways (LCR)</p> <p>This workstream commenced in July 2023 with SCC and LCR</p>	
1.3.3	Supporting the development of proposed Meecebrook Garden Community	<p>Completion of Strategic Outline Business Case for the railway station</p> <p>Completion of remaining technical studies (excluding transport modelling)</p>		X		X	<p>Draft report completed for technical review by officers</p> <p>Commissions commenced during 22/23</p>	

	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Completion of detailed master planning and viability studies				X		
		Completion of collaboration agreement				X		
1.3.4	Stone Leisure	Delivery phase for Westbridge Park initiated			X		Following the granting of planning consent and appointment of a contractor, works to Westbridge Park have commenced and are on track for completion in autumn 2023.	✓
		Planning consent granted.						
		Work on site commence						
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Work in partnership to generate economic and sustainable growth for the long-term prosperity of our residents, visitors and businesses</b>							
1.4.1	Develop Stafford as a hub of productivity to help businesses develop, grow and thrive	New and existing businesses supported to grow and build confidence in Stafford as a hub of productivity with a balanced economy.		X	X	X	Existing businesses can apply for the Rural Business to Business grant that launched at the start of Quarter 2.	✓
1.4.2	Promote our visitor economy to demonstrate the offer in the Borough	Relaunch Our Beautiful Borough visitor economy campaign	X				The UK Shared Prosperity Fund has enabled a refresh of the Our Beautiful Borough campaign with a new website, tourist information leaflets, bus shelter and bus side advertising and billboard and digital marketing.	✓

	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
		Development of a Local Visitor Economy Partnership in conjunction with Staffordshire County Council				X		
1.4.3	Unlock economic opportunities in our rural areas	<p>Launch of Rural England Prosperity Fund grant programme</p> <p>Grant awards made under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund rural business to business grant programme</p> <p>Completion of UK Shared Prosperity Funded rural hub feasibility study</p>		X			<p>The grants programme will be launched on 13/07/23</p> <p>The feasibility study was commissioned at the end of Q1 and an inception meeting has taken place.</p>	
1.4.4	Support the facilitation of lifelong learning to create a local workforce with specialist skills that can respond to growth ambitions	Delivery of grants to support apprenticeships and training via UK Shared Prosperity Fund business to business rural grant scheme		X	X		The grants programme will be launched on 13/07/23	

	Objective & Actions	Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Develop a new Local Plan that reflects our Corporate ambitions for growth</b>							
1.5.1	Revise and refresh the Local Plan	<p>Appropriate sites for future development for housing, employment and open space identified</p> <p>Updated evidence base completed that includes infrastructure, viability and economic recovery issues</p>		X	X		<p>The approved Local development Scheme sets out the key stages leading to the adoption of new Local Plan (2023/24)</p> <p>New Local Plan Preferred Option consultation and publication of response completed. Officer assessment of key issues during Summer 2023 and implications on subsequent stages of the Local Plan 2020-2040 during Autumn 2023.</p>	
1.5.2	Embed high quality design into Planning Policy to ensure that Stafford is an attractive place that people want to live in, promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting future investment	Local design codes linked to New Local Plan progressed	X				Consideration of Government's proposals through NPPF for local design codes following Local Plan preferred options responses during Autumn 2023.	

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2023/24 - as at end of Quarter 1

### KPIs for Business Objective 1 - The Economy

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	4
Performance on target	✓	2
Performance below target	✗	1

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	<b>Economic Development &amp; Planning</b>								
	Major Planning Applications determined within time	60%	90.9%					★	Development Management performance is subject to a national league table which is published as a rolling 2 year snapshot. As at 30/06/23 84.7% of major applications were decided within time/agreed extension, an increase from 83.0% at 31/03/23

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	70%	75.9%	X	X	X		★	Development Management performance is subject to a national league table which is published as a rolling 2 year snapshot. As at 30/06/23 76.7% of non-major applications were decided within time/agreed extension, a reduction from 77.0% at 31/03/23
	<b>Regulatory Services</b>								
L13	Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	90%	99%					★	
L14	Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	70%	85%					★	
LI15	Building Control-Site visits completed on day requested	99%	99%					✓	
LI16	Building Control-Customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	90%	88%					✓	

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	Turnaround time for land charges searches (excluding personal searches) – average no. of working days	100% within 10 working days	22%						Whilst only 42 of the 193 searches completed during the quarter were dealt with in 10 days or less the longest a customer waited for a response was 21 days. Search results are dependent on information from the County Council who have been experiencing resourcing issues. Towards the end of the quarter this situation improved therefore performance should increase during quarter 2. Additionally there have been some issues with the Land Charges software which impacted performance but this is largely resolved.
	Deliver 210 affordable homes per year working with Registered Providers, Developers and Homes England	210 homes						N/A	Figures due at year end

## KPIs for Business Objective 2 - The Community

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	9
Performance on target	✓	2
Performance below target	✗	0

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	<b>Regulatory Services</b>								
LI3	No of Enviro-crime complaints acknowledged and initial investigation completed within 72 hours of receipt.	94%	96%					★	Of the 309 complaints received in Q1, we completed an initial investigation of 297 cases within the target timescale.

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	<b>Operations</b>								
LI4	No of residents who think the town centres are clean and tidy (%)	<b>90%</b>	97%					★	Customer Satisfaction Survey carried out by the Customer Contact Centre with residents who called in specifically for Streetscene related issues. Response from 436 residents was 97% positive in the range of 'satisfactory to excellent' regarding the cleanliness of the town centres.
LI5	Residual Household Waste Collected per household (Kgs) (target maximum given)	<b>110</b>	100.53 (est)					★	Some tonnages estimated. Awaiting confirmation from Staffordshire County Council.
LI6	% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	<b>51%</b>	54.54% (est)					★	Some tonnages estimated. Awaiting confirmation from Staffordshire County Council.
LI41	No of sites with green flag status	<b>6</b>	6					✓	Victoria Park - Stonefield Park - Wildwood Park - Tixall Road Crematorium - Eccleshall Road Cemetery - Stone Cemetery

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
	<b>Wellbeing</b>								
LI7	% of homeless cases resolved through prevention	<b>35%</b>	39%					★	Demand has been higher than previous years for quarter 1, despite this there has been an increase in people approaching at prevention stage, which is testament to the work the team puts into preventing homelessness as early as possible.
LI8	% of homeless cases resolved through relief	<b>65%</b>	61%					★	
LI9	No of DFGs completed	<b>10</b>	12					★	The new in-house shared service with SSDC mobilised on 1 April and were able to quickly complete works that had been initiated by the previous provider.
LI10	No of households referred for energy efficiency measures	<b>8</b>	13					★	
LI11	Empty Homes brought back into use following Officer interventions	<b>15</b>	12					✓	
LI12	No of households given advice on energy efficiency	<b>15</b>	113					★	
LI52	Overall reported crime in the Borough	<b>8410</b>							

	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Qtr 1</b>	<b>Qtr 2</b>	<b>Qtr 3</b>	<b>Qtr 4</b>	<b>Year End</b>	<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Comments</b>
LI53	Reported incidents of domestic abuse	<b>2959</b>							
LI54	Reported incidents of ASB	<b>2031</b>							

## KPIs for Business Objective 4 - The Council

Description	Symbol	Number of KPIs
Performance exceeds target	★	2
Performance on target	✓	3
Performance below target	✗	1

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
	<b>Local Taxation and Benefits</b>								
L13	Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	20 days	36.7					✗	A backlog has arisen due to a recent turnover in staff, at our busiest time. Agency support is being applied to clear this so that the whole year average can achieve target.
L14	Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	9 days	9 days	8.5				★	
	% of Council Tax collected annually	98% by year end	28.8%					✓	Whilst nit yet back to pre-pandemic levels, in-year recovery is improving. Prior year arrears need more attention.
	% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98% by year end	28.9%					✓	Whilst not yet back to pre-pandemic levels, in-year recovery is improving. Prior year arrears need more attention.

	Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year	Symbol	Comments
	<b>Calls</b>								
	% of calls answered	94%	94%					✓	
	Average call wait time	2 min	1.21					★	

## Agenda Item 7(d)

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	24 August 2023
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Law and Governance
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ian Curran
<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01785 619220
<b>Ward Interest:</b>	Nil
<b>Report Track:</b>	Economic Development and Planning 24/08/2023 (Only)
<b>Key Decision:</b>	N/A

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## Work Programme

### 1 Purpose of Report

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

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

### 3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation

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

### 4 Relationship to Corporate Business Objectives

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

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

## 5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Members will recall that one of the fundamental philosophies behind the creation of Overview and Scrutiny is that the process should be Member-led and the first stage in achieving this is to develop a Work Programme that is:-
- Owned by all Members of the Scrutiny Committee
  - Flexible to allow the Committee to react to urgent items
  - Contain aspects of both Overview and Scrutiny
- 5.2 Therefore, at each scheduled meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee, an up-to-date copy of the Work Programme will be provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.
- 5.3 The Work Programme includes provision for the Committee to scrutinise appropriate items delivered through the Council's Service Delivery Plan up to twelve months in advance, whilst maintaining the flexibility to respond to any issues that may arise.
- 5.4 Accordingly, attached at **APPENDIX** is the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee's current Work Programme to consider or amend as appropriate.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Financial

Nil

### 6.2 Legal

Nil

### 6.3 Human Resources

Nil

### 6.4 Human Rights Act

Nil

### 6.5 Data Protection

Nil

### 6.6 Risk Management

Nil

## **6.7 Community Impact Assessment Recommendations**

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

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

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

### **Wider Community Impact:**

Detailed above.

## **7 Previous Consideration**

Nil

## **8 Background Papers**

File available in Law and Governance.

## Appendix

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

**Date of Meeting:** 24 August 2023

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### **Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 6.30pm**

Minutes of Last Meeting: Thursday 24 August 2023

Officer Items by: Monday 30 October 2023

Member/Public Items by: Thursday 2 November 2023

Agenda Despatch on: Monday 6 November 2023

Officer Reports: **Stafford Town Centre Transformation  
Programme/Future High Streets Fund**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

#### **Section 106 Monitoring Update**

Head of Economic Development and Planning

#### **Performance Update**

Head of Transformation and Assurance

#### **Work Programme**

Head of Law and Governance

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### **Thursday 11 January 2024 at 6.30pm**

Minutes of Last Meeting: Tuesday 14 November 2023

Officer Items by: Tuesday 19 December 2023

Member/Public Items by: Thursday 21 December 2022

Agenda Despatch on: Wednesday 3 January 2024

Officer Reports: **Projects Update**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Meecebrook Garden Community Proposals**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Local Plan**

Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Work Programme**

Head of Law and Governance

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**Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 6.30pm**

Minutes of Last Meeting: Thursday 11 January 2024

Officer Items by: Monday 19 February 2024

Member/Public Items by: Thursday 22 February 2024

Agenda Despatch on: Monday 26 February 2024

Officer Reports: **Biodiversity Net Gain Duty**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Business and Leisure Tourism (Grants)**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Performance Update**  
Head of Transformation and Assurance

**Work Programme**  
Head of Law and Governance

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**Future Items:**

Task and Finish Review – Events and Activities held in Stafford Town Centre/Parks;  
Early 2024