

# Annual Report

2018/19



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## Joint Foreword by the Managing Director and the Leader of the Council

Our Annual Report for 2018/19 marks the end of the first 12 months of our new and ambitious Corporate Plan for 2018-2023 where Cannock Chase District Council has refined its strategic priorities to focus on two key areas over a five-year period: Promoting Prosperity and Improving Community Wellbeing.

Promoting Prosperity is about building on the District's strengths including its central strategic location, transport links and high levels of employment; by focussing on continued business growth, attracting more high skilled employment and supporting residents to have the skills they need for the future. On page 11 you can read about the seven strategic objectives behind this priority.

Improving Community Wellbeing recognises that Cannock Chase benefits from beautiful natural environments, open spaces, award winning parks, modern leisure facilities and vibrant communities. However, issues remain with the wellbeing of our population which experiences relatively high levels of long-term illness and obesity in spite of the large amount of money the Council and its leisure partner spend on leisure facilities, parks and open spaces. The priority therefore has four strategic objectives including creating opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles (leading to an increase in participation in sport and physical activity by 2023), supporting vulnerable people, and sustaining safe and secure communities.

In the first 12 months of this plan period we have seen some key developments on our journey to fulfilling our priorities as you will read in this report.

They include Cannock Chase being officially confirmed as the venue for mountain biking in the 2022 Commonwealth Games when it is hosted by Birmingham. Construction work is well underway to build the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet in Cannock due to open in 2020 which is set to become a major retail and leisure offer in the West Midlands. The opening of the Chase Skills and Innovation Hub has returned further education to the District after the closure of the former Cannock Campus, and the regeneration of The Stadium at Pye Green (the former Cannock Athletics Stadium has given the District a community sport and recreation hub).

The achievements we detail would not have been possible without the support of the Council's employees, its 41 Members and our partners, including those that have provided funding for some of our projects. A financial summary appears on page 18 including details of external grants received during the year.

Thank you for reading.

**Tony McGovern**  
Managing Director

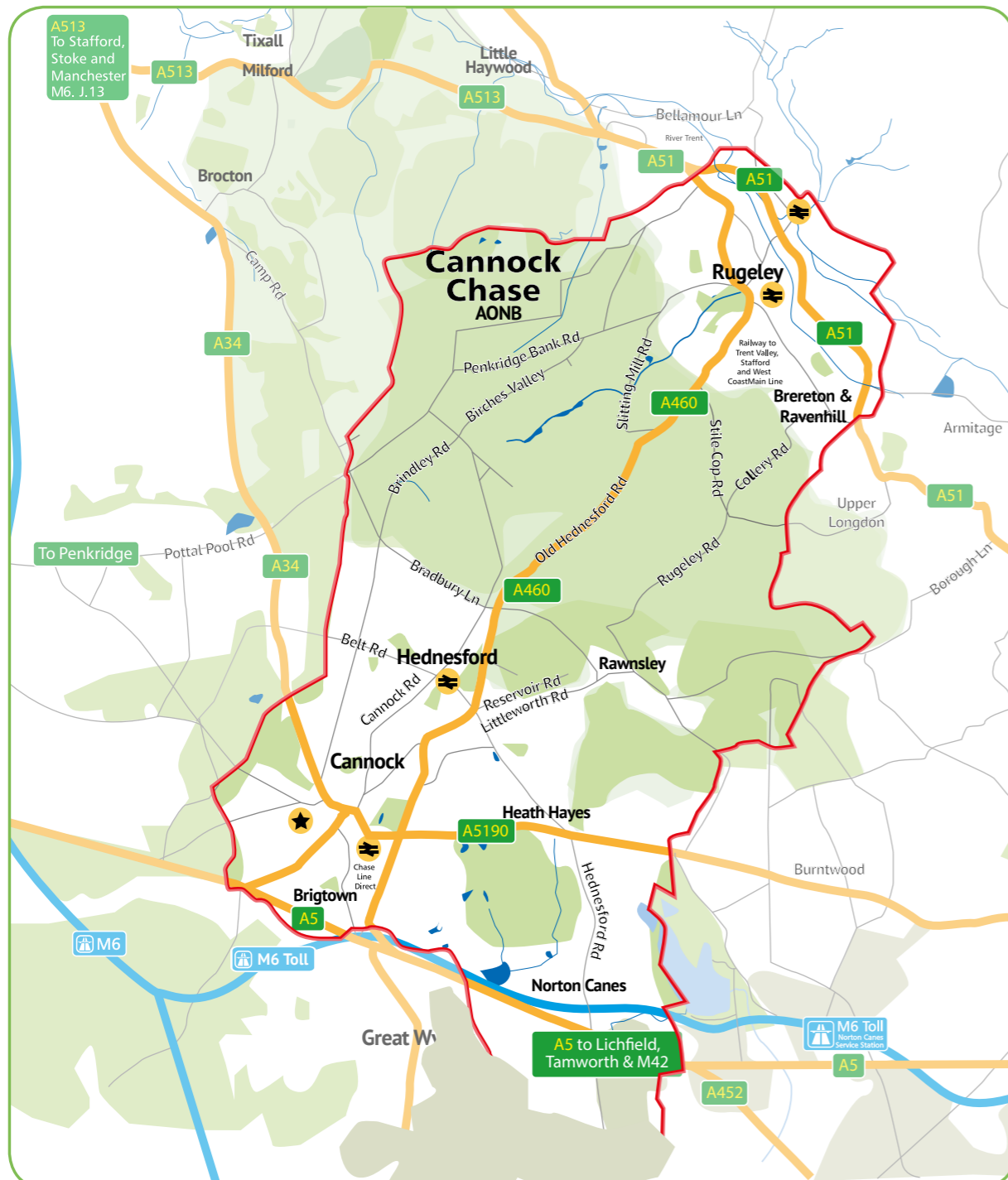
**Councillor George Adamson**  
Leader of the Council

# About Cannock Chase District

The District of Cannock Chase covers over 30 square miles on the northern border of the West Midlands conurbation and forms one of the eight districts of the County of Staffordshire. The District incorporates the towns of Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford and is divided into 15 Wards which include the local communities of Brereton and Ravenhill, Bridgtown, Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rawnsley.

A key feature of the District is its strong transport infrastructure including the M6, M6 Toll and A5 trunk road. In addition to a network of bus routes, railway stations at Rugeley, Hednesford and Cannock provide connections to Stafford in the North and Birmingham and Walsall to the South. The £110 million Network Rail electrification of the Chase Line has enabled more frequent, faster and energy efficient train journeys with direct trains to Birmingham International and London Euston planned from May 2019.

The Mid-2017 Population Estimate for Cannock Chase was 99,126 with 2016-based projections estimating a population of around 100,000 for the District by 2038. There were an estimated 42,000 households in the district in 2018, projected to rise to 46,000 by 2038.



Map not to scale Based on Ordnance Survey Mapping. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Cannock Chase District Council, license No. 100019754 (2018)

# Review of 2018/19: Key Events for the District

Work on the £160m **McArthurGlen Designer Outlet in Cannock** commenced in 2018 and continues on target to deliver this major retail and leisure destination in the District in 2020. The development has the potential to transform the economy and reputation of Cannock Chase, bringing in additional investment, 1,000 new jobs and around three million visitors per year to the area.



The first stage of the demolition of the **Rugeley Power Station** site took place in February 2019. The former Rugeley Power Station site is the largest brownfield site in the West Midlands and has huge potential for housing, employment and leisure developments. Work is ongoing to redevelop this site in response to local consultation and an outline planning application is due to be received by the Council in 2019.



Demolition of Rugeley Power Station began in 2019

In September 2018 phase one of the £1.3m development of the former **Cannock Stadium** site in **Pye Green** was completed with an official opening ceremony. In response to local consultation, the site has been redeveloped as a community sport and recreation hub.



Opening of The Stadium, September 2018

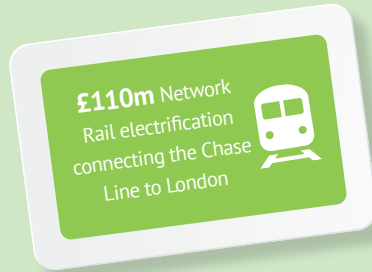
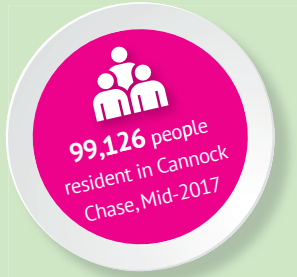
2018 marked the culmination of Cannock Chase Council's commemorations marking the **Centenary anniversary of the First World War (1914-1918)**. Armistice Day 2018 was marked with an official Beacon Lighting Ceremony 'The Battle's Over A Nation's Tribute', at St. Luke's Church in Cannock. Beacon Lighting Ceremony commemorations were also held in Norton Canes and Rugeley, alongside local Remembrance services and parades across the District on 11 November 2018.



Beacon Lighting Ceremony, St. Luke's Church, Cannock, November 2018

Image courtesy of Nola Lovatt

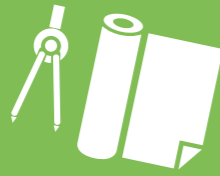
## The District by numbers



## Cannock Chase Council: Role of the organisation:

The Council's core responsibilities defined by Parliament include:

**Planning Authority** the Council determines planning policy for the District via Local Plans and also makes decisions on most planning applications.



**Housing Authority and Homelessness duty** the Council has a responsibility to plan the housing needs of the District; 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 District.



**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 District.



The Council undertakes additional optional responsibilities to promote economic prosperity and community wellbeing in the District. 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 Citizens Advice



Floral displays in town centres and grass cutting



Provision of a CCTV service



Maximising opportunities for public and private investment



Staffordshire County Council is responsible for social care provision, libraries, education and roads / highways etc. The funding and provision of healthcare services such as GPs / hospitals etc. is the responsibility of Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

## Councillors - How the Council is made up

There are 41 Councillors representing 15 wards, who are all democratically elected representatives responsible for setting the policy direction and budgets of the Council. Elections are held three out of every four years. The political composition of seats (as of 3 May 2018) was as follows:



Party Name	Seats
Labour	21
Conservatives	15
Green Party	3
Liberal Democrats	1
Independent	1

## Membership of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the West Midlands Combined Authority

Cannock Chase District Council has been a member of both the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) and the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) since their formation in 2011. A national LEP review is currently taking place that may result in membership being limited to one LEP only. However, at this time no formal decision has been taken by the Government. In September 2015 Cannock Chase Council's Cabinet recommended that the Council join the West Midlands Combined Authority as a non-constituent member.



# Our Priorities 2018-2023

## Priorities covering 2018-2023

July 2018 saw the publication of Cannock Chase Council's new Corporate Plan which covers five years to 2023. The Council's strategic priorities were defined as Promoting Prosperity and Improving Community Wellbeing - interlinking priorities which reinforce each other to improve quality of life for communities across the District.

Our priorities for this Corporate Plan are 'Promoting Prosperity' and 'Community Wellbeing', priorities that interlink and reinforce each other to improve the opportunities, wellbeing and quality of life of our communities.



It is important to recognise that these areas are inter-linked - 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.

The graphics overleaf outline the strategic priorities for Cannock Chase Council within these two interlinking areas.

## Promoting Prosperity

### Strategic objectives

Our priority for this five year plan is to focus on the following seven strategic objectives:

Establishing McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Cannock as a major visitor attraction and maximising the benefits it will bring to the District



Increasing the skill levels of residents and the amount of higher skilled jobs in the District



Increasing housing choice



Creating strong and diverse town centres to attract additional customers and visitors



Creating a positive environment in which businesses in the District can thrive.



Increasing access to employment opportunities



Commencing regeneration of the Rugeley Power Station site



## Improving Community Wellbeing

### Strategic objectives

Our priority for this five year plan is to focus on the following four strategic objectives:

Opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles



Supporting vulnerable people



Sustaining safe and secure communities



Promoting attractive and healthy environments



### McArthurGlen Designer Outlet

- Land purchase completed July 2018
- 160 local tradespeople and suppliers attend 'Meet the Buyer' event, September 2018
- Construction begins October 2018 with Ground-Breaking Ceremony
- Amey upgrading road infrastructure with dual carriageway on Eastern Way and new underpass
- Access to Retail Employability Programme delivered by Walsall College supporting local people to access jobs at McArthurGlen
- Steelworks nearing completion



Top Right: The Ground-Breaking Ceremony, October 2018

### Rugeley Power Station

- Cannock Chase Council, as part of the Rugeley Power Station Task Force, is planning the future development of the Rugeley Power Station Site
- November/December 2018, ENGIE (owners of the site) Community Planning Weekend involving the local community in the site's development
- Demolition work begins February 2019
- ENGIE submitting an outline planning application for the site in 2019



Above: Rugeley Power Station

Image courtesy of Nola Lovatt

### Chase Line Electrification

- Revised timetable launched May 2018 re-introducing two trains per hour to Walsall and Birmingham.
- New four-carriage electric trains connecting the Chase Line directly to Birmingham International and London Euston due for launch in 2019
- Work completed to extend platforms at Rugeley, Hednesford and Cannock railway stations
- December 2018 £231,000 funding allocated by Cannock Chase Council to upgrade Cannock Railway Station working with West Midlands Rail Executive, West Midlands Trains and Staffordshire County Council



### Swift Smart Travel Card Launch

- March 2019 Swift launched on all Arriva bus services across Cannock Chase
- Scheme promotes public transport use by enabling smart travel in the District, with discounts for Swift users on connecting services in the West Midlands



Right Launch of Swift Smart Travel Card, Cannock Bus Station

### Cannock Chase Skills and Innovation Hub

- July 2018 South Staffordshire College re-opens its Cannock Campus
- Branded as Cannock Chase Skills and Innovation Hub, 600 students are now enrolled
- Partnership formed between Cannock Chase Council and South Staffordshire College to raise skills and qualifications in the District
- Cannock Chase Council has match funded a successful bid made to Stoke and Staffordshire LEP for £500,000 to provide £1m for South Staffordshire College to develop a new state-of-the-art Engineering Academy opening in September 2019



Right: Steve Burgin and Claire Boliver from South Staffordshire College with Tony McGovern and Councillor George Adamson at the launch of Cannock Chase Skills and Innovation Hub

### Connecting Communities Employment Support Pilot for Cannock North

- April 2018 funding won from West Midlands Combined Authority
- Walsall College delivering Connecting Communities Cannock North

This provides free courses to promote employability and support people into work



### Increasing Housing Choice

The Former Garage Sites and Other Council Owned Land Redevelopment Scheme will provide 39 affordable homes for Council rent by summer 2019.

Over 2,000 residential planning consents approved by Cannock Chase Council in 2018.



### Town Centre Improvements Rugeley and Cannock

- July 2018 investment approved into further improvements to pedestrian and cycle links between Tesco, Rugeley Town Centre, Towers Business Park and the Trent and Mersey Canal improving accessibility
- Partnership aims to increase footfall and enhance Cannock Town Centre's offer as an attractive destination for retail and recreation



November 2018 new Cannock Town Centre Partnership facilitated by Cannock Chase Council



Towers Business Park, Rugeley

### Green Flags and Hednesford Park

July 2018 Cannock Chase Council awarded six Green Flag Awards for parks making it the top performing District Council in the West Midlands.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funded work in Hednesford Park continues with a thriving volunteer programme restoring Hednesford No.1 Signal Box.

Pools to Park and Play a community book for the Park was launched in January 2019.



Launch event for Pools to Park and Play

### Chase Leisure Centre

- August 2018 work began on upgrading Chase Leisure Centre as part of a £1m redevelopment
- Renovations to the existing gym and studio plus introduction of a new cycle studio
- Both feature latest Technogym equipment and audio visual technology providing virtual classes, and the Les Mills immersive cycling experience



Above: Councillor Christine Mitchell and Peter Burt, Managing Director of Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles at the new gym studio, Chase Leisure Centre

### The Stadium Redevelopment

September 2018 completion of phase one of the £1.3m community sport and recreation hub at the former Cannock Stadium site in Pye Green.

Site features a new adventure play area, green gym equipment, footpaths, cycleways, a BMX pump track and community allotments.

Formation of the new Friends of Cannock Stadium Park group.



### Cannock Chase in the Commonwealth Games 2022

In October 2018 it was announced that Cannock Chase will host the mountain biking event of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Commonwealth Games will involve athletes from 71 nations competing in July August 2022. The Games will attract millions of TV viewers and generate great benefits for the District.





## Improving Community Wellbeing: What we've achieved in 2018/19 (continued)

### Universal Credit

Universal Credit introduced in Rugeley in August 2017 rolled out across the rest of Cannock Chase in November 2018.

Cannock Chase Council providing advice on income management and signposting people to sources for information and guidance via the Council's dedicated web pages (as pictured). It has been working with Citizens Advice and the Department for Work and Pensions to ensure customers are aware of the changes and can be supported as appropriate.



### Ofgem Visit - Tackling Fuel Poverty

- March 2019, visit to Cannock Chase by Martin Cave, the Chairman of energy regulator Ofgem
- Chase Community Solar has fitted solar panels to over 300 of Cannock Chase Council's bungalow properties as part scheme supported by the Council to battle fuel poverty in the District.



Above: Martin Cave (Chair of Ofgem), Jim Allen and Graham Bass (Directors of Green Energy Networks and Smart Innovations Grid), Margaret Miles, Susan Whelan (daughter of Mrs Miles) and Councillor Alan Pearson outside the home of Margaret Miles on Cemetery Road, Cannock



## Improving Community Wellbeing: What we've achieved in 2018/19 (continued)

### 'See Something, Say Something' Safeguarding Vulnerable People across Cannock Chase

February 2019 launch of 'See Something, Say Something' campaign by the Community Safety Partnership at Cannock Chase Council.

Campaign aims to safeguard vulnerable adults and children in the District by raising awareness of abuse and encouraging people to report.

Right: Campaign messages are prominently displayed across Cannock Chase including on this plasma screen in South Staffordshire College the College is supporting the campaign



### Reduce, Re-Use, Recycle

A number of campaigns to promote recycling and waste reduction delivered over the past 12 months including:

- Nappy contamination
- Chewing gum campaign
- Introducing community litter picking equipment
- Supporting the Great British Spring Clean
- Started a Residual Composition Analysis
- Launched 'Which Bin Stop & Think' campaign



# Financial summary

## Income

£20m Housing Rents  
 £25.3m from Government grants  
 £9.1m from Fees and Charges  
 £6m Council Tax Income  
 £3.8m Business Rates Income including growth  
 £384k Revenue Support Grant from Government



## Expenditure

£20.2m Housing services (5,146 properties)  
 £27.0m Health and wellbeing (including housing benefits)  
 £4.9m on Environment related services  
 £3.7m on Culture related services  
 £3.1m on Economic development related services  
 £5.9m on non-Housing functions (including £220,000 use of reserves)

## External Funding received by the Council

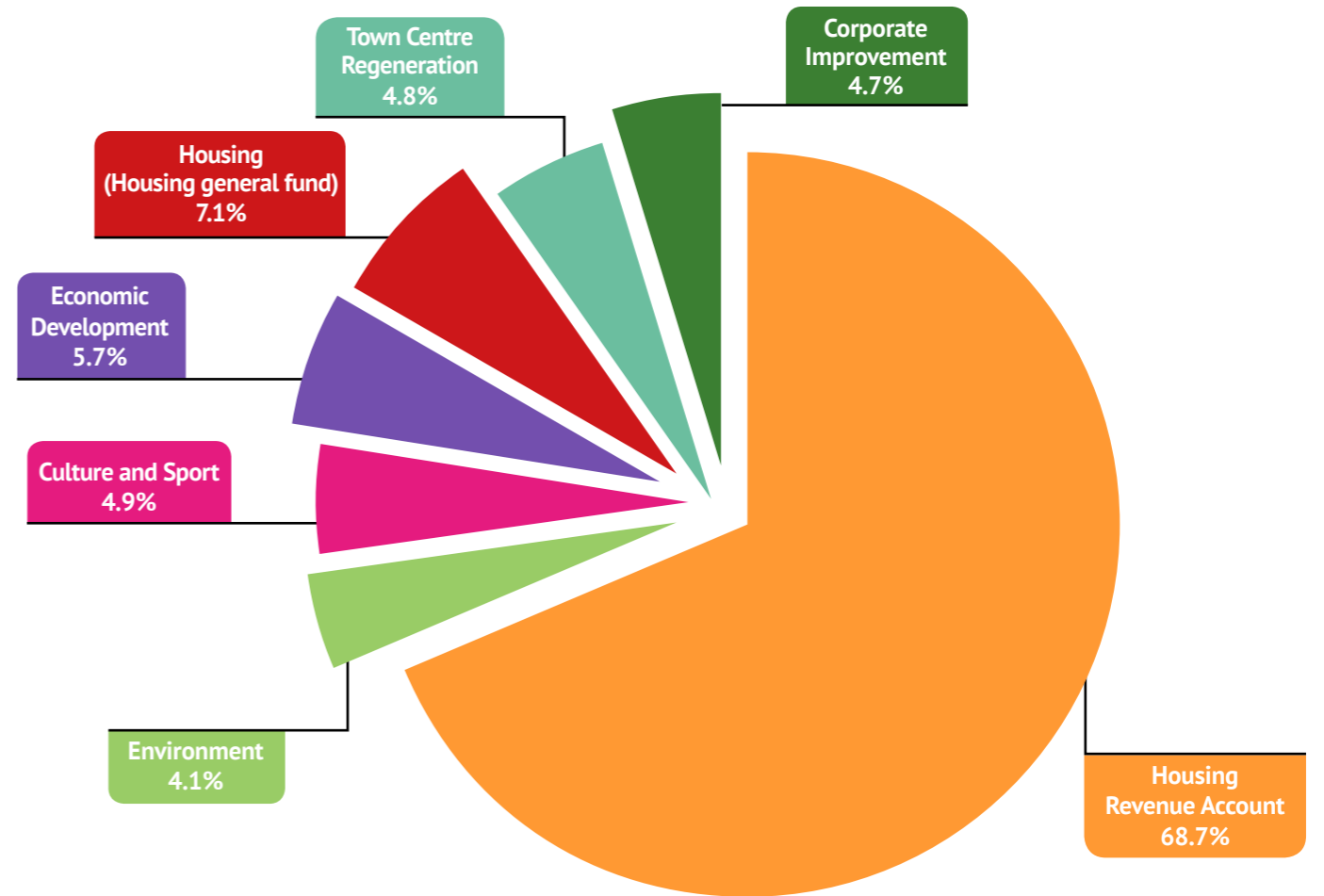
External Body	Amount
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	£305,000

## External Funding received in the District

External Body	Amount
West Midlands Combined Authority	£370,844
Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire LEP (includes £500,000 to South Staffordshire College for the Engineering Academy)	£549,235

## Capital Expenditure

Cannock Chase Council spent £9.256 million on capital projects in 2018/19



## Major items of Capital Expenditure in 2018/19 were:

- £1.457 million on former garage sites development
- £1.267 million on external and environmental works
- £1.170 million on central heating upgrades
- £0.804 million on bathroom replacements
- £0.661 million on Disabled Facilities Grants
- £0.537 million on upgrading electrical systems
- £0.519 million on Council disabled facilities grants
- £0.500 million contribution to Engineering Academy
- £0.441 million acquisition of Market shops
- £0.372 million on new pay and display car park at the Civic Centre (part completed)
- £0.260 million on replacing kitchens in Council homes
- £0.218 million on Moss Road Reema Flats Development

N.B. All investment secured by Cannock Chase businesses as grants or loans aimed at business growth support and delivered via programmes operated by Local Enterprise Partnerships and/or their partners, where the Council has been either directly or indirectly involved.

# Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

We set ourselves the highest standards in delivering services to residents and businesses. How we handle complaints is an important part of our commitment to working in a fair and consistent manner. The majority of complaints are resolved by our internal complaints process, however, where this is not possible the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) provides independent resolution. The tables below illustrate those cases and their outcomes.



## Annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the LGO regarding Cannock Chase Council 2018-19

Statistics provided by the LGO

### Complaints and enquiries received

Adult Care Services	Benefits & Tax	Corporate & Other Services	Education & Children's Services	Environment Services	Highways & Transport	Housing	Planning & Development	Total
0	4	1	0	0	0	0	3	8

### Decisions made

Incomplete or invalid	Advice Given	Referred back for local resolution	Closed after initial enquiries	Detailed investigations			Total
				Not upheld	Upheld	Upheld rate	
0	0	4	4	0	0	0%	8

**Note:** The uphold rate shows how often we found evidence of fault. It is expressed as a percentage of the total number of detailed investigations we completed.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Annual Report. For further information on the Council's Corporate Plan and services please get in touch using the contact information below [policy@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:policy@cannockchasedc.gov.uk)

## Keep in touch and how to contact us...





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