



PLACE
Improved Living Environment
Environment
Priority Delivery Plan
2013/14

Lead Officer:
Corporate Director

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Why is this a priority outcome?

Cannock Chase District has a unique mix of urban and rural environments. The urbanised areas of the District, including the three main towns of Cannock, Rugeley and Hednesford, each have their own special character with a mix of old and new development including post-mining heavy industry, re-developments of modern housing estates and business parks. There are eight Conservation Areas reflecting the pre 20th Century roots where buildings have special protection. Green space is a fundamental part of the District's character, with the rural sections comprising around 60% of the area of the District which has green belt protection status. At the heart of the District is the Area of Outstanding Beauty, an asset of National importance.

The District's population has grown by over 5% between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, and is predicted to continue rising over the next twenty years. Population density within Cannock Chase as measured by the 2011 Census is high, with over 12.4 persons per hectare (PPH), compared to Staffordshire (3.2 PPH) and England (3.77 PPH).¹

Cannock Chase Council provides a broad range of services which impact on and influence the living environment and environmental sustainability. Specific services including waste collection and recycling, pollution control, community safety and streetcare maintenance; all of which contribute to delivering a sustainable community. We need to provide a clean and green environment by ensuring that cleansing operations provide optimum service delivery, whilst coordinating education and enforcement measures to maintain sustainable clean and green public open space.

Cannock Chase District Council has made real progress in providing a cleaner and greener District. The introduction of wheeled bins for bi-weekly collections of dry recyclable and green waste has vastly increased the proportion of waste sent for recycling, an improvement recognised by the Council's waste and recycling service being rated in the top fifty services in DEFRA's national assessment. The value for money provided by the service is also illustrated by it being the least costly in Staffordshire. We must build on this momentum and develop services that match the aspirations of our residents in providing services that meet the needs of today whilst protecting the District's assets for the future.

The perception of a neighbourhood amongst those who live, work and visit can be heavily influenced by the quality of the natural and built environment.

¹ Source: Office for National Statistics, www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Planning, Building Control, Environmental Services and Environmental Health play a central role in the maintenance of the District's appearance, sustainability and quality of life.

Despite a 15% reduction during the onset of the economic downturn in 2008-09 average house prices have more than doubled in Cannock Chase since 2001, and averaged £146,945 for the quarter ending September 2012. However, this compares with an overall average price of £170,131 for Staffordshire during the same period. Despite this, owner-occupation remains out of reach for many Cannock Chase households on low incomes.

The need for more affordable housing continues to be a priority. Affordable housing comprises of:

- Social and Affordable Rented Housing
- Other affordable housing provided at prices below the market, including shared ownership and housing for sale which is permanently discounted below the market price.

The "self-financing " system for funding Council housing became operational on 1 April 2012. This has enabled the Council through the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan to ensure the long term financing of its housing stock.

Housing Benefit changes (including the introduction of the "bedroom tax") and the introduction of Universal Credit will have significant implications on the Council's housing services. It is envisaged that the changes will increase the reluctance of some landlords to rent properties to benefit claimants with a consequent impact on homelessness. Council house rent arrears are also expected to increase as a result of reduced benefits and money management issues amongst some tenants.

Levels of crime and community safety issues in the District are not disproportionate when analysed against National averages or as prevalent in terms of deprivation when compared to economic and employment factors. The number of incidents of recorded crime in Cannock Chase District during 2011/12 was 5,803, a reduction of 10.8% or 705 crimes on the previous year. Levels of violent crime have also decreased to a total of 1,488 in 2011/12, an annual drop of 16.7%.

Public consultation has identified that anti-social Behaviour (ASB) is clearly a priority for residents of Cannock Chase, as low-level nuisance behaviour has a very real impact on a community's quality of life. The volume of ASB incidents has shown a continued decrease, with a total of 2,292 incidents of ASB recorded by Staffordshire Police in Cannock Chase during 2011/12, compared to 3,590 for 2010/11. This equates to an annual reduction of 16.7%, and contributes to an overall reduction in the number of incidents of 47.7% over the

last five years.

The Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment 2012 highlights that the majority of major Community Safety issues within the District are concentrated around specific locations. Hotspot analyses of crime issues included in the Strategic Assessment illustrate the similarity of distribution for many types of crime and/or ASB in these areas.

Portfolios

- **Environment**
- **Housing**
- **Crime and Partnerships**

Each of these Portfolios and the contribution they make to the Priority Outcome of Place: Improved Living Environment is set out in the following Portfolio Delivery Plan sections.

Environment

Portfolio Delivery Plan

The Environment Portfolio enables Council services provision to maintain, protect and improve the living environment of the district.

The portfolio responsibilities for Environment include:

- Refuse collection, waste management and recycling.
- Issues relating to itinerants.
- Management of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Landscape and countryside management services including wildlife issues, tree preservation and the Ranger service.
- Land drainage and watercourses, engineering services and public clocks.
- Environmental Protection Services including public nuisances, stray dog services, pest control and contaminated land.
- Allotments.
- Street cleansing, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping.
- Licensing Services including hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, public entertainment, street trading, street collections and liquor.
- Public car and lorry parks.

The Council provides these services through the Environmental Services and Environmental Health Departments and the Building Control Section of the Planning and Regeneration Department which is shared with Stafford Borough Council.

Environmental Services Department

- Waste Management, Collection & Recycling
- Management & maintenance of Car and lorry parks
- Provision of Christmas lighting
- District roads furniture maintenance
- Management of Land drainage and watercourses
- Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance
- Landscape Design
- Countryside service
- Tree Maintenance and Management
- Management of Council owned Allotments
- Removal of Abandoned/Nuisance Vehicles removal
- Removal of Fly Tipping

Environmental Health Department

The Environmental Protection section and the Licensing Unit within Environmental Health deliver services in the Environment Portfolio:

Environmental Protection

- Investigating matters relating to air pollution, noise, contaminated land, flytipping, public health nuisances and pests, and taking appropriate action.
- Implementing strategies to improve air quality and assessing contamination of land, requiring its remediation as necessary.
- Delivering programmed Environmental Enforcement Actions.
- Reduce nuisance caused by stray dogs and dog fouling, through education and enforcement
- Providing expert advice on consultation for Development Control, Building Control and the Licensing Unit.
- Ensuring compliance with Permits issued under Integrated Pollution Prevention legislation.
- Managing the Pest Control, Stray Dog Collection and Stray Dog Kenneling contracts.

Licensing Unit

Duties relate to the licensing of Premises, Persons and Vehicles. The areas of work are broadly in respect of:-

- the sale and supply of alcohol
- regulated entertainment
- late night refreshment
- gambling
- sex establishments
- the taxi and private hire trade
- street trading
- charitable collections
- animals; boarding, breeding, pet shops etc.
- the registration of body piercing activities and hairdressers.

Building Control

- Administration of Building Regulations including checking of plans, site inspections and enforcement.
- Inspection and remedial action in respect of dangerous structures.

Service Aims

- Increase the reuse and recycling of waste
- Manage Council owned Flood Risk sites
- Improve Car Parks access in Winter
- Improve Countryside sites provision
- Investigate complaints and take appropriate action.
- Improve air quality and contaminated land.
- Deliver programmed Environmental Enforcement Actions.
- Administer applications for licences, permits and registrations.
- Contribute to ensuring good standards of buildings and making safe dangerous structures.

How will we achieve our service aims and the priority outcome?

Service Aim: Increase the reuse and recycling of waste

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Reduce the amount of residual waste per household as stated for CCDC within the Staffordshire Waste Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	Waste & Engineering Services Manager	Place Environment 1	Within existing employee resources
Increase volumes of waste recycled in line with the targets as stated for CCDC within the Staffordshire Waste Action Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	Waste & Engineering Services Manager	Place Environment 2	Within existing employee resources
Undertake an information & motivational campaign to increase food waste and increase recycling.	✓	✓	✓		Waste & Engineering Services Manager	N/A	Within existing employee resources

Service Aim: Manage Council owned Flood Risk sites

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Inspect and Monitor all Flood Risk sites within the district each month and during periods of heavy rain	✓	✓	✓	✓	Direct Works Supervisor	N/A	Within existing employee resources

Service Aim: Improve Car Parks access in Winter

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Grit Town Centre Council owned car parks during winter period			✓	✓	Direct Works Supervisor	N/A	Subject to approval of 2013-14 budget "growth item"

Service Aim: Improve Countryside sites provision

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Major preparatory work for Heathland recreation on Hednesford Hills as part of the Higher Level Stewardship Agreement with Natural England				✓	Principal Landscape Officer	N/A	Higher Level Stewardship Agreement with Natural England

Service Aim: Respond to service requests, investigate complaints and take appropriate action.

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Respond to requests for service.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Environmental Protection and Food and Safety Managers	Place Environment 3	Staff resources

Service Aim: Improve air quality and contaminated land.

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Finalise the Air Quality Management Area action plan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Environmental Protection Manager	Place Environment 4	Staff resources
Submit bids for central government funding for the investigation (and remediation if required) of potentially contaminated sites,				✓	Environmental Protection Manager	Place Environment 5 & 6	Staff resources and Contractor
Complete a progress report on air quality in the District.	✓				Environmental Protection Manager	Place Environment 7	Staff resources

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Complete a 'further assessment' of air quality (subject to approval of Detailed Assessment by DEFRA) and consult on the draft plan.				✓	Environmental Protection Manager	Place Environment 8 & 9	Staff resources

Service Aim: Deliver programmed Environmental Enforcement Actions.

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Produce, gain approval for and then deliver an Environmental Enforcement Action Plan.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Environmental Protection Manager	Place Environment 10 & 11	Staff resources

Service Aim: Administer applications for licences, permits and registrations.

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Processes and procedures in place for the effective Operation of the Licensing function.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Food & Safety Manager	Place Environment 12	Staff resources

Service Aim: Contribute to ensuring good standards of buildings and making safe dangerous structures.

How	When				Who	Indicator	Resource
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4			
Ensure building work under the control of the Council complies with the Building Regulations.			✓		Building Control Manager	Place Environment 13	Within existing employee resources
Ensure reported dangerous structures are inspected and where necessary made safe.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Building Control Manager	Place Environment 14	Within existing employee resources
Provide a high quality, customer focused service.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Building Control Manager	Place Environment 15 & 16	Within existing employee resources

Key Performance Measures

Service Aim: Increase the reuse and recycling of waste			
Indicator reference code	Definition	Baseline 2012/13	Targets 2013/14
Place Environment 1	Residual household waste per household	TBA	TBA
Place Environment 2	% of Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting	TBA	TBA

Service Aim: Investigate complaints and take appropriate action			
Indicator reference code	Definition	Baseline 2012/13	Targets 2013/14
Place Environment 3	Respond to 95% of requests for service within the required timescale – 24 hours, 3 days or 5 days	To be confirmed after 31/3/2013	95%

Service Aim: Improve air quality and contaminated land			
Indicator reference code	Definition	Baseline 2012/13	Targets 2013/14
Place Environment 4	Produce a final version and secure Council approval of the Air Quality Management Area action plan	N/A	Secure approval by December 2013
Place Environment 5	Submit bids within funding windows announced by Central Government	5 bids submitted	2 bids to be submitted
Place Environment 6	Use funding from successful bids to commission site investigations	3 sites investigated	Dependent on number of successful bids
Place Environment 7	Complete progress report of air quality in the District and submit to DEFRA for approval	N/A	Submit to DEFRA by May 2013
Place Environment 8	Complete a 'further assessment' of air quality (subject to approval of Detailed Assessment by DEFRA) and consult on the draft plan	N/A	Draft completed by December 2013
Place Environment 9	Undertake public consultation on the Draft Action Plan	N/A	Consultation commenced by March 2013

Service Aim: Deliver programmed Environmental Enforcement Actions			
Indicator reference code	Definition	Baseline 2012/13	Targets 2013/14
Place Environment 10	Produce and gain approval for an Environmental Enforcement Action Plan	EEA plan approved by Environment PDC	Gain approval of plan by Environment PDC
Place Environment 11	Deliver actions to required timescales	Actions delivered	Deliver actions in approved EEA Plan

Service Aim: Administer applications for licences, permits and registrations			
Indicator reference code	Definition	Baseline 2012/13	Targets 2013/14
Place Environment 12	Process 95% of applications within the required timescale	To be confirmed after 31/3/2013	95%

Service Aim: Contribute to ensuring good standards of buildings and make safe dangerous structures			
Indicator reference code	Definition	Baseline 2012/13	Targets 2013/14
Place Environment 13	Average number of interventions to ensure building regulation compliance per project plan assessment or individual site visit	0.7	0.7
Place Environment 14	% of reported dangerous structures that are assessed and course of action determined within 2 whole working days following receipt of notification	80%	80%
Place Environment 15	% of full plans applications that are assessed within 15 working days of receipt	75%	75%
Place Environment 16	% of customers satisfied or very satisfied with the service	90%	90%