



**Please ask for:** Matt Berry  
**Extension No:** 4589  
**E-mail:** [mattberry@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:mattberry@cannockchasedc.gov.uk)

22 February 2023

Dear Councillor,

**Cabinet**

**6:00pm on Thursday 2 March 2023**

**Meeting to be held in the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

You are invited to attend this meeting for consideration of the matters itemised in the following Agenda.

Yours sincerely,

**T. Clegg**  
**Chief Executive**

To: Councillors:

Lyons, O	Leader of the Council
Jones, B.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Community Safety & Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Sutherland, M.	District and High Street Development Portfolio Leader
Johnson, J.P.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Jones, V.	Health, Wellbeing, and Community Engagement Portfolio Leader
Fitzgerald, A.A.	Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader
Hughes, R.J.	Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader

# Agenda

## Part 1

### 1. Apologies

### 2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

To declare any personal, pecuniary, or disclosable pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

### 3. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

To receive and consider oral updates (if any), from the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader, and Portfolio Leaders.

### 4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on 26 January and 16 February 2023 (enclosed).

### 5. Forward Plan

Forward Plan of Decisions for March to April 2023 (Item 5.1 - 5.3).

### 6. Recommendation from the Health, Wellbeing, and The Community Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December 2022 (Call-in LTA Report)

Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 6.1 - 6.16).

### 7. Quarter 3 Performance Report 2022/23

Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 7.1 - 7.35).

### 8. Development of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub Stadium Site Phase 2 - Proposed Wheeled Activity Play Area - Phase 2 Revised (Part A)

Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 8.1 - 8.14).

### 9. Support Staffordshire

Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 9.1 - 9.17).

### 10. Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 3

Report of the S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 10.1 - 10.30).

The Appendices to this report (Item 10.6 - 10.30) are confidential due to the inclusion of:

- Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, and
- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 26 January 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Lyons, O.	Leader of the Council
Jones, B.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Community Safety & Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Sutherland, M.	District and High Street Development Portfolio Leader
Johnson, J.P.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Jones, V.	Health, Wellbeing, and Community Engagement Portfolio Leader
Fitzgerald, A.A.	Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader
Hughes, R.J.	Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader

**72. Apologies**

None.

**73. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

No other Declarations of Interest were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

**74. Updates from Portfolio Leaders**

**(i) Leader of the Council**

The Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Health in All Policies Workshop**

The Leader referred to a LGA led workshop that had been held on Monday, 23 January, 2023, which she had attended with other Cabinet Members and other Councillors and felt it had been a really useful session. The Leader thanked the other attendees for making themselves available and Officers and the LGA for organising the event. It was also noted that a further session had been organised for 30 January for Leadership Team and Senior Managers.

**(ii) Community Safety and Partnerships**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Asylum Seekers**

In relation to asylum seekers currently being housed by the Home Office at the Holiday Inn hotel in Cannock and the Roman Way hotel in Cannock (but technically in the South Staffordshire District Council area), in recent weeks there had been an increase in community tension following some very negative Facebook posts. This had included inappropriate comments toward the asylum seekers and criticism of the both the Police and Cannock Chase Council.

To be clear, the asylum seekers had been placed at the two locations by the Home Office, as indeed many others had also been placed in hotels up and down the country. Serco was the Government's appointed contractor.

Locally, it was apparent that although some cultural differences existed, to date only one asylum seeker had been charged with any offence and that was of a minor nature. The police always responded to concerns promptly but very often those concerns were found to be unsubstantiated but made with good intent.

The Police and the Council's Community Safety team regularly liaised regarding community tension and acted as appropriate. Meanwhile, this Administration was lobbying the local MP and Government for a long-term solution to this unsustainable housing issue.

- **Vehicle Crime in Cannock Chase**

The Portfolio Leader advised that he was pleased to report that numerous arrests had been made in recent weeks as part of a coordinated police operation cracking down on vehicle theft.

**75. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 December 2022 be approved.

**76. Forward Plan**

**Resolved:**

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period January to March 2023 (Item 5.1 – 5.4) be noted.

**77. General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023-26**

Consideration was given to the Report of the S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 6.1 - 6.62).

**Resolved:**

That the following be recommended to Council at its meeting to be held on 15 February 2023:

- (A) The Budget requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2023-24 be set at £14.941 million.
- (B) The indicative General Fund Revenue Budgets for 2024-25 be set at £14.592 million and for 2025-26 be set at £15.396 million.

- (C) The budget pressures, savings, and income generation set out in report paragraphs 5.4 to 5.6 be approved.
- (D) The General Fund working balance be set at a minimum of £1 million.
- (E) The detailed capital programme as set out in report Appendices 2 and 3 be approved, along with the Community Infrastructure Levy allocations as set out in report Appendix 4.
- (F) The Council Tax for 2023-24 be increased by 2.99% to £236.92.
- (G) The Council's Tax Base be set at 33,543.50 (as determined by the S151 Officer reducing the tax base of 34,438.92 to reflect the collection rate).
- (H) Note that the inflation parameter for fees and charges for 2023-24 was generally set at 5%.
- (I) The detailed portfolio budgets as set out in report Appendix 1 be approved.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

The report set out the current position on the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2023-24 and indicative budgets for 2024-25 to 2025-26. It took into account the Local Government Finance Settlement 2023-24, New Homes Bonus Grant allocation, the position on the Council's Collection Fund, the Council's Tax Base for 2023-24 and the consequential Council Tax for 2023-24.

The budget for 2023-24 was based on the estimated outturn position for 2022-23, which had been updated to reflect known changes and estimates for 2023-24.

Indicative budgets had been set out for 2024-25 and 2025-26 which included the key issues which it was anticipated would have a potential impact on the Council's finances. However, it should be noted that there were substantial uncertainties regarding the central Government policy for local government finance. There was a significant risk to the council's financial position in 2025-26 should the business rates reset take place. It could not be assumed that support would be provided to manage this reduction in resources by central government at this time. The Council was still operating with a one-year financial settlement.

### **78. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24**

Consideration was given to the Report of the S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 7.1 - 7.12).

#### **Resolved:**

That:

- (A) Council, at its meeting to be held on 15 February 2023, be recommended to approve the removal of the 80% cap for working-aged claimants, in respect of the Local Council Tax Reduction scheme for 2023-24 only.
- (B) Authority be delegated to the S151 Officer to make incidental changes to the scheme where such changes did not impact on the Council's budget or policies and were necessary to ensure that claimants' entitlement to Local Council Tax Reduction was not reduced by receipt of payments made that were intended to assist with cost-of-living and energy bill increases.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

Working aged claimants of Local Council Tax Reduction (LCTR) who were not the parents of children under 5 and were not disabled were subject to an 80% cap in the amount of reduction available to them. The report recommended the removal of that cap so that these claimants could receive up to 100% reduction for the 2023-24 year.

The Council needed the ability to ensure that any changes to the benefit schemes made in the future, which were intended to deal with specific issues such as increases in the cost of living, did not negatively impact on claimants' entitlement to reduction. Delegated authority was therefore sought for the Chief Financial Officer to respond to changes as necessary.

A full review of the LCTR scheme would be undertaken in 2023, with any improvements identified being reported to Members.

### **79. Housing Services 2021-22 Annual Report**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 8.1 - 8.19).

#### **Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The 2021-22 Housing Services Annual Report be agreed for publication on the Council's website.
- (B) If required, the Head of Housing and Partnerships, following consultation with the Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader, be authorised to make amendments to the 2021-22 Housing Services Annual Report prior to publication.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

The Annual Report must be made available to all tenants and a copy of the final document would be placed on the Council's website, with hard copies available on request.

### **80. Housing, Homelessness, and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-33**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 9.1 - 9.31).

#### **Resolved:**

That the Housing, Homelessness, and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2033 be approved, and the actions contained within it be agreed.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

Whilst there was no longer a statutory requirement to produce a housing strategy, there remained a statutory duty to produce a homelessness strategy. A new combined housing, homelessness, and rough sleeping strategy would ensure that residents, Registered Providers, and other stakeholders could continue to refer to a document that outlined the housing, homelessness, and rough sleeping issues facing the District and presented the actions that were being put in place to address them.

## **81. Rent Setting Policy - April 2023**

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing & Partnerships and S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 10.1 - 10.10).

### **Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The revised Housing Rent Setting Policy be agreed and implemented with effect from 1 April 2023.
- (B) The Government's guidelines on setting social housing rent for 2023/24 be followed.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

The report confirmed the details provided in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) report dated 2 February 2022 and the three-year Business Plan approval for HRA budgets 2022-23 to 2024-25.

It was proposed that the report sought confirmation that the Council would follow the social rent policy cap set by the Government as part of the Autumn statement on 17 November 2022.

## **82. Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2022-23 to 2025-26**

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing & Partnerships and S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 11.1 - 11.6).

### **Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The revised position with regard to estimated income and expenditure for the 2022-23 Housing Revenue Account and budgets for the period 2023-24 to 2025-26, as summarised in report Appendix 1, be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 15 February 2023 be recommended to:
  - (i) Determine a minimum level of working balances of £2.078 million for 31 March 2024, and indicative working balances of £2.135 million and £2.192 million for 31 March 2025 and 2026, respectively.
  - (ii) Approve the Housing Revenue Account Budgets for 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26 (and note the forecast outturn for 2022-23), as summarised in report Appendix 1.

### **Reason for Decisions**

Cabinet was required to propose a budget in relation to the Housing Revenue Account for submission to Council on 15 February 2023.

## **83. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2022-23 to 2025-26**

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing & Partnerships and S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 12.1 - 12.6).

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The estimated availability of Housing Revenue Account capital resources for the period 2022-23 to 2025-26, as set out report Appendix 1, be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 15 February 2023, be recommended to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for the period 2022-23 to 2025-26, as set out in report Appendix 2.

**Reason for Decisions**

Cabinet was required to propose a budget in relation to the Housing Revenue Account for submission to Council on 15 February 2023.

**84. Aelfgar Housing Scheme**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 13.1 - 13.10).

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The following be noted:
  - (i) The Aelfgar site, marked in red in report Appendix 1, was a priority site for redevelopment for the provision of new Council housing.
  - (ii) An application was being made to Homes England for Affordable Housing Grant in respect of the Aelfgar Housing Scheme.
  - (iii) The appointment of a development partner via Constructing West Midlands Construction Framework Agreement.
  - (iv) The proposed housing scheme.
  - (v) Council homes would be constructed to the Future Homes Standard to achieve a higher standard of sustainability than was required by current building regulations.
- (B) The closure of Taylors Lane car park be approved to take place in Spring 2023 prior to start on site.
- (C) The Aelfgar Housing Scheme as set out in the report and permission to spend for the Aelfgar Housing Scheme be approved.
- (D) The Head of Housing and Partnerships, following consultation with the Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader, be authorised to take forward all actions and make amendments to the Scheme as necessary to implement any agreed recommendations.
- (E) Authority to enter into any legal agreements between Cannock Chase Council and the appointed development partner that were required to facilitate the delivery of the proposed Scheme be delegated to the Head of Housing and Partnerships in consultation with the Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader.



## Reasons for Decisions

In 2018 Cabinet approved a budget of £12.9m for the establishment of a Housing Investment Fund to support the delivery of new Council housing in the District. The Aelfgar Site was purchased from Staffordshire County Council in order to provide a site which together with the Council's land at Taylors Lane car park would provide for an additional 58 homes of which 29 would be for Council rent. Outline planning permission for up to 58 homes was granted in July 2021.

An application to Homes England for grant funding would ensure best value for the Council and demonstrate partnership working.

A direct award would be made to the selected development partner through the Constructing West Midlands framework to undertake a housing scheme which would include building the Council homes to the Future Homes Standard. Building to a higher standard than building regulations would achieve sustainable housing with high energy efficiency and a reduced carbon footprint.

In order to progress the scheme delegated authority was required to complete all necessary legal agreements.

### 85. UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 14.1 - 14.15).

#### Resolved:

That:

(A) The following be noted:

- (i) The award to the Council of £3,041,807 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25.
- (ii) The payment of £386,724 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding for the 2022-23 financial year, and indicative allocations of £733,448 for 2023-24, and £1,921,635 for 2024-25.

(B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 1 March 2023, be recommended to amend the current Capital Programme to accommodate the sum of £932,000 to ensure delivery of capital projects identified in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan.

(C) The establishment of a UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Board be agreed, along with a wider Partnership Group potentially involving the local MP.

(D) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation with the District and High Street Development Portfolio Leader, to take any associated decisions as required to ensure that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme was delivered on time and on budget, including, but not limited to:

- (i) Recruiting and appointing additional officer capacity to support the efficient and effective delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan for Cannock Chase, the cost of which would be contained within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation for management and administration costs.
- (ii) Finalising the terms of reference and membership of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Board and wider partnership group and

vary from time to time as necessary to meet the needs and objectives of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme.

- (iii) Producing and submitting any financial and output returns and monitoring and evaluation information as required to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- (iv) On behalf of the Council, developing and commencing the commissioning of external projects to be funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and commencing commissioning of Council-led projects to be funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- (v) Working with Head of Law & Administration to develop and produce any legal agreements required for external projects funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

To ensure that Cabinet was aware of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding award, and that Cabinet gave the appropriate authority to establish the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Partnership Board and ensure that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation could be utilised effectively.

## **86. Proposed Improvements to Barnard Way Play Area**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 15.1 - 15.7).

### **Resolved:**

That:

- (A) Approval be granted to proceed with the proposed improvements to the public open space at Barnard Way, Cannock, as set out in the report and the proposals attached at report Appendix 1.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 1 March 2023, be recommended to include in the Council's capital programme 2023-24 the sum of £88,000 from Cannock East ward allocated Community Infrastructure Levy funds, and £8,750 income from the Forest of Mercia.
- (C) Permission to spend £88,000 from the Cannock East Community Infrastructure Levy funds and £8,750 Forest of Mercia funding be granted, to deliver the Barnard Way Open Space Improvement project, as set out in the report.
- (D) Authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, in consultation with the Housing, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Leader and the Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader, to agree the project detail and take such actions as may be necessary to progress the above decisions within existing approved budgets.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

Significant housing development had taken place over the last five years or so in Cannock. Local ward members had requested that the Council utilise Community Infrastructure Levy ward funding identified from new developments to deliver an improved play area within the Cannock East ward.

Community Infrastructure Levy funding was currently available for this scheme from the ward contributions and all three Council ward member had agreed that Barnard

Way play area was seen as a priority for redevelopment. A total of £88,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy funds were required to deliver this project.

**87. Exclusion of the Public**

**Resolved:**

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, and 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 26 January 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 2**

**88. Leisure, Culture, and Heritage Services**

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 17.1 - 17.9).

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The Management Fee for 2023/24, as set out in report paragraph 3.1(a) be agreed, based upon a Fixed Cost Fee and a Variable Management Fee to be based upon a mid-case scenario of the net cost of operating facilities.
- (B) The Variable Fee was to be agreed as part of the Council's Budget process and was to be subject to the clauses contained in the Covid Relief Deed of Variation to the initial contract.
- (C) As a priority, the Council and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles engage in a formal process to review the relevance of the current Covid-19 Relief Agreement Deed of Variation and open book arrangements in the light of the unfolding consequences of the Cost-of-Living crisis, and report back to Cabinet with recommendations by June 2023.

**Reason for Decisions**

The Council was required to agree a Management Fee with Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles by 30 September 2022 in relation to the 2023-24 Management Fee. Letters of extension between the parties had been signed to extend the deadline for agreeing the Management Fee to 31 December 2022.

**89. Rugeley Indoor Market Hall**

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 18.1 - 18.9).

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The outcome of the recent public consultation related to the future of Rugeley Indoor Market be noted.
- (B) The taking of all necessary steps to secure the closure of Rugeley Indoor Market with immediate effect be approved, creating an annual budget saving of £67,000 per annum from 2024-25 onwards.

- (C) The decision to advertise the Rugeley Indoor Market Hall as a building to let for a variety of uses, subject to obtaining planning permission and Landlord's consent, be approved.
- (D) A revenue budget of £10,000 be approved to advertise the property and for obtaining Landlord's consent to vary the lease.
- (E) A further report detailing options for the site be brought back to Cabinet once the property had been market tested.
- (F) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity in consultation with the Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader to progress the recommendations outlined in the report.

### **Reason for Decisions**

Despite the best efforts of staff to encourage new business into the market, there continued to be very few traders wanting a stall within the market and correspondingly very little public footfall. Continuing to support the indoor market was not financially viable.

Consultation with the remaining stallholders and the general public had not provided any justifiable reasons to keep the market hall open as an indoor market.

The closure of Rugeley Indoor Market presented the Council with an opportunity to make a significant annual budget saving, although savings in 2023-24 would be offset against mothballing and redundancy costs.

The meeting closed at 7:20 p.m.

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**Leader**

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 16 February 2023 at 5:36 p.m.**

**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Lyons, O.	Leader of the Council ( <i>arrived at 5:42pm</i> )
Jones, B.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Community Safety & Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Sutherland, M.	District and High Street Development Portfolio Leader ( <i>arrived at 5:54pm</i> )
Johnson, J.P.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader ( <i>arrived at 5:55 pm</i> )
Jones, V.	Health, Wellbeing, and Community Engagement Portfolio Leader
Fitzgerald, A.A.	Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader
Hughes, R.J.	Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader

**90. Apologies**

None.

It was noted the Leader of the Council, District & High Street Development Portfolio Leader, and the Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader would be delayed arriving at the meeting.

The Deputy Leader chaired the meeting.

**91. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

No other Declarations of Interest were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

**92. General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023-26**

No Alternative Budget proposals were referred back to Cabinet from the Council meeting held on 15 February 2023, therefore this item was not considered.

**93. Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, and Annual Investment Strategy 2023-24**

Consideration was given to the Report of the S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive (Item 4.1 - 4.32).

*(The Leader arrived at the meeting during the presentation of this item.)*

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) Council, at its meeting to be held on 1 March 2023, be recommended to approve:
  - (i) The Prudential and Treasury Indicators,
  - (ii) The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement,
  - (iii) The Treasury Management Policy, and
  - (iv) The Annual Investment Strategy for 2023-24.
- (B) It be noted that indicators may change in accordance with the final recommendations from Cabinet to Council in relation to both the General Fund / Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budgets and Capital Programmes.

**Reasons for Decisions**

The Council was required to approve its treasury management, investment, and capital strategies to ensure that cash flow was adequately planned and that surplus monies were invested appropriately.

**94. Exclusion of the Public**

**Resolved:**

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 16 February 2023 at 5:36 p.m.**

**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 2**

**95. Boardwalk and Bridges**

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 6.1 - 6.7).

*(The District & High Street Development Portfolio Leader and Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader both arrived at the meeting during the debate on this item.)*

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The costs of replacing the footbridges at Anglesey Nature Reserve and Rawnsley Woods, and the likely costs of replacing the Rugeley Boardwalk, as set out in report paragraph 3.1, be noted.
- (B) It be noted that additional funding would be required to fund the works described in decision (A) above, as the required funding exceeded the existing approved amount in the Capital Programme of £110,000.
- (C) All works on Boardwalks and Bridges be deferred, pending a review of market conditions, inflation, and construction costs to be carried out by the end of 2023, with a report brought back to Cabinet for further consideration.
- (D) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity in consultation with the S151 Officer and Innovation & Resources Portfolio Leader to implement all actions necessary to progress the recommendations arising from the report.

**Reasons for Decisions**

The existing capital budget for replacement of the structures outlined in the report was not sufficient. Recent increases in construction and materials costs had had a major impact on costs, coupled with the replacement structure for Rugeley Boardwalk needing to be far more substantial than the original design.

It was therefore considered financially prudent to defer a decision on these works pending a review of market conditions, inflation, and construction costs to be carried out by the end of 2023.

The meeting closed at 5:58 p.m.

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**Leader**



### Forward Plan of Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet: March to April 2023

For Cannock Chase Council, a key decision is as an Executive decision that is likely to:

- Result in the Council incurring expenditure or making savings at or above a threshold of 0.5% of the gross turnover of the Council.
- Affect communities living or working in two or more Council Wards.

Representations in respect of any of matters detailed below should be sent in writing to the contact officer indicated alongside each item via email to [membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:membersservices@cannockchasedc.gov.uk)

**Copies of non-confidential items will be published on the Council's website 5 clear working days prior to the relevant meeting date.**

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representation Received
<b>March 2023 (02/03/23)</b>						
Recommendation from the Health, Wellbeing, and The Community Scrutiny held on 19/12/22 (Call-in LTA Report)	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader	02/03/23	No	No		N/A
Quarter 3 Performance Report 2022/23	Head of Governance & Corporate Services / Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader	02/03/23	No	No		N/A
Development of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub Stadium Site Phase 2 - Proposed Wheeled Activity Play Area - Phase 2 Revised (Part A)	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader	02/03/23	No	No		N/A
Support Staffordshire	Head of Housing and Partnerships / Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader	02/03/23	Yes	No		N/A

**Item No. 5.2**

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representation Received
Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 3	S151 Officer & Deputy Chief Executive / Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader	02/03/23	No	Yes (Appendices only)	Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
<b>March 2023 (30/03/23)</b>						
Priority Delivery Plans 2023/24	Head of Governance and Corporate Services / Leader of the Council	30/03/23	No	No		N/A
Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Head of Economic Prosperity / Health, Wellbeing, and Community Engagement Portfolio Leader	30/03/23	Yes	No		N/A
Four Year Capital Play Area Improvement Programme 2022-2026	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader and Environment and Climate Change Portfolio leader	30/03/23	Yes	No		N/A
Adoption of Contaminated Land Strategy 2023	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	30/03/23	No	No		N/A
Revocation of Air Quality Management Areas	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	30/03/23	Yes	No		N/A
Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games - Final Summary, Retrospective, and Legacy	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader	30/03/23	No	No		N/A

**Item No. 5.3**

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representation Received
Waste & Recycling Collection Contract Extension	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	30/03/23	Yes	Yes	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
Levelling Up Fund - Permission to Spend	Head of Economic Prosperity / District and High Street Development Portfolio Leader	30/03/23	Yes	Yes	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
<b>April 2023</b>						
Environmental / Climate Change Strategy	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	27/0423	Yes	No		N/A
Staffordshire Sustainability Board - Policy Update	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader	27/0423	No	No		N/A
Open Spaces Strategy	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles / Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader	27/0423	Yes	Yes	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Environment &amp; Healthy Lifestyles</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Joss Presland</b>
<b>Contact Number:</b>	<b>01543 464 202</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Housing, Heritage &amp; Leisure</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 02/03/23</b>

## **Cabinet**

**2 March 2023**

**Recommendation from the Health, Wellbeing, and The Community Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December 2022 (Call-In LTA Report)**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 That Cabinet considers the recommendations of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December 2022.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to consider the below recommendations agreed at the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December 2022, following the call-in of the decision relating to the Review of Tennis Provision - Cannock Chase Council, made on 10 November 2022.

- 2.2 Scrutiny Committee Recommendation:

That the Cabinet's original decision of 10 November 2002 (minutes no. 57) in respect of Review of Tennis Provision - Cannock Chase, be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration with the proposed amendment that, there was an agreement in principle for the need for a charging model with the provision of some form of possible concession scheme, and that this be referred back to Cabinet.

### **3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

#### **Key Issues**

- 3.1 Following the Cabinet resolution 10 November 2022 in regard to the Tennis Court Provision Report the decision was called-in to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee by Cllr Josh Newbury. The call-in request can be found at Appendix 2.

- 3.2 The relevant extract from the 10 November 2022 Cabinet minutes is attached at Appendix 3.
- 3.3 Decision (E), ‘The policy change from free to chargeable tennis provision, in accordance with the Lawn Tennis Association’s proposal, be approved (should the Council’s bid be successful)’, was the subject of the call-in.
- 3.4 The reason for the call-in were debated at length by members and they were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Portfolio Holder, Council Officers, and representatives from the Lawn Tennis Association and Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club, who were also present.
- 3.5 During the final stage of the meeting the original motion was amended, as per Item 2.2 above. The amended motion was seconded, voted upon and carried, before the meeting was closed.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.6 The original call-in motion was debated at the meeting on 19 December 2022 and during the meeting the motion was amended to that given above at Item 2.2. The amended motion was seconded, voted upon and carried, before the meeting was closed; minutes of the meeting are enclosed at Appendix 1.

#### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report supports the Council’s Corporate Priorities as follows:
- (i) Supporting **Priority 2, Health and Wellbeing**, and **Priority 3, The Community**. The availability of high-quality tennis courts within our Parks may help reach out and encourage more people to use the parks, helping them to improve their physical and mental health and well-being.
  - (ii) The offer of a family ticket will encourage the playing of tennis to a younger generation of players which is at the heart of the LTAs drive for the game.

#### **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 Following the Cabinet resolution 10 November 2022 in regard to the Tennis Court Provision Report the decision was called-in to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee by Cllr Josh Newbury. The call-in request can be found at Appendix 2.
- 5.2 Cabinet on 10 November 2022 had resolved the below, Items A - E:
- (A) The contents of the report be noted.
  - (B) Authority be delegated to the Parks and Open Spaces Manager to start the process of the bid application to the Lawn Tennis Association.
  - (C) The current arrangements between Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Tennis Club and the Council, in the provision of coaching, be noted.
  - (D) The Council’s use of the Lawn Tennis Association’s ClubSpark booking platform be approved, including the installation of digital gates, allowing access to players at specific times following an online booking (should the Council’s bid be successful).

- (E) The policy change from free to chargeable tennis provision, in accordance with the Lawn Tennis Association's proposal, be approved (should the Council's bid be successful).
- 5.3 Cllr Newbury's call-in related to one element of the above, Item E.
- 5.4 The relevant extract from the 10 November 2022 Cabinet minutes is attached at Appendix 3.
- 5.5 Decision (E), 'The policy change from free to chargeable tennis provision, in accordance with the Lawn Tennis Association's proposal, be approved (should the Council's bid be successful)', was the subject of the call-in.
- 5.6 The request for the call-in was submitted by Councillor Josh Newbury, and supported by Councillors, Jo Elson, John Preece, Andrea Muckley and Tony Johnson.
- 5.7 The reasons given for the call-in were:
- "Whilst we very much support the prospect of much-needed investment in our tennis courts, we believe that a £7 per hour booking fee cannot be described as "nominal" and that in light of the ongoing cost of living crisis, it could present a barrier to many residents and their families accessing local exercise facilities and learning the sport of tennis.
    - We believe that any proposal which may exclude some residents from accessing sports facilities which they can access currently is a backwards step which does not promote 'health in all policies.'
    - We note that Staffordshire County Council charges a rate of £5.70 per hour, the West Walsall Academy charges £6 per hour whilst Cannon Hill Park in Birmingham and the tennis facilities in the Walsall Borough are free of charge; both of the latter authorities use the LTA ClubSpark system.
  - We feel that more could be done to explore sources of funding to keep tennis courts free, as other local authorities have done.
    - If this is not possible, we believe that further work needs to be done on protecting access for our most vulnerable residents, for example by guaranteeing free access for leisure centre concession holders or offering discounts to certain groups of residents in financial hardship.
    - We also ask that consideration be made for whether tennis equipment could be lent to residents, as would be possible at our leisure centres.
  - We appreciate reference to free sessions, but we believe a clear decision needs to be taken on a minimum number of these sessions across all sites during a calendar year to ensure residents who cannot afford a booking fee are able to access courts.
    - This will be particularly important should courts be handed over to private operators, as is mooted in the cabinet report.
  - We would ask for more clarity around the statement regarding "frustrations" due to an inability to "guarantee access to courts."
    - The cabinet report also states that this LTA initiative and the introduction of a booking fee "may" encourage others to take up exercise.

- It is therefore confusing as the courts are clearly not underused at present, but we also wish to encourage more people to get active.
- If we are seeking greater take-up, the report concedes that the proposals only "may" work and we believe that they could, in fact, limit the amount of people who are able to use the facilities."

5.8 Councillor Newbury et al. originally proposed the following:

"We propose that this initiative be referred to full council so that a debate can be held on the specifics of the proposal outlined above, particularly:

- the policy change from free to chargeable service provision
- sources of funding to retain free provision, as is the case in neighbouring authorities
- discounts or exemptions for vulnerable residents and those in financial hardship
- setting a minimum number of free sessions held annually across all courts
- the objectives of this policy e.g., restricting access to paying residents or encouraging more residents to take up tennis."

5.9 The above was debated at length by members and they were given the opportunity to ask questions of the Portfolio Holder, Council Officers, and representatives from the Lawn Tennis Association and Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club, who were also present.

5.10 All members made it clear that they did not want to hamper the potential LTA grant funding to the Council. The LTA representative was also clear that the funding would not be granted without a reserve funding model being in place, to enable the courts to be kept at a high standard.

5.11 As the meeting progressed, the concept of operating a concession scheme for some users was raised. Officers agreed that a possible concession scheme could be looked at as part of the charging model, but additional scoping work would have to be carried out. Issues with the appropriateness of the existing IHL leisure concessions scheme and barriers to sharing data from it, were also discussed.

5.12 During the final stage of the meeting the original motion was amended, as per Item 2.2 above. The amended motion was seconded, voted upon and carried, before the meeting was closed.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

The introduction of a concession arrangement could have an impact upon the projected income from the chargeable tennis scheme, this would have to be offset against the projected savings. If Cabinet were to accept the recommendation of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, the potential reduction in income would be covered in the follow up report, where the possible concession scheme model/s would be reviewed.

**6.2 Legal**

The trust status of Cannock Park was not highlighted in the original report, for transparency, the status and its relevance to the scheme will be detailed in the follow up report, as per the above.

**6.3 Human Resources**

None

**6.4 Risk Management**

None

**6.5 Equality & Diversity**

None

**6.6 Climate Change**

None

<b>7 Appendices to the Report</b>
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Appendix 1 - Minutes of Scrutiny Committee 19.12.22

Appendix 2 - Call-in Request

Appendix 3 - Minutes of Cabinet Meeting 10.11.22

**Previous Consideration**

Cabinet 10 November 2022 - Review of Tennis Court Provision

**Background Papers**

None



**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Call-In Meeting of the**  
**Health, Wellbeing and The Community Scrutiny Committee**  
**Held on Monday 19 December at 6:00pm**  
**Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:**  
**Councillors**

Haden, P.K. (Chair)  
Newbury, J.A.A. (Vice-Chair)

Beach, A.	Kenny, B.
Buttery, M.S.	Kruskonjic, P.
Elson, J.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Frew, C.L.	Prestwood, J.
Jones, P.T.	Thompson, S.L.

**Proposer of Call-in:**

- Councillor J.A.A. Newbury

**Councillors Supporting the Call-in Request:**

- Councillor J.S. Elson (Committee Member)
- Councillor J.P.T.L. Preece (Committee Member)
- Councillor A.M. Muckley (Non-Committee Member)
- Councillor T.B. Johnson (Non-Committee Member)

**Invitees (from Cannock Chase District Council):**

- J. Presland, Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles
- T. Walsh, Parks and Open Spaces Manager
- Councillor A.A. Fitzgerald, Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader

**Invitees (Lawn Tennis Association)**

- S. Maidment, Lawn Tennis Association Parks Investment Delivery Team
- A. Hart, Lawn Tennis Association Parks Investment Delivery Team

**Invitee (Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club)**

- C. Perrin, Head Coach and Secretary, Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club

**24. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J.T. Bancroft.

**25. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations**

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

**26. Call-In Request: Review of Tennis Provision - Cannock Chase Council**

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 3.1 – 3.4 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

Councillor J.A.A. Newbury (Proposer) read out and proposed the Motion as set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report, which was duly seconded by Councillor J. Elson.

The supporters of the call-in then spoke in turn, outlining their reasons as to why the motion should be supported, which covered the following matters:

- The reduction in “free” activities and charging a fee could disadvantage certain people and families within the local community. There could also be an impact on the health and wellbeing of some residents who use sport to help them. Maximisation of free spaces for those in lower socio-economic groups should be considered.
- Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL) currently offered a concession scheme at the Chase Leisure Centre, however there was no offer for a concessionary scheme included in the Cabinet’s proposal for tennis provision.
- An assumption had been made that 85% of residents could afford £7 per hour booking fee and only 15% of spaces would be free, and residents were already being impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.
- There was concern that there was a lack of data available to show statistics such as the numbers using the tennis courts and the periods where they were busy.
- Concern expressed with the venue information and revenue forecasts as provided within the report. The forecast for venue 1 assumed that 21,000 court hours would be made available each week. This number seemed high, and it was unlikely that it would be hired every week for these hours.

The Chair then opened the matter up for debate by the Committee and asked that any questions for the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) and Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club be directed through the Parks and Open Spaces Manager. The following points/questions/comments to all those invited/Members were then raised by Members:

*Q. Fees were scrapped previously as there was no booking system and no one allocated to collect the fees. Would the fees now be paid through an allocated booking system.*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and advised that charging fees had previously been stopped. There were many challenges including staff not always

being around on the sites and no booking system being available which led to some users not always paying. Therefore, it was intended to introduce the charge of £7 which was the same as 15 years ago. This system of booking was called the Clubspark system.

*Q. Which tennis courts would charges be made for?*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and advised that this would apply to the tennis courts located in Heath Hayes Park, Hednesford Park, Ravenhill Park and Cannock Park.

*Q. Reference was made to the comparison figures from other local authorities contained within Appendix 5 of the document. Could you advise if any other local authorities have been checked for comparisons?*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and advised that Stafford Borough Council currently charged £6 per hour, however the fee would be increasing to £6.50 in the next financial year.

Following on, the Parks and Open Spaces Manager advised that fees could vary and could range between £5 to as much as £10 per hour so £7 was the midpoint and what was previously approved by the Council.

***Point/comments raised during debate:***

- The funding would provide for refurbishment of the current tennis courts which were in a poor state. All tennis courts would be significantly improved which would enable residents to access them for both their mental and physical wellbeing.

*Q. Could the funding be in jeopardy?*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and advised that the Council did not have sinking funds for the refurbishment of the tennis courts, and the Council had a financial responsibility to maintain them. She detailed the costs for refurbishment of each park with the total amounting to well over £148,000. She also commented on the use of £21,000 S106 monies which would be used to undertake works at Ravenhill Park.

*Q. Can you explain how the figure of £7 per hour was calculated, and is there any data to support the statistics?*

The Parks and Open Spaces Manager responded and advised that this was the same figure that was charged 15 years ago and used as a starting point. He commented that there was no data available, however information was available on potential court usage by using the LTAs Feasibility Toolkit.

The representative from the LTA added that a feasibility tool in terms of data was used and provided further in-depth detail based on post code/indices of multiple deprivation. This then calculates the potential court hours and penetration rate for each area. He indicated that fees were checked elsewhere and that the figures could be made financially sustainable, he also commented that there needed to be a long-term sustainability plan in place. The Council's £7 per hour figure in question, happened to be at a midpoint across the country and all other local authorities.

***Point/comment raised during the debate:***

- Various figures were being quoted for charging, however £5 per hour with more free sessions for residents could be an option.

*Q. Stafford Borough Council would be charging £6.50 per hour from the next financial year but would be operating a concession scheme for some residents. Could the Council offer a similar concession scheme?*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and advised that Stafford Borough Council would still charge a standard rate of £6.50 per hour. The representative from Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club added that for a household the cost would be £1 per week for 1 hour with an annual household pass.

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader added that for 4 people playing tennis, the cost would amount to £1.75 per person at a cost of £7 per hour. She commented that anti-social behaviour was an issue around the tennis courts, however with the current offer, residents could book in advance, courts would be well maintained, available to use and good value for money.

***Points/comments raised during the debate:***

- The cost of £1 per week sounded good, however the annual pass would be expensive for some households if paying upfront. Concern with comments around anti-social behaviour by youths, and an issue raised around the number of free spaces and what people would do when the nights were darker. The tennis courts should be there for everyone to enjoy.

*Q. Is the 15% free usage visible when online booking is used, and who is eligible?*

The parks and Open Spaces Manager responded and commented that checks were not made, and booking was on a first come first served basis with a passcode text to mobile phones.

***Points/comments raised during the debate:***

- Discussion around hidden membership, discounted membership, or free access to tennis courts. Proposal of mixed charging model.
- Clarification was given that booking a tennis court was for 1 hour, and not 45 minutes.

*Q. Was there any prior discussion around concessionary schemes. A concession was given to armed forces ex members this year, why should this differ?*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and advised that this had not been discussed to date as tennis has never been included in any concessionary schemes at Cannock Chase Council.

The Parks and Open spaces Manager added that Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Community Tennis Club offered free coaching sessions at Hednesford Park, and this had already been included in the scheme.

The Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles commented and explained that the concessionary scheme mentioned was run through IHL and the tennis courts were managed through the Council. This would not be easy to apply and there was no data available. The 15% free access was a minimum and seen as a concession. Once the Council has more data from the operation of the scheme it could look at introducing a more formal concession, if considered necessary. The whole point of the scheme was to increase participation nationally and locally, improve our tennis court provision for residents and make our courts sustainable, as it was considered there was a real need to improve grassroots tennis.

*Q. Free tennis provision could be booked by anyone including those that can pay the fee for a session; therefore, this should be targeted. This could also discourage residents from accessing the courts.*

The Parks and Open Spaces Manager through the LTA responded and commented that the free use could be restricted, and limits imposed on the session, however he was unsure how this would work with a family ticket given that it is not clear who was booking.

He advised that IHL used a system that could apply concessions, however the scheme for tennis provision would be administered by the Parks and Open Spaces team who were not experienced with booking systems as Leisure Services had never applied concessions to tennis before.

*Q. Could conversations be held with IHL and Stafford Borough Council regarding concession schemes.*

The Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader responded and indicated that discussions could be had with IHL, however consideration should be given as other local authorities were also pursuing the type of offer available to the Council, and there could be a risk that the opportunity could be lost if the Council did not apply straightaway. She suggested that the application be made and then some thought given to concession schemes later.

*Q. Is there a deadline for the grant application?*

The representative from the LTA responded and advised that whilst there was no firm deadline, funding was available on a first come first served basis and this was a once in a generation offer and was unlikely to be repeated.

(At this point there was a lengthy discussion around the basis of the Call-In. Members did not want to halt the bid application for funding. They discussed various proposed amendments around charging and concessions and whether the original motion put forward should be considered by Council or Cabinet).

Councillor Newbury proposed the following minor amendment to the original motion which was seconded by Councillor Buttery:

“That there is an agreement in principle for the need for a charging model with the provision of some form of possible concession scheme, and that this be referred back to Cabinet”.

The Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader, gave her right of reply to the debate, raising the following points:

- Indicated that there was a tight timescale and felt that the subject had been well debated.
- Advised that contact details of those who accessed the scheme could not be requested by Council officers and would have to be facilitated through IHL due to data protection.

Councillor Newbury (Proposer) gave his right of reply to the debate, raising the following points:

- Indicated that the debate had been well discussed, he felt that none of the Members there wanted to jeopardise the funding and hoped all those present were agreeable with the outcome.

The original motion with the proposed amendment which was moved by Councillor Newbury and seconded by Councillor Elson was then put to a vote.

**Resolved:**

That the Cabinet's original decision of 10 November 2002 (minutes no. 57) in respect of Review of Tennis Provision - Cannock Chase be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration with the proposed amendment that, there was an agreement in principle for the need for a charging model with the provision of some form of possible concession scheme, and that this be referred back to Cabinet

The meeting closed at 8:00 p.m.

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**Chair**



### **Request for Call-in of a Decision of the Cabinet (Executive)**

Date of Cabinet Meeting: **16/11/2022**

Minute Reference / Number: **57**

Subject: **Review of Tennis Provision – Cannock Chase Council**

**Decision to be called-in:** (please provide the wording of the decision you wish to call-in, as detailed in the relevant Cabinet minute):

***Resolved:***

That:

- (A) The contents of the report be noted.
- (B) Authority be delegated to the Parks and Open Spaces Manager to start the process of the bid application to the Lawn Tennis Association.
- (C) The current arrangements between Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Tennis Club and the Council, in the provision of coaching, be noted.
- (D) The Council's use of the Lawn Tennis Association's ClubSpark booking platform be approved, including the installation of digital gates, allowing access to players at specific times following an online booking (should the Council's bid be successful).
- (E) The policy change from free to chargeable tennis provision, in accordance with the Lawn Tennis Association's proposal, be approved (should the Council's bid be successful).

***Reasons for Decisions***

The Council's tennis courts needed significant investment. Partnering with the Lawn Tennis Association on their ClubSpark programme was a way of achieving that with a minimum of capital requirement from the Council, allowing capital funds to be spent elsewhere. Introducing the ClubSpark system and electronic gating would improve the Council's tennis provision and accessibility for residents across the District.

**Reason for Call-In** (please explain):

- Whilst we very much support the prospect of much-needed investment in our tennis courts, we believe that a £7 per hour booking fee cannot be described as "nominal" and that in light of the ongoing cost of living crisis, it could present a barrier to many residents and their families accessing local exercise facilities and learning the sport of tennis.

- We believe that any proposal which may exclude some residents from accessing sports facilities which they can access currently is a backwards step which does not promote 'health in all policies'.
- We note that Staffordshire County Council charges a rate of £5.70 per hour, the West Walsall Academy charges £6 per hour whilst Cannon Hill Park in Birmingham and the tennis facilities in the Walsall Borough are free of charge; both of the latter authorities use the LTA ClubSpark system.
- We feel that more could be done to explore sources of funding to keep tennis courts free, as other local authorities have done.
  - If this is not possible, we believe that further work needs to be done on protecting access for our most vulnerable residents, for example by guaranteeing free access for leisure centre concession holders or offering discounts to certain groups of residents in financial hardship.
  - We also ask that consideration be made for whether tennis equipment could be lent to residents, as would be possible at our leisure centres.
- We appreciate reference to free sessions, but we believe a clear decision needs to be taken on a minimum number of these sessions across all sites during a calendar year to ensure residents who cannot afford a booking fee are able to access courts.
  - This will be particularly important should courts be handed over to private operators, as is mooted in the cabinet report.
- We would ask for more clarity around the statement regarding "frustrations" due to an inability to "guarantee access to courts".
  - The cabinet report also states that this LTA initiative and the introduction of a booking fee "may" encourage others to take up exercise.
  - It is therefore confusing as the courts are clearly not underused at present, but we also wish to encourage more people to get active.
  - If we are seeking greater take-up, the report concedes that the proposals only "may" work and we believe that they could, in fact, limit the amount of people who are able to use the facilities.

### **What are you proposing?**

We propose that this initiative be referred to full council so that a debate can be held on the specifics of the proposal outlined above, particularly:

- the policy change from free to chargeable service provision
- sources of funding to retain free provision, as is the case in neighbouring authorities
- discounts or exemptions for vulnerable residents and those in financial hardship
- setting a minimum number of free sessions held annually across all courts
- the objectives of this policy e.g. restricting access to paying residents or encouraging more residents to take up tennis.



**Please indicate below who should be invited to the Scrutiny Committee meeting?**

<b>Councillor(s)</b>	<b>Officer(s)</b>	<b>Representative from organisations / public</b>
Andrea Muckley	Joss Presland	An LTA representative
Tony Johnson	Tom Walsh	
Adrienne Fitzgerald		

The request for call-in will only be valid if a total of 5 Members\* have supported it, and it is returned to the Managing Director by no later than the deadline date on the published Cabinet Minutes.

*\*2 of whom must be Members of the relevant Scrutiny Committee, and none of whom may be Cabinet member.*

**Request made and supported by:**

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Josh Newbury (Proposer)	Confirmed via email	23/11/2022
Jo Elson	Confirmed via email	23/11/2022
John Preece	Confirmed via email	23/11/2022
Andrea Muckley	Confirmed via email	23/11/2022
Tony Johnson	Confirmed via email	23/11/2022

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 10 November 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**

**In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Lyons, O.	Leader of the Council
Jones, B.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Community Safety & Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Sutherland, M.	District and High Street Development Portfolio Leader
Johnson, J.P.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Jones, V.	Health, Wellbeing, and Community Engagement Portfolio Leader
Fitzgerald, A.A.	Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader
Hughes, R.J.	Innovation and Resources Portfolio Leader

**50. Apologies**

None received.

**51. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members**

No other Declarations of Interest were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

**57. Review of Tennis Provision - Cannock Chase Council**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 8.1 - 8.7).

The Housing, Heritage, and Leisure Portfolio Leader advised that references in the report to 'Great Wryley and Cheslyn Hay Tennis Club' / 'Great Wyrley Community Tennis Club' should read 'Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Tennis Club'.

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) The contents of the report be noted.
- (B) Authority be delegated to the Parks and Open Spaces Manager to start the process of the bid application to the Lawn Tennis Association.

- (C) The current arrangements between Cheslyn Hay and Cannock Chase Tennis Club and the Council, in the provision of coaching, be noted.
- (D) The Council's use of the Lawn Tennis Association's ClubSpark booking platform be approved, including the installation of digital gates, allowing access to players at specific times following an online booking (should the Council's bid be successful).
- (E) The policy change from free to chargeable tennis provision, in accordance with the Lawn Tennis Association's proposal, be approved (should the Council's bid be successful).

**Reasons for Decisions**

The Council's tennis courts needed significant investment. Partnering with the Lawn Tennis Association on their ClubSpark programme was a way of achieving that with a minimum of capital requirement from the Council, allowing capital funds to be spent elsewhere. Introducing the ClubSpark system and electronic gating would improve the Council's tennis provision and accessibility for residents across the District.

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Governance &amp; Corporate Services</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Adrian Marklew</b>
<b>Contact Number:</b>	<b>01543 464598</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Innovation &amp; Resources</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 02/03/23</b>

**Cabinet**  
**2 March 2023**  
**Quarter 3 Performance Report 2022/23**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise Members on the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) and Council's performance at the end of the third quarter of 2022-23.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 To note the progress at the end of the third quarter relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities as detailed at Appendices 1a-1c and the performance information set out at Appendix 2.

**3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

**Key Issues**

- 3.1 The Priority Delivery Plans set out the key projects and actions for delivery in 2022/23. These are based on the Corporate Plan 2022-26 and the supporting four-year delivery plans.
- 3.2 Overall, 89% of the projects have been delivered or are on schedule to be completed. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in section 5 of the report and set out in detail in Appendices 1a to 1d.
- 3.3 With regard to the operational performance of the key services of the Council, 68% of targets have been met or exceeded. Further details can be found at 5.7 and in Appendix 2.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.4 The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's corporate priorities and operational services.

#### 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities





- 4.1 The indicators and actions contribute individually to the Council's priorities and objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2022-26.

#### 5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2022-26 was approved by Council on 27 April 2022, setting out the priorities and strategic objectives. The supporting four-year delivery plans were approved on 16 November 2022.
- 5.2 The Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) set out in Appendices 1a to 1d to this report are the annual documents that set out how the Council will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; these plans establish the actions and timetable for delivery that are the basis of the Council's performance reporting framework.
- 5.3 In addition to the PDPs, performance is also reported against the delivery of key operational services; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for these services are set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.4 Where applicable, we will also report on new or additional duties undertaken by the Council during the quarter, as part of this report.

#### Priority Delivery Plans

- 5.5 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the projects/actions set out in the PDPs is given in Appendices 1a-1d. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in the table below.

Delivery of Projects as at end of Quarter 3							
Corporate Plan Priority					Total Projects due as at Q3	N/A	Total Number of Projects
	Action completed	Work on Target	Work < 3 months behind schedule	Work > 3 months behind schedule		Work not yet due to be started	
<b>Economic Prosperity</b>	4	10	2	0	<b>16</b>	0	<b>16</b>
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>	6	14	1	0	<b>21</b>	1	<b>22</b>
<b>Community</b>	3	10	2	0	<b>15</b>	2	<b>17</b>
<b>Responsible Council</b>	4	3	2	0	<b>9</b>	3	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>67</b>

5.6 At the end of quarter 3, of the 61 actions due for delivery:

- 28% of have been completed,
- 61% are on target to be completed,
- 11% have slipped slightly.

#### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

5.7 A dashboard of key performance indicators for the Council's operational services is set out in Appendix 2. In summary:

- 9 indicators show performance above target (47%),
- 4 indicators show performance on target (21%), and
- 6 indicators show performance below target (32%).

The reasons for underperformance and the corrective action to be taken is set out in Appendix 2.

#### **New / Additional Duties**

5.8 There were no new or additional duties required of the Council during quarter 3 of 2022/23 though the Council has continued to deliver the new duties reported in quarter 2 i.e.:

- Supporting Ukrainian families
- Payment of Energy Rebates

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

### **6.2 Legal**

None

### **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.

## 6.5 Equality & Diversity

Equality and diversity matters are addressed in individual services areas and by undertaking equality impact assessments for projects and programmes of work where this is necessary and appropriate.

## 6.6 Climate Change

There are specific objectives within all of the priority areas which address the challenge of climate change.

# 7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1a: Economic Prosperity PDP

Appendix 1b: Health and Wellbeing PDP

Appendix 1c: Community PDP

Appendix 1d: Responsible Council PDP

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

## Previous Consideration

None

## Background Papers





Corporate Plan 2022-26 - Council 27 April 2022



4-Year Delivery Plans 2022-26 - Cabinet 15 September 2022

## Priority Delivery Plan for 2022-23



## PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY “To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives”




## Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3




				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	
4	10	2	0	0	16





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Attract investment to develop the District's economy</b>							
Deliver the Levelling Up Fund regeneration scheme for Cannock Town Centre, creating a new cultural hub and high-quality public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign off scheme design for main build i.e. leisure and culture hub</li> </ul>			X		RIBA Stage 2 design report has been produced for Leisure and Culture Hub, public realm and Northern Gateway, design output signed off by Project Delivery Team in December 2022. Design work is now progressing to RIBA Stage 3 (detailed design).	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit planning application</li> </ul>			X		Outline planning application expected to be submitted during quarter 4.	



Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work in partnership to secure investment in major projects to create confidence in our District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>McArthurGlen phase 2 - planning applications submitted</li> </ul>			X		Phase 2 planning application (reserve matters) has been submitted by McArthurGlen	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cannock Railway Station - transformational upgrade. Detailed business case and funding strategy.</li> </ul>					X	Design and engineering review completed by Network Rail on behalf of Council, West Midlands Rail and Staffordshire County Council. Awaiting final report and recommendations with next steps.
Identify a pipeline of future projects to support economic growth opportunities and the rejuvenation of our town centres across Rugeley, Hednesford, Cannock and the surrounding villages and maximise investment and funding into the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish strategic priorities for pipeline of projects</li> </ul>		X			As part of the work to develop the Council's UKSPF Investment Plan, a priority list of projects has been established and the Council's Economic Prosperity Strategy has been refreshed and was approved by Cabinet last August	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment Plan approved for UK Shared Prosperity Fund and implementation of projects</li> </ul>				X		Cannock Chase UKSPF Investment Plan was approved by Government on 5 December 2022

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Encourage entrepreneurship, promote apprenticeships, and support business</b>							
Seek to identify and promote employment sites for new and growing businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop proposal for business workspace in Levelling Up Fund project</li> </ul>				X	Proposal being developed as part of RIBA Stage 3 design work currently being taken forward. Current design allows for 1,300 sqm of managed workspace units to be created as part of the LUF project.	
Work with established Growth and Skills Hubs to streamline and simplify access to business support services, access to training and apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote availability of support from existing Growth and Skills Hubs to increase business referrals</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	As per the quarter 2 update, UKSPF will change District provision and support provider - where support is still available from LEPs we continue to promote via existing communication channels	
Continue to work with partners to secure additional funding to be able to continue business growth and start-up schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify schemes to be funded via UKSPF</li> </ul>		X	X	X	UKSPF Investment Plan has now been approved, officers will work with partners to support business growth and start up schemes identified in the Investment Plan	





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Attract modern, green, and skilled industries and create jobs</b>							
Work with our colleges and training providers to equip young people and all residents with skills they need to access employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivery of Apprenticeship and Training initiatives with local colleges; identifying opportunities to develop green skills and green jobs</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	As per the quarter 2 update, future provision is included within the UKSPF Investment Plan and will establish new partnership arrangements with Staffordshire University, South Staffordshire College - and local initiatives also planned to help raise aspirations of young people	
Work with partners to identify and support businesses to become more carbon efficient and identify opportunities to create green jobs in our District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify appropriate net zero schemes to be funded via UKSPF</li> </ul>		X	X	X	UKSPF Investment Plan includes provision of a Net Zero Pathfinder project to support local businesses to transition to net zero	
<b>Rejuvenate our town centres</b>							
Identify opportunities to improve public realm in our town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rugeley Boardwalk - replacement scheme</li> </ul>		X	X	X	Design work for replacement boardwalk now completed with report to be presented to Cabinet in Q4.	


Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work with town/parish councils, local businesses, and traders to support the development of initiatives to increase vibrancy of our town centres and increase footfall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular liaison meetings with town and parish councils to identify opportunities for joint working</li> </ul>		X	X	X	UKSPF Investment Plan includes a 'Thriving Communities' project which will make funding available to town and parish Councils to support and enhance their local communities. Officers to progress discussions with town and parish councils during Q4.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement local initiatives using UKSPF funding</li> </ul>			X	X	As above	
<b>Support the development of our visitor economy</b>							
Work with Destination Staffordshire to promote our key attractions, accommodation providers and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with DMP to develop a county-wide visitor economy strategy</li> </ul>	X	X			County-wide visitor economy strategy has been developed and approved by the DMP Board	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in joint marketing initiatives and development of themed campaigns</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	The Council has agreed to provide funding to the DMP for a further 12 months (2023-24 financial year). Report will be brought forward to Cabinet during 2023-24 to evaluate return on investment and set out options for future participation in the DMP.	

## Priority Delivery Plan for 2022-23



## PRIORITY 2 - HEALTH and WELLBEING “To encourage and support residents to lead healthy and independent lives”






## Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3

				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	
6	14	1	0	1	22

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
<b>Provide opportunities for residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles and recognise the importance of mental health and wellbeing</b>							
Work with Inspiring Health Lifestyles (IHL) leisure trust and other stakeholders to deliver campaigns/ programmes to promote the benefits of being active and living healthily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with IHL, partners, stakeholders and schools on increasing participation in sports and wellbeing activities and bid for funding where appropriate</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	<b>Museum</b> Half term workshops/Mission Christmas/Guided walks on Hednesford Hills/Young Careers sessions  <b>Wellbeing</b> School and community creative workshops - Environment and Sense	





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
						<p>of Place/Nature workshop with primary school/Eco arts workshop/Walks leader training/Walking football programme/Inclusive cycling/ Winter Warm Cosy Club/</p> <p>Developing outdoor women only cycling programme/ Started community mental health programme</p> <p><b>Leisure Centres</b></p> <p>Couch to 5k/Pumpkin fitness challenge/Launched Les Millis exercise programme/World Snooker qualifying/ Trampoline and dance competitions/Swimming teacher training/UEFA Coaching Course</p> <p><b>Theatre</b></p> <p>Engaged with 3 dance schools /Binworld rehearsals and performances / Engaged with community groups to host performances</p>	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
Promote use of the `Cannock Chase Can` online app to support people in leading healthy lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop evaluation tool - Cannock Chase Can portal</li> <li>• Develop new app features and functionality</li> <li>• Deliver aactivities within the community - bespoke projects</li> <li>• Organise Cannock Chase Can showcase event</li> <li>• Establish a Cannock Chase Can zone at Hednesford's annual festival</li> <li>• Embed Cannock Chase Can into the infrastructure of IHL (wellbeing offer)</li> <li>• Create a Cannock Chase Can Wellbeing Hub, using existing leisure and cultural venues</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	<p>Plan and develop showcase event</p> <p>Cabinet report on Cannock Chase Can, as a partnership between IHL and CCDC</p> <p>Investigate with partners how IHL facilities can be utilised to provide wider health and wellbeing offer through CCC</p> <p>Continue service delivery of community projects</p> <p>Develop virtual challenges to promote biking on Cannock Chase with Staffordshire Libraries as part of Legacy programme fro Commonwealth Games</p>	
Encourage residents to walk or cycle to and from work and school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and support green travel strategy</li> </ul>		X	X	X	Draft green travel strategy has been created and is being aligned with the County Council's	



Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners to create attractive and safe walking and cycling routes</li> </ul>			X	X	County Council working on the cycle way connections around the District	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with schools to promote walking and cycling to school</li> </ul>			X	X	Working on the Council's Pedal Power programme with local schools	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities to be identified as part of the planning application process</li> </ul>			X	X	Planning officers looking to actively encourage developers to incorporate improved cycling and walking considerations and routes in their development designs, prior to publication of the local plan	
<b>Embed health and wellbeing into all of our policies and everything that we do</b>							
Develop a Health and Wellbeing Strategy (HWB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research current best practice in HWB strategies</li> </ul>	X	X			Research undertaken by Council's Health Improvement Officer, that has been fed into the development of the HWB strategy.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with service managers on nature of strategy (incorporating</li> </ul>			X	X	Sessions with LGA have been arranged for January 2023 for both elected members and	



Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
	Health in all Policies (HiAP) principles)					officers, to assist in clarifying a corporate approach and framing the HWB Strategy	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Member workshop to inform structure and delivery of strategy</li> </ul>		X			Member workshop delivered last September	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present strategy to Cabinet for adoption</li> </ul>				X		
<b>Work with partners to address health inequalities across the District</b>							
Work with Staffordshire County Council to deliver the `Better Health Staffordshire` (BHS) Pilot Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing member and officer participation in BHS workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engagement session</li> <li>presentation of strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Elected members and CCDC & IHL officers have continued to attend the BHS workshops	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide input and assistance with this pilot project as requested by partners</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Officers and members are actively contributing to the pilot programme. Feedback on BHS Causal mapping	✓

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure opportunities for the Cannock Chase Can Initiative and app to contribute to BHS are maximized</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Development of the Cannock Chase Can programme and opportunities to contribute to BHS continue. Profile of Cannock Chase Can raised at workshops. Commitment by BHS team to consider how Cannock Chase Can might contribute to its outcome goals.	
<b>Support residents that need our help</b>							
Work with partners to encourage the take up of benefits by residents with low incomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bid for Funding (UKSPF) to appoint a Welfare Benefits Advisor</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Bid Successful	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review service level agreement with voluntary sector partners to increase the focus on encouraging the take up of benefits</li> </ul>			X	X	SLA has been reviewed and Q3 performance information received from Citizens Advice	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New webpage to be created dedicated to encouraging benefits take up and signposting to relevant organisations</li> </ul>			X		Complete - Cost of Living signposting webpage created	





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team to initiate cross service working to promote take up of benefits</li> </ul>			X	X	Countywide Cost of Living Officer Group set up to share best practice	✓
Work with Support Staffordshire and Staffordshire County Council to build on community spirit and volunteering / befriending advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of `Anchor` arrangements with the voluntary sector to support volunteering across the District</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Report prepared for LT (7 February) outlining work undertaken by Support Staffordshire. SLA ends 31 March.	✓
Work on fuel poverty with partners, such as Staffordshire Warmer Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bid for Funding (UKSPF) to procure / commission energy advice</li> </ul>			X	X	Bid successful	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of existing budgets to be undertaken to identify funding to support working with Staffordshire Warmer Homes and Beat the Cold, across the District</li> </ul>			X	X	Budget secured to commission Beat the Cold	★



Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Progress update	Symbol
Work with partners to safeguard the most vulnerable people within our District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver Partnership campaigns to raise awareness of key issues and support pathways for key issues affecting the District:</li> <li>• Yr 1 - Safety of Women at Night, Hate Crime, Domestic Abuse and Fraud</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	<p>Hate Crime/Community Cohesion campaign has been completed</p> <p>Safety of Women at Night campaign is ongoing throughout year as planned</p> <p>Fraud Campaign is drawing to a close</p> <p>Domestic abuse campaigns were operational during the World Cup and also scheduled around Valentine's Day</p>	
Provide funding to voluntary organisations to provide free independent, impartial, and confidential advice to our residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the current service level agreements with voluntary sector agencies</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	SLA and funding arrangements with Citizens Advice reviewed as part of the budget savings review	

## Priority Delivery Plan for 2022-23




## PRIORITY 3 - THE COMMUNITY “To ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home”


## Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3

				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	
3	10	2		2	17




Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Ensure our neighbourhoods are safe, clean, and tidy</b>							
Develop a co-ordinated response to anti-social behaviour (ASB) across partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresh corporate ASB policy</li> </ul>			X	X	Pan-Staffordshire review of Community Safety Partnerships' ASB policies due to begin in late January. This is being commissioned by the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.	
Engage with young people at risk of engaging in ASB through targeted diversionary activities across the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver annual programme of diversionary activities across the District</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Achieving Goalz and Dreams has been commissioned through Locality Deal Funding to deliver this initiative. Areas for engagement are determined based upon known	





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
						peaks/hotspots, with additional flexibility to respond to emerging themes and trends as required.	
<b>Maintain our local parks and green spaces</b>							
Undertake a review of all our play areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Part 2 of the Open Spaces Strategy review</li> </ul>				X		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a sustainable 4-year capital play area refurbishment programme</li> </ul>		X	X	X	Report going to Cabinet 30 March on the 4-year capital programme for play area improvements	✓
<b>Encourage residents to live a sustainable lifestyle</b>							
Work with partners and the local community to support appropriate tree planting schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with schools, internal and external partners etc to identify suitable sites for community planting schemes</li> </ul>		X	X	X	<p>Planting schemes have/are being undertaken as follows during Q3 and into Q4 (tree planting season):</p> <p>Byron Place - 38Lm hedgerow (190 native plants) plus 5 trees.</p> <p>Ravenhill Park - 150Lm hedge (1359 native plants).</p> <p>Hobby Way - 440 tree and 221 native shrub planting over 955m2 area.</p> <p>Hawks Green South - 77 trees via Forest of Mercia following a bequest.</p>	✓

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
						Joseph Dix Drive - 16 cherry trees. Ravenhill Park - 150Lm hedge (550 native plants)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out community planting at suitable identified sites</li> </ul>			X	X	Joseph Dix Drive and Byron Place involve community planting. Ravenhill Park hedge was a corporate event involving Amey (Highways)	
Undertake campaigns to raise awareness of the ways in which residents can reduce their impact on the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry out annual waste reduction/recycling/climate change campaigns</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	The Council has a new Waste & Engineering Services Manager and has appointed a new Waste, Recycling & Climate Change Officer who will start in March 2023. Ongoing campaigns will be reviewed, and new campaigns delivered in partnership with Staffordshire LA's, during 23/24	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with schools, other educational establishments and partners, to promote the environment and climate change</li> </ul>		X	X	X	Binworld successfully delivered to multiple schools across the District. Plan to revisit this project biennially.  The Small Change Big Difference project is also being delivered across multiple schools as a joint project, which started late 2022	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
						Appointment of new Waste, Recycling & Climate Change Officer will provide additional opportunities to support projects such as these	
Develop an Environmental Strategy and action plan to reduce our impact on the climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an environmental/climate change strategy</li> </ul>				X		
Work with partners to support the delivery of the zero-carbon pilot scheme in Rugeley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work with and support EQUANS, partners and other stakeholders on the delivery of the Zero Carbon Rugeley project throughout its lifecycle and various stages</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	<p>The Council's partnership with EQUANS has continued working on Zero Carbon Rugeley and a number of meetings and workshops have been attended by officers and Members. The project is planned to end in March 2023.</p> <p>The Council is currently working with partners and stakeholders on maximising the impact, learning and the community that has developed around it and attempting to evolve it into a stakeholder group or some form of Cannock Chase mini commission.</p>	



Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Improve the housing offer across the District</b>							
Increase housing choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver sufficient supply of homes to provide for housing choice and ensure all people are able to live in a decent home</li> </ul>		X			Policies on housing choice and a proposed uplift in the delivery of affordable housing have been included in the Regulation 19 Local Plan. Consultation will commence in the near future with a submission for examination anticipated later this year.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help meet local need for a wide variety of housing, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ affordable dwellings;</li> <li>○ and aspirational housing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		X			Affordable Housing Policies are set out within Reg19 Local Plan. Consultation has been delayed (see below).	
Work with other housing providers and landlords to ensure that their properties are safe and healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update policies and procedures, as legislation is updated, changes and/or is created in relation to health and safety around public and private sector housing</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	Work is progressing on the revised Housing Assistance Policy	





Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Ensure our communities are well designed, accessible, and inclusive environments</b>							
Adopt a new Local Plan for the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-submission version of the Local Plan (Regulation 19 Report) for Cabinet/ Council approval</li> </ul>		X			Approval to finalise documents and commence Reg 19 consultation obtained August/September 2022.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation on the report</li> </ul>			X		<p>Consultation delayed as key evidence documents still in preparation.</p> <p>Consultation on Levelling Up Bill and proposed changes to NPPF will require consideration.</p>	
<b>Support and build strong connections within our local communities</b>							
Work with partners to support community events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular meetings with town and parish councils</li> </ul>		X		X	Meetings will be set up during Q4 with Town and Parish Councils to identify opportunities for them to access UKSPF funding via the new Thriving Communities initiative.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify options for supporting community events</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	CCDC and IHL were actively involved in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, Queen's Batton Relay and Commonwealth Games community events. In addition, the District held its first Chase	


Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
						<p>Pride event in September 2022, supported by Council staff.</p> <p>Split Mask community drama group (based at Kingsmead school) took part in 5 'Binworld' environmental theatre performances at the Prince of Wales and Red Rose Theatres in December 2022.</p>	


### Priority Delivery Plan for 2022-23

#### PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL “To be a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council”




##### Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 3


				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>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Improve our customers’ access to services</b>							
Develop a new customer portal to deliver better access to services online	Procurement of new system		X			<p>The procurement of a new customer portal has been completed and the contract awarded.</p> <p>Work has commenced with the supplier on planning for implementation on the new software.</p>	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Enhance the use of technology and new ways of working</b>							
Update our digital technology strategy and plan future improvements	Review of digital strategy and development of action plan				X		
	Future improvements to be prioritised once a decision has been made regarding the shared services business case				X		
<b>Develop our workforce to ensure they are suitably skilled</b>							
Develop and deliver a workforce plan	Over-arching framework for workforce plan to be developed. Specific workstreams will be determined once a decision has been made regarding the shared services business case				X		
	Development and trial of hybrid working model		X			The hybrid working trial is in progress. The surveys of managers and employees to gauge progress is slightly behind schedule and will now take place during February 2023.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<b>Be a responsible Council that lives within its means and is accountable for its actions</b>							
Set a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce a draft MTFS for 2023-26 for Cabinet Briefing by end of September that aims to eliminate the use of reserves over the period. Final MTFS to Cabinet in January.</li> </ul>		X			<p>This has now been completed following a significant amount of work by the finance team and budget holders.</p> <p>While it was not possible to eliminate the use of reserves at Cannock, this was a result of a lower funding amount from central government rather than a lack of savings programmes.</p>	★
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the second stage of the business case for shared services. Further actions will depend on the decision taken by Council in December.</li> </ul>			X		<p>The business case has been completed.</p> <p>Both Councils have agreed to proceed with the wider sharing of services and the creation of a joint management team.</p> <p>Work is underway to plan for the implementation phase.</p>	★
<b>Make the best use of our assets</b>							
Undertake a corporate wide review of our assets and develop a new Asset Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asset and Property Strategy to be approved by Cabinet</li> </ul>	X				Asset Strategy was approved by Cabinet on last June	★

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake a strategic review of the Council's non-HRA land and property assets</li> </ul>		X	X	X	Terms of reference for Corporate Asset Management Group have been developed and agreed; the first meeting took place in October. The group has agreed an initial work programme and focus for first tranche of asset reviews.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the business case to create a new Civic Hub in Cannock town centre as part of the Levelling Up Fund scheme</li> </ul>		X	X	X	Strategic business case work is progressing. External support has been sourced from a neighbouring authority to help develop strategic case and develop financial modelling.  Discussions with Staffordshire County Council are progressing the co-location of services and potential partnering arrangements.  Initial RIBA 1 design work has been undertaken and will be refined during Q4.	
Identify opportunities for funding for green initiatives to improve energy efficiency of our buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an Energy Management Strategy</li> </ul>			X	X	Following issue of the AECOM Baseline Study (Costed Action Plan), the Energy Management Strategy will be developed in Q4 in consultation with the Climate Change Working Group and the Asset Management Group	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify `green` funding opportunities to support asset requirements</li> </ul>				X	<p>Salix funding opportunities have been identified. However, they have a short registration window, requiring organisations to have projects ready to go and match-fund.</p> <p>This work is unlikely to commence until the Energy Management Strategy is in place, asset reviews progress, and the long-term future of properties is agreed.</p> <p>It is likely to be 2023-24 before projects are developed.</p>	



**Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2022/23 - as at end of Quarter 3**

Symbol	Description	Number of KPIs
★	Performance exceeds target	9
✓	Performance on target	4
✗	Performance below target	6

**KPIs for Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity “To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives”**



Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
<b>Planning</b>							
Major Planning Applications determined within time	60%	50%	100%	100%		★	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	70%	87.4%	90.5%	93.8%		★	

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
<b>Building Control</b>							
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	90%	63%	96%	97%		★	
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	70%	87%	91%	94%		★	

### KPIs for Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing “To encourage and support residents to lead healthy and independent lives”

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
<b>Leisure</b>							
Number of leisure and wellbeing service users	Out-turn (2021/22) 779,191	197,282	185,297	200,331		✓	This figure includes visits to Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres, Cannock Park Golf Course, Fives Pavilion, Museum of Cannock Chase, Prince of Wales Theatre and Wellbeing activities.
Number of individuals engaged through Cannock Chase Can activities and initiatives, including the app	N/A	1,678	1,206	1,088			Q3 figure includes 727 registered app users and 361 attendees at live events

## KPIs for Priority 3 - The Community “To ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home”

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
<b>Waste Collection</b>							
% Household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting  <i>Breakdown:</i> <i>Recycling (dry)</i> <i>Composting (garden)</i>	50%	49%	47%	40%			The reduction in Q3's % is due to the very dry year that we had and has resulted in less composting. Q3 saw a good increase in dry recycling as the blue bag scheme became more embedded and wider used.
Missed bin collections (including assisted)	2021-22 out-turn 732	686	468 (est)	349			Additional blue bag numbers have increased the overall total during 2022/23 but this is now being reduced as residents have got used to the bags as is demonstrated in the comparison of Q1, Q2 and Q3 figures.
<b>Environmental Health</b>							
% of food businesses inspected which are broadly compliant (rating of 3 or better)	N/A	98%	96%	97%		N/A	
<b>Homelessness</b>							
% of homeless cases resolved through prevention assessed under prevention duty	N/A	90%	83%	71%			Dependant on cases coming forward.

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
% of homeless cases assessed under relief duty	N/A	10%	17%	29%			Dependant on cases coming forward
<b>Housing</b>							
Rent collected as proportion of rent due	100%	98.27%	99.15%	99.00%		✘	Cost of living crisis affecting some tenants' ability to pay rent, collection rate only dropped slightly, pro-active work of Money Management team will try to improve and meet target in Q4
Rent arrears - former tenants (FTA)	£500,000	£517,958	£531,94	£546,153		✘	As above, for former tenants, less inclined to pay former debts. Team will look to reduce in Q4.
Average re-let time for Voids	52	81.04	84.72	77.85		✘	Performance has improved in Q3, but is still below the target level. Whilst the Voids team are working to clear the backlog, sickness and vacancies are impacting on performance
% emergency repairs completed in time	100%	100%	100%	100%		✔	

## KPIs for Priority 4 - Responsible Council “To be a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council”

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
<b>Local Taxation and Benefits</b>							
Days taken to process new HB/CT Claims	20 days	15.2	14.5	15.9		★	
Days taken to process new HB/CT change of circumstances	9 days	7.5	5.7	5.2		★	
% of Council Tax collected annually	98% by year end	27.8%	54.1%	80.5%		✓	Reversion to the pre-pandemic collection levels is likely to take some time. Arrears have accrued during the past 3 years and the Revenues Team’s ability to deal with them has been impacted by the work done to pay covid relief grants as well as Council Tax Energy Rebate payments.
% National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected	98% by year end	24.0%	56.6%	81.0%		✓	At this time, collection rates are on a par with the 2019-20 pre-pandemic levels. This in part due to the increased levels of rate relief afforded to many business since the start of the pandemic.
<b>Land Charges Searches</b>							
Turnaround time for land charges searches (excluding personal searches) – average no. of working days	10 working days	14.85	24.15	31.85		✗	Delays in receiving responses from the county council continue to affect turnaround times for local searches

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Symbol	Comments
<b>Calls, Complaints and FOI requests</b>							
% of calls answered	94%	88.7%	85.1%	97.7%		★	
Average call wait time	2 min	2.36min	3.08min	1.18min		★	
Complaints received and upheld:							
<b>Total stage 1 complaints</b>	N/A	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>			
<i>Upheld in full</i>		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>			
<i>Upheld in part</i>		<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>			
<b>Total stage 2 complaints</b>	N/A	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>			
<i>Upheld in full</i>		<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>			
<i>Upheld in part</i>		<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>			
FOI requests within time i.e., 20 working days	85%	88%	91%	88%		★	
<b>Finance</b>							
Percentage of invoices paid within 30 Days							Following implementation of the new financial management system, this reporting requirement is still being developed and is planned to be available for the Q4 reporting period.

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Colin Donnelly</b>
<b>Telephone No:</b>	<b>01543 464 520</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Housing, Heritage &amp; Leisure Environment &amp; Climate Change</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 02/03/23</b>

**Cabinet**

**2 March 2023**

**Development of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub Stadium Site  
Phase 2 - Proposed Wheeled Activity Play Area - Phase 2 Revised (Part A)**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet approval to proceed with the implementation of the wheeled sports plaza and cycle arena project at Cannock Stadium sports hub site, as set out in the indicative development plans attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 To seek approval for permission to spend £264,100 of CIL allocated funding and £10,900 grant funds, secured from the Forest of Mercia.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Grant approval to proceed with the proposed Option 2 for Phase 2 (revised A) improvements (wheeled sports plaza and cycle arena provision) of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub, as set out in paragraph 5.25.
- 2.2 Recommend to Council to include £264,100 from existing CIL funds and £10,900 from Forest of Mercia into the Capital Programme for 2023 - 2024.
- 2.3 Grants permission to spend up to £275,000 to deliver the scheme proposals as set out in this report.
- 2.4 Authorises the procurement of, and entering into the necessary contracts with suppliers to enable the delivery of the proposed Phase 2 (revised A) works on site.

- 2.5 Delegates authority to the Environment and Healthy Lifestyles Head of Service to enter the required contractual arrangements, to agree the project details and to take such actions as may be necessary to progress the above recommendations within the approved budgets in consultation with the Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Holder.

### **3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

#### **Key Issues**

- 3.1 Councils have a major role in contributing to the promotion and delivery of increased participation in sport, recreation, and physical activity. The provision of first-class sports and recreation facilities that are sustainable and meet the needs of the community can assist in this role.
- 3.2 Phase 2 (revised A) of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub facility had been put on hold, while the Council considered its capital programme, priorities for the coming years and for this particular site in regard to linking it to the 2022 Commonwealth Games mountain biking event legacy. Appropriate funding has been identified that will contribute towards continuing the site's development, as a sports hub that in this instance concentrates on cycling and the wheeled sports provision. This report outlines the next stage in the capital project delivery and operation of the improvements proposed to complete Phase 2 (Revised A).
- 3.3 Following the highly successful delivery of the Commonwealth Games mountain biking event on Cannock Chase, the Council is looking to build on the events legacy. The Council is looking to deliver cycling and wheeled sports development projects in some of its play areas across the district, where appropriate to maintain that legacy. By doing this, it is hoped that increased opportunities will be available to residents getting involved with cycling and wheels sports.
- 3.4 Development of a fully off-street cycling training facility offers additional uses other than just in play. Including the possible use of the new facility by local schools and community associations into the concept has been welcomed by British Cycling. A dedicated off-street facility that has safety at its heart, that can simulate all the on-street safety issues without any real risk will offer a real improvement to the district's portfolio of activity provision.
- 3.5 The design and implementation of a floated concrete wheeled sports arena, will increase active participation levels in sports for residents. Increasing active leisure, thus improving Health and Well-being contributes to tackling social health issues such as the high level of childhood healthy weight issues seen across the district.
- 3.6 The Forest of Mercia have identified funding to the value of £10,900 to contribute to the Cannock Stadium project. These funds are via Central Government to tackle climate pollution by the planting of native trees and shrubs around the country.
- 3.7 Developing sports / recreation, including wheeled sports, will increase the active participation levels of youths and children within the Cannock Chase area.



- 3.8 It should be noted that given the level of information at this stage of the Phase 2 (revised A) project, the estimated costs provided must be viewed as budget estimates only. They will need to be subject to further scrutiny at each element of the design and tender submission stage and may be subject to value engineering to ensure the final expenditure is within the approved budget.
- 3.9 The creation of the Council's first wheeled sports plaza and cycling arena will encourage the take up of green travel across the district and assist with the Council's net carbon neutral ambition.
- 3.10 Proposals around the construction of a toilet block, changing and community rooms will come in a later report, during 2023. On the Phase 2b development of the site.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.11 The Council is keen to progress this proposed development and for it to be completed by 2024. To achieve this deadline, it will be necessary to include the estimated cost of the proposed scheme in the Council's Capital Programme for 2023-24 and to secure approval to spend the CIL funds to develop and deliver the scheme within the budget approved.

## **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report and the Phase 2 (Revised A) developments proposed for the Stadium site support the Council's two Corporate Priorities; Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing and Priority 3 - The Community:

### **Priority 2 - Health & Wellbeing**

- Work with partners to address health inequalities across the district
- Provide opportunities for residents to lead Healthy and active lifestyles and recognise the importance of mental health and wellbeing.
- Create opportunities for all our residents to lead healthy lifestyles - be it walking in our parks or cycling around the district
- Encourage residents to walk and cycle to and from work and school.

### **Priority 3 - The Community**

- Ensure our communities are well designed, accessible and are inclusive environments.

## **5 Report Detail**

### **Background**

- 5.1 Council requested Cabinet in May 2012 to remove the former Stadium site from the list of land available for housing development and develop it as a site for use as a public open space for sport and leisure purposes.

- 5.2 Cabinet, on 21 June 2012, welcomed this decision and on 19 July 2012 agreed to undertake public consultation on the development of the Stadium site as a community sport and recreation hub.
- 5.3 Cabinet, on 17 July 2014, identified a number of key and desirable deliverables for the site and approved a two-phased approach to deliver the Design Master Plan for the Stadium. Cabinet also agreed that the site would offer high quality community facilities, be an open community site which is not exclusively for one single club or activity and provide a wide range of facilities suitable for a range of age groups and activities.
- 5.4 On the 18 September 2014, Cabinet approved the capital investment and revenue expenditure to deliver Phase 1 of the community sport and recreation hub. At the same meeting, Cabinet requested that, at a later stage they would receive a further report on the capital and revenue costs associated with Phase 2.
- 5.5 As part of the improvement programme the Council has established a local Friends of the Stadium Group which is currently very active in the community. Working with the Friends Group, other partners, and organisations, including Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles and the Forest of Mercia CIC, the Council remains committed to develop and improve the community site further.

### **Phase 1**

- 5.6 Phase 1 saw a significant investment and impact upon the site.
- 5.7 The Phase 1 development has delivered a number of play, sport and recreation facilities as well as achieving a wide range of real visible improvements to this unique open space, including:
- a mini junior and toddler play area designed by local school children (March 2015)
  - a multi-use games area completed in March 2016
  - a junior adventure play area including a space net which, when installed, was the 1<sup>st</sup> of its kind in the country
  - community allotments (14) and community building
  - a BMX track completed by the contractor who constructed the BMX facility for the London 2012 Olympics
  - nearly 2,000 metres of lit (71 lights) tarmac footpaths for walking, cycling, and running
  - 10 items of Green Gym equipment
  - 6 CCTV cameras
  - new main access road, fencing and entrance gates
  - new Huntington Terrace Road entrance
  - car parking with overflow spaces
  - benches, bins and landscaping including the planting of over 4,000 plants, shrubs and trees.

- 5.8 All of the Phase 1 works were completed by early 2022 with capital investment totalling £1,772,960.

## Phase 2

- 5.9 Phase 2 of the community sports and recreation hub project started in the spring of 2022. Since then, the following improvements have been completed or are ongoing:

- Entrance Flower beds
- Eco arts trail
- Eco mulch to BMX track
- Design work for a community building, including toilet block and sports changing rooms.

The remainder of the phase 2 works were put on hold in Summer 2022. This was to enable the Council to review the site and see what additional improvements could be made, especially around its Commonwealth Games mountain biking event legacy, as the site seemed ideal.

- 5.10 A successful CIL application has enabled some additional Phase 2 works to take place, in line with the above, including the following:

- Improved wheeled sports / skate park arena
- Cycle training facility (arena)

- 5.11 Development of a fully off-street cycling training facility offers additional uses other than just in play, including to local schools and community associations, and have been welcomed by British Cycling. A dedicated off-street facility that has safety at its heart, that can simulate all the on-street safety issues, without any real risk to young people will offer a real improvement to the district's portfolio of activity provision.

- 5.12 The facility will be available for use by parents, schools and community groups to teach safe on-street riding, and it will give individuals, families and groups more confidence and hopefully enable them to access Cannock Chase easier.

- 5.13 The creation of the wheeled sports plaza and cycling facility also encourages the take up of green travel across the district and assists with the Council's net carbon neutral ambition. If successful, the Council will look to replicate this model in other areas across the district.

- 5.14 Other site improvements that were also identified as part of Phase 2 that Cabinet still wish to consider, in the development of a Phase 2 (b) plan include:

- **Toilet and changing facilities** – This proposal will include various options for providing toilet and changing accommodation on site. It will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet in 2023 and will include both capital and revenue implications.

## Overall Phase 2 Estimated Capital costs

- 5.15 It is important that the long-term financial obligations of the Council – be it capital or revenue are minimised and to this end the project costs estimated by the original consultants, Continuum Sport and Leisure Ltd in their feasibility study

have been reviewed by an external quantity surveyor, Townsend and Renaudon (T&R) in 2014. Then again, internally in 2022, via a desk top comparison exercise. The aim being to ensure that, where possible, the data available to Cabinet is as up to date as possible.

5.16 The estimated capital costs associated with the delivery and implementation of the facilities included in Phase 2 (original) are set out in the table below:

Description of Components	Phase 2	Capital Cost £ Continuum 2014	Capital Cost £ T&R 2020	Revised Estimates 2022	Complete
Temporary Cycle Parking for 48 cycles	✓	1,000	9,600	-	-
CCTV to cover main car park and community building	✓	5,000	5,000	10,000	-
Creation of a FA Standard full sized adult natural turf adult football pitch (x1) that can be divided into junior pitches (9v9), (7v7) and (5v5)	✓	Not Included	119,970	130,000	-
Drainage and attenuation to 3 current grass pitches	✓	61,000	Assumed 61,000	Assumed 80,000	-
Full size floodlit 3G AGP*	✓	550,000	775,000	850,000	-
Outdoor gym and agility equipment area	✓	40,000	60,200	-	Complete on phase 1
Wheeled sports / skate park facilities (ramps and jumps)	✓	110,000	175,000	185,000	-
Community building including toilets, kiosk, changing rooms, office, lounge and communal areas (757 sq m)*	✓	2,143,750	1,837,500	1,850,000	-
Potential Piling to building (Indicative)	✓	25,000	40,000	Assumed 50,000	-
Fencing to east of football tiers (to prevent ball roll)	✓	30,000	12,720	15,000	-
Barbeque/social/picnic areas	✓	25,000	15,000	-	-
Hard and soft landscaping	✓	50,000	35,000	40,000	-
Additional car parking	✓	20,000	74,400	75,000	-
Cycle arena and learn to ride				60,000	-
<b>Sub Total</b>		3,060,750	3,230,392	3,345,000	
Eco Arts Trail		Not Included	Included above	Included above	Complete

Description of Components	Phase 2	Capital Cost £ Continuum 2014	Capital Cost £ T&R 2020	Revised Estimates 2022	Complete
Additional Footpaths		Not Included	50,774	-	Included within new cycle arena
Flower Beds		Not Included	Included above	Included above	Complete
Eco Mulch to BMX Track		Not Included	70,000	70,000	Complete
<b>Sub Total (For all improvements) AGP + Pitch</b>		<b>3,060,750</b>	<b>3,351,166</b>	<b>3,415,000</b>	
Professional Fees (7.5%/4%)		229,556	134,047	Nil	
Contingency (10%/5%)		306,075	167,558	170,750	
Total (For all Improvements) AGP + Pitch		3,596,381	3,652,771	3,585,750	
Total with AGP only		3,595,381	3,532,801	3,455,750	
Total with Football Pitch only		3,046,381	2,877,771	2,605,750	
Total with Existing pitches only.		Not included	Not included	2,475,750	

5.17 Given the constraints of the site and current funding, it is not possible for Cabinet to undertake all the improvements included in the table above. Consequently, Cabinet will have to determine whether to develop a 3G Artificial Grass Pitch / an additional grass pitch / toilet building / community room).

5.18 Using the revised estimates of 2022, if Cabinet wish to deliver all the above improvements, including a 3G AGP, then the total capital cost is estimated to be in the region of £3,585,750.

Alternatively:

5.19 If Cabinet wish to deliver all the above improvements, excluding the 3G pitch and additional grass pitches, then the capital cost is estimated to be in the region of £2,475,750.

5.20 Currently there is insufficient capital to fully deliver these options.

## Phase 2 Estimated Annual Revenue Facility Costs

- 5.21 There will be additional revenue budget implications required for the maintenance of additional facilities at the site:
- Grass football pitches and the additional outdoor gym equipment - estimated in the region of £10,000 p.a.
  - 3G all-weather pitch, fencing and sinking fund for 10 years - estimated in the region of £20,000 p.a.
  - New building (Toilet block / Changing Rooms / Community Rooms) - estimated in the region of £30,000 to £90,000 p.a., dependant on chosen option. (Further report to follow)
- 5.22 The revenue costs do not include making a provision for the replacement of facilities in accordance with lifecycle periods, any such costs would need to be accounted for in future capital programmes, as required.

## Phase 2 revised funding

- 5.23 The funding which could potentially be allocated to the delivery of the Phase 2 (completed so far, and revised A) programme is set out below:

Source of Funding	Amount £
CIL Infrastructure funding	264,100
Section 106 Development Land West of Pye Green Road – Received 2017-18 (spent)	124,570
Forest of Mercia funding	10,900
<b>Sub Total of available capital</b>	<b>399,570</b>
Section 106 Development Land West of Pye Green Road – Estimated year of Receipt 2020/21	200,000
Estimated year of Receipt 2021/22	200,000
Estimated year of Receipt 2022/23	200,000
<b>Total of available and committed capital</b>	<b>999,570</b>

## Funding Strategy and Options

- 5.24 Currently there is insufficient capital to deliver all the proposed improvements included in Phase 2 or a Phase 2 (revised A) programme.
- 5.25 Consequently, in order to minimise the pressure on capital and revenue budgets the following options are suggested for consideration by Cabinet:

**Option 1** – Put on hold the remaining Phase 2 works and develop a funding strategy for the full delivery of this phase and receive a further report to Cabinet

for consideration. This option would not deliver any improvements, but it would allow time to explore and submit possible funding bids to potential partners such as Sport England and the Football Foundation and explore and identify any other capital funding opportunities. This option would also allow further time to investigate the capital costs and associated operating income for the proposed facilities; thereby limiting the financial risk to the Council.

**Option 2** – Continue Phase 2 (revised A) of the development utilising approved CIL funding. Delivering the two key further improvements that can be delivered within the current level of capital and revenue funding available. This would enable delivery of the cycle arena and the wheel sports / skate plaza. This option would also enable possible funding bids to be explored and submitted to partners such as Sport England and the Football Foundation. e.g. For pitch improvements.

Suggested Phase 2 (revised A) improvements include:

<b>Improvement</b>	<b>Estimated Amount £</b>
Skate Park Facility	175,000
Cycle arena	75,000
Eco Trail, Flower beds and Landscaping - (ongoing)	25,000
Eco Mulch to BMX banks - (complete)	70,000
Eco Mulch to allotment banks - (complete)	18,300
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>363,300</b>
Contingency 10%	36,270
<b>Total</b>	<b>399,570</b>

- 5.26 It should be noted that given the level of information at this stage in respect of the Phase 2 (revised) project, the estimated costs provided must be viewed as indicative only. They will need to be subject to further scrutiny at each element of the design and tender submission stage and may be subject to value engineering to ensure that the final expenditure is within the approved budget.
- 5.27 The amendments in the revised Phase 2A proposal for the site would mean that Phase 2 on completion, would have allowed an additional investment in the stadium site of another £400k.
- 5.28 Allowing the Phase 2 (revised) programme to go ahead at this stage would enable improvement works to progress on the site. While future plans were reviewed and costed including the possible provision of toilets, changing rooms and a community room on the site, as part of Phase 2b.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Financial

As identified in Table 5.16, the total budget is in excess of £2m and funds currently available are insufficient to fund the total list of potential improvements identified within this and previous reports. As such, should Cabinet seek to progress immediately with Phase 2, the list of improvements will need to be considered in line with affordability.

Whilst the total proposed allocation identified for Phase 2 of the project is £1m, it should be noted that only £399k has been sourced to date. The remaining £600k is subject to ongoing housing developments within the district and is therefore subject to a degree of risk depending on ongoing market conditions. The estimated dates of receipt are therefore subject to change.

- Option 1 identified within the report seeks to limit the risk to the Council by delaying Phase 2 delivery until further investigative works are undertaken to determine costs. This option therefore would have no immediate financial implications for the Council until a further decision on a way forward was made.
- Option 2 seeks to limit the level of risk to the Council by limiting the extent of Phase 2 expenditure to within the resources already secured. As such, should Option 2 be approved, there is funding available to cover the cost of the works up to a maximum of £399k. Of this total, £124k relates to a S106 receipt and is already allocated to Phase 2 delivery as part of the Capital Programme. The additional £275k which has yet to be formally allocated to the project is available for such use via CIL funds and Forest of Mercia Funding.

### 6.2 Legal

Any contracts relating to Phase 2 or Phase 2 (revised A) works will be let in accordance with the Council's Procurement Regulations and the Public Contract Regulations 2015. All contracts will need to be drafted to cover the obligations imposed on all parties involved in Phase 2 or Phase 2 (revised A), including provisions for agreed specifications for works and/or services. Timescales will need to consider the time needed for tender exercises and contract preparation work.

### 6.3 Human Resources

None

### 6.4 Risk Management

There is a risk that the project costs may increase. The project may be exposed to severe market fluctuations and increases in construction costs. This can be mitigated to some degree by re-engineering the project to ensure that the final expenditure is kept within the approved budget. There is a risk that planning approval may not be secured for some particular elements of the full Phase 2 project.



There is also a risk that the additional funding required to deliver some elements of the full Phase 2 cannot be secured.

#### **6.5 Equality & Diversity**

It is anticipated that the new development and facilities will have a positive impact on a range of equalities groups and that any negative impacts can be negated through the design process.

#### **6.6 Climate Change**

This project incorporates and features, tree planting, landscaping works, arts features, and consideration of active travel networks, along with encouraging green travel. These will lead to improvements to the natural environment, awareness of climate change factors and contributes towards the Councils climate change agenda.

### **7 Appendices to the Report**

Appendix 1: Masterplan Phase 2

Appendix 2: Image - Example of wheeled sport / skateboard plaza

Appendix 3: Example Cycle Arena

#### **Previous Consideration**

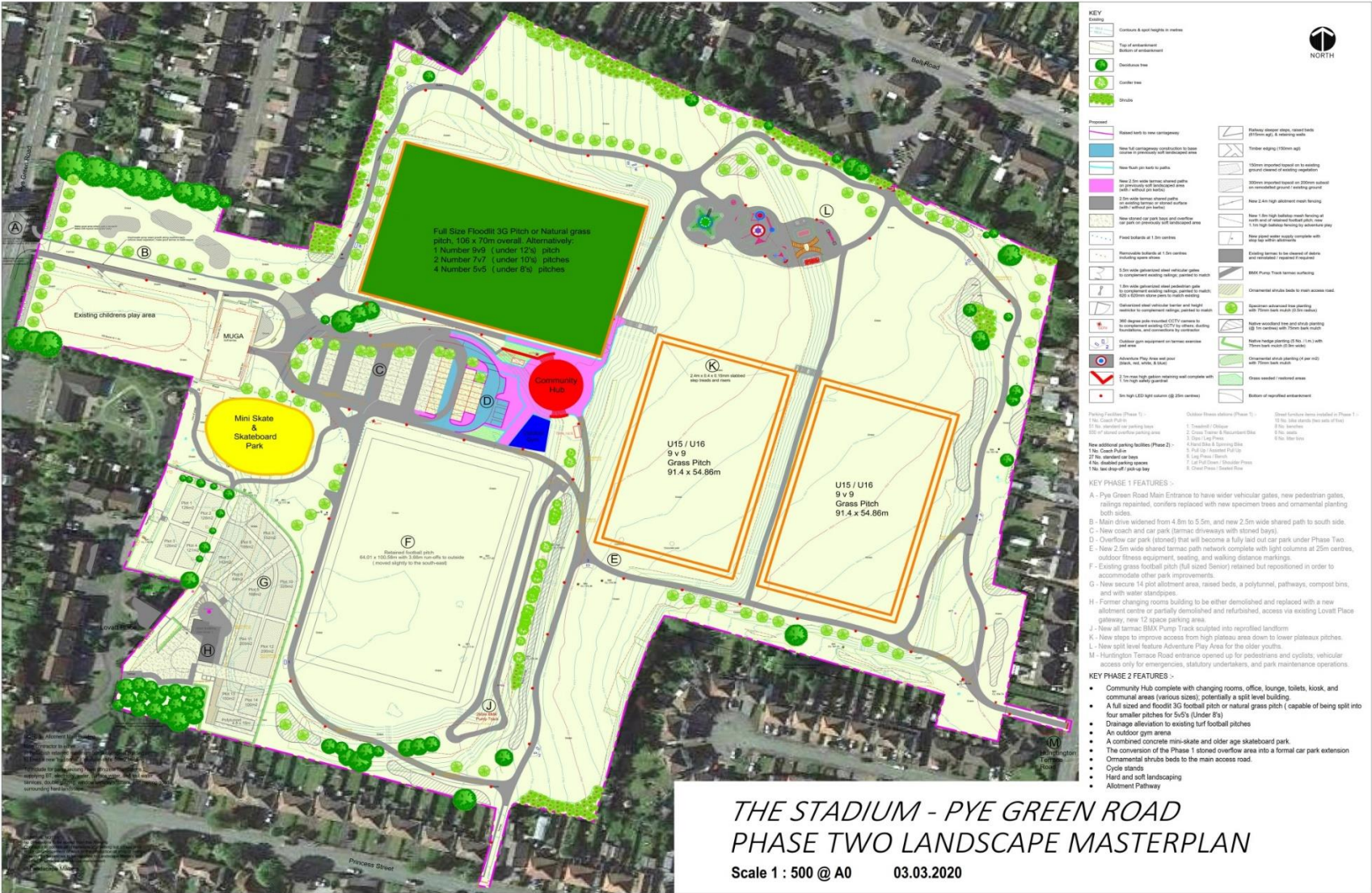
None.

#### **Background Papers**

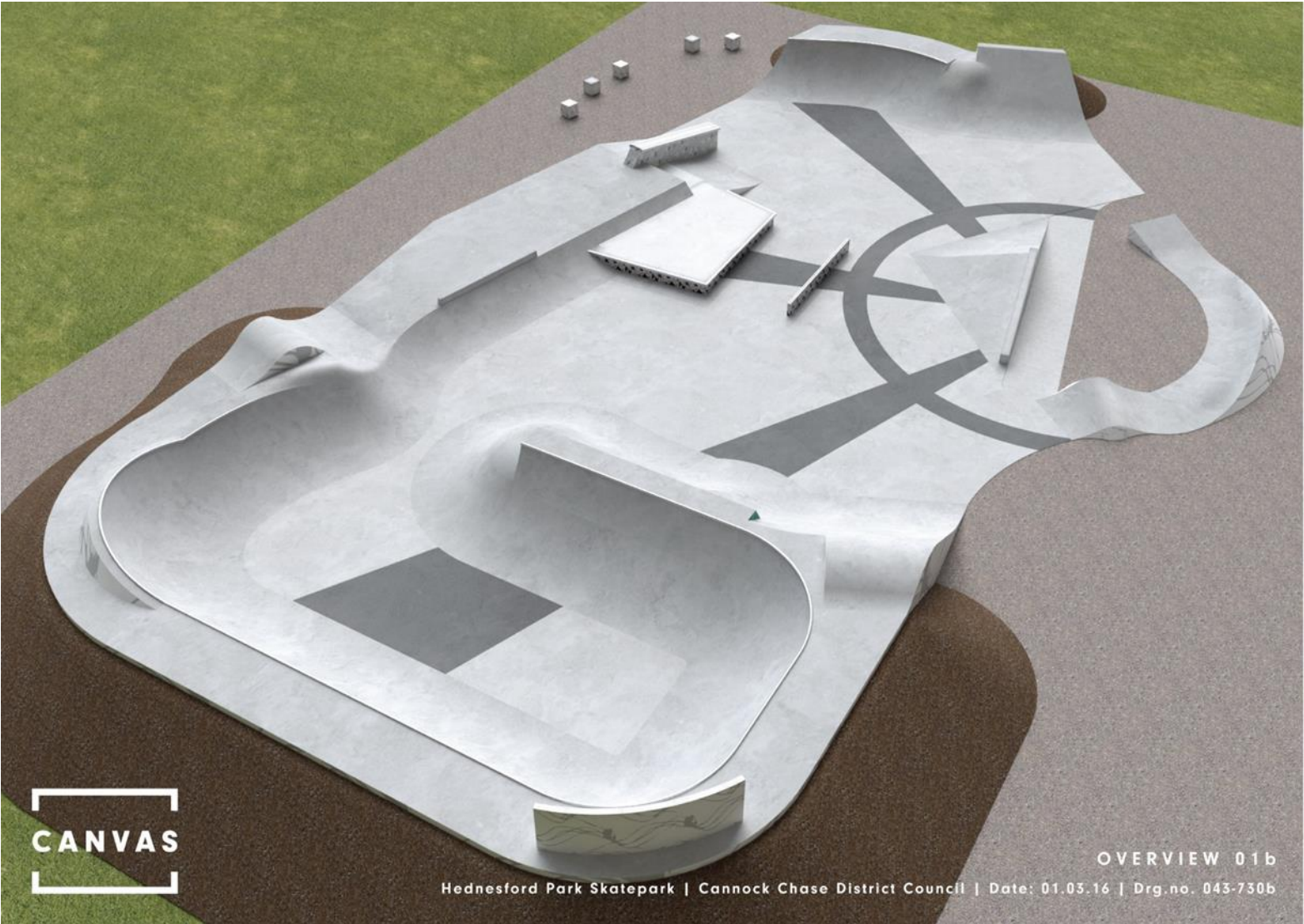
Capital and Revenue Costs for Phase 1 Development of a Community Sport and Recreation Hub – Stadium Site - Cabinet 18/09/2014

Capital and Revenue Costs for Phase 2 Development of a Community Sports and Recreation Hub - Stadium Site - Cabinet 18/03/22

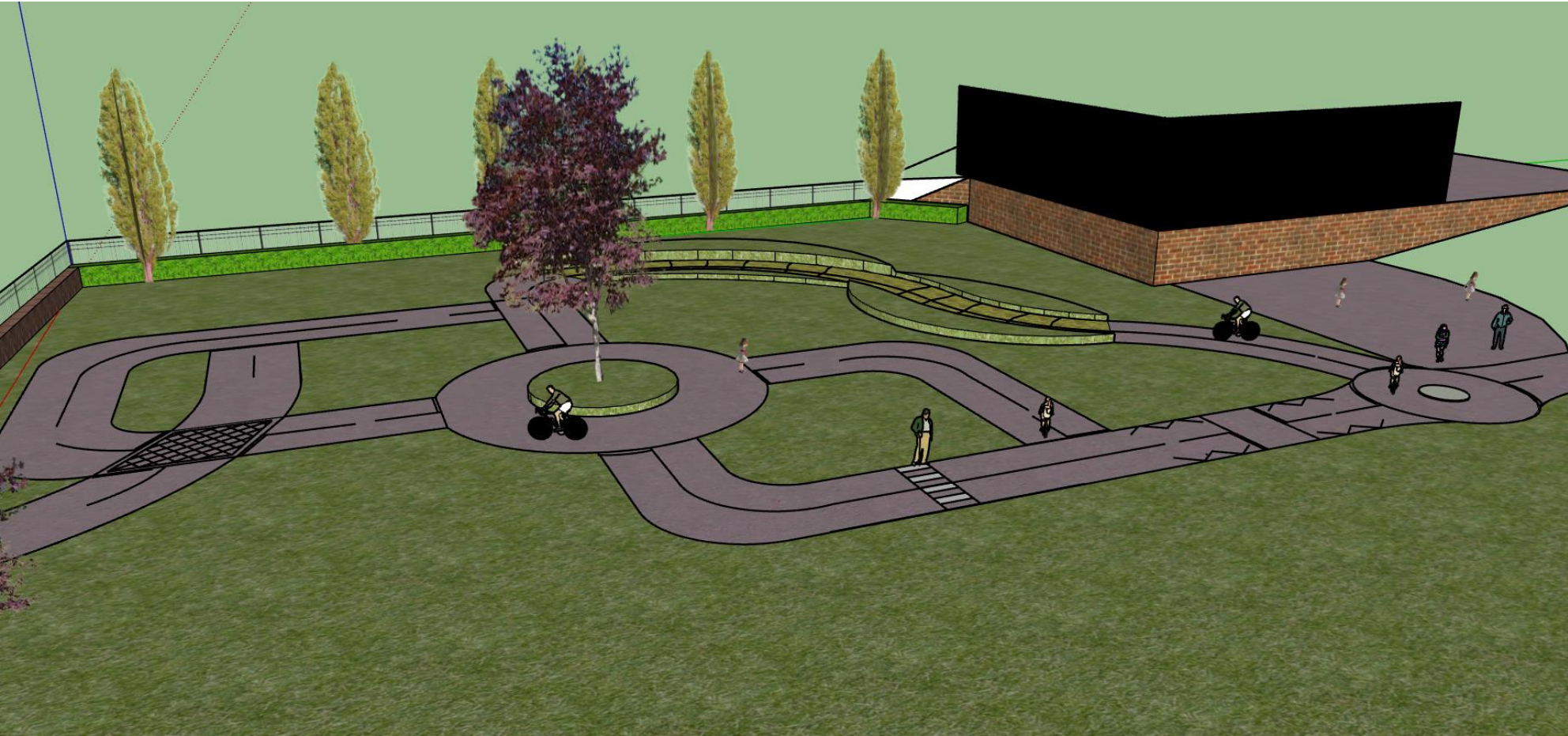
Masterplan Phase 2



Example Wheeled Sports / Skate Plaza



Example Cycle Arena (Learn to Ride Track)



<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Housing and Partnerships</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Nirmal Samrai</b>
<b>Contact Number:</b>	<b>01543 464 210</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Housing, Heritage, and Leisure</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 02/03/23</b>

**Cabinet  
2 March 2023  
Support Staffordshire**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with an update on the work undertaken by Support Staffordshire in assessing the strengths and challenges faced by the district's voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE) and identifying which VCSE organisations exist, their location and their capacity. Support Staffordshire have produced a report as requested, six months after the start of their funding
- 1.2 To seek approval to continue funding Support Staffordshire for a further 12 months.
- 1.3 To inform Cabinet of the projects Support Staffordshire are currently involved in across the District and consider providing project workers office space.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 To note the progress made by Support Staffordshire in identifying and developing anchor organisations.
- 2.2 To recommend that Cabinet approve a grant allocation of £9,454 to continue funding Support Staffordshire for a further 12 months from April 2023 to March 2024 - to deliver an additional 5 hours per week to undertake local work, over and above that undertaken through the contract Support Staffordshire have in place with Staffordshire County Council:
  - (i) to continue to identify and advise on options for anchor organisations in the District to signpost people to organisations that can support them, this will also include helping organisations to look for suitable premises.

- (ii) to work with and support organisations providing support to residents during the cost-of-living crisis.
- (iii) to work with voluntary groups to support Asylum Seekers / Refugees across the District.
- (iv) to promote the delivery of the UKSPF across the District and to support community groups to access funding.

### **3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

#### **Key Issues**

- 3.1 Support Staffordshire completed research between December 2021 and May 2022 to identify VCSE organisations across the district. This research looked to:
  - Identify and assess existing anchor arrangements, the strengths and challenges they face.
  - In areas without anchor organisations, identify the potential for existing organisations or partnerships to develop into anchor organisations, or the need for an anchor organisation to be established
  - Support groups to identify and respond to local issues
- 3.2 The research identified the VCSE organisations and physical assets by political wards initially. Following this it found it to be more feasible to formulate cluster group areas based on where people associate themselves to live.
- 3.3 The existing funding arrangements for Support Staffordshire expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.3 The report highlighted that certain cluster areas have anchor organisations or strong resources and potential for anchor organisations (Rugeley and Brereton, Hednesford, Heath Hayes and Norton Canes). Other areas require more support or do not have an organisation that could act as an anchor (Cannock). There are also areas that may not necessarily need an anchor organisation but still have communities that may require support (Cannock Chase Villages).
- 3.4 Support Staffordshire are well placed to develop and support groups and continue to identify and build their capacity with the potential to become anchor organisations.
- 3.5 Support Staffordshire also have existing initiatives or movements that their staff are involved in including: Places of Welcome, Compassionate Communities, CORE20Plus5 (targeted work within the District on identifying health inequalities and barriers to health care, Dementia friendly communities and Community help points. Support Staffordshire have key links with the voluntary sector and communities and are in a key role to promote and assist groups with funding applications for the UKSPF.

## 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:
- (i) **Priority 2: Health and Wellbeing** - support residents that need our help. Work with Support Staffordshire and Staffordshire County Council to build on community spirit and volunteering/befriending advocacy.
  - (ii) **Priority 3: The Community** - support and build strong connections within local communities

## 5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Support Staffordshire were allocated grant funding from December 2021 - March 2023 to allow them to continue to provide an enhanced support service, but with greater emphasis placed on advising on whether the District might benefit from the establishment of "anchor" arrangements.
- 5.2 The report from Support Staffordshire details their findings and shows just some of the variety of VCSE organisations there is across the district and the challenges they face. Since the initial report further groups have been identified and Support Staffordshire are working with them.
- 5.3 The report highlights that there are opportunities to identify and respond to local needs through community action, to develop resilience and create stronger supportive networks but that this takes time and resources and some organisations will require more support than others.
- 5.4 With the introduction of refugees from Ukraine and asylum seekers in the District it has become clearer that there is a lack of resources to provide support and anchor organisations could provide this service. This may be seen further as we begin to see the effects of the cost of living crisis on our residents.

## 6 Implications

### 6.1 Financial

The Council received grant funding during 2020/21 and 2021/22 from Staffordshire County Council to support Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Residents. This grant has been used in part from December 2021 to March 2023 towards Support Staffordshire funding at a cost of £11,150. The balance of the grant funding remaining is forecast to be £25,779.24 at 31 March 2023. The grant allocation of £9,454 as set out in paragraph 2.1 is proposed to be funded from the reserve leaving a forecast balance at the 31 March 2024 of £16,325.24.

### 6.2 Legal

The Council will need to enter into a grant agreement with Support Staffordshire to set out details of the work to be funded for April 2023 to March 2024.

**6.3 Human Resources**

None

**6.4 Risk Management**

None

**6.5 Equality & Diversity**

An equality impact assessment has not been undertaken on this report. If and when options for anchor arrangements are progressed this will need to be assessed. Given the nature of the support we are aiming to facilitate, any improvements to the system for vulnerable people are likely to have a particularly positive effect on older people and people with disabilities, but this will need to be properly assessed in due course.

**6.6 Climate Change**

None

<b>7 Appendices to the Report</b>
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Appendix 1: Support Staffordshire report

**Previous Consideration**

Voluntary Sector Community Support Cabinet, 11 November 2021

**Background Papers**

None



May 2022

## Cannock Chase District

Exploration of options for the  
establishment of "Anchor"  
arrangements across  
Cannock Chase District

Michelle Cliff



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## Introduction

This piece of engagement and community development work in partnership with Cannock Chase District Council is to assess the strengths and challenges faced by voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations (VCSE) and report on the recommendations for further support needs to:

- a) Identify VCSE organisations that take on a lead role in their geographical area
- b) Support the work of organisations that have a willingness and desire to actively engage with their communities
- c) To continue successes from the start and during the pandemic – especially aimed at supporting isolated and vulnerable residents
- d) Support VCSE organisations to work together and build capacity

The report outlines the analysis of research undertaken between December 2021 and May 2022 to identify anchor organisation arrangements in the Cannock Chase District.

The preliminary research was carried out with a mixture of desktop and field research to engage with existing organisations, to review what exists, or doesn't exist, and what can be strengthened to help to support people and their needs. Over the period from January to May 2022 time was focussed to contact individuals of VCSE organisations who best fit the criteria based on the requirements above. The report identifies the outcomes of the research, but does not account for any missed opportunities as it is largely based on the knowledge of the author.

## Local resilience – connecting communities

### Why is this important?

The Covid-19 pandemic saw a higher level of need for community support, and through a localised voluntary led response, a coordinated effort helped to make sure that those most vulnerable or shielding were able to access essential provisions, such as food and prescriptions. In addition, individuals and families were supported and checked to be safe and well through befriending calls. In some areas, new neighbourhood covid support groups sprung to action, whereas in other areas existing organisations were able to respond to the request for help with a coordinated approach. With no specific VCSE organisation with the capacity to take on an identified role as district wide 'anchor' organisation, Staffordshire County Council and Cannock Chase Council staff responded to incoming requests for help and passed enquiries to local community groups to carry out actions.

As neighbourhoods started to recover after the pandemic some covid support groups disappeared, and others remain in a different format. Organisations that existed before the pandemic still have a role to play in their communities. It is therefore useful to identify where and which local community groups and organisations actively engage with their communities, and those that want to develop further to build capacity, pathways and networks to strengthen their responsiveness to local issues – similar to those experienced at the start of the pandemic.

The report is in three sections to:

- a) **Identify and assess existing “anchor”** arrangements that exist across the District and understand how they operate - **their strengths and challenges** they face.
- b) In areas without established anchor organisations, **identify the potential for existing organisations or partnerships to grow and step up into the role of an anchor organisation** for their locality, or the need and potential for an anchor organisation to be established.
- c) Support groups **to identify and respond to local issues**, in particular to be able to prepare for situations which might require a rapid response.

## Identify and assess existing “anchor” arrangements

Firstly, it is useful to think about what the term ‘anchor organisation’ might mean.

In this context an anchor organisation could be described as:

- one that is well rooted within the community and understands the needs of the community
- one that signposts people to organisations that can best support them
- one that works well and in partnership with other organisations
- one that can respond to challenges and meet local needs

There already exists a large number of established, small to medium sized, local VCSE organisations across the Cannock Chase district serving their local communities. For the purposes of the research they were initially identified into political wards, at a hyperlocal level to assess where they might most understand their local needs and to provide solutions to solve those needs.

In most wards there is the presence of physical ‘assets’ or community buildings that may represent as a hub for the community. This may include a community centre, a church or a library for instance. There are some VCSE organisations that act as a ‘voice’ of the local community, as well as taking on small scale projects to improve areas, such as residents associations or action groups. These organisations will be pinpointed on a map as an appendix.

There are also hundreds of community groups and organisations normally operating within the asset community buildings which provide a ‘shared’ activity or a community of interest to enable people to connect with others and seek low level support.

### Hagley and Western Springs Wards

Considering what works well already, it is clear that the arrangement in Rugeley operated by Rugeley Community Church (Free Church and registered charity), is a strong anchor organisation and the best example in the district. The community church took on the former Staffordshire County Council Youth Centre a few years ago to be the hub of the community. The centre hosts a Trussell Trust Foodbank, a

day centre for adults with disabilities, a place for a wide range of physical activity sessions, a meeting space, a community café, a bereavement hub, and 'place of welcome'<sup>1</sup> There is a good network with other key partner organisations and it is identified as a community help point for the Rugeley area by Staffordshire County Council for active signposting. A local guide / directory is produced to identify what's on where, and this lists many of the local activities and support groups in and around the town.

At the start of the pandemic Rugeley Community church trustees made a difficult decision to save costs, to close the community centre and furlough the staff (apart from the Foodbank). However, when the reassurance of government funding came they were able to step in to support the local effort, along with a number of other local organisations, including a new good neighbour scheme to take referrals for practical help for low level requirements such as shopping and befriending.

The challenge faced by this organisation has been the time it has taken to become a thriving community hub. It has taken about 5 years of which 2 were affected by the pandemic, with activities now happening most of the time. The challenge still remains to encourage people to know what the community centre offers in terms of local support and signposting, and they are currently working on an awareness raising campaign.

In the other parts of the Hagley and Western Springs wards there are a range of other community assets – churches, libraries, theatre, community buildings and sports clubs which similarly offer Places of Welcome, but also additional services such as mental health support through counselling services, debt advice, luncheon clubs, free surplus food provision and space for community groups. The majority of these are well linked in with the Rugeley Community Church network.

In addition a new residents association is in early stages of development in the Springfields Estate, being supported by the District Council Neighbourhood Officer.

### **Brereton and Ravenhill Ward**

Nearby in Brereton and Ravenhill there is a closely linked network of community action which has been boosted by the Brereton Million Big Local lottery project. This is a partnership led by local volunteers with funding to spend £1 Million over 10 years to improve the local area dependent upon consultation with the community and action plans. An employed staff member coordinates most of the day to day work and some of the achievements include a community hub, improvements in the park, planters, bus shelters and much more. Brereton Million started the pilot project called Brereton Can as a health

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<sup>1</sup> Places of Welcome are led in Staffordshire by Transforming Communities Together. To be identified as a Place of Welcome it should have basic local knowledge, to be able to signpost people to other services. Specifically, the organisation signs up to the following five principles:

Place: An accessible and hospitable building, open at the same time every week.

People: Open to everyone regardless of their circumstances or situation, and staffed by volunteers.

Presence: A place where people actively listen to one another.

Provision: Offering free refreshments (at least a cup of tea and a biscuit) and basic local information.

Participation: Recognises that every person coming to a Place of Welcome will bring talents, experiences and skills that they might be willing to share locally.

improvement initiative before the launch of Cannock Chase Can. The area has also recently been awarded Compassionate Community status for work with bereavement, loneliness and isolation.

During the pandemic the needs of residents in Brereton were met by an army of coordinated volunteers offering a wide range of support. One of the strengths that came from this was improved engagement with local people as they valued the support offered by the group. The organisations in the area work well together and coordinate projects with the library and the churches. The community library run by the Rotary club volunteers, and St Michaels Church both host Places of Welcome, but they are currently struggling to bring back numbers of people to the sessions. St Michaels is supporting both low income families and elderly people with initiatives such as pre-loved school uniform, lunch bunch and a community food point.

It was also reported that since the pandemic there has been an improved relationship established with organisations in Rugeley, as there have been opportunities to work together rather than setting up new services in Brereton.

### **Etching Hill and the Heath Ward**

In Etching Hill and the Heath ward, skirting around Rugeley, the village halls and churches in Slitting Mill and Etching Hill are the physical assets hosting space for groups such as Women's Institutes, Gardening Guilds and various interest groups taking place where people meet. Many of these long established groups face similar difficulties in attracting a younger membership and struggle to find people to take on roles on the committee. Whilst beneficial and supportive to members they often offer low level help and bereavement support through friendship. It was suggested that people in this ward feel part of Rugeley and would tend to find specific support from organisations in the town or wider district, rather than within the ward.

Brindley Heath Parish Council covers a very large rural area of the ward. Properties are dispersed and there are no community buildings to meet in. It may involve a discussion with parish councillors if it was felt there was a need for an anchor organisation, and if it is deemed a priority in the future.

### **Hednesford North, Hednesford Green Heath and Hednesford South Wards**

These wards have many physical assets operated by different church bodies, including Methodist, Church of England, Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal and Salvation Army. In addition other community assets are the museum, the park, community centres and community cafés. There are currently no Places of Welcome in these wards, but there have been discussions with the Salvation Army and the Lighthouse Café to apply. The Lighthouse Café is a new venture by the community group, Chase Lighthouse who have leased premises in Hednesford town centre to operate a supportive café and community fridge.

There are good examples of coordinated community engagement, activities and networks through Hednesford in Partnership, Hednesford Lions and the Town Council. Whilst the town council are interested in increasing community involvement, the key focus at present is footfall in the town centre, and economic regeneration. A new Community Officer has recently been recruited, and this role will be supporting local networks for community action.

There are also many beneficial community groups addressing loneliness and isolation operating in the area, one particular example is Cannock Chase Shed, currently based at the museum. The challenge they face is the difficulty in seeking cost effective industrial space or a unit where they can operate more effectively.

The Salvation Army Church in Hednesford would most likely be identified as the strongest anchor organisation for this area overall with their existing arrangements as a community hub with a 'pay as you can' café, food bank, IT and job club support, debt advice and dementia support. The Salvation Army was able to coordinate action towards the local response during the pandemic, and improved a partnership with the Cannock and District Foodbank to distribute food supplies. This church is also interested in further developing scope as a local hub for a wider range of community activity and active support.

### **Rawnsley Ward**

In the ward of Rawnsley, the long established residents association for Hazel Slade and Rawnsley has been less active and lacked motivation for meaningful projects for the local community. Whilst they represent local resident's views of planning proposals on the Chase they may be able to offer low level activity and support in the future if they can plan how to support the elderly residents. The pub is the only asset in the village and better use of this could be an option.

The villages of Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw have a range of community assets such as village halls and churches, but small congregations, and lower numbers at groups are the challenges. The village halls are less identified as community hubs, and there are no Places of Welcome in the area. In Prospect Village the village hall seems fairly inactive, and the housing association working in the area may better understand local needs.

### **Heath Hayes and Hawks Green Ward**

In the Heath Hayes and Hawks Green area there is a fairly strong close knit network of VCSE organisations supporting the local community consisting of the community run library, the churches, the community centres and a senior citizen welfare club (charity). During the pandemic an informal group of volunteers came together to operate good neighbour activities offering practical support such as shopping, befriending and prescription collecting. Group leaders have no desire to formalise as a good neighbour scheme organisation, because of work and family commitments. However, a very successful weekly walking for health group developed to connect people through short walks to encourage mobility and activity, friendship, bereavement support and socialising. This group is a good example of low level support offering befriending and companionship with links to other useful assets such as the library, Community Food store and Hayes Green Community Centre

The library is a Place of Welcome and as a local signposting centre has good central connections with key knowledge holders involved in volunteering there. The community centre in Hayes Green offers a wide range of activities such as the Cherished Café, a grandparents group, and a luncheon club. Many of the organisations in the wards are working towards recognition as a dementia friendly community.

An initiative that came out of the impact of the pandemic, and subsequent cost of living crisis has been a

community food table. The food table takes surplus food from supermarkets which would normally go to landfill, but can be distributed free for residents to take. Following some early issues with people arriving from Walsall and filling lots of carrier bags they have now developed the scheme into a community food store. The food store will be the first in the district and it differs from a foodbank because it won't give handouts of food. Instead there will be a low cost to join as a member, then members can purchase a bag of food from the shelves once a week to feed themselves and their family. The food table started under the principles of a good neighbour scheme and there is potential to offer holistic support to families who are facing hardship and further support.

### **Norton Canes Ward**

Norton Canes ward and Parish seems to have a relatively strong network and as it identifies as a village it has the feeling of a close knit community which is self-sufficient and able to support local people. The Parish Council produce a local newsletter and use this as a method of engagement to reach people to inform them what is happening in the village. The general challenge in the area is the age of volunteers and volunteer effort in the editorial and delivery of the newsletters. Parish Councillors are engaged in helping Norton Canes to be identified as a dementia friendly community which indicates supporting people living with dementia.

The community centre run as a charity is thriving, with a wide range of activities taking place including senior groups, and youth activity. Through councillor involvement, the community centre hosts a satellite food table from Heath Hayes, and following the pilot food store, may consider the same in the next 12 months.

A charity in Norton Canes runs its own community transport scheme for seniors, operated by volunteers, and this is the only example in the district. However the challenge is the basic level of knowledge of safeguarding and policies, as well as the age and condition of the minibus and access to sources of funding.

One of the key groups for seniors support is the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) Darby and Joan Club. This is a long established group offering social support and friendship, they have basic knowledge to find sources of help for the members, and there is a willingness to signpost to other organisations if they are known. The challenge is the lack of volunteers and people on the management committee, mainly due to age. However they have had a number of new members join recently and are linked in with the local social prescriber.

There is no Place of Welcome in Norton Canes, but the community managed library is a good resource and potential help point, and there is some enthusiasm from the local churches to offer further support.

### **Cannock North Ward**

This ward has some well-established charities with premises, such as West Chadsmoor Family Centre and Special Needs Adventure Playground (SNAP). Both offer specialisms in support predominately to families with children, but have some basic knowledge in other fields for signposting or support.

The church of St Aiden's is currently a Place of Welcome, with an aspiration to become a hub for the



community, as they benefitted from additional bursary support from Support Staffordshire to develop the actions needed. The challenge from the pandemic has been a significant financial struggle for the church with a reduced number of groups returning to hire the church hall. In addition the capacity, skills and enough volunteers to run projects or groups have had an impact to pick up the aim of the original plan as a community hub.

Areas including Chadsmoor, Hednesford North and Springfields estate are being supported by the Chase Up project being led by Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles who benefitted from a large investment grant of £416,000 in 2018 from National Lottery Reaching Communities. One of the groups, The Friends of Stadium Court are a relatively new group that developed and supported by Chase Up, to improve outdoor activity through the use of community allotment space, and they have carried out some good projects and use this as a way of engaging with the local community to address some of the local needs.

### **Cannock East Ward**

This area hosts the Cannock and District food bank storage and distribution centre, which is led by Pye Green Christian Centre. The organisation hosts a wide range of support and activities for the most vulnerable, including a café, supported housing, clothing bank and a community fridge.

Scouting and guiding groups in Chadsmoor are in early stages of planning and design for a purpose built community facility in Chadsmoor which will seek to combine the groups into one premises, and also increase the opportunity for further community use as a local hub. The feasibility and timescale for this project, and to achieve the funds required, will be a long term plan.

St Chads church is under the same ecclesiastical parish as St Aidans, but at present is closed due to structural problems which makes it difficult to see the future purpose of the asset.

However other churches in the area such as the Baptist church and Methodist church have started to increase community activity again since the pandemic and have engaged well with other grass roots community groups, over the last few years through social action (asset based community development) support from Support Staffordshire to encourage groups to work together more effectively and coordinate and deliver projects that address local needs.

Spectrum residents association have also remained keen, playing an important role working with, and communicating with local residents in the area. They deliver local improvements projects such as litter picking, and work with shops to keep the high street clear. They also get involved in creating wonderful visual displays at the war memorial. Last year they were encouraged to enter the Bloomin' Cannock award, and the transformation and management of a piece of land was deemed the most outstanding entry.

### **Cannock West Ward**

Cannock West ward has a large area of statutory provision including the main town park, leisure centre, hospital, civic centre, schools, library, and children's centre. The ward covers some of the commercial areas of the town with affluent housing behind the park area.

The needs of the community for an 'anchor' in the area are less known but Cannock library has tried to be representative as a Place of Welcome, and a community help point for signposting. However the challenge has been the attraction for volunteer involvement through groups such as a former 'Friends of' group, and the lack of volunteers to run the place of welcome - with numbers now dwindled. Reduced footfall due to closed shops nearby and awareness of the library location affect the library provision but there are opportunities to link with other organisations to build on the strengths.

A key charity located in this ward is the Cannock Chase Advice Centre. This charity is run entirely by volunteers who offer support to individuals living in poverty, and affected by financial hardship. They work with people based on individual need to give guidance and support in claiming entitlement to benefits and help people to budget and manage their debts. They work with a wide range of partners in the same field of work, and are facing increasing referrals for support due to the cost of living crisis. During the pandemic they received Staffordshire County Council funding to support people facing hardship from self-isolation. The challenges this charity faces is the unsuitability of the current premises as an advice centre, and to scale up to meet the demand, the employment of a manager/volunteer coordinator would help with the future direction.

St Stephens Methodist church have presence in the area and may have potential to offer support to people.

### **Cannock South Ward**

There are a good number of church organisations operating in the ward, including the town centre church of St Lukes, St Mary's Catholic Church, Cannock Salvation Army, Methodist churches, and Living Springs Elim Pentecostal church based in Avon Community Centre. The common theme for most of the churches is a 'community centre' provision to offer a wide range of services and support for residents. However there is a loosely joined up approach, with some churches now struggling due to age of volunteers, motivation, cost of premises – improvements and running costs, capacity of staffing, and numbers in the congregation.

In comparison Living Springs Church has a very large congregation, but with largely working age members there is less time to commit to community projects. In addition, the church is seeking to purchase alternative premises rather than hiring space at Avon Community centre. The location is not of importance, but when they find the right premises they would be interested in identifying as a hub for the community.

Within the close knit area of Bridgtown, identified as a village, the Bethel Church offers community space for activity. Recent attempts to coordinate community action to support asylum seekers being housed in the Holiday Inn in Bridgtown unfortunately did not result to a great deal of engagement activity to improve their recreation and leisure to combat boredom. However the Salvation Army stepped in with help to access clothing needs for the temporary residents who had very little of their own.

A key active organisation covering all of the areas in the combined wards of Cannock, with an enthusiastic group of volunteers for community projects, supporting local needs, is the Cannock Lions Club. The Lions

club offer practical help such as purchasing kitchen equipment, paying for holidays for families with terminally ill children, help with fence painting and light maintenance. The Lions Club would consider supporting anchor work and would be willing to take additional referrals for practical help.

## Identify potential “anchor” arrangements

Considering the research carried out for the first part of the report to identify existing anchor arrangements, the next stage is to identify potential for existing organisations or partnerships to step into the role of an anchor organisation for their locality, for areas without an anchor organisation.

The focus on ward level identified strengths and challenges for organisations at hyperlocal levels, but in reality it is more feasible and sustainable to formulate cluster group areas based on where people probably most associate themselves living. This also helps to address local needs which are specific to individual areas, rather than thinking about a one size fits all solution.

Therefore grouping the wards into the areas of:

- Rugeley and Brereton
- Hednesford
- Heath Hayes
- Norton Canes
- Cannock
- Cannock Chase Villages

**Rugeley and Brereton** – as indicated, the strongest existing anchor organisation is Rugeley Community Church/Centre which operates to serve the area and is well connected to existing groups who retain their own identity. Also Brereton Million serve the geographical village community, and have the drive and funding to offer a wide range of support depending on local needs. It has been recognised that there is more strength to collaborate across areas than replicate services.

**Hednesford** – the Salvation Army has the resource of a large community building, staff, volunteers and enthusiasm to do more to serve the community and address local needs, as an anchor. The churches have an informal network and know their strengths. The Salvation Army church leader has knowledge of social action as a means of community development work, but further links and networks to the town council, Hednesford in Partnership and the Lions Club may help to strengthen a partnership approach.

**Heath Hayes** – the potential for centralised provision may be through a combined effort between the library as the Place of Welcome with the community centre, food store and churches. The central component to most of these groups are the same people who are connected and involved in many of the groups as active individuals. Therefore they have good knowledge and awareness of the local area and provision. The practical support and volunteer help delivered through the neighbourhood community support group helps to get things done.

**Norton Canes** – the library has the most potential as the community asset to be an anchor point for the community, starting with discussion about Place of Welcome initiative. However a partnership approach

with the active parish council and other organisations would be beneficial in terms of delivering practical solutions and addressing local needs.

**Cannock** – there are a large range of organisations and community building assets with the aspiration of being a community hub, providing a centre for the community. But in considering how the anchor works in Rugeley there is not a singular organisation in Cannock area with the capacity to be identified as an anchor organisation at present. There is potential to strengthen the networks between key bodies to identify opportunities to lead on a local partnership anchor response, but also the possible opportunity to bring in Cannock Lions Club volunteers with practical assistance.

**Cannock Chase Villages** – in the less populated areas of Rawnsley, Cannock Wood, Propsect Village and Brindley Heath it is unlikely that the needs for an anchor organisation are high. In some of the village/hamlet communities there are no community asset buildings, but in others there may be a church, pub, or village hall. Whilst the community buildings offer a place for things to happen, activity for people to connect, rather than practical support as seen during the pandemic. It is not to say that people in villages do not feel isolated or lonely, however villages are often resilient with some local support from people knowing their neighbours, unless there is a specific need or desire to develop a good neighbour scheme which can prove successful in some villages.

## Support groups to identify and respond to local issues

### Recommendations

The recommendations going forward, using the example of what works well in Rugeley, is to continue a process of engagement and developmental support with key contacts and organisations in local areas to enable growth and build capacity. This will be tailored to individual areas, without a one size fits all, or top down approach, but will respond to local needs, guided by the existing strengths and assets in the local communities.

Where there are gaps, there is the opportunity to identify what can be done with what already exists, such as the libraries and churches. The potential for the churches to step up to respond to local needs has generated some positive discussion and should be explored further.

In addition, as referred to in various parts of the report, there are existing initiatives or movements that support community development to help communities and community groups to build on and work towards responding to local issues, often depending on needs and enthusiasm of local involvement.

Those mentioned were:

- Places of welcome
- Compassionate communities
- Dementia friendly communities
- Community help points

These initiatives offer useful insight to local needs and provide networking and low level signposting support. Supporting the known Places of Welcome to increase signposting support, and to develop this within more settings offers a useful starting point for community engagement. Likewise recognising Cannock Chase District as a Compassionate Community is in early stages at present, but will be a positive driver for networking and engagement – supporting the most vulnerable and isolated in the community.

With continual changing external pressures of political, environmental, economic, social and technological changes having an impact on local communities, supporting groups to respond to these issues locally and gain resilience to prepare for situations that may need a rapid response, similar to community action seen in crisis situations such as the pandemic, or in other areas flooding.

Just some of the community issues that are currently being responded to at a local level include:

- Refugee support
- Health needs and inequalities
- Cost of living
- Climate change / carbon free

There are specialist organisations, and organisations with knowledge, skills and experience to learn from, so enabling a joined up approach with local community action will help to support more people at neighbourhood level. Therefore continued support to community groups and organisations to identify and respond to the issues is fundamental to strengthen local resilience.

## Summary

This report details the findings of research at ward level to explore and identify anchor organisations, and to assess the strengths and challenges they face. Whilst the analysis does not show the detail of all voluntary sector organisations operating in the district, it shows the role as well as the potential for anchor organisations within the voluntary sector in Cannock Chase. The voluntary sector is mixed and varied at hyperlocal neighbourhood level, but similar challenges are faced by groups such as lack of volunteers, age of volunteers, low motivation, capacity, unknown networking opportunities, sustaining funding, and access to purposeful premises.

There are opportunities to work with local clustered neighbourhoods in partnerships to identify and respond to local needs through community action, to develop resilience and create stronger supportive networks. However this is not a quick fix solution and takes time and resource to build trust, develop relationships and change mind-set or culture.

The recommendations therefore are to work with what exists, and address what can be done easily to have an impact on people's lives. Developing anchor organisations involves sharing learning, encouraging best practice principles, ethical values, partnership working and a commitment to carry out activities that are the most beneficial for the communities.

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>S151 Officer &amp; Deputy Chief Executive</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Rob Wolfe</b>
<b>Telephone No:</b>	<b>01543 464 397</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Innovation and Resources</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 02/03/23</b>

**Cabinet**  
**2 March 2023**  
**Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 3**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the performance of the Revenues and Benefits Service as regards:
- collections of Council Tax during the first three quarters of the financial year.
  - collections of Business Rates during the first three quarters of the financial year.
  - the recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit during the first three quarters of the financial year.
- 1.2 To seek approval to the write off of the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES**.

**2 Reasons for Appendices being 'Not for Publication'**

- 2.1 In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the Appendix is considered 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:
- Exempt Paragraph 2 – Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
  - Exempt Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

**3 Recommendation(s)**

- 3.1 That the information regarding collections be noted.

- 3.2 That the arrears listed in the **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES** be written off.

#### **4 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

##### **Key Issues**

- 4.1 Efficient collection of the Council's revenues is of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by our preceptors.
- 4.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounts to £60.7M of which some **80.5%** was collected by the end of December. This slightly less than last year's performance in the same period (81.1%).
- 4.3 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £36.8M of which some **81.0%** was collected by the end of December, showing an increase on the previous year (74.1%).

##### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.4 Whilst our collection rates are traditionally good, regrettably not all of the monies owed to the Council can be collected and this report contains a recommendation to write off bad debts which cannot be recovered.

#### **5 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

#### **6 Report Detail**

##### **Council Tax**

- 6.1 Council Tax is collected on behalf of the District Council, Parish Councils and our Major Preceptors (Staffordshire County Council and Commissioner for Police, Crime, Fire and Rescue). The effect of the Collection fund arrangements means that Cannock Chase Council retains around 12.4% of the council tax collected.
- 6.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounts to £60.7M and we would hope to collect in the region of 97.5% within the year, as was the case prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The knock-on effect of underpayments during the past two years, (in which collection rates of 96% and 96.2% were achieved), the current economic climate and backlog of work that accumulated whilst Revenues staff managed Covid related payments and Council Tax Energy Rebate awards, will add to the difficulty in achieving this target in the current year. Action will continue to collect arrears after the end of the financial year, with around 99% traditionally being recovered.
- 6.3 In accordance with the Council's approved policies, all reasonable and lawful attempts are made to recover all amounts due. In the first instance this involves the issue of bills, reminders and final notices, followed by Summonses in the Magistrates Court where the warning notices are not effective. At all stages of this

process, debtors are encouraged to engage in voluntary arrangements to repay their arrears, to prevent the need for formal action.

Where necessary and when Liability Orders are granted by Magistrates, the Council uses its powers to make deductions from earnings and benefits of debtors, where it can, and instructs Enforcement Agents where such deductions are not possible or appropriate.

In the most severe cases and for debts exceeding £5,000, the Council will consider personal bankruptcy action against individuals.

6.4 The recovery powers available to the Council are considerable but not completely infallible. Some of the limitations which lead to debts being written off are described below.

6.4.1 Statutory safeguards such as Debt Relief Orders, Individual's Voluntary Arrangements exist to protect debtors suffering hardship, to attempt to the expensive, stressful and sometimes ineffective process of personal bankruptcy. Where a debt is included in such an instrument, or when a debtor is bankrupt, our ordinary recovery powers cannot be used.

6.4.2 For any of our powers to be effective we need to know the whereabouts of a debtor and this is not always the case. Where debtors abscond we will use all reasonable endeavours to trace them and are often successful in doing so. Unfortunately, on occasions this is not so and we must submit a debt for write off.

Our trace procedures include:

- Checking our internal Council systems, and following any information which may help us to trace the debtor.
- Use of Transunion credit reference agency data.
- Trace and collect facilities offered by our Enforcement Agencies
- Visits to the last known address by the Council's Property Inspector and use of external tracing agents.

Unfortunately, legislation does not currently permit access to DWP or HMRC records to trace Council Tax debtors or their employers, though a Cabinet Office project is currently reviewing this.

Data protection legislation allows us to receive information as to a debtor's whereabouts but we cannot disclose information to other creditors. Reciprocal arrangements with utility companies and similar are not therefore workable.

6.5 16 Irrecoverable council tax debts in the sum of £60,288.88 are listed in the **confidential appendix 1** to this report.

### **Business Rates**

6.6 Business rates income now forms a part of the Council's core funding, with around 29% of receipts being retained by this Council. The remainder is collected on behalf of Central Government and our major preceptors.



- 6.7 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £36.8M of which some **81.0%** was collected by the end of the December. This represents an increase on last year's performance (74.1%) which seems to indicate some upturn in the local economy and is more in line with the 79.7% achieved in the same period of 2019.
- 6.8 The recovery powers available to us are again contained in the Council's approved policies and are used in full. Those powers and our procedures are similar to the council tax powers described above, with the exception that deduction from individuals' benefits and earnings are not permissible, even if the debtor is an individual.
- 6.9 Where rates are owed by an individual, similar safe guards exist for the debtors and trace facilities are used by the Council for absconding debtors, as described above.
- 6.10 Additionally, in the case of business rates, as has been reported to Cabinet previously, our collection efforts are sometimes frustrated by weaknesses in legislation. Rates are due from the occupiers rather than the owners of property and where the occupier is a company, we can only recover from that company. Some proprietors will strip a company of its assets, or dissolve the company before we have had an opportunity to implement our recovery procedures. A new company is then formed in a similar style, to trade from the same premises.

Central Government has previously undertaken to review the loopholes that exist in rating and company legislation, though no changes have yet been received. Your officers continue to actively monitor these issues.

- 6.11 35 Irrecoverable business rates debts in the sum of £175,185.23 are listed in the **confidential appendix 2** to this report

### **Housing Benefit Overpayments**

- 6.12 The Council manages the Housing Benefit scheme on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, who fund the cost of benefits paid to claimants.
- 6.13 Recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit continues to progress well, with some £220,731.17 being collected into the Council's General Fund in the first three quarters of the year.
- 6.14 3 irrecoverable Benefit Overpayment debts in the sum of £23,450.30 is included in the **confidential appendix 3** to this report.

## **7 Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Under the Business Rates Retention Scheme, business rates write offs will no longer be offset against the National Non-Domestic Rating Pool. Write offs will now form part of the costs of collection of business rates.

Council Tax write offs are losses to the Collection Fund and, as such, form part of the cost of collection incurred by this Council. The Council Tax write-offs on this

report are 16 cases totalling £60,288.88. This represents 0.1% of the outstanding collectable debit as at the 1 April 2022.

The cost of collecting the debts has been considered as part of the decision to put them forward for write off. If further information does come forward about the whereabouts of any of the individual debtors the Council will pursue recovery action.

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommended.

**7.2 Legal**

Cabinet are asked to write off the debts as they are considered to be irrecoverable for the reasons given in the appendices. The debts remain legally due to the Council and should the circumstances causing the write off in any particular case, subsequently change, recovery action may be recommended.

**7.3 Human Resources**

None.

**7.4 Risk Management**

The risk issues contained in this report are not strategic and therefore should not be included in the Strategic Risk Register.

**7.5 Equality & Diversity**

None.

**7.6 Climate Change**

None.

<b>8 Appendices to the Report</b>
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Appendix 1: Council Tax write offs over £1,000 (pages 10.6 to 10.13)

Appendix 2: Business Rate write offs over £1,000 (pages 10.14 to 10.28)

Appendix 3: Housing Benefit Overpayments write offs over £1,000  
(pages 10.29 to 10.30)

**Previous Consideration**

None.

**Background Papers**

None.