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12 March 2024

Dear Councillor,

Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
6:00pm, Wednesday 20 March 2024
Council Chamber, 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:

Mawle, D. (Chair)
Dunnett, M.J. (Vice-Chair)
Bancroft, J.T. Pearson, A.R.
Cartwright, S.M. Prestwood, F.
Fisher, P.A. Sutherland, M.
Foley, D. Theodorou, P.C.
Haden, P. Wilson, L.J.
Jones, P.T.

Agenda

Part 1

1. Apologies

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

(i) To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2023 (enclosed).

4. Quarter 3 Performance Report 2023/24

To receive the Quarter 3 performance information for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan (Item 4.1 - 4.9).

5. Update on closure of Amazon Fulfilment Centre

Verbal update by the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

6. Scrutiny Review - Support for Businesses Working Group

The Chair of the Review will provide a verbal update to Members.

(Please note: The Working Group is meeting on 14 March. Should there be any recommendations from the Group these will be "To Follow")

7. Exclusion of Public

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.

Agenda

Part 2

8. Levelling Up Fund Update

Confidential verbal update from the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 at 6:00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock
Part 1

Present: Councillors:

Mawle, D. (Chair)

Bancroft, J.T.	Pearson, A.R.
Fisher, P.A.	Prestwood, F.
Foley, D.	Sutherland, M.
Jones, P.T. (arrived 6.07pm)	Theodorou, P.C.

17. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Dunnett (Vice-Chair), S. Cartwright, P. Haden, and L. Wilson.

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

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made.

19. Minutes

The Head of Economic Development and Planning referred to Minute No. 13 - Proposed closure of Amazon Fulfilment Centre and advised that he was meeting with officers and representatives from Amazon tomorrow to discuss the next steps in the process. He would seek to determine the number of local people affected by the closure, establish how many workers would be redeployed and whether any support was required for workers seeking alternative employment. He would also ask whether transport was being provided for workers to get from Rugeley to Sutton and discuss the re-letting of the unit.

The Committee would be provided with an update at the next meeting. However, if any information could be shared beforehand, he would email this to Members.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 be approved.

20. PDP 2023/24 - Quarter 2 Performance Report

Consideration was given to the quarter 2 performance information for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan 2023/24 (Item 4.1 - 4.10).

The Head of Economic Development and Planning led Members through the PDP which provided progress updates for each project.

Members noted that the planning application in respect of the Cannock town centre Levelling Up Fund was approved on 15 November. The Head of Economic Development and Planning confirmed that the Council was engaging with 8 objectors to the CPO with the aim of addressing their concerns. However, it may not be possible to remove all the objections.

(Councillor P.T. Jones joined the meeting at this point).

A Member asked about the costings and feasibility of the Rugeley Boardwalk replacement scheme. The Officer advised that he would provide this information to the Member outside of the meeting. Another Member commented that further information on the project was awaited from Rugeley Town Council.

In respect of the McArthurGlen designer outlet phase 2 planning application, the Planning Services Manager confirmed that a multi storey car park was a requirement, and any additional units could not be built until a car parking solution was provided.

The performance in Quarter 2 was noted.

21. UK Shared Prosperity Fund - update

The Head of Economic Development and Planning introduced Michelle Smith, Economic Growth and Strategic Projects Manager. Members received a presentation which provided a mid-term delivery update in respect of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

She advised that the Council's £3.021m UKSPF investment plan was agreed by the Government in December 2022 and outlined how the funding had been allocated in the three-year programme. Three themes had been identified - Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills. She showed Members examples of what had been delivered in the 7 areas - Cannock, Rugeley, Hednesford, Norton Canes, Heath Hayes, Chads Moor and Bridgtown. Spending was tracked each year and should there be any underspend by January this would be redistributed based on the ability of an area to commit, accelerate and deliver their plan. She confirmed all the spend would be committed this financial year.

She referred to several projects that had been supported, including: -

- Cannock Construction Excellence Initiative - a project delivered in conjunction with Cannock College to support local businesses and develop local skills for the construction industry. An opening ceremony was held on 27 October.
- Beat the Cold - a project to help local people with their energy bills during the cost-of-living crisis.
- West Midlands SME Grant Programme for Cannock - these grants support startups and growing businesses in addition to providing grants for apprenticeships for the district's businesses.
- Net Zero Pathfinder - a project delivered with Staffordshire University, launched in July 2023. The University and students provide a 12-week programme designed for businesses looking to implement a Net Zero plan aligned with Net Zero

commitments.

- Go Digital Accelerator - another project delivered in partnership with Staffordshire University, also launched in July 2023. A 16-week programme to businesses in the district to offer research and development advice to help develop new products, services or adopt advanced technology.

Members noted the slide outlining the release of payments for Year 3. It was explained that the underspend position for the first two years would be less than 20%, therefore the Council should receive the full funding entitlement. It was important to ensure all funds were spent to avoid any clawback by the government.

Members then noted the following projects for Year 3:

- Raising Aspirations for Young People - procurement currently live, contract due for award in February 2024.
- Poverty Benefits Advisor - supporting CAB activity, helping local people to maximise their benefit entitlements.
- Thriving Communities - new initiatives.

Following the presentation Members were offered the opportunity to ask any questions. In response to a question the Head of Economic Development and Planning confirmed that all Local Authorities in Staffordshire were now part of the Beat the Cold initiative. The UKSPF funding had been used to enable Cannock Chase District to participate and benefit from the initiative. He confirmed that Beat the Cold were a Charitable Organisation which the Council supported/funded, and they undertook valuable work to support residents, particularly vulnerable people, to help them reduce their energy costs and save money.

(Councillor A. Pearson left the meeting at this point as he had another meeting to attend).

A Member asked whether care givers could be considered under the project "Raising Aspirations for Young People". The Economic Growth and Strategic Projects Manager commented that the specification for the work had gone out, but she would take this request back for further consideration.

22. Local Plan - update

Members had requested an update on the Local Plan and the Planning Services Manager was in attendance to provide a presentation. The presentation slides would be emailed to Members following the meeting.

Members were advised that the existing Local Plan was adopted in 2014. The new Local Plan commenced in 2018 and 3 rounds of 6-week public consultations had been held so far to develop the plan and an extensive evidence base had been produced. The final stage (pre-submission) document was approved by Cabinet in August 2022 but did not progress to consultation. Revisions to the plan in 2023 were required to update key elements.

Local Plans are required by legislation and contain local planning policies which are then used to determine planning applications. The Plan sets site allocations to meet the development needs of the district over at least a 15-year period (to 2040) including sites for housing, employment, and gypsies/travellers. The Plan can amend Green Belt

boundaries to accommodate development needs.

He advised that Cannock Chase District will meet the development needs arising from the district (2018-2040) and provide a 500-dwelling contribution towards the housing market area shortfall. To meet these needs development will focus on:

- Re-using brownfield land.
- Supporting existing settlements and characteristics.
- Assisting in the rejuvenation of town centres.
- Ensuring infrastructure delivery to support growth.
- Safeguarding natural and historic assets.
- Assisting in the delivery of the Council's ambition to be carbon neutral ahead of the Government's target date of 2050.

Members noted the Local Plan Development requirements, as follows:

- 5808 homes (264 per annum) based on government's standard.
- Methodology to calculate housing need +500 dwellings to meet HMS need (6,308).
- 69ha employment land (based on recommended range of 52-74 ha net).
- 18 pitches for gypsy and travellers (5 allocated on extensions to existing sites).
- 10 plots for travelling showpeople.

At the Cabinet meeting next week Members would be asked to approve the pre-submission Cannock Chase Local Plan for a 6-week consultation period, commencing 15 January to 26 February 2024 (provisional dates). Feedback would then be reported back and approval for submission would be sought from Cabinet and Council. The Local Plan would be submitted for examination in the summer of 2024 with examination by the Planning Inspectorate in the Autumn/Winter. The aim was to adopt the Local Plan in the Summer of 2025.

Members were then offered the opportunity to make comments and ask any questions.

23. Scrutiny Reviews

Administration of Community Infrastructure Levy

Consideration was given to the Briefing Note of the Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 7.1 - 7.2 plus appendices).

The Chair of the Review, Councillor Fisher, gave a brief overview of the work of the Group explaining that they had met on two occasions and had received information in respect of the EXACOM software system which allowed for the effective management of CIL/S106 payments. Members gave their support to the purchase of the EXACOM system in principle.

The Planning Services Manager confirmed that the decision on whether to purchase the system would be included in the budget setting process and flagged as a priority. He added that Biodiversity Net Gain would be introduced in January 2024 and EXACOM

was able to manage this process too.

Support for Businesses

The Chair of the Review, Councillor D. Mawle, provided the Committee with an update. He advised that the Group had met on 16 November and agreed to look at the relevant pages in relation to support for businesses on the current website, and then look at the pages on the new website after it was launched. An MS Teams meeting had been scheduled for Members on 20 December so that they could outline their findings in respect of the information on the website pages. The Group had also agreed to hold another meeting towards the end of January 2024.





The meeting closed at 7.00pm.

Chair

Priority Delivery Plan for 2023-24

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	
5	11	3	1		20


Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3




Good progress being made with the Council's UKSPF Investment plan with the Cannock Construction excellence work completed and launch event held in October 2023. The Youth Aspiration project is progressing through the final stages of procurement ahead of a 1 April 2024 launch.


Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3





Levelling Up Fund - outline planning application considered by Planning Committee in November 2023 and approved subject to completion of a section 106 agreement. CPO Statement of Case submitted in December 2023. The project adjustment and extension of time request submitted to DLUHC in November 2023 is still awaiting a decision which prevents progress on a number of key workstreams.





Cannock Railway Station - As reported at Q2, the Council is not yet in a position to develop a detailed business case, and there are no active opportunities to bid for external funding to fund the project.




Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Attract investment to develop the District's economy							
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"> Secure outline planning consent for LUF scheme 	X				<p>Project Adjustment Request (PAR) submitted to DLUHC in October 2023, requesting extension to deadline for project spend/delivery. PAR request has been acknowledged but DLUHC currently unable to confirm whether extension will be granted.</p> <p>Project scope currently being reviewed to understand what could be delivered by 31 March 2025 and whether project is viable in its current form</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approval of design and cost plan 	X				<p>RIBA 3 design work completed for scheme included in PAR submission. Design and budget review currently taking place linked to review of project viability (as above).</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence demolition and clearance of existing sites 				X	Demolition cannot commence until land assembly is completed.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compulsory Purchase Order approval from Secretary of State 				X	CPO Statement of case submitted in December 2023; awaiting date of public inquiry - likely to be summer 2024.	





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"> Participate in the UKReIFF 2023 event to promote the District to developers/investors 	X				As noted in the Q1 update, the Head of Economic Development and Planning attended UKReIFF event as part of the 'We are Staffordshire' team. Preparation is now starting for the 2024 event	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-development of former Rugeley Power Station as a Zero Carbon community - owner to commence build out of development scheme 				X	Site sale process ongoing Planning application for All Through School has been submitted by appointed contractor to Lichfield DC	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannock Railway Station - transformational upgrade. Detailed business case and funding strategy. 	X				While work has been undertaken in relation to the design and feasibility of achieving a transformational upgrade to the station, the Council is not yet in a position to develop a detailed business case, and there are no active opportunities to bid for external funding to fund the project. Project partners will consider next steps for the project in Q4.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
<p>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</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of projects set out in the Council's approved UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan 	X	X	X	X	<p>West Midlands Grant Programme, Net Zero Pathfinder, Go Digital Accelerator and Cannock Construction Excellence Initiative have all signed their grant agreements.</p> <p>Net Zero Pathfinder and Go Digital Accelerator launched in August</p> <p>Cannock Construction Excellence work has been completed and launch event took place last October.</p> <p>Agreement from the UKSPF Project Board in July to progress the Enterprise Advice & Support Programme - the grant funding agreement has been signed.</p> <p>Youth Aspiration project tender has been advertised and tenders are now in for assessment - contract commencement should be 1 April 2024.</p> <p>Life Skills project tender documents being drafted with intention of publishing them in February 2024 with intention to commence contract in April 2024.</p> <p>Beat the Cold - funding grant agreement has now been signed and delivery going well.</p> <p>Poverty Benefits Advisor - Head of Wellbeing is procuring this service with planned spend in 2024/2025.</p>	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Encourage entrepreneurship, promote apprenticeships, and support business							
Seek to identify and promote employment sites for new and growing businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New employment allocations to be identified via new Local Plan 		X	X	X	Regulation 19 Local Plan identifies new employment allocations	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposal for business workspace in Levelling Up Fund project 		X			The requirements for business workspace have been built into the LUF RIBA stage 3 design work. As noted above, the project viability is currently being reviewed and extension request has been submitted to DLUHC.	
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"> Promote availability of support from existing Growth and Skills Hubs to increase business referrals 	X	X	X	X	E-bulletins sent to businesses on our database as and when information is shared with the Economic Development Team	
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"> Commission and procure new start up support provision utilising UKSPF funding 		X			<p>Agreement from UKSPF Board in July 2023 for Staffordshire County Council to deliver the Enterprise Advice & Support Programme funded through UKSPF which will cover Working for Yourself / Loans to step up businesses / Get started and Grow.</p> <p>West Midlands SME Grant Programme is providing grants for start-up and growing businesses</p>	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Attract modern, green and skilled industries, and create jobs							
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"> Commission and fund Cannock Construction Excellence project (South Staffordshire College) utilising UKSPF allocation 	X	X	X	X	<p>The facility is now completed and was formally opened in October 2023</p> <p>The Council has also secured £73k of GBSLEP funding to finance the installation of an outdoor concrete construction pad to support learners</p>	
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"> Commission and fund Staffordshire Net Zero pathfinder project 	X	X	X	X	The project has been launched and is being promoted to local businesses.	
Rejuvenate our town centres							
Identify opportunities to improve public realm in our town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cannock Town Centre - LUF investment in public realm enhancements - sign off of detailed scheme and cost plan 		X			<p>Public realm enhancements included as part of RIBA Stage 3 design work.</p> <p>As noted above, the project viability is currently being reviewed and extension request has been submitted to DLUHC</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rugeley Boardwalk - replacement scheme - review inflation and construction cost pressures and present options to Cabinet 			X		Reported to Cabinet last October and agreed to consider potential future funding for Rugeley Boardwalk as part of the Council's wider capital budget setting process	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work with town and 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"> Regular liaison meetings with town and parish councils to identify opportunities for joint working 	X	X	X	X	The Economic Development Team is in regular contact with the seven town and parish councils involved in the Thriving Communities UKSPF project, to share ideas and best practices	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Thriving Communities project and invite town and parish councils to bid for funding 	X	X	X	X	The UKSPF allocation for the Thriving Communities project has been equally divided between the seven areas included in the project. Each area had £13,484.70 (£94,392.90 in total) to spend during 2023/2024. As at 25 January 2024 there is £2,166.89 left to spend across all areas. Spending has ranged from arranging community events, improving high streets with planters / plants / artwork, cleaning up areas, benches, speed control signs and more.	
Support the development of our visitor economy							
Work with Destination Staffordshire (DMP) to promote our key attractions, accommodation providers and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with DMP to deliver the county-wide visitor economy strategy 	X	X	X	X	Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) has been accredited by Visit England. The LVEP will act as the successor to the DMP and new governance arrangements and delivery structures are being put in place.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr4	Progress Update	Symbol
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in joint marketing initiatives and development of themed campaigns 	X	X	X	X	Cannock Chase continues to participate in Enjoy Staffordshire marketing campaigns as part of its membership of the DMP. Focus during quarter 3 has been Christmas events / activities and continuation of '30 days under 30 pounds' campaign.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation of Destination Staffordshire investment 				X	Awaiting publication of the Economic Impact Assessment from Destination Staffordshire to inform future decisions on Council investment. LVEP accreditation will require the Council to review new governance and delivery arrangements.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with McArthurGlen on encouraging overnight stay packages in the District 	X	X	X	X	Regular meetings take place to discuss progress at McArthurGlen and opportunities for joint working. McArthurGlen has submitted a reserve matters application for phase 2 of the development and this should be presented to Planning Control Committee during Q4.	
Maximise the legacy of the 2022 Commonwealth Games by using the event to help boost the District's profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options for new visitor accommodation / eco accommodation to encourage those visiting Cannock Chase Forest to stay in the District 			X	X	Forestry England are continuing to look at options and meeting with Council officers to be set up during Q4	

KPIs for Priority 1 - Economic Prosperity

Indicator	Target	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End	Symbol	Comments
Planning								
Major Planning Applications determined within time	60%	N/A	100%	100%			★	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	70%	96.6%	95.5%	92.4%			★	
Building Control								
Applications registered and acknowledged within 3 days of valid receipt	90%	100%	98%	100%			★	
Full plans applications with initial full assessment within 15 days of valid receipt	70%	95%	92%	93%			★	