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25 June 2025

Dear Councillor,

Cabinet

6:00pm on Thursday 3 July 2025

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:

Johnson, T.	Leader of the Council
Williams, D.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Thornley, S.J.	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
Wilson, L.	Parks, Culture and Heritage Portfolio Leader
Freeman, M.	Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader
Prestwood, J.	Resources and Transformation 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 interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2025 (enclosed).

4. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

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

5. Forward Plan

Forward Plan of Decisions for July to September 2025 (Item 5.1 - 5.2).

6. Housing Board Minutes

To note the Minutes of the Housing Board held on 15 May 2025 (Item 6.1 - 6.8).

7. Complaints Monitoring 2024/25

Report of the Head of Law & Governance (Item 7.1 - 7.5).

8. Leisure Contract Procurement

Report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 8.1 - 8.5).

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 5 June 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

Johnson, T.	Leader of the Council
Williams, D.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Thornley, S.J.	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
Wilson, L.	Parks, Culture and Heritage Portfolio Leader
Freeman, M.	Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J. Prestwood, Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader.

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

None received.

3. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 April 2025 be approved.

4. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

There were no updates from the Portfolio Leaders.

5. Forward Plan

Resolved:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period June to July 2025 (Item 5.1 - 5.2) be noted.

6. Value for Money Progress Report - Q4 / End of Year for 2024-25

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 6.1 - 6.27).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The progress made in 2024/25 in the delivery of the value for money improvement plan as set out in report appendix 1 be noted.
- (B) The proposals for refocusing the improvement plan for 2025/26, as set out in report paragraph 5.8, be noted.

Reason for Decisions

The information allowed Cabinet to ensure that all appropriate steps were being taken to address the findings of the External Auditors and improve the Council's governance arrangements.

7. End of Year Performance Report 2024-25

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 7.1 - 7.38).

Resolved:

That the progress at the end of 2024/25 related to the delivery of the Council's priorities as detailed in report appendices 1a-1d and the performance information set out in report appendix 2, be noted.

Reason for Decision

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

8. Updated Strategic Risk Register

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Transformation & Assurance (Item 8.1 - 8.26).

Resolved:

That the new strategic risk register, as set out in report appendix 2, be approved.

Reason for Decision

Cabinet was required to approve the strategic risk register.

9. Updated Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 9.1 - 9.16).

Resolved:

That the updated Corporate Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, as set out in report appendix 1, be approved.

Reasons for Decision

Cannock Chase Council had a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to work with authorities to prevent and reduce crime, disorder, and reoffending.

Cannock Chase Council also had a statutory duty to investigate reports and complaints of anti-social behaviour under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

10. Cabinet Appointed Representatives on Outside Bodies 2025-26

Consideration was given the report of the Chief Executive (Item 10.1 - 10.5).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The appointment of Cabinet representatives to outside bodies for 2025-26, be approved (a copy of the agreed appointments was included as an Annex to these Minutes).
- (B) The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make appointments to additional outside bodies and amendments to any existing outside bodies, as necessary, throughout the municipal year, which would otherwise be determined by Cabinet.

Reasons for Decisions

To reflect the wishes of the Cabinet as to which Members it wished to appoint to those outside bodies as listed in Appendix 1 of the report.

Cabinet was also requested to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make appointments to any additional outside bodies, and amend existing appointments.

11. Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 4 2024-25

Consideration was given to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive Resources (Item 11.1 - 11.9).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The information regarding collections be noted.
- (B) The arrears listed in the confidential appendices to the report be written off.

Reasons for Decisions

Efficient collection of the Council's revenues was of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by its preceptors.

Whilst the collection rates were traditionally good, regrettably, not all of the monies owed to the Council could be collected and the report therefore recommended to write-off bad debts that could not be recovered.

The meeting closed at 6:40pm

Leader

Cannock Chase Council
Cabinet Appointed Representatives to Outside Bodies for 2025-26

Notes:

- All the below listed positions are appointed on an annual basis at the first Cabinet meeting after Annual Council.
- All bodies have one seat available unless otherwise stated.

Name of Body	Appointed Representatives
Cannock Chase National Landscape Joint Management Committee	Parks, Culture and Heritage Portfolio Leader Substitute: Cllr. J. Preece
Local Government Association General Assembly	Leader of the Council Substitute: Deputy Leader
Local Strategic Partnership (Chase Community Partnership) 5 seats to be filled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of the Council • Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader • Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader • Parks, Culture & Heritage Portfolio Leader • Leader of the Opposition
Norton Canes Community Partnership	Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London Joint Committee	Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Poplars Landfill Site Liaison Committee	Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership	Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader (or Head of Economic Development & Planning as nominee)
Staffordshire Police, Fire, and Crime Panel	Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader Substitute: Cllr. S.J. Thornley
Staffordshire Sustainability Board	Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader Substitute: Cllr. L. Wilson
Staffordshire Playing Fields Association	Parks, Culture & Heritage Portfolio Leader
West Midlands Employers	Leader of the Council

Forward Plan of Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet: July to September 2025

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

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	Representations Received
July 2025 (03/07)						
Complaints Monitoring 2024/25	Head of Law & Governance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	03/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Leisure Contract Procurement	Head of Wellbeing / Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader	03/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
July 2025 (31/07)						
Permission to Spend Swimming Pool Support Fund	Head of Wellbeing / Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26	Head of Economic Development and Planning / Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Tree Management	Head of Operations / Parks, Culture, and Heritage Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A

Item No. 5.2

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representations Received
Heath Hayes Park Master Plan	Head of Operations / Parks, Culture, and Heritage Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Charging	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Vehicle Replacement	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Housing Services Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and Self-Assessment	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing & Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Tenancy Management Policy	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing & Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Housing Services - Repairs and Maintenance IT Transformation	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing & Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	31/07/25	No	Yes	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	
September 2025 (04/09)						
Quarter 1 Performance Report 2025/26	Head of Transformation and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	04/09/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
VFM Progress Report - Quarter 1 2025/26	Head of Transformation and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	04/09/25	No	No	N/A	N/A

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Housing Board
Held on Wednesday 14 May 2025 at 10:00am
In the Datteln Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Present:

Board Members:

Councillors:

T. Johnson	Leader of the Council and Chair of the Housing Board
P. Haden	Housing and Corporate Assets Shadow Portfolio Leader

Tenant and Leasehold Members:

B. Murphy	Council tenant of 12 years, retired
G. Pace	Council tenant of 30 years, retired

Independent Members:

L. Cunnett	Homes Manager, Tamworth Borough Council
S. Johnson	Director of Governance and Legal, Walsall Housing Group
A. Kenny	Former Executive Director of Property, Housing Plus

Also Present:

Officers:

T. Clegg	Chief Executive
G. Stott	Deputy Chief Executive-Place
N Samrai	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
R. Frumenzi	Housing Maintenance Manager
C. Hawkins	Housing Property Services Manager
L. Tandy	Housing Services Manager
J. Morgan	Assistant Housing Services Manager
M. Berry	Democratic Services Team Leader

Observer:

J. Grannell	Advisor, TPAS
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1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Board and invited all present to introduce themselves.

Apologies were noted for:

- N. Howells, Tenant and Leasehold Member, and
- H. Campbell, Tenancy Services Manager.

It was noted Councillor S.J. Thornley, Housing & Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader and Vice-Chair of the Board would be delayed arriving (NB: Councillor Thornley did not end up attending the meeting).

2. Key Performance Indicators and Performance Overview

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets took the Board through the 2024/25 year-end position for the Housing Services' key performance indicators (KPIs), drawing specific attention to those areas where performance exceeded target or was more than 5% below target. Each service manager provided additional context on the KPIs where relevant.

Board members then raised the following comments/queries on the performance information, with responses provided by officers (*shown in italic text*):

1. The 65% target for completion of non-emergency repairs on time seemed to be quite low.

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the NEC console and Go Mobile app were not helping with management of repairs works, with a paper-based system having to be used. As such, work was being done to secure a new system which should help improve the target and overall performance of the service.

2. Were all backlog repair jobs categorised?

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that this was the case, with category one repairs being given priority status.

3. What was the 2025/26 target for completion of non-urgent repairs?

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised targets were currently being reviewed but had to be set by the end of this month. The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets further advised that the Assistant Housing Services Manager was going to be doing some sector benchmarking of data to help with setting new targets.

An independent member noted it would be worthwhile speaking to customers about what they think relevant targets could be.

4. What would happen if the backlog of repairs increased again?

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that funding had been agreed for an additional contractor to help deliver the repair works. The contract would be for an initial 12-month period with a view to extending for a further 12 months. The initial priority would be to focus on clearing the backlog before moving onto other categories of repair works.

5. It would be good to see what was driving the repairs to determine whether investment was needed in the housing stock to reduce the need for repairs in the first place.

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised he was working closely with the Housing Property Services Manager on improvements to the stock.

6. Was the external contractor trade specific?

The Housing Maintenance Manager advised that the contractor had multi-trade skills.

7. In respect of the building safety data, how much confidence was there that the data presented was accurate, given that all aspects had achieved the 100% target?

The Housing Property Services Manager advised that he was confident with the figures reported.

An independent member recommended that the data be externally validated. The Housing Property Services Manager advised that some of the data was both internally and externally audited. The independent member raised it would be helpful for the Board to also see that data.

8. Was the Council aware of some current dissatisfaction raised by tenants about the company used for undertaking gas safety inspections?

The Housing Property Services Manager advised that the Council was aware, and had met with the company concerned to ensure improvements were made.

9. How many housing and mutual exchange applications were received each week?

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that circa 30 housing applications were received weekly, and only a low number of mutual exchange applications.

10. Was there any data available on the percentage of applicants who did not progress through the banding stages or did not complete their applications at all?

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that this data was not collected at present but could be sourced from the application system.

11. A common issue raised by applicants was about not receiving a decision as soon as their application had been submitted.

The Chair noted that part of this was about applicants' expectations of the Council and how the Council communicated with them and managed those expectations.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that almost a year had been spent redesigning the application form following a scrutiny committee review into the application process. The Assistant Housing Services Manager further advised that the views of tenants were sought as part of the review.

12. Commentary being provided in the report was useful, particularly for those actions/indicators that had not achieved their target.

13. Whilst the number of adaptations delivered being greatly above target was positive for the customer experience, had this had a significant budgetary impact?

The Housing Property Services Manager advised that this was correct, and discussions held with occupational therapists on what works to be done and getting their professional opinion before the works were carried out. It was however expected that the number of adaptations would reduce in 2025/26. Furthermore, work was being done to find better ways of managing and recording information and matching up new tenants as best as able to do so with the properties available.

14. Was the target for adaptations budget driven and why was it so out of kilter with the year-end figure?

The Housing Property Services Manager advised that the target was based on previous year's figures and the number of requests received.

15. Did the Council have a policy in place for the type of bathroom to be installed in a property as there appeared to be a recent increase in wet rooms being provided?

The Housing Property Services Manager advised that tenants were given a choice as to what type of bathroom they wished to have installed, but the Council would look to install level access bathrooms if such a need was identified.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets noted there had been a recent issue of registered providers in the District not wanting to make adaptations to their own properties so were sending tenants to the Council instead. The Council had pushed back on this to make the providers take responsibility for adapting their own stock.

16. For new build Council homes, consideration should be given to ensuring door widths were widened to support customers going forward.

17. Adapting properties was focused on existing tenants/applicants on the waiting list, but this could create future challenges if those adaptations were no longer required.

The Housing Maintenance Manager noted this was an issue and that much of the existing stock was not built to meet the requirements of being adapted.

18. In respect of complaints, did the Council take learning from the Housing Ombudsman reports/feedback?

The Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that this was the case, and officers were also asked to identify any learning from internal stage 1 and 2 complaints.

19. Did the Council have any issues with 'ambulance chasers'?

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that it did, mainly in respect of disrepair claims.

20. Were complaints received managed centrally?

The Assistant Housing Services Manager advised that whilst complaints were submitted and recorded centrally, housing related complaints were responded to directly by the service. The Chief Executive further advised that in some instances complaints came in as MP enquiries so were dealt with on that basis.

21. For the KPI on percentage of empty dwellings, it would be useful to also have the figure of the number of dwellings this applied to.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that in respect of the re-let time for void properties, the current process was that if a kitchen or bathroom required replacement within two years then this would be done when the property became void, but this had an impact on the turnaround times. As such, views were sought on whether tenants should be offered to move into a property prior to works being undertaken, having given them the chance to input into what improvements they wanted making. Comments raised were:

- This could be presented in a positive way if tenants were offered input into what fittings they wanted installed.
- It would be better to do the works when the property was empty to reduce disruption for the tenant and it may be better to produce a separate KPI for capital works.
- There was a need to strike a balance between the customer experience of the works being done prior to or after having moved in, with the rental income loss from properties being void. The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that the rental income loss data could be included in future performance reports as it was currently collated but not reported anywhere.

The Head of Housing and Corporate Assets then provided a brief overview of the tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs), management and perception measures. An independent member noted there was a need to consider the perception measures in the context of whether respondents would have had experience of what was being asked.

Views were then sought on whether the Board was happy to receive each quarter the corporate KPIs and the management TSMs or a combination of both, or whether a separate suite of indicators for reporting to the Board.

The Board agreed it would like to see both sets of data going forward as the information presented in the meeting had been important for helping the Board to understand the Council's performance and meet the requirements of the terms of reference.

3. Current Issues

The Board was provided with an overview of the current issues within the Housing Service:

- ICT System:
 - The Housing Services Manager advised that the NEC System had been implemented in 2014/15 with mixed success. It had been working well for the Tenancy Services team, but less so for Property Services and Maintenance.
 - The Housing Maintenance Manager referred to the issues raised earlier in the meeting about maintenance jobs having to be managed in a paper-based format, noting that a more suitable system was required to drive efficiencies, identify where issues existed and direct resources more effectively.
 - In response to a query from an independent member as to whether any external advice had been sought for changing the IT systems going forward, the Housing Services Manager advised that external support had already been sourced to help review what future IT system needs would be across all of the Housing service areas. The Housing Maintenance Manager further advised the aim was to produce a true specification of service need to ensure the right solution was provided.
 - Linked to the above, the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that funding was being secured for a replacement system and the provision of specialist staffing resource with knowledge of IT systems. The Deputy Chief Executive-Place noted that IT issues were the biggest risk to the Housing Revenue Account work, so the Board's support would be sought to get these improvements made.
- Repairs Backlogs - discussed under agenda item 2.
- Empty Property Management - void re-lets - discussed under agenda item 2.
- Stock Condition Survey Final Report and HRA Business Plan:
 - The Housing Property Services Manager set out the background of the survey work to date, advising that in 2022/23 an initial survey of 20% of the housing stock had been commissioned, of which 15% had been successfully completed (the remaining 5% were non-respondents). In October 2024 the decision was taken to have the remaining 80% of the stock surveyed. So far, circa 50% of the work had completed, with a target finished date of the end of June 2025. Following that, the data would be reviewed and work streams produced to bring the stock up to decent standard.
 - In response to a query from the Chair as to whether any initial themes were coming through from surveys completed so far given the age of the housing stock, the Housing Property Services Manager advised the main issue coming out was replacement of roofing, as much of the original stock still had the same roofing. This was expected to come out of the service being the only area without a works programme already in place.
 - The Deputy Chief Executive-Place noted that the Board would receive a full update on the stock condition survey at its next meeting as the final survey results would be available along with initial work planning outcomes. The survey results would be used to develop the next 30-year HRA Business Plan and help to establish a timeline of works and how those works should be categorised.
 - In response to a query from an independent member as to whether the Council had a policy for fencing, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that no specific policy existed, but fencing would be replaced if it was within the Council's boundary lines.

- In response to a query as to how the Council was going to implement the requirements of 'Awaab's Law' from October 2025, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised that relevant officers were already being trained, and a supervisor recruited with a specific focus on damp and mould hazards. A team restructure had also been done to provide more support for this work. A case management system was also being adopted to monitoring reporting and remediation of such issues. Additionally, the requirement to respond to emergency repairs within 24 hours further highlighted the need to address the earlier mentioned IT issues and have a dynamic reporting service in place for use by the maintenance operatives.
- An independent member suggested that for future performance reports, a KPI be included on how the requirements of Awaab's law were being managed/monitored.
- An independent member noted there was a need to think about what support was provided to customers who were experiencing damp and mould issues through no fault of their own. In response, the Housing Maintenance Manager advised this would involve joint focus with Tenancy Services. The new proposed case management IT system would allow tenants to download an app offering advice on ways to reduce damp and mould in their homes. Additionally, a company had been spoken with this week about provision of a plug-in device that could eradicate mould. Costs were £700 for a portable device and £1,200 for a fixed device.
- An independent member noted that given the cross-cutting nature of the issues identified, component parts of the Housing service should seek to pool resources where able to do so.
- Inspection Ready? (Housing Services Improvement Plan):
 - In response to a query from an independent member as what inspection rating the Council predicted to receive from the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH), the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets advised that:
 - Whilst a high rating is aimed for, the key issue is securing additional resources to deliver the required actions in the improvement plan that could hopefully achieve this.
 - Some additional resource had already been secured for compliance works, but more was needed in respect of policy development and service improvement.
 - A meeting is happening soon with West Lancashire Borough Council as one of only three local authority landlords who has achieved a C1 rating, to seek some advice and guidance.
 - The provision of tenant profiling data was currently being explored with Legal Services, specifically issues around tenant consent and the collection of special category data.
 - Following any subsequent rating, an action plan would be developed to help achieve/maintain a C1 rating.
 - Furthermore, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government had recently acknowledged that inspectors needed to be trained to understand the differences between local authority landlords and registered providers, particularly around staffing resourcing and requirements.

4. Overview of Complaint Themes

The Board noted the following overview regarding Housing specific complaints (more detail on which had been provided under agenda item 2):

- Repairs, cyclical maintenance and upgrades made up the majority of complaints.
- Not being completed on time, lack of communication in the process or issues with contractor performance on gas servicing and kitchen/bathroom upgrades.
- Other complaints about:
 - The condition of properties on re-let.
 - Housing application decisions / waiting time for a property.
 - ASB, neighbour disputes.
- Communication was at the centre of a lot of issues.

5. Tenant Engagement Update

The Board noted the following updates in respect of tenant engagement work:

- Circa five tenants had so far been identified for the new Tenant Scrutiny Panel, with the deadline for expressions of interest being 31 May. It was hoped to hold the first meeting of the Panel in early June.
- The latest tenant newsletter was sent out to all tenants in late April / early May and included information about the Housing Board.
- Work was being undertaken with Independent Living Schemes to set up a small tenant panel. Introductory discussions had been taking place to identify tenants interested in forming these panels to understand the issues they faced in the schemes.
- A complainant had made a suggestion for improvements on the timing of text reminders for repairs. As a result, the reminders had been changed to the morning of that day instead of 5pm the day before. This demonstrated the Housing service was listening to the tenant voice and valued their feedback in shaping services.

6. Board Questions

In advance of the meeting, a tenant and leasehold member had raised the following query:

“What is the current percentage of stock completed by Rapleys for the Stock Condition Survey?”

The following response was provided:

“As at 2 May 2025, 50% of the stock had been completed.

4,498 survey instructions of which 2,238 were completed; 377 with 3x no access; and 9 refusals.

We are forecast to have everything either surveyed or no access procedure exhausted by end of June 2025.

Inclusive of the 2022-23 surveys the total completed is circa 65% of the stock.”

The tenant member provided context to why the question had been asked, advising that letters sent to residents had implied the surveys would be carried out in March and April, but the performance report implied a different timescale.

The tenant member further advised it had been apparent that not all residents received second letters inviting them to book a survey appointment and so there was concern around how this work had been communicated to residents.

By way of follow-up question, the tenant member queried how many tenants had contacted the Council to book an appointment following receipt of the second letter. The Housing Property Services Manager advised this would have to be checked and report back separately.

7. Forward Agenda

The following items were noted for consideration at forthcoming meetings of the Board:

Meeting 2:

- Performance-standing item.
- Housing Services Improvement Plan-standing item.
- Complaint Performance and Service Improvement Report.
- Stock condition, asset management, investment and capital works programme-update (main item).
- Annual Tenant Report-draft review (if available).

Meeting 3:

- Consumer Standards Self-Assessment and Improvement Plan.
- HRA Budget and Business Plan-half yearly review (if available).

In respect of the performance data, it was suggested that as raised earlier in the meeting, additional commentary for each action be provided in the report so questions could be focused on specific areas rather than going through the report page by page.

8. Any Other Business

In response to an independent member as to what the Council wanted from the Board going forward, the Chair advised it wanted the Board to achieve consensus on matters and be a critical friend by providing views, ideas and critiques on the matters within the Board's remit. The Chief Executive further advised that the Council was very self-aware that whilst it had a good Housing Service in place, it wanted to service to be better, noting that it would be facing several challenges from Government, regulators and customers to deliver service improvements, so the Board would be crucial in helping to provide the tenants and independents members perspectives.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 13 August 2025, 10am, Esperance Room, CCDC.

The meeting closed at 12:08pm.

Complaints Monitoring 2024/2025

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	3 July 2025
Report of:	Head of Law and Governance
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update members on performance in relation to corporate complaints and complaints referred by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 To update members on performance in relation to complaints for the previous municipal year.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The following report updates members on performance in relation to corporate complaints and complaints referred by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following Corporate Business Objective 3:- To be a well-run, financially sustainable and ambitious organisation responsive to the needs of our customers and communities and focussed on delivering our objectives.

5 Report Detail

5.1 The Complaints Procedure

- 5.1.1 The Council's Complaints Procedure encompasses a two stage procedure. This is in line with the majority of other public authorities and accords with the advice of the Local Government Ombudsman to limit complaints processes to two stages to avoid unduly long processes or delayed access to the Ombudsman. Stage 1 incorporates a response by an officer responsible for the service provided and Stage 2 provides from a response from a Chief Officer if the complainant is not satisfied by the Stage 1 response.
- 5.1.2 Most contacts received by the Council will be classed as service requests rather than complaints. Officers will seek to resolve any such requests at an early stage as a normal part of its business. If the service recipient remains unsatisfied, however, they then have access to the formal complaints process. Under the

process, the Council keeps a central record of all complaints received at Stage 1 and Stage 2.

- 5.1.3 A breakdown of complaints for Stage 1 in 2024/25 compared with the previous year, is as follows:

Service	2023/24	2024/25
Law and Governance	1	0
Development	5	10
Finance	8	2
Transformation and Assurance	0	0
Operations	3	5
Regulatory	2	3
Wellbeing	3	1
Corporate Assets	0	0
Total	22	21

- 5.1.4 A breakdown of complaints for Stage 2 in 2024/25, compared with the previous year is as follows:

Service	2023/24	2024/25
Law and Governance	0	0
Development	1	6
Finance	0	1
Transformation and Assurance	0	0
Operations	2	1
Regulatory	0	1
Wellbeing	1	0
Corporate Assets	0	0
Total	4	9

- 5.1.5 Of the 9 complaints that progressed to Stage 2, the vast majority sought to challenge decisions made by the Council, with one also complaining about the quality of communications received by the complainant.

- 5.1.6 It should be noted that complaints about the Council as a housing landlord are not included in these figures and are reported separately by Housing. Complaints in that area are regulated separately by the Housing Ombudsman rather than the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

- 5.1.7 The Council currently aims to acknowledge stage 1 complaints within 5 working days and respond within 10 working days. The average response times for 2024/25 (in days) were as follows:

Average no. of days to acknowledge: 2
Average no. of days to respond: 13

- 5.1.18 The Council currently aims to acknowledge stage 2 complaints within 5 working days and respond within 20 working days. The average response times for 2024/25 (in days) were as follows:

Average no. of days to acknowledge: 1
Average no. of days to respond: 23

5.2 Complaints referred to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

5.2.1 There were 5 complaints determined by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman during 2024/25, which are summarised at **APPENDIX 1**. This compares to 2 complaints in 2023/24.

5.2.2 Although not a prerequisite, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman will usually only investigate a complaint when the complainant is not satisfied with the response given by the Council at the final stage of the Corporate Complaints process.

5.2.3 As can be seen from the summary included at **APPENDIX 1**, during 2024/25, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman did not find the Council to be at fault in any case.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

None

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Complaints to the LGO 2024/25

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

None

Contact Officer: Ian Curran

Telephone Number: 220

Report Track: Cabinet: 03/07/25

Key Decision: No

Complaints Monitoring 2024/25**Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman 2024/25**

Ref	Decision Date	Subject	Services Involved	Decision
1	12/05/24	Access to housing register	Housing	Insufficient evidence of fault
2	20/08/24	Planning Enforcement	Development	Insufficient evidence of fault
3	29/10/24	Tree maintenance	Operations	Insufficient evidence of fault
4	19/12/24	Anti-social behaviour	Housing	Insufficient evidence of fault
5	27/03/25	Housing Application	Housing	Insufficient evidence of fault

Leisure Contract Procurement

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	3 July 2025
Report of:	Head of Wellbeing
Portfolio:	Community Wellbeing

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the procurement of a new leisure contract which will be able to start delivery from April 2026 and to seek authority to procure the support required to meet the timescales associated.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the procurement of a leisure contract with the new contract being able to start delivery from April 2026. Cabinet will be asked to approve the appointment of the preferred contractor in a separate report to be presented in December 2025.
- 2.2 Cabinet gives delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) in consultation with the Head of Wellbeing, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Leisure, to draw down from the leisure reserve as appropriate to facilitate the procurement and any support required.
- 2.3 That Cabinet note the review of the fixed assets within the leisure portfolio and agree to the commissioning of necessary maintenance and enhancements to the facilities to ensure they support a commercially competitive response to the leisure procurement. Costs for this work will be funded from within the existing leisure reserve. Should forecast costs for this work exceed the amount in the leisure reserve a business case will be brought back to Cabinet seeking approval for additional resources as needed.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.4 An independent review of the current leisure, culture and heritage contract has suggested that elements of the service can operate with lower levels of subsidy than present. To achieve best value, it is important to carry out a procurement exercise for a new contract as soon as possible. A leisure reserve was created, as per the outturn report, to facilitate this process to enable a new contract to be in place and able to deliver from April 2026.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Cannock Chase Council, like many other Councils in England is in a financially challenging situation, with significant uncertainty around future funding settlements. It is essential that best value is achieved in all contracts and services the Council delivers.

- 3.2 The Council intends to commence a procurement process to retender the leisure service, with the intention to have a new contract able to deliver from 01 April 2026.
- 3.3 A recommendation on the appointment of delivery partner will be brought to Cabinet in December 2025.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 Procurement of a new leisure contract supports priority 2 of the Council's Corporate Plan, Health and Wellbeing and, priority 4, a Responsible Council.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 Like other council's Cannock Chase has experienced a sustained period of austerity, resulting in year-on-year savings being made to balance its budget. These savings have been achieved through outsourcing, reducing services and through sharing services with Stafford Borough Council. External contracts have been reviewed and retendered where appropriate. Going forward there remains uncertainty around local government financial settlements with the potential of further savings being required.
- 5.2 The Council outsourced its leisure, culture and heritage provision in April 2012 with the award of a contract to Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL) for a period of 10 years, with the option of two, 5-year extensions.
- 5.3 Before the end of that initial 10-year contract period, March 2020, saw the start of a turbulent period for leisure, culture and heritage providers. The pandemic closed facilities and then allowed limited opening, this was then followed by significant increases in energy prices, high inflation and a cost-of-living crisis. This challenging operating environment meant most operators needed additional support from their local councils, or grant funding to ensure facilities remained open.
- 5.4 It was a particularly challenging time for IHL who in April 2021 saw Wigan Council take its leisure and culture offer back in house, leaving IHL with 2 remaining contracts, Selby District Council and Cannock Chase. This led to a deed of variation in August 2021 between IHL, Selby and Cannock Chase setting out how IHL would be supported through the pandemic and a further deed of variation between Cannock Chase and IHL extending the contract between Cannock Chase Council and IHL to 31 March 2027, subject to agreeing an annual management fee.
- 5.5 In August 2024 IHL's contract with Selby District Council came to an end. Cannock Chase District Council is now IHL's only client.
- 5.6 As set out in the report to Cabinet in November 2024 entitled "Review of Leisure, Culture and Heritage Provision" the environment in 2024 was more stable and the Council took this opportunity to appoint Sport, Leisure and Culture Consultancy (SLC) to carry out an independent review of the contract.

- 5.7 This independent review, coupled with SLC's extensive knowledge of the market suggested to the Council that elements of the service, Cannock Chase Leisure Centre and the Golf Course, Rugeley Leisure Centre and 5s Pavillion, could operate with lower levels of subsidy and become more sustainable, through income growth or reduced overheads.
- 5.8 A duty of the Council is to ensure best value for the services it delivers, therefore, as indicated in the Budget Report that went to Cabinet on 30 January 2025, a retendering of the leisure service has been planned for 2025/26.
- 5.9 To get a new contract in place by April 2026 is achievable, but the timetable is extremely tight and requires significant resources to be focussed on the procurement to ensure the deadline is met. SLC have extensive experience in commissioning leisure services, therefore have been appointed to support the Council through this process. Without their expertise the procurement would be expected to take in the region of 21 months, therefore delaying the start of a new contract. It should also be noted that given the Council have outsourced leisure provision for the last 13 years, there isn't the necessary specialist experience in house to carry out a leisure procurement.
- 5.10 Throughout the procurement additional support will be required to meet the deadlines, for example, external legal advice. It was for this purpose that a leisure reserve was created. To ensure that timescales are met, and a robust procurement is carried out it is recommended that this budget be drawn on as required to get the support that is necessary in a timely manner.
- 5.11 Throughout the process decisions will need to be made which will shape the contract, these will be taken by the Head of Wellbeing and Deputy Chief Executive (Resources) and Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community Wellbeing and Leader of the Council. A project board has been created which is responsible for overseeing and directing the project. In addition to this there is a programme of officer and stakeholder consultation that will ensure views are heard on what the new contract should look like.
- 5.12 When the procurement has reached the stage whereby a preferred contractor has been identified, the decision on their appointment will be brought to Cabinet. This is planned for December 2025.
- 5.13 In 2024 CBRE were commissioned to assess the stock condition of the facilities owned by the Council and leased to and operated by IHL. This identified the works required to ensure the facilities were kept in good condition both now and in future. It is important that the new contract starts with buildings in a good condition, therefore it is intended that necessary maintenance and any potential enhancements to the assets are carried out, if possible, prior to the new contract starting. This will support the authority's ambition to get the best possible commercially competitive response to the tendering exercise. As set out in the recommendations, the costs of this will be funded from the leisure reserve and should the forecast costs exceed the amount in the reserve, a separate business case will be brought to Cabinet for consideration seeking approval for additional resources as needed.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

A leisure reserve was created as part of the 2023/24 outturn/2025/6 budget setting process. This reserve was intended to support the exercises described above. Usage of this reserve will be reported on as part of the annual outturn report. It is a finite sum of monies so no more can be spent than is currently held in the reserve.

Monies will be used as per the approval process described above, with delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive resources in consultation with the head of wellbeing, leader and portfolio holder for leisure.

6.2 Legal

The procurement, award and subsequent contract will be subject to the Council's own decision making and governance requirements. The procurement must be compliant with the Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's procurement regulations.

Failure to comply can expose the Council to legal challenges. Specialist legal support has been engaged to ensure compliance with all procurement and contractual arrangements of a new leisure contract

Consideration will need to be given to the in-house capacity to deal with the provision of advice and drafting of any necessary legal agreements relating to the maintenance and potential enhancements to the assets.

6.3 Human Resources

There are no direct human resources implications for employees of the Council as the service is already outsourced, however the Human Resources team will need to engage with the current contractor ahead of the tender process to collate a summary of anonymised information relating to those employees who are expected to be subject to a TUPE transfer.

6.4 Risk Management

Provision of affordable and sustainable leisure provision is a risk on the Council's Strategic Risk Register, with one of the actions to mitigate the risk being procurement of a new Leisure Contract to which this report relates.

A separate risk register has been established for this procurement and is being monitored and updated on a weekly basis.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Procurement of a new leisure contract will consider matters of equality, inclusion and diversity to ensure facilities are accessible and inclusive to all.

6.6 Health

Leisure services are an important part of promoting and supporting a populations physical and mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring best value for delivery of these services will ensure that residents of Cannock Chase are able to continue to benefit from these facilities. The current contract has a strong focus on community health and wellbeing and this is something that will be equally important going forward.

6.7 Climate Change

Consultation will take place with the Climate Change Officer to ensure the procurement and future contract support the Council's Climate Change Strategy. This will include, but not be limited to, consideration of carbon reduction initiatives and the sustainability of the facilities.

7 Appendices

None.

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Review of Leisure, Culture and Heritage Provision, Cabinet, 28 November 2024

General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2024-28, Cabinet, 30 January 2025

Contact Officer:	Anna Nevin
Telephone Number:	01785 619 176
Ward Interest:	All
Report Track:	Cabinet
Key Decision:	No