



Please ask for: Matt Berry
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29 October 2025

Dear Councillor,

Cabinet

6:00pm on Thursday 6 November 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:

Thornley, S.	Leader of the Council
Williams, D.	Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Thornley, S.J.	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader
Samuels, G.	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 9 October 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 November 2025 to January 2026 (Item 5.1 - 5.3).

6. Outturn 2024/25

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer (Item 6.1 - 6.35).

7. Local Government Reorganisation and Shared Services Transformation

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 7.1 - 7.7).

8. Former Tenant Arrears Policy 2025

Report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 8.1 - 8.19).

9. Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2 2025/26

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive-Resources (Item 9.1 - 9.9).

The appendix (Item 9.6 - 9.9) to the report is confidential due to the inclusion of:

- Information relating to any individual.
- Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
- Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any person.

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 9 October 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

Thornley, S.	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
Samuels, G.	Parks, Culture and Heritage Portfolio Leader
Freeman, M.	Regeneration & High Streets Portfolio Leader

43. Apologies

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor J. Prestwood, Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader.

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

None received.

45. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2025 be approved.

46. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

(i) Regeneration and High Streets

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Employment and Claimant Rates**

“The current employment rate up to September 2025 for Cannock Chase District is 81.5% of the economically active population for the age group between 16-64. This compares favourably to the West Midlands rate of 73.9% and the national rate of 75.4%.

In terms of the claimant count, of those people who couldn't work, the claimant rate in Cannock Chase at August 2025, was 1,960, 3.1% of the resident population aged between 16-64. This is just above the countywide rate of 2.8%, but significantly below the national claimant rate of 4.1%. The claimant count in Staffordshire saw an increase of 280 claimants over the last month. The total number of claimants in the County now stood at 15,300. There was an increase in the claimant count this month across the majority of districts in Staffordshire. It is important to highlight that all the districts have a lower claimant rate than both the regional and national rates.

We will continue to support these residents who unfortunately find themselves out of work to access employment through our partnership working."

- **Cannock Town Centre Regeneration**

"Demolition of the former multi-storey car park is continuing at pace, and the demolition works should be completed in the coming weeks. The planning application for the demolition of the former Forum shopping centre will be considered by the Planning Control Committee on 15 October. Positive discussions are continuing with potential operators who are interested in the town centre regeneration opportunity that is being created.

McArthurGlen Phase 2 and M&S planning decisions - very positive news. Planning permission has been granted for phase two of the hugely successful McArthurGlen Designer Outlet, bringing more investment and jobs to the District.

Equally, it is pleasing to see investment in a new, larger M&S Foodhall on the Orbital retail park. Again, this will be an excellent new development for our District, and the new store is due to open at Christmas, or just before."

- **Official Opening of Coronation Court, Cannock**

"The Leader and I, together with the Head of Economic Development & Planning, attended the official opening of Coronation Court in Cannock, last Tuesday.

I want to give my thanks to Exemplar Healthcare for investing in Cannock, transforming a car park into a state-of-the-art facility. Coronation Court not only provides high-quality care for residents with complex needs but also creates stable and rewarding jobs for local people."

- **Economic Development Events**

"The Economic Development team organised a successful 'Boost Your Business' event on Tuesday morning at the Aquarius Ballroom in Hednesford. The event showcased the wealth of support granted by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund available to local businesses and was well received with 40 local businesses turning up. Thank you to the partner organisations who helped to make the event a success and to the Economic Development team for organising it.

Added to that, I also attended 'Grants for Growth', another event assisting small businesses who could apply for grants between £1,000-£10,000. It was another successful event organised by the Economic Development team held in the Civic Centre Ballroom."

(ii) **Environment and Climate Change**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **New Appointments**

“We are pleased to announce that we have appointed two new Climate Change Officers, Martyne and Jayke. Martyne, the Climate Action Officer, will work with businesses around climate strategy and help support them in accessing funding to achieve Net Zero goals. Jayke will be working as the Climate Change Officer and supporting the Council with our climate strategy. I would like to officially welcome them to the team.”

- **Cannock Chase SAC Joint Strategic Board Meeting**

“I attended the Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Joint Strategic Board meeting on 17 September at Walsall. I was honoured to be appointed the Vice-Chair of the group.

Ian Marshall, the team leader of Cannock Chase National Landscape (CCNL) (formerly known as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) gave us a thorough presentation of this Internally Important Conservation Area. An interesting aspect of the presentation was that the Chase was internationally important for Adders and White-claw Crayfish.

There was an interesting question asked after the presentation about the Hednesford Hills being included in the National Landscape as its omission has been a historical anomaly. I also raised the issue of parts of the Chasewater and South Staffordshire Site of Special Scientific Interest in Norton Canes and Heath Hayes being of poor or declining quality. I was assured to hear that work was being undertaken around these sites to try and improve the quality.

One area of concern was the lack of progress on the Car Parking Strategy for the CCNL which will be funded through SAC money. There needs to be a licence/legal agreement to move the project forward with Staffordshire County Council. I proposed that we should write to the relevant cabinet members at the County Council as they were not at the meeting and this was unanimously agreed. The chairman of the group, Tony Pearce, has subsequently written to them asking for a meeting of the voting members of the SAC board with County Councillors and officers to discuss moving the project forward.”

- **Staffordshire Sustainability Board**

“I attended the Staffordshire Sustainability Board on the 30th of July at the council chambers in Staffordshire County Council. During the meeting we discussed our future vision and commitments to the group. There is a draft currently being finalised which will be brought forward to this Cabinet at a later date to approve. I was pleased that the group agreed to continue to recognise the principle of Net Zero in the vision and I look forward to presenting this report to Cabinet soon.”

(iii) **Parks, Culture and Heritage**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Laburnum Avenue Park**

“On Thursday 2 October 2025 I filmed a short video with Kompan to show off the play area that they installed. The goals were to highlight how the play area was making a difference for local families, what was new and exciting about the equipment, and what it was like working with Kompan to bring our ideas to life. In advance of, and preparation for, this shoot, I attended a litter-picking session on Sunday 28 September, hosted by the Friends of Laburnum Avenue Park.”

- **Cannock Park**

- o *“Dinosaur* - this has had to be removed following repeated vandalism. It has been taken into storage to be repaired, with security fencing installed, and replaced within the main flower bed on the Park Road gate entrance. This will be done by the end of October.
- o *Fitness pop-up* - a temporary fitness suite has been installed near the leisure centre, by Kompan, between 7th and 17th October 2025. This is for us to test out its quality and determine what use it might have. Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles will be using this equipment for some classes this month.
- o *Play area* - the sand digger on site will have to be removed as it is not fit-for-purpose and a new digger reinstalled. Timescale is to be determined by Kompan.

Other issues to be addressed on the play area include replacement signage stating no dogs allowed, additional signage for people with communications issues, and repairs to soft spots in the wet pour surfacing.

- o *Heritage trail* - there is a current project, with the Friends of Cannock Park, to install some heritage signboards throughout the park and on the pathway to Shoal Hill. These will be installed by the end of March 2026. Quoting for this work should be any week now.
- o *Arts project* - a current arts project is ongoing, to repaint the existing shutters with a new more site-specific and friendly narrative. This work has been quoted and an order placed. The winning contractor will work with local schools to come up with some vibrant images that can be spray painted onto the shutters and leisure centre wall. This work is expected to be completed by the end of December 2025.
- o *Tree planting* - in conjunction with the Forest of Mercia climate change programme and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, there are plans to plant a further 2,000-plus tree whips on the golf course.
- o *Promotional video* - as with Laburnum Avenue park, I shot another short video with Kompan on Thursday 2 October 2025.”

- **Meeting with Lynn Evans**

“On Friday 3 October, I met with Lynn Evans, Community & Education Officer (along with Steve Clarke, Cleansing Supervisor, and some of the Rangers) to get a stronger understanding of her role as Community Officer for Parks & Open Spaces. This was followed by me speaking with and observing a work experience sessions with pupils from Hednesford Valley High.”

- **Officer Briefing Meetings**

“9 October with Colin Donnelly (Project Manager); 17 October with Anna Nevin (Head of Wellbeing) and team regarding culture, heritage, theatres and the arts; and 24 October, monthly briefing with Joss Presland (Head of Operations) and team.”

(iv) **Community Wellbeing**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Community Safety**

“Our implementation of enhanced Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) continues to deliver results. Since renewal in February, the Community Safety team and local policing team have issued 90 warning letters to offenders for anti-social behaviour (ASB) across the District. Importantly, 84% of the cases have been resolved at that stage, which shows the effectiveness of the policy to get people to change their behaviour without further action needed.

Those who breach the PSPO a second time are issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN), and we have issued 14 of those since February. Non-payment of the FPN, or a further breach of the Order will result in a summons to the courts. Sadly, the Community Safety team are currently preparing five files for the court. Early intervention works and if you persist in ASB in the District you will face the consequences. Of those under 18, every effort is being made to support them to change their behaviour as part of the multi-agency response prior to criminalisation.

As we’re in spooky season and Halloween is soon upon us, glow in the dark no trick-or-treat cards have been printed to help reassure vulnerable residents on those who do not wish to be disturbed. They’ll be available from reception from the 13 October and we’re also posting them to residents who contact us. If Members want some for their constituents, they need to email the Partnerships team and they will be placed in pigeon-holes, but there are only limited supplies available.”

- **Bleed Kits**

“Following the installation of six additional life-saving bleed kits earlier in the year, the Council is running training sessions in November, one in Cannock, one in Hednesford, and one in Rugeley, with 25 spaces per session.”

- **Homelessness Support**

“I’m pleased to announce that we have in place a new homelessness consultant social worker. That person is bridging the gap between housing and social care on complex cases.

We're working with the Staffordshire Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS) to develop a new complex care pathway for rough sleepers, particularly those who are hard to engage. We are joint funding an outreach post who will take the service to the streets, the job advert for which closes on 17 October.

"I am particularly pleased that our first Spring Housing resident is ready to graduate to a secure Council tenancy, they keep their home and support they have built around them and our second is due to graduate soon. This is our housing first programme working, intensive support for rough sleepers in their homes with real outcomes.

We have been recently managing some particularly complex individual cases regarding close co-ordination between the community wellbeing and the housing team, so it is good to see that cross-portfolio collaboration."

(vi) **Housing and Corporate Assets**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Repairs Service**

"We've had a big backlog in the repairs service for Council properties, mainly fencing. It has been absolutely horrendous this year; we've had I think three storms which have brought down metres and metres of fencing. So much so, we have employed Waites to help with repairing all the fences. We've got Waites for another two weeks, but the Depot is actually booked up now until next year with fencing repairs. All other repairs are going on normally.

It has been highlighted that properties were going to be looked at for trip hazards as we've had some complaints about trip hazards so that was another exercise they're going to be doing in Council properties."

- **Waiting List and Housing Provision**

"As of Monday, there was 1,117 people on the waiting list for social housing properties. I've had a couple of people phone me about the former Power Station site in Rugeley. We're not actually building on that site; all I can say it is Linden Homes and Bovis Homes actually building there. They're building private rented and social rented, which I presume will be going to housing associations, and they're also building shared ownership."

47. Forward Plan

Resolved:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period October to December 2025 (Item 5.1 - 5.3) be noted.

48. Housing Board Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Housing Board held on 13 August 2025 (Item 6.1 - 6.7) be noted.

49. 2024-25 Housing Services Annual Report to Tenants

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 7.1 - 7.16).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The 2024-25 Housing Services Annual Report (as attached at appendix 1 to the Cabinet report) be agreed for publication on the Council's website and circulated to tenants.
- (B) If required, the Housing of Housing and Corporate Assets, following consultation with the Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader, be authorised to make amendments to the 2024-25 Housing Services Annual Report prior to its publication.

Reason 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 circulated to tenants and leaseholders in conjunction with the next edition of the tenants' newsletter.

50. Responding to Statutory Consultations on the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Consideration was given to the joint report of the Head of Economic Development & Planning and the Head of Operations (Item 8.1 - 8.7).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The purpose and progress of the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the process for its publication be noted.
- (B) Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Economic Development & Planning and the Head of Operations, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leaders, to respond to both the pre-consultation draft and the full consultation of the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Reasons for Decisions

Mandated under the Environment Act 2020, Local Nature Recovery Strategies were being developed in every area of England at the county scale. In Staffordshire, this was being led by Staffordshire County Council as the 'Responsible Authority'. Cannock Chase Council was a 'Supporting Authority' to the Staffordshire-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Regulation 7 of the Environment (Local Nature Recovery Strategies) (Procedure) Regulations 2023 required Responsible Authorities to provide all Supporting Authorities with the draft strategy and request their comments, prior to issue of the full consultation document.

There was a limited timeframe for comments to be provided by Support Authorities (28 days) which did not allow time for scrutiny of the pre-consultation draft and then reporting to Cabinet with recommendations. Therefore, delegated authority was sought to enable the Council to respond to the pre-consultation draft of the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Local Nature Recovery Strategy and then later the full consultation on behalf of the Council.

51. Capital Investment to Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres and Cannock Park Golf Course

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 9.1 - 9.5).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The request for £2,306,000 of capital funds to enhance facilities at Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres and Cannock Park Golf Course be approved.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 5 November 2025, be recommended to incorporate the £2,306,000 in the capital budget for the 2025/26 financial year.

Reasons for Decisions:

The capital investment would enhance the offer at both leisure centres, improving the health and wellbeing of residents in the District. The new facilities at both leisure centres would bring in different cohorts of customers as well as providing a wider offer to existing customers.

Investment in the golf course would ensure a good quality course, essential for retaining members and attracting new members to the sport, in particular introducing younger residents to golf.

The meeting closed at 6:56pm.

Leader

CCDC Forward Plan of Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet: November 2025 to January 2026

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
November 2025						
Outturn 2024/25	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer / Leader of the Council / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	06/11/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Local Government Reorganisation and Shared Services Transformation	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	06/11/25	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Former Tenant Arrears Policy 2025	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	06/11/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2 2025/26	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	06/11/25	No	Yes (Appendix only)	Information relating to any individual and likely to reveal the identity of an individual. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).	None.
Proposal for Local Government Re-organisation and Devolution	Chief Executive / Leader of the Council	19/11/25	Yes	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
December 2025						
Quarter 2 Performance Report 2025/26	Head of Transformation and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Housing Services Q2 Performance Report 2025/26	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Updated Strategic Risk Register	Head of Transformation and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Governance Improvement Plan Update - Q2 2025/26	Head of Transformation and Assurance / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Vehicle Replacement	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Tree Management-Stage 2 - Resourcing	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Health and Safety Monitoring	Head of Operations / Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
Appointment of Leisure Contractor	Head of Wellbeing / Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
Planning Enforcement Policy	Head of Economic Development and Planning / Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A

Item No. 5.3

Item	Contact Officer / Cabinet Member	Date of Cabinet	Key Decision	Confidential Item	Reasons for Confidentiality	Representations Received
Cannock Town Centre Regeneration	Head of Economic Development and Planning / Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader	04/12/25	No	No	N/A	N/A
January 2026						
Permission to Spend - Community Safety Funding	Head of Wellbeing / Community Wellbeing Portfolio Leader	29/01/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2026-2029	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer / Leader of the Council / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	29/01/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Rent Setting 2026/27	Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	29/01/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2025/26 to 2028/29	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	29/01/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2025/26 to 2028/29	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources / Head of Housing & Corporate Assets / Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader	29/01/26	No	No	N/A	N/A
Treasury Management, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, and Annual Investment Strategy 2026/27	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources & S151 Officer / Leader of the Council / Resources and Transformation Portfolio Leader	29/01/26	No	No	N/A	N/A

Outturn 2024/25

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 November 2025
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources & S151 Officer
Portfolios:	Leader of the Council / Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet the outturn position for 2024/25.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the outturn position for the year ending 31 March 2025 be noted.
- 2.2 That the financing of the capital programme as outlined in the report be approved.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.3 The Budget report set out an indicative capital programme and financing, this report now sets out the actual capital spend and therefore financing to be approved.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Budget for 2024/25 was revised as part of the Budget report to Cabinet on the 30 January 2025 which set out a forecast transfer to balances of £0.485 million pounds.
- 3.2 The Portfolio outturn for 2024/25 shows a favourable variance of £0.424 million consisting of a number of variations.
- 3.3 Investment income in year has increased by £0.390 million as compared to the Revised Budget. This change has occurred due to the following factors
- Interest rates remained higher for longer than anticipated giving an additional gross investment income above budget of £0.329 million.
 - The interest earned is the gross amount for the authority, part of this is payable to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), therefore there is an additional amount payable in interest payable line of £0.010 million.
 - The budget also assumed an amount in relation to interest on balances held by the authority in relation to repayable grants, due to the fall in inflation and spend the budget of £0.054 million was not required.
- 3.4 Technical items show an unfavourable variance of £0.730 million reflecting contributions made to reserves.
- 3.5 Income from the Business Rates Retention Scheme was some £0.160 million higher than anticipated.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The outturn for 2024/25 covers all of the Council's priorities.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 This report provides an analysis of the outturn position for 2024/25. It covers the following accounts:
- General Fund Revenue account – which bears the net cost of providing day-to-day services.
 - Business Rates Retention
 - Capital expenditure and how it is financed.
 - Collection Fund.
- 5.2 The accounts are provisional at this stage and are still subject to Audit. No changes to the accounts that impact upon Council Taxpayers are however envisaged due to the technical nature of the audit process.

General Fund Revenue Outturn

- 5.3 The table overleaf summarises the outturn position of the General Fund Revenue Account for the year compared with the budget position.
- 5.4 The Council's Net Expenditure (Portfolio Budgets) in relation to the Revenue Budget for 2024/25 financial year was set by the Council in February 2024 at a net expenditure of **£15.703 million**. In determining the 2025/26 Budget in January 2025 Council approved the Forecast Outturn for 2024/25 of **£15.126 million**, a reduction of £0.577 million as compared to the Original Budget.
- 5.5 The Revised Budget reflected the inflationary increases in costs and known changes in the forecast.

Cannock Preliminary Outturn 2024/25

		Revised Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance to Revised £'000
	Portfolios			
1	Community Wellbeing	2,934	2,888	46
2	Environment & Climate Change	4,256	4,095	161
3	Housing	1,313	1,243	70
4	Leader of the Council	1,336	1,311	25
5	Parks, Culture and Heritage	2,114	1,925	189
6	Regeneration & High Streets	1,227	1,182	45
7	Resources & Transformation	4,046	4,158	-112
8	Total Portfolios	17,226	16,802	424
9	Investment Income	-2,759	-3,149	390
10	Interest Payable	444	453	-9
11	Technical Items	1,866	2,596	-730
12	Net Expenditure	16,777	16,702	75
13	Use of Government Grants	-1,651	-1,729	78
14	Net Revenue Budget	15,126	14,973	153
	Financed by:			
	Business Rates			
15	Core Funding	-3,291	-3,291	0
16	Growth / S31 Grants	-2,187	-2,226	39
17	Business Rates Pool	-1,152	-1,273	121
18	Revenue Support Grant	-131	-131	0
19	Fund guarantee grant	-1,542	-1,542	0
20	Core spending power grant	-21	-21	0
21	Council Tax deficit	38	38	0
22	Council Tax	-7,324	-7,324	0
23	Total Financing	-15,610	-15,770	160
24	Trf to/(from) working balances	484	797	-313
25	Net Revenue Budget	15,126	14,973	153

- 5.6 The table above shows that net expenditure including Investment Income, Technical financing adjustments and use of government grants was **£14.973 million, £0.153 million** (1.01%) less than the budget.
- 5.7 The actual expenditure on portfolio budgets was £0.424 million (2.46%) lower than anticipated with Investment Income being £0.390 million higher than expected due to the increased interest rates, and reduced interest on balances held. Interest payable shows the additional investment income due to the HRA. Technical items show a variance of £0.730 million reflecting additional reserve contributions.

- 5.8 Government grants show additional income of £0.078 million, the main variation relates to the compensation grant received from the government in respect of the business rates multiplier which has been frozen and councils are receiving compensation for this via specific grant.
- 5.8 Business rates incomes shows additional receipts of £0.160 million with the overall position, actual net expenditure, and financing, resulting in a transfer to working balances of £0.797 million. This was as compared to the budgeted figure which envisaged at contribution to reserves of £0.484 million, at year end an additional £0.313 million contribution was made.

Net Portfolio Expenditure

- 5.9 Net portfolio expenditure was £0.424 million lower than the budget. The principal cost variations, on each portfolio are as follows ((-) is an unfavourable variance (+) is a favourable variance):

Community Wellbeing

- CCTV - staff variations £7,000 (-), reduced supplies £15,000 (+), grant funding re safer streets was also received and spent of £7,000
- Grants - one off reduction in contributions £23,000 (+)
- Housing services - staff variations £21,000 (+)
- Leisure contract sports - survey works £24,000 (-)
- Partnerships - reduced property costs £8,000 (+) and reduced supplies £4,000 (+)
- Stadium - reduced operational costs and additional income £3,000 (+)
- Leisure planning and marketing - general underspends £3,000 (+)

Environment and Climate Change

- Waste - reduced chargeable waste income £16,000 (-), additional recycling income £34,000 (+), contract payments £30,000 (-) and reduced supplies £11,000 (+)
- Regulatory services - staff variations £40,000 (+) and other variations £6,000 (+)
- Cleansing - reduced costs £4,000 (+)
- Drainage - reduced maintenance costs £4,000 (+)
- Countryside management - staff variations £39,000 (+)
- Off street parking - additional income £28,000 (+), reduced maintenance and utility costs £26,000 (+)
- Conservation areas - staff variations £2,000 (-)
- Food Safety - reduced supplies £8,000 (+) and additional income £6,000 (+)
- Management and Administration - staff variations £18,000 (-)
- Mortuary - reduced maintenance costs £5,000 (+)
- Licensing - reduced income £17,000 (-), staff variations £30,000 (+) and other variations £3,000 (+)

Housing (Housing General Fund)

- Caretakers and Cleaners - staffing variations £28,000 (+) and reduced supplies etc £2,000 (+)
- Circular 8/95 - increased recharge of costs HRA £13,000 (-)
- Civic ballroom - additional income £5,000 (+)
- Housing Act Advances - archiving destruction charges £12,000 (-)
- Miscellaneous properties - additional properties purchased as part of regeneration scheme expenditure £28,000 (-) and rental income £17,000 (+)
- Private sector housing - staff variations £41,000 (-), supplies £3,000 (-) and additional income £5,000 (+)
- Public Buildings - additional income £75,000 (+), staff variations £7,000 (+), reduced utilities costs £84,000 (+), reserve contribution maintenance underspends across the portfolios £70,000 (-) and other variations £12,000 (+)

Leader of the Council

- Members - reduced members allowances £10,000 (+), and other variations £9,000 (+)
- Executive Management and support - reduced costs £5,000 (+)

Parks, Culture and Heritage

- Grounds maintenance – staffing variations £100,000 (+); supplies £27,000 (+), other variations £15,000 (+), additional income £98,000 (+) less transfer Trading reserve £106,000 (-), earmarked reserve contributions £27,000 (-)
- Parks and Open spaces - staffing variations £24,000 (-), reduced income £24,000 (-), underspend on services etc £78,000 (+), utility costs £20,000 (+), less transfer Trading reserve £40,000 (-)
- Cemeteries - staffing variations £8,000 (-), cost for opening and closing gates £4,000 (-), reduced public buildings spend £13,000 (+), additional income £18,000 (+), reduced supplies £14,000 (+), and other variations £8,000 (+)
- Allotments - reduced costs £2,000 (+)
- Street Cleansing - staffing variations £28,000 (-), additional fee income £5,000 (+), underspend supplies and transport £6,000 (+)
- Vehicles - staffing variations £13,000 (+), supplies etc £14,000 (-) and reduced income £16,000 (-)
- Tourism - UKREiiF £12,000 (-) and reduced supplies £2,000 (+)
- Contract monitoring - staffing variations £55,000 (+), reduced transport costs £4,000 (+), additional income £4,000 (+), reduced supplies etc £9,000 (+)

Regeneration and High Streets

- Building Control - staffing variations £82,000 (+), reduced supplies etc £18,000 (+), income and contributions £45,000 (+), less shared service reserve contribution £184,000 (-)
- Development Control – staffing variations £6,000 (net of biodiversity grant income) (-), additional grant income £50,000 (+), additional reserve contribution grant income £50,000 (-), other variations £7,000 (-)

- Economic Development - staffing variations £20,000 (+) other variations £3,000 (+), levelling up additional costs £144,000 (-), levelling up capacity funding £50,000 (+), reserve funding for levelling up £104,000 (+)
- Industrial sites - reduced public buildings £3,000 (+) reduced income £4,000 (-), and other variations £3,000 (+)
- Land charges - staff variations £6,000 (-), reduced supplies £10,000 (+), and additional search fee income £10,000 (+)
- Management and Support - staffing variations £23,000 (+), reduced reserve funding £23,000 (-) and reduced grant funding £14,000 (-)
- Town Centre management - reduced public buildings £16,000 (+), reduced utilities £2,000 (+) and additional rent income £32,000 (+)
- Markets - reduced public buildings £9,000 (+), reduced utilities £8,000 (+), backdated rates £21,000 (-), reduced supplies £13,000 (+) and additional income £3,000 (+)

Resources and Transformation

- Technology - additional supplies £15,000 (-)
- Human Resources - additional supplies etc £6,000 (-)
- Customer services - staffing variations £21,000 (-), reduced supplies £10,000 (+)
- Corporate Services - staffing variations £12,000 (+), additional postage costs £19,000 (-) and reduced supplies £3,000 (+)
- Communications - Staffing variations £31,000 (+)
- Policy and Performance - staffing variations £1,000 (+) and reduced supplies £5,000 (+)
- Risk - increased cost of insurance premiums £10,000 (-)
- Customer services management - Staffing variations £36,000 (+)
- Taxation - staffing variations £342,000 (-), postages £90,000 (-), increased bad debts provision £53,000 (-), audit fees £30,000 (-), supplies £5,000 (-), additional income, reserves and grants £403,000 (+) and shared service contributions £177,000 (+)
- Finance - staffing variations £229,000 (+) reserve funding for supplies £51,000 (+), shared service contributions £21,000 (+), additional supplies etc £91,000 (-) and contributions to shared service reserve £232,000 (-)
- Corporate management - increased cost of asset valuation £20,000 (-), reduced audit costs due to delays in audit and rebate £122,000 (+), reduced supplies £3,000 (+), and additional grant from government for audit fees £21,000 (+)
- Non distributed costs - additional pension payments £1,000 (-)
- Excluded items - additional bad debts provision £3,000 (-), reduced energy and underspend estimate across the authority £75,000 (-) and corporate vacancy factor £35,000 (-)
- Democratic services - staffing variations £32,000 (+)
- Elections - staffing variations £8,000 (-) and additional supplies £7,000 (-)
- Benefits payments - additional cost reflecting subsidy return £215,000 (-)

- 5.10 A summary of performance of the main streams of income against budget is set out in the following table:

Main Streams of Income

	Revised £'000	Actual £'000	Variance £'000
Waste & Recycling	(1,814)	(1,829)	15
Off-Street Parking	(763)	(779)	16
Markets	(34)	(28)	(6)
Building Control	(339)	(363)	24
Local Taxation	(362)	(456)	94
Development Control	(366)	(363)	(3)
Licensing	(230)	(214)	(16)
Public Buildings	(273)	(344)	71
Cemeteries	(187)	(199)	12
Town Centre Management	(127)	(142)	15
Grounds Maintenance	(106)	(205)	99
Industrial Sites	(124)	(117)	(7)
Land Charges	(58)	(67)	9
Bus Shelters	(26)	(26)	-
Leisure Contract Sports	(192)	(189)	(3)
Leisure Contract Heritage	(2)	(2)	-
Total Main Sources	(5,003)	(5,323)	320

- 5.11 Overall income levels were £0.320 million higher than the revised budget. The major variations related to Public buildings, Grounds maintenance and Local Taxation which showed additional income.
- 5.12 More detailed explanations for all expenditure and income variances greater than £10,000 and 10% are attached for each portfolio at **ANNEX 1**.

Business Rates Retention

- 5.13 The Business Rates Retention Scheme forms part of the current Funding regime for Local Government and incentivises Councils to promote economic growth in their area as they are entitled to retain a share of business rates growth.
- 5.14 The scheme came into operation with effect from April 2013; therefore 2024/25 is the twelfth year of operation. Income being shared between central government, the Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Service and the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Business Rates Pool.
- 5.15 The business rates growth figure was £0.039 million higher than anticipated, of this amount £0.007 million related to growth with the balance being attributable to additional business rates grants.
- 5.16 The business rates pool balance was also £0.121 million higher than anticipated due to increase in the business rates growth and additional grants.

Working Balances

- 5.17 The outturn shows a contribution from working balances on the General Fund of £0.797 million with a resultant £2.410 million balance as at the 31 March 2025. As the Council policy is to retain a working balance of £1.0 million the £1.410 million transfer will be able to support future budgets.

Capital Outturn

- 5.18 The Council approves the Capital Programme for the financial year as part of the budget process and the amount that can be spent is limited by the amount of capital resources available to the Council. The 2024/25 capital programme was approved in February 2024 and updated as part of the revised budget set as part of the 25/26 budget cycle.
- 5.19 Many of the schemes within the Capital Programme take some time to develop and implement so the detailed programme can experience many changes. Considerable variation will therefore arise over the 18-month period from the time the Capital Programme for the financial year is initially considered, right through to the end of March of the relevant year.
- 5.20 The Council spent £7.878 million on General Fund capital projects in 2024/25 which was £2.193 million less than the budget of £10.071 million. This is primarily as a result of timing delays in bringing projects to fruition. Of this underspend, £1.124 million relates to DFG spend, £0.445 million for Cannock Park phase 1 and £0.252 million relates to delays in the Levelling up fund project.

Capital Outturn Position

	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance from Budget £'000
Environment & Climate Change	84	97	(13)
Parks, Culture and Heritage	1,689	1,034	655
Resources and Transformation	208	196	12
Community Wellbeing	2,567	1,347	1,220
Housing	12	3	9
Regeneration and High Streets	5,511	5,201	310
Total	10,071	7,878	2,193

The major items of capital spend in the year were:

- **£4.488 million** on Levelling Up Fund
- **£1.043 million** on Disabled Facilities Grants.
- **£0.400 million** on UK Shared Prosperity Fund
- **£0.280 million** on Laburnum Avenue Phase 1

The detailed Capital Programme outturn for 2024/25 is attached at **ANNEX 2** along with explanations for major variations.

5.21 The capital programme of £7.878 million was financed in the following way:

Capital Financing	£'000
Capital grants and contributions	6,556
Capital receipts	247
Direct Revenue Financing	1,075
Total	7,878

Collection Fund

5.22 Cannock Chase is the billing authority and as such has a statutory requirement to establish and maintain a separate fund covering the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and national non-domestic rates (NNDR). Net Business Rates attributable to the Council are accounted for as part of the General Fund under the new Business Rates regime.

Council Tax

5.23 The net position on the Collection Fund for the year was a surplus of £0.513 million for Council Tax after taking into account distribution of previous year deficits in year. The overall position for Council tax leaves a net deficit on the fund of £0.744 million at 31 March 2025 (of which £0.094 million relates to this Council).

National Non-Domestic Rates

5.24 A surplus of £1.110 million exists in relation to Business Rates as at 31 March 2025. The deficit is however notional and represents a timing difference between estimated Business Rates returns and actual returns. This Council's actual retained Business Income is in line with the Income and Expenditure account after taking into account the timing deficit required as part of the Collection Fund Statutory requirements.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The financial implications have been referred to throughout the report.

6.2 Legal

The legal implications have been referred to throughout the report.

6.3 Human Resources

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

6.4 Risk Management

Nil.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

Nil.

6.6 Health

Nil.

6.7 Climate Change

Nil.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed Revenue Outturn 2024/25

Appendix 2 - Capital Outturn 2024/25

8 Previous Consideration

None.

9 Background Papers

Available in Financial Services.

Contact Officer: Chris Forrester

Report Track: Cabinet: 06/11/25

Key Decision: No

COMMUNITY WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
CCTV					
Expenditure	314,450	298,177	16,273	5.2%	
Income	(112,710)	(105,876)	(6,834)	6.1%	
Net	201,740	192,300	9,440		
Grants and Contributions					
Expenditure	114,260	91,630	22,630	19.8%	Reduced contributions primarily due to external funding received
Net	114,260	91,630	22,630		
Housing Services					
Expenditure	1,538,470	2,064,275	(525,805)	(34.2%)	Asylum grant (£45k), bed and breakfast costs (£298k), grant funded homeless prevention (£207k) and staffing variations £21k
Income	(1,230,170)	(1,779,431)	549,261	(44.6%)	Asylum grant £45k, housing benefit recovered £287k, homeless prevention grant £207k and minor variations
Net	308,300	284,844	23,456		
Leisure Contract Sports					
Expenditure	2,096,300	2,120,535	(24,235)	(1.2%)	
Income	(191,890)	(189,383)	(2,507)	1.3%	
Net	1,904,410	1,931,152	(26,742)		
Partnerships					
Expenditure	337,250	324,414	12,836	3.8%	
Income	(89,890)	(87,792)	(2,098)	2.3%	
Net	247,360	236,622	10,738		

COMMUNITY WELLBEING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-2025

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Stadium					
Expenditure	73,030	70,245	2,785	3.8%	
Income	-	(471)	471	n/a	
Net	73,030	69,774	3,256		
DFG Delivery					
Expenditure	126,560	189,741	(63,181)	(49.9%)	Staffing variations
Income	(126,560)	(189,741)	63,181	(49.9%)	Capitalisation of additional staff costs
Net	-	-	-		
Leisure Planning and Marketing					
Expenditure	98,620	95,533	3,087	3.1%	
Income	(14,180)	(13,966)	(214)	1.5%	
Net	84,440	81,567	2,873		
Portfolio Total	2,933,540	2,887,890	45,650	1.6%	

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Waste and Recycling					
Expenditure	4,444,800	4,662,391	(217,591)	(4.9%)	Food waste implementation grant contributed to reserves (£202k) contract payments (£30k), reduced supplies £13k
Income	(1,836,050)	(2,053,076)	217,026	(11.8%)	
Net	2,608,750	2,609,315	(565)		
Regulatory Services					
Expenditure	455,720	410,291	45,429	10.0%	Staffing variations £40k and minor variations
Income	(26,560)	(26,763)	203	(0.8%)	
Net	429,160	383,527	45,633		
Cleansing Services					
Expenditure	456,080	451,638	4,443	1.0%	
Net	456,080	451,638	4,443		
Drainage Services					
Expenditure	8,880	5,274	3,606	40.6%	
Net	8,880	5,274	3,606		
Countryside Management					
Expenditure	323,480	306,040	17,440	5.4%	One off income (contributed to reserves) £21k
Income	(84,610)	(106,523)	21,913	(25.9%)	
Net	238,870	199,517	39,353		
Public Clocks					
Expenditure	6,710	5,928	782	11.6%	
Net	6,710	5,928	782		

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025						
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)	
	£	£	£	%		
Off Street Parking						
Expenditure	527,580	500,315	27,265	5.2%		
Income	(783,660)	(811,189)	27,529	(3.5%)		
Net	(256,080)	(310,874)	54,794			
Bus Shelters						
Expenditure	38,700	38,562	138	0.4%		
Income	(25,750)	(25,843)	93	(0.4%)		
Net	12,950	12,719	231			
Conservation Areas						
Expenditure	205,280	207,615	(2,335)	(1.1%)		
Net	205,280	207,615	(2,335)			
Food Safety						
Expenditure	400,570	393,888	6,682	1.7%		Food Hygiene scheme income £3k and minor variations
Income	(5,610)	(11,261)	5,651	(100.7%)		
Net	394,960	382,627	12,333			
Management and Administration						
Expenditure	103,560	120,933	(17,373)	(16.8%)	Staffing variations	
Net	103,560	120,933	(17,373)			
Mortuary						
Expenditure	28,930	24,331	4,599	15.9%		
Net	28,930	24,331	4,599			

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Licensing					
Expenditure	211,130	178,249	32,881	15.6%	Staffing variations £30k
Income	(230,420)	(213,606)	(16,814)	7.3%	Reduced income from licences
Net	(19,290)	(35,357)	16,067		
Resilience					
Expenditure	73,250	73,250	-	0.0%	
Income	(50,170)	(50,170)	-	0.0%	
Net	23,080	23,080	-		
Hawks Green Depot					
Expenditure	136,990	137,279	(289)	(0.2%)	
Income	(182,520)	(182,520)	-	0.0%	
Net	(45,530)	(45,241)	(289)		
Climate Change					
Expenditure	60,000	60,000	-	0.0%	
Net	60,000	60,000	-		
Portfolio Total	4,256,310	4,095,031	161,279	3.8%	

HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-2025

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Caretakers and Cleaners					
Expenditure	330,180	299,318	30,862	9.3%	
Income	-	-	-	n/a	
Net	330,180	299,318	30,862		
Circular 8 95					
Expenditure	35,520	48,742	(13,222)	(37.2%)	Additional recharge from HRA
Net	35,520	48,742	(13,222)		
Civic Ballroom					
Expenditure	660	-	660	100.0%	
Income	(6,340)	(10,767)	4,427	(69.8%)	
Net	(5,680)	(10,767)	5,087		
Housing Act Advances					
Expenditure	20	11,878	(11,858)	(59289.2%)	Archiving destruction charges
Net	20	11,878	(11,858)		
Miscellaneous Properties					
Expenditure	6,650	33,910	(27,260)	(409.9%)	Additional costs of property purchased during year including survey costs
Income	(15,570)	(32,752)	17,182	(110.4%)	Rent income from regeneration property purchases during year
Net	(8,920)	1,159	(10,079)		
Private Sector Housing					
Expenditure	237,560	281,595	(44,035)	(18.5%)	Staffing variations
Income	(5,540)	(10,960)	5,420	(97.8%)	Mobile home licence fee income £5k
Net	232,020	270,635	(38,615)		

HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-2025

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Public Buildings					
Expenditure	1,140,260	1,150,656	(10,396)	(0.9%)	
Income	(410,300)	(528,257)	117,957	(28.7%)	Repairs reserve funding £47k, additional service charge income £75k and minor variations
Net	729,960	622,399	107,561		
Portfolio Total	1,313,100	1,243,363	69,737	5.3%	

LEADER PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-2025

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Members					
Expenditure	361,920	342,779	19,141	5.3%	
Net	361,920	342,779	19,141		
Executive Management and Support					
Expenditure	973,700	971,870	1,830	0.2%	
Income	-	(3,635)	3,635	n/a	
Net	973,700	968,235	5,465		
Portfolio Total	1,335,620	1,311,014	24,606	1.8%	

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-2025

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Grounds Maintenance					
Expenditure	1,154,180	1,146,597	7,583	0.7%	
Income	(1,154,180)	(1,252,914)	98,734	(8.6%)	
Net	-	(106,317)	106,317		
Parks and Open Spaces					
Expenditure	1,613,680	1,600,191	13,489	0.8%	
Income	(121,180)	(118,458)	(2,722)	2.2%	
Net	1,492,500	1,481,734	10,766		
Cemeteries					
Expenditure	356,870	333,975	22,895	6.4%	
Income	(189,740)	(207,991)	18,251	(9.6%)	
Net	167,130	125,984	41,146		
Allotments					
Expenditure	4,150	2,867	1,283	30.9%	
Income	(4,640)	(5,499)	859	(18.5%)	
Net	(490)	(2,631)	2,141		
Street Cleansing					
Expenditure	733,140	755,691	(22,551)	(3.1%)	
Income	(733,140)	(737,959)	4,819	(0.7%)	
Net	-	17,732	(17,732)		
Vehicles					
Expenditure	257,180	258,153	(973)	(0.4%)	
Income	(276,580)	(260,112)	(16,468)	6.0%	
Net	(19,400)	(1,959)	(17,441)		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Leisure Contract Heritage and Arts					
Expenditure	310,900	310,900	-	0.0%	
Income	(1,630)	(1,681)	51	(3.1%)	
Net	309,270	309,219	51		
Tourism					
Expenditure	5,990	15,000	(9,010)	(150.4%)	Ukreiff costs (£12k) and minor variations
Net	5,990	15,000	(9,010)		
Contract Monitoring					
Expenditure	218,680	150,237	68,443	31.3%	Staffing variations £55k, reduced transport costs £4k and minor variations
Income	(59,620)	(63,928)	4,308	(7.2%)	
Net	159,060	86,310	72,750		
Portfolio Total	2,114,060	1,925,070	188,990	8.9%	

REGENERATION AND HIGH STREETS PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Building Control					
Expenditure	797,400	882,203	(84,803)	(10.6%)	Staffing variations £82k, reduced transport and supplies £18k and shared service reserve contribution (£184k)
Income	(570,720)	(615,421)	44,701	(7.8%)	Additional income and contributions
Net	226,680	266,782	(40,102)		
Development Control					
Expenditure	528,540	615,803	(87,263)	(16.5%)	Staffing (£33k), digital grant contributed to reserves (£50k) and minor variations
Income	(396,940)	(470,944)	74,004	(18.6%)	Digital planning grant £50k, biodiversity grant £27k and minor variation
Net	131,600	144,859	(13,259)		
Economic Development					
Expenditure	2,053,760	2,174,452	(120,692)	(5.9%)	
Income	(1,821,820)	(1,975,925)	154,105	(8.5%)	
Net	231,940	198,527	33,413		
Industrial Sites					
Expenditure	11,310	5,870	5,440	48.1%	Reduced repairs £3k and minor variations
Income	(123,500)	(120,018)	(3,482)	2.8%	
Net	(112,190)	(114,149)	1,959		
Land Charges					
Expenditure	79,370	80,552	(1,182)	(1.5%)	
Income	(57,630)	(73,214)	15,584	(27.0%)	Reserve funding for new system costs £6k and additional search fee income £10k
Net	21,740	7,338	14,402		

REGENERATION AND HIGH STREETS PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Management and Support					
Expenditure	488,170	560,530	(72,360)	(14.8%)	Staffing £23k, Green belt grant to reserves (£70k), rephased LDF spend (£25k) and minor variations
Income	(59,220)	(117,822)	58,602	(99.0%)	
Net	428,950	442,709	(13,759)		
Town Centre Management					
Expenditure	253,790	235,998	17,792	7.0%	Additional rent income
Income	(127,440)	(159,451)	32,011	(25.1%)	
Net	126,350	76,547	49,803		
Markets					
Expenditure	208,060	222,090	(14,030)	(6.7%)	One off income contributed to reserves £25k
Income	(35,570)	(63,433)	27,863	(78.3%)	
Net	172,490	158,657	13,833		
Portfolio Total	1,227,560	1,181,271	46,289	3.8%	

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Legal Services					
Expenditure	299,290	299,290	-	0.0%	
Income	(216,230)	(216,230)	-	0.0%	
Net	83,060	83,060	-		
Technology					
Expenditure	1,359,300	1,410,372	(51,072)	(3.8%)	
Income	(570,280)	(606,110)	35,830	(6.3%)	
Net	789,020	804,262	(15,242)		
Governance					
Expenditure	45,390	48,655	(3,265)	(7.2%)	
Income	(18,860)	(22,715)	3,855	(20.4%)	
Net	26,530	25,940	590		
Human Resources					
Expenditure	274,480	280,107	(5,627)	(2.1%)	
Income	(183,580)	(183,580)	-	0.0%	
Net	90,900	96,527	(5,627)		
Customer Services					
Expenditure	422,820	435,012	(12,192)	(2.9%)	
Income	(128,140)	(128,114)	(26)	0.0%	
Net	294,680	306,899	(12,219)		
Corporate Services					
Expenditure	260,950	265,199	(4,249)	(1.6%)	
Income	(39,780)	(40,472)	692	(1.7%)	
Net	221,170	224,727	(3,557)		

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Communications					
Expenditure	325,980	300,733	25,247	7.7%	
Income	(26,220)	(32,340)	6,120	(23.3%)	Reserve funding for website costs
Net	299,760	268,393	31,367		
Policy and Performance					
Expenditure	97,320	91,565	5,755	5.9%	
Net	97,320	91,565	5,755		
Audit					
Expenditure	292,290	294,955	(2,665)	(0.9%)	
Income	(128,270)	(130,935)	2,665	(2.1%)	
Net	164,020	164,020	-		
Risk					
Expenditure	1,089,580	1,079,304	10,276	0.9%	
Income	(964,570)	(944,775)	(19,795)	2.1%	
Net	125,010	134,529	(9,519)		
Customer Serv Mgmt incl Social Alarms					
Expenditure	129,300	92,940	36,360	28.1%	Staffing variations
Income	(30,360)	(30,360)	-	0.0%	
Net	98,940	62,580	36,360		

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Taxation					
Expenditure	3,530,310	4,045,475	(515,165)	(14.6%)	Staffing (£342k), postages (£85k), bad debts provision (£53k) and audit fees (£30k)
Income	(2,376,340)	(2,955,863)	579,523	(24.4%)	Reserve funding for staffing £214k, grants for staffing £97k, court costs and penalty income £94k and shared service contributions £177k
Net	1,153,970	1,089,612	64,358		
Finance					
Expenditure	1,599,980	1,693,753	(93,772)	(5.9%)	
Income	(1,157,640)	(1,230,483)	72,843	(6.3%)	
Net	442,340	463,270	(20,930)		
Corporate Management					
Expenditure	303,170	197,933	105,237	34.7%	Audit fee reduced charge and rebate £122k, asset valuation (£20k) and minor variations
Income	(58,670)	(79,709)	21,039	(35.9%)	Government grant for audit fees £21k
Net	244,500	118,224	126,276		
Non Distributed Costs					
Expenditure	310,150	311,352	(1,202)	(0.4%)	
Income	(43,300)	(43,300)	-	0.0%	
Net	266,850	268,052	(1,202)		
Excluded Items					
Expenditure	(59,760)	148,176	(207,936)	348.0%	Budget savings across the authority outturn estimate (£75k), corporate vacancy factor (£35k) and grant repayment (£95k)
Income	(948,680)	(1,044,555)	95,875	(10.1%)	Reserve funding for grant repayment £95k
Net	(1,008,440)	(896,379)	(112,061)		

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 1

Final Accounts 2024-2025					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Democratic Services					
Expenditure	168,400	134,983	33,417	19.8%	Staffing variations
Net	168,400	134,983	33,417		
Elections					
Expenditure	372,990	431,646	(58,656)	(15.7%)	Staffing (£8k), supplies (£7k), Electoral grant to reserves (£30k) and elections underspend to reserves (£13k)
Income	(1,260)	(44,659)	43,399	(3444.4%)	Electoral Integrity programme grants £30k and recharges for by election costs £12k
Net	371,730	386,986	(15,256)		
Benefit Payments					
Expenditure	15,881,350	16,721,255	(839,905)	(5.3%)	
Income	(15,764,860)	(16,390,112)	625,252	(4.0%)	
Net	116,490	331,143	(214,653)		
Portfolio Total	4,046,250	4,158,393	(112,143)	(2.8%)	

COMMUNITY WELLBEING CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
DFG Private Grants					
Expenditure	2,166,380	1,042,867	1,123,513	51.9%	Reflects activity, balance to slip to 2025/26
Net	2,166,380	1,042,867	1,123,513		
CCTV technology upgrade					
Expenditure	67,000	67,000	-	0.0%	Project complete
Net	67,000	67,000	-		
CCTV Safer Streets 5					
Expenditure	60,000	60,000	-	0.0%	Project complete
Net	60,000	60,000	-		
Streetlighting Safer Streets 5					
Expenditure	35,000	19,051	15,949	45.6%	Project complete - Safer Streets 5 budget realigned to Cannock Park Streetlighting
Net	35,000	19,051	15,949		
RLC Solar Panels					
Expenditure	238,270	158,411	79,859	33.5%	Major works completed in 2024/25, small balance to slip to 2025/26 for any outstanding fees
Net	238,270	158,411	79,859		
Portfolio Total	2,566,650	1,347,329	1,219,321	47.5%	

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Wheelie Bins					
Expenditure	84,120	97,207	(13,087)	(15.6%)	Reflects purchases, funding brought forward from 2025/26 to finance 2024/25 overspend
Net	84,120	97,207	(13,087)		
Portfolio Total	84,120	97,207	(13,087)	(15.6%)	

HOUSING CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Home Security Grants					
Expenditure	12,280	2,771	9,509	77.4%	Expenditure reflects demand
Net	12,280	2,771	9,509		
Portfolio Total	12,280	2,771	9,509	77.4%	

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25					
	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Additional Cemetery Provision					
Expenditure	18,340	2,700	15,640	85.3%	Project completed, slip balance to 2025/26 for any other small outstanding works
Net	18,340	2,700	15,640		
Stile Cop Cemetery					
Expenditure	129,000	74,717	54,283	42.1%	Slip balance to 2025/26
Net	129,000	74,717	54,283		
Penny Cress Green Play Area					
Expenditure	9,790	210	9,580	97.9%	Project complete, balance to be released
Net	9,790	210	9,580		
Stadium Development Phase 2					
Expenditure	208,390	187,388	21,002	10.1%	Project completed in 2024/25, balance to slip to 2025/26 for any small outstanding works
Net	208,390	187,388	21,002		
Rugeley ATP					
Expenditure	-	(924)	924	n/a	Project complete, final retention over accrued
Net	-	(924)	924		
Commonwealth Games Legacy					
Expenditure	2,530	2,500	30	1.2%	
Net	2,530	2,500	30		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Play Area Development and Refurbishment					
Expenditure	44,000	-	44,000	100.0%	Slip balance to 2025/26
Net	44,000	-	44,000		
Parks and Open Spaces Vehicles					
Expenditure	103,750	95,489	8,261	8.0%	Slip balance to 2025/26
Net	103,750	95,489	8,261		
Wellington Drive Park and Open Space					
Expenditure	-	5,000	(5,000)	n/a	Project complete, final landscape works completed in 2024/25 financed via capital grants and S106
Net	-	5,000	(5,000)		
Laburnum Avenue Phase 1					
Expenditure	344,780	279,568	65,212	18.9%	Project completed in 2024/25, balance to slip to 2025/26 for any other small outstanding works
Net	344,780	279,568	65,212		
Elmore Park Toilets					
Expenditure	5,790	-	5,790	100.0%	Project complete, balance to be released
Net	5,790	-	5,790		
Infrastructure Fencing Parks and Open Spaces					
Expenditure	11,040	-	11,040	100.0%	£14k works coded to revenue as spend revenue in nature. No capital budget to slip to 2025/26
Net	11,040	-	11,040		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Cannock Park Path works					
Expenditure	25,000	34,284	(9,284)	(37.1%)	Project completed in 2024/25, overspend financed from Cannock Park Phase 1
Net	25,000	34,284	(9,284)		
Ravenhill Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	16,000	4,309	11,691	73.1%	Project complete, balance to be released
Net	16,000	4,309	11,691		
Cannock Park Phase 1					
Expenditure	465,000	19,707	445,293	95.8%	Part of budget reallocated in 2024/25 to Cannock Park Path Works and Cannock Park Streetlighting Safer Streets for additional works. Balance to be slipped to 2025/26
Net	465,000	19,707	445,293		
Cannock Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	-	2,721	(2,721)	n/a	Project complete
Net	-	2,721	(2,721)		
Hednesford Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	-	451	(451)	n/a	Project complete
Net	-	451	(451)		
Heath Hayes Park Tennis Courts					
Expenditure	4,260	1,775	2,485	58.3%	Project complete
Net	4,260	1,775	2,485		

PARKS CULTURE AND HERITAGE CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Cannock Park Streetlighting Safer Street					
Expenditure	160,000	178,766	(18,766)	(11.7%)	Project complete, additional spend financed from Cannock Park Phase 1
Net	160,000	178,766	(18,766)		
Flaxley Road Play Area					
Expenditure	141,770	145,704	(3,934)	(2.8%)	Project complete, overspend financed in 2024/25
Net	141,770	145,704	(3,934)		
Portfolio Total	1,689,440	1,034,365	655,075	38.8%	

REGENERATION AND HIGH STREETS PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Let`s Grow Grants					
Expenditure	13,110	-	13,110	100.0%	Reflects demand, balance to be slipped to 2025/26
Net	13,110	-	13,110		
Anglesey Bridges and Rawnsley Woods Brid					
Expenditure	106,000	60,411	45,590	43.0%	Slip balance to 2025/26
Net	106,000	60,411	45,590		
UK Shared Prosperity Fund					
Expenditure	400,000	400,000	-	0.0%	Project complete
Net	400,000	400,000	-		
Levelling Up Fund Capital					
Expenditure	1,719,790	2,378,924	(659,134)	(38.3%)	Phase 1 accelerated from 2025/26
Net	1,719,790	2,378,924	(659,134)		
Levelling Up Fund Phase 2 Capital					
Expenditure	3,020,000	2,109,283	910,717	30.2%	Slip Phase 2 balance to 2025/26
Net	3,020,000	2,109,283	910,717		
Chadsmoor High Street CIL					
Expenditure	34,900	34,894	6	0.0%	Project complete
Net	34,900	34,894	6		
Etching Hill CIL					
Expenditure	217,440	217,434	6	0.0%	Project complete
Net	217,440	217,434	6		
Portfolio Total	5,511,240	5,200,946	310,294	5.6%	

RESOURCES AND TRANSFORMATION CAPITAL PORTFOLIO

ANNEX 2

Final Accounts 2024-25

	Annual Budget	Total Spend	Variance from Annual Budget		Comments (variances > 10% and £5,000)
	£	£	£	%	
Revenues Computer system					
Expenditure	208,000	195,463	12,538	6.0%	Slip balance to 2025/26
Net	208,000	195,463	12,538		
Portfolio Total	208,000	195,463	12,538	6.0%	

Local Government Reorganisation and Shared Services Transformation

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 November 2025
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive - Resources
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed approach to prepare for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the impact this will have on our work plans for shared services and transformation.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to approve:
- (i) not proceeding any further with the shared services transformation programme and the removal of the shared services savings from the base budget for future years;
 - (ii) the plans for project work prior to the vesting day for the new council(s) as set out in 5.13 to 5.26; and
 - (iii) the re-direction of the budget set aside for transformation to preparing for LGR.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 In order to make the most effective use of resources, it is necessary to revise the Council's work programme and budgets to reflect the impact of the Government's proposals for Local Government Reorganisation and what this means for the current plans for shared services transformation.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council had set out its ambitions to deliver significant change through the Shared Services agenda, as well as its Transformation and Digital Strategies. Shortly after these were approved by Cabinet in November 2024, the Government announced its plans for local government reorganisation. As a consequence, work on transformation was paused to allow time to assess the implications.
- 3.2 The initial submission for a proposed unitary for mid and southern Staffordshire was submitted in March 2025. Work is now underway, supported by consultants, on behalf of the six district and borough Councils in mid and southern Staffordshire to develop the final proposal for submission in November 2025.
- 3.3 As work has been progressing on the proposal, Leadership Team have had time to consider the effect that LGR will have on our plans for shared services and transformation. Transformation is a long-term project requiring significant time and investment. It is considered that we are unlikely to see any significant pay back / benefit from the work required within the 2½ years remaining until the

creation of the new unitary council. Furthermore, the Council is already facing challenges with capacity.

- 3.4 It is considered that work on shared services should stop at the current level (shared management only for the services shared from April 2023 and full sharing for those services shared since 2011), with the exception of a few small areas/teams where it is considered that it would be beneficial to continue to create resilience.
- 3.5 Whilst it is proposed to not proceed with the plans for further sharing and transformation, there will continue to be a focus on continuous improvement, with particular emphasis on customer service.
- 3.6 This will allow resources to be released to support the work needed to prepare for Local Government reorganisation. This work includes an element of change and improvement as set out in paragraphs 5.13-5.19.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 Preparation for Local Government Reorganisation primarily relates to Priority 4 “To be a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council”.

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 A decision was taken in December 2022 to extend the sharing of services between Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council with all but a small number of services to be shared under a single management team.
- 5.2 The shared Leadership Team was established in April 2023 and the restructure of service managers to create a shared senior management team was completed in June 2024.
- 5.3 The next step after this was to bring the service teams together and then review and transform the delivery of services. A transformation strategy and implementation plan were developed and set out the framework and resources to deliver this, supported by a digital strategy; these were approved by Cabinet in December 2024. Funding of £200,000 (£100,000 from each Council) was set aside to create a Transformation Team.
- 5.4 Shortly after the transformation strategy was approved, the Government announced plans for Local Government reorganisation (LGR) which will see the abolition of all district, borough and county councils and the creation of new unitary councils as part of the wider devolution plans.
- 5.5 Following discussions in early January, Leadership Team decided to pause the work on shared services and transformation, pending consideration of the implications of LGR. It was considered that TUPE transferring staff now when they would be transferred again in three years’ time would be unsettling, particularly when considering the concerns and challenges of retaining staff during the lead up to LGR in an already difficult recruitment market for many specialist/professional areas.

- 5.6 An outline proposal for the creation of two unitaries in Staffordshire (a North and South) was developed and approved by full Council in March 2025. The final submission to the Government was modified, following work with the five other district and borough Councils in the South, to include the potential to split the southern unitary into two and the proposal was re-badged as Southern and Mid Staffordshire.
- 5.7 Since this time, the Council has been working with the five other district and borough councils in mid and south Staffordshire to further develop the proposals. Consultants, KPMG were appointed to support the Councils with this work. Five working groups were set up:
- Finance and data;
 - Service design and transformation;
 - People and workforce;
 - Communications and engagement; and
 - Governance.

Each working group has been chaired by a Chief Executive and comprises relevant professionals / representatives from each of the Councils, along with officers from KPMG.

- 5.8 Whilst other options have been considered and discounted, two proposals have been developed in detail:
- a north and south unitary; and
 - a north and two unitaries in the south (one combining Cannock Chase, South Staffordshire, and Stafford; and the other East Staffordshire, Lichfield, and Tamworth).
- 5.9 Arrangements are being made for the proposals to be considered by full Council and Cabinet prior to being submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025.
- 5.10 The Government is scheduled to announce the new unitary Councils in summer 2026. This will be followed by elections to the new shadow Council in May 2027 so that work can begin on making the necessary arrangements including the appointment of a senior management team.
- 5.11 Whilst there is still much uncertainty as to what is going to happen in the lead up to the new unitary council being established in 2028, there is a need for the Council to maintain service delivery, complete the major projects that are planned/underway and prepare for LGR.
- 5.12 As well as considering how we best prepare for LGR, a decision needs to be taken regarding shared services and the proposed transformation work programme which has been on pause since the Government's announcement for LGR.

Way Forward

Transformation

- 5.13 It is recommended that further work on sharing services and transformation should be halted, with a few exceptions where it is considered essential or particularly beneficial to continue. We will maintain the shared management of services but will not proceed with the transformation work programme (including TUPE transfers) as this will be costly and time consuming and the Council is unlikely to see sufficient benefit / payback in the remaining 2½ years. Furthermore, the Council does not have the capacity to support both shared services transformation and prepare for LGR. This means that plans to create a Transformation Team, will not proceed.
- 5.14 However, we will continue to look for opportunities for continuous improvement in service delivery, with a focus on our customers, and this may include aligning policies and processes where appropriate. Together with plans to prepare the Council for LGR, this will be used to develop a modest programme of change.
- 5.15 We are continuing to make improvements as part of our Governance Improvement Plan (following the External Auditor's VFM audit report) and there are a number of key pieces of work associated with this that will support wider improvements across the Council.

Digital Transformation

- 5.16 A programme of service specific IT systems which need to be replaced over the next 2-3 years has been agreed in principle by Leadership Team, based on a risk and needs assessment. This focusses on essential replacements only and one new system. The systems to be replaced are: Trees (new system), Planning, Environmental Health, and Housing (repairs module). Business cases and funding still need to be agreed for the replacement planning and environmental health systems.
- 5.17 In addition to new/replacement systems we plan to complete migration to SharePoint. The majority of councils use this, and it will provide for more flexible access to files and reduce the cost of our infrastructure. It is also proposed to progress work on digitising our records and the back scanning of our existing paper records. This will support retrieval of information going forward and support the modernisation of our systems and processes.
- 5.18 We intend to continue to improve our digital offer to customers, through the ongoing development of our customer relationship management (CRM) system. There is also an ambition to implement Midcall should resources allow. This will enhance the customer experience of making payments to the Council as well as improving the efficiency of back-office processes and reducing pressure on services.
- 5.19 We also propose to implement the self-serve portal for the HR system for use by managers and staff. Most if not all of the neighbouring councils already have this in place so it is important that we upgrade our current arrangements. This will also improve efficiency in a number of our processes, particularly with regard to the preparation of the payroll. It is estimated that this will cost £30,000.

Contract Renewals

- 5.20 All contracts coming up for renewal in the run up to the implementation of LGR will need to be considered carefully due to the potential implications for the new unitary council(s). Some contracts may not be required by the new Council e.g. due to the alignment of IT systems. The new Council may also wish to reconsider service provision and how it is delivered e.g. it may choose to bring services back in-house. When re-tendering, consideration will need to be given to the length of contract awarded as the new Council will not be in a position to align all of its contracts in year one. The Council will need to balance its own needs for service delivery and value for money (VFM) against the implications for / needs of the new Council. We will seek to extend existing contracts or re-tender as appropriate, ensuring compliance with Procurement Act 2023. Work is underway to assess the contracts that will be affected and agree the best approach for each of them.

Preparation for LGR

- 5.21 As referred to in 5.7, the Council has been supporting the development of the business case with the Chief Executive and senior officers from the Resources Directorate sitting on the working groups.
- 5.22 It is unclear at the moment whether these groups will continue to meet after the submission has been made or whether there will be a hiatus whilst we await the Government's decision on the proposals. But it is anticipated that further support will be required leading up to the establishment of the new shadow organisation in May 2027 and beyond this to vesting day.
- 5.23 In the lead up to the creation of the new Council it is going to be essential to keep the public, businesses, partners, stakeholders, Members, and our employees informed of progress and changes. A communications plan will be developed to support this. In order to manage the additional workload from LGR and wider needs across the Council, it is proposed to create an additional post within the communications team at Stafford Borough Council to 'match' the existing resources at Cannock Chase Council. The post will be for a fixed term.
- 5.24 LGR will create a significant period of change and uncertainty for staff. As referred to above, staff and trade unions will be briefed regularly. Training will also be provided for managers to support them and enable them to support their teams through the changes.
- 5.25 It is anticipated that there will be an impact on the Council's ability to recruit and retain staff over the next two years or so as news is awaited of the Government's decision and the Councils move into the implementation stages. Existing options to aide recruitment and retention e.g. market supplements will be reviewed and new options considered as appropriate.
- 5.26 In addition to the work already set out above, it is anticipated that the Council's accounts will need to be audited. Whilst we have caught up with the publication of our financial accounts; they have not been audited for 3 years. It will be essential for this to be completed before LGR so that the new council understands the financial position. There is pressure on us to do this anyway, but LGR makes this more time critical. This will be a huge undertaking and will take significant time to complete; particularly as the team undertaking this work will be key in supporting LGR at the same time. The Finance Team are already struggling with

recruitment and capacity; despite having appointed some specialist interims. Additional resources will need to be brought in to support the successful completion of the audit work and what this looks like is currently being developed.

Summary

- 5.27 As set out above, LGR is having a considerable impact on our work plan and capacity. It has been identified as a risk on our Strategic Risk Register.

The Cabinet will continue to be kept updated on progress and advised on any material changes to the plans to manage the Council's preparation for LGR.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

It is proposed that the total budget of £200k (£100k from each Council) that is set aside to create a Transformation Team is used instead to fund some of the preparatory work on LGR to include but not limited to:

- Continue our Digital transformation work (to include document scanning and implementation of the HR self-serve portal) - to be funded by both Councils;
- Fund additional support for the communications team at Stafford Borough Council (to be funded from Stafford's contribution to the transformation team budget).

With regard to the £200k savings included in the budget relating to shared services, these will be removed from the base budget for future years.

6.2 Legal

The Secretary of State has powers to order the reorganisation of a local government area under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

6.3 Human Resources

Whilst the decision not to proceed with transformation means that TUPE transfers will not now take place between Cannock Chase and Stafford Borough Councils, the provisions of the TUPE Regulations will apply and protect terms and conditions of employees at the point of transfer to the new unitary council in due course.

Notwithstanding this it is recognised that structural changes may still be needed in some areas in the next few years to amend delivery models where sharing is warranted. In these circumstances normal staff consultation protocols will continue to be followed in line with current policy.

We will work closely with management and the trade unions to support them and staff through this significant period of change.

6.4 Risk Management

LGR has been identified as a risk on our strategic risk register. Actions have been put in place to mitigate this, and quarterly updates are provided to Cabinet.

With regard to this report, there is a further risk in that if LGR doesn't proceed we will have lost time developing our shared services and delivering transformation. But the reality is that we don't have capacity to do both. As set out in the report, we will proceed with a more modest change programme, which focusses on improving service delivery to our customers and efficiency.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

None

6.6 Health

None

6.7 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices

None

8 Previous Consideration

None

9 Background Papers

Contact Officer:	Judith Aupers
Telephone Number:	01543 464 411
Ward Interest:	All
Report Track:	Cabinet: 06/11/25
Key Decision:	Yes

Former Tenant Arrears Policy 2025

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 November 2025
Briefing Note of:	Head of Housing and Corporate Assets
Portfolio:	Housing and Corporate Assets

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to adopt a revised Former Tenant Arrears Policy. The policy seeks to improve our approach to preventing, managing and recovering former tenant arrears in order to improve overall Income Management performance.

2 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approves the revised Former Tenant Arrears Policy 2025, as attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Notes the proposals in relation to the limited use of reductions and incentives to help maximise the outcomes which can be achieved.
- 2.3 Notes the performance indicators on which policy success will be measured.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.4 This proposed policy change brings the Former Tenant Arrears Policy up to date, through a renewed approach, enabling greater capacity in prevention and recovery of arrears from former Council tenants. This in turn supports increased revenue collection, to maximise Council resources.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Former Tenant Arrears amount to around £500,000 of rental income owed to the Council. Maximising recovery of these is an important part of Housing Revenue Account funding, in order to fund services and improvements for Council tenants and applicants, within their homes, neighbourhoods and communities.
- 3.2 The revised policy enhances former tenant arrears processes and recovery arrangements to strengthen the potential for improved performance. It includes a new proposal to permit the use of 'reductions and incentives' in a limited manner, in relevant cases, where this will result in successful payment of former tenant debts which are challenging to enforce or may otherwise remain unpaid.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Former Tenant Arrears Policy contributes to Corporate Priorities 2, 3 and 4:
- (i) **Priority 2 - Health and Wellbeing:** Through maximising rental income the Council can work with partners to help make our homes, neighbourhoods and communities safer places to live, work and visit
 - (ii) **Priority 3 - The Community:** A robust approach to former tenant arrears helps embed our commitment to managing Council homes efficiently and effectively, reflecting the rights and responsibilities of Council tenants, as part of our wider approach to providing good quality housing within the public sector.
 - (iii) **Priority 4 - Responsible Council:** strong income management performance increases the limited housing resources available to the Council to deliver its objectives.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council's Income Management Team manages and recovers rent arrears from both existing and former tenants. They do so within the framework provided by the relevant policy. For tenants whose tenancies have ended, this is through the Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) Policy.
- 5.2 Each year around 250 - 300 CCDC tenancies come to an end. In 2024/25, 289 tenancies ended. Of these, the balance on the rent account at the date of termination varies considerably, from tenants having paid in advance through to significant arrears, especially where the Council has taken enforcement action to end the tenancy because of rent arrears or other tenancy breaches. Such arrears cannot usually be pursued in the same way as a current tenancy debt and legal means of recovery are more challenging to enforce.
- 5.3 The Income Management Team's overall performance is excellent. It has recovered FTA debts alone since the former external debt collection provider ceased trading during the covid pandemic. An opportunity now exists to build on this further in relation to FTAs, through an updated policy, and building team capacity, to take a strengthened focus through associated procedures related to both pre-termination of tenancy and action taken after a tenancy ends. This will help to increase performance further.
- 5.4 In 2024/25, FTA arrears amounted to £488,153, an increase against 2023/24 (£466,222), due to new FTA debt, despite a 10.24% collection rate of £49,965 of the total arrears outstanding (£45,975 in 2023/24). However, we also wrote-off a total of £19,496.60 (combined write off total, October 2024 and April 2025), because these debts became irrecoverable. A breakdown of the current FTA debt position is given at Appendix two.

5.5 The revised policy aims to give greater scope for a proactive approach to prevention and recovery of former tenant debt in a comprehensive way. Consideration has been given to good practice in other organisations which will continue to be explored as procedures are strengthened in line with the agreed policy. The draft policy includes:

1. **Improved Approaches to Preventing Former Tenant Debt:** from before a new tenancy begins.
2. **Enhancements to pre-termination of tenancy processes:** in relation to tenants moving on, next of kin where a tenant has moved away or as a result of tenancy enforcement proceedings.
3. **Better procedures and approaches to case management:** active case management to speedily identify and take steps to recover FTA debt which could not be prevented.
4. **Reductions & Incentives (see 5.7 below):** where they both ensure the remainder of the debt is paid and offer better value than other proceedings or where the debt would otherwise remain unpaid or become irrevocable.
5. **Write off / Write Back On Procedures:** to ensure appropriate write off of irrecoverable debts, with processes re-instigated recovery action (through writing back on debts) where new avenues for collection become known.
6. **Key Performance Indicators:** KPIs to measure performance and outcomes.

5.6 In tandem with reviewing the policy, we have already improved:

- pre-termination liaison between teams to ensure greater focus on payment of arrears prior to tenancies ending
- exclusion and pre-exclusion processes for tenants who apply to us for re-housing where former tenancy debts are owed
- tenancy agreement terms so that in exceptional cases where we allow a tenant to stay in their current home under a new tenancy or transfer home, owing FTAs, these are enforceable within their new tenancy agreement
- initial contact with tenants and early-stage collection procedures after tenancies first come to an end

5.7 'Reductions and Incentives' to pay form a new part of the proposed policy. It is proposed these will only be offered where recovery actions have first been pursued, where this provides a better value outcome than legal action being taken or the debt would otherwise become irrecoverable, because a former tenant cannot afford to make payments (or payment arrangements) for the whole debt. In all cases, the use of any reduction or incentive will be subject to approval, sign off and review, to ensure these are only being used successfully and in appropriate cases.

5.8 The policy enhances the scope for increased performance, more income for the Council to invest in services provided to other tenants through the HRA fund and the opportunity for team members to build their knowledge and expertise.

Online Consultation

- 5.9 The draft policy was published online along with a dedicated questionnaire to ask for feedback on each aspect of the policy proposals, for a period of 6 weeks ending on Friday 13 June. All nine respondents were positive about the overall proposals.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The policy will be delivered through existing budgeted resources.

6.2 Legal

Former Tenancy Debt Recovery is subject to the statute of limitations, in the same manner as other debt recovery, which is normally 6 years.

Legal action taken to recover debts will be subject to liaison with the Council's in house legal services.

6.3 Human Resources

There are no direct implications.

6.4 Risk Management

Risks of non-recovery will be managed through the associated process and procedures and monitoring of the amount of debt owed and the amount recovered. These will aim to help maximise income through processes which are efficient, effective and consistently applied.

The risk of re-housing a tenant with former tenant arrears still outstanding will be managed through the effective application of the Allocation Policy and associated exclusion policy / process.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to this policy, which identified no adverse impact for any protected characteristic.

6.6 Health

There are no direct implications.

6.7 Climate Change

There are no direct implications.

7 Appendices

Appendix One: Draft Former Tenant Arrears Policy 2025

Appendix Two: Breakdown of the current FTA debt position

8 Previous Consideration

None.

9 Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer: Peter Griffiths, Assistant Tenancy Services Manager

Telephone Number: 01543 464 329

Report Track: Cabinet: 06/11/25

Key Decision: No



Former Tenant Arrears Policy (Rent Arrears) 2025 - 2028

Version Control

Version	Changes	Approval Stage	Date
1	Original Draft	Internal	10 December 2024
2	Updated Draft	Internal	26 March 2025
3	No Changes - limited responses which signalled approval of draft	Tenants/Public Consultation	26 June 2025
4	Referral to LT (Reductions and Incentives is not in current policy)	Head of Service sign off	17 July 2025
5	Minor Clarifications	Leadership Team	16 September 2025
6	LT Requested Amendments to content and text (minor changes)	Cabinet	23 October 2025

Former Tenant Arrears Policy 2025

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1. Introduction

The Council owns just over 5,000 residential rented properties throughout the Cannock Chase District. All of these are homes rented to tenants as either introductory or secure tenants.

The Council relies on rental payments to help preserve and improve its housing stock, housing services, neighbourhoods and support to Council residents and to contribute towards investment in new housing provision.

When a tenancy ends, the ideal scenario is that the rent account balance is nil. That is, all payments due have been paid and the tenant neither owes, nor is owed any rent arrears or credit balance. For many different reasons, this is not always the case, with many tenancies ending with the balance either in credit - 'former tenant credits' (FTCs) - or in arrears - 'former tenant arrears' (FTAs).

The Council proactively refunds FTCs to former tenants. When a tenancy ends with a debt owing, the Council will actively pursue the FTAs, to help maximise its resources and increase the Council's ability to invest in homes, services and communities.

2. Context

In 2024/25, the total amount of rent due from CCDC Tenants was around £24m. The Council has strong performance in collecting the rent due, in 2023/24 achieving a collection rate of 100.2%, which exceeds the level collected by most of its peers.

While rent accounts are managed proactively, some tenancies still end with rent arrears outstanding - this becomes former tenant arrears.

In 2024/25, FTA arrears amounted to £488,153, an increase against 2023/24 (£466,222), due to new FTA debt, despite a 10.24% collection rate of £49,965 of the total arrears outstanding (£45,975 in 2023/24). However, we also wrote-off a total of £19,496.60 (combined write off total, October 2024 and April 2025), because these debts became irrecoverable.

3. The legal and regulatory requirements

The legislative framework for former tenant arrears relates to housing legislation (which underpins the basis in which the former tenancy was granted and managed) as well as wider legislation relating to debt recovery, equality and data protection, including:

- Housing Act 1985 (as amended by the Housing Act 1996)
- Housing Act 2004
- Limitation Act 1980
- Localism Act 2011

- Equality Act 2010
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 & 2005
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018

There are no specific housing regulatory requirements in relation to former tenant debts. This is in part because the Council usually no longer has a contractual - or landlord-tenant - relationship with the tenants who have left their homes.

Some exceptions exist in rare cases where the Council allows a person with former tenant arrears to:

- Remain as a council tenant in another home (a transfer), or
- Become a Council tenant again, with a new tenancy

In those cases, the regulatory requirements set out by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH) would apply in respect of their current tenancy, but these would still not normally have a direct bearing on the former tenancy arrears.

Nonetheless, the RSH expects the Council to ensure value for money as part of its Governance and Viability standards, in which maximising income is a key element.

The Council will also apply the spirit of the RSH's consumer regulations in respect to how we manage former tenant arrears - and therefore this policy - in respect of:

- The advice and assistance we offer tenants before during and after termination of their tenancy
- Transparency, Influence and Accountability to tenants in relation to our practice and procedures

4. Vision and Aims

This policy aims to help ensure that former tenant arrears (FTAs) are minimised and to maximise the collection of FTAs when they are incurred.

This forms part of an overall income management approach which aims to prevent and minimise arrears, through effective prevention, support, collection and where necessary, enforcement.

5. How will we achieve our Aims / Policy Details

Prevention - Before Former Tenancy Arrears Occur

Housing Applications and Applicant Exclusion Process

The Council will actively check all housing applications in relation to current and former tenancy debts (with the Council or others). Applicants will be subject to the Council's housing application exclusion process, where a former debt is owed and / or previous possession proceedings have been taken in relation to rent arrears.

In exceptional cases where an external applicant with former tenancy debts is allowed to be included on the housing register:

- consideration of any offers will include a check on how well the applicant has maintained any conditions or payment plan agreed by the exclusion panel
- continued payment will be a condition of the new tenancy. The Council's new tenancy agreement (2025) enables such a condition to be included within the new tenancy.

Through the life of this policy, we will introduce credit checks for applicants and enhance our approach to affordability, to help maximise sustainable tenancies.

Pre-Allocation Interviews and Tenancy Management

The best way to minimise former tenant arrears is to avoid arrears occurring when a tenancy is live.

We will actively undertake income and expenditure checks as part of our pre-allocation processes, to help ensure tenants can afford their tenancy when they first move into a council property. Where a tenant can afford a home, but there is an identified risk of tenancy failure, we will seek to provide or find support to help mitigate those risks, including, for example, dedicated tenancy sustainment officer liaison for young people taking on their first tenancy.

Throughout their tenancy, we will provide support, including referrals to debt advice agencies and others and information about money management and budgeting, to help tenants to maintain rent payments. We will also proactively manage rent accounts, taking early steps where payments are missed to prevent arrears escalation and to help tenants to reduce arrears, throughout the life of a tenancy.

Pre-Termination Process

Tenants Moving On (External)

Tenants are required to give four weeks' written notice to end their tenancy with the Council.

We will improve our use of this period to actively seek to ensure that any rent due is paid and / or an agreement is in place for any arrears outstanding to be cleared. We will explain the tenant's obligation to pay the outstanding amount (or the expectation that any available funds from a tenant's estate should be used to clear any debt) and the consequences of them not doing so, as appropriate.

Tenants who give us notice will receive an acknowledgement of their notice period, with clear information about their rent account, payments due and how they can make payments before their tenancy ends (or thereafter, as appropriate). We will improve customer information, to make the issues associated with ending a tenancy clear and explicit, including the ongoing responsibility to clear any rent debt owed.

At this stage, the scale and nature of the account balance will be reviewed and a plan of action designed to ensure contact in the time before the termination takes

effect to receive or agree payments or a payment plan and ensure the Council has forwarding address and other contact information before the tenant leaves.

Tenants Moving On (Internal - Transfers)

Applications for a transfer, will be considered under the Council's Allocations Policy, including where appropriate the exclusion panel process.

Transfer applicants will be advised that their rent accounts should be clear and up to date if they wish to be considered for a transfer. Offers of accommodation will not be made to transfer applicants who have not maintained their rent accounts in line with their tenancy agreement, except in exceptional circumstances.

Notice periods for transferring tenants are decided based on the individual circumstances of each case, with a maximum notice period of 4 weeks. During this period proactive account management should be undertaken to ensure the account is clear and up to date.

Exceptional cases (transfers with arrears, or other debts, such as recharges) must be approved through 'managed move' approval for urgent transfer cases or be subject to the exclusion panel process, as appropriate.

The reason for moving an applicant with arrears should be identified as part of the approval process and, except for emergency cases and exceptional cases where hardship funding is approved to clear a debt owed, a payment plan should be agreed, prior to the move, which should form a condition of the new tenancy which is created. The Council's new tenancy agreement (2025) allows for payment for such debts to be explicitly included as a condition of tenancy.

Acknowledgement of the notice and of a tenant's acceptance of the offer of another tenancy must clearly set out the rent payment arrangements and consequences of non-payment, including, if relevant, withdrawal of any offer of accommodation made.

Death of the Tenant

Tenancies where one of two joint tenants die, or there is another person who qualifies for succession to the tenancy will not be subject to this policy as the tenancy will continue as a survivorship or succeeded tenancy.

Where a tenant passes away and succession does not apply, the tenancy does not end automatically, though any benefit payments made towards the rent, will stop or be classed as 'overpaid' and reclaimable by Housing Benefit or Universal Credit teams.

Four weeks' notice is normally required from the relevant next of kin or appointed representative, although the Council may charge rent due for only two weeks' of this notice period or accept a shorter notice period of two weeks', dependent upon the individual circumstances. The tenants' estate is liable for the rent during this period. We will improve the clarity of information provided to and sought from tenants' relatives and representatives to help minimise former tenant debts which arise.

During the initial contact about a tenant's death and subsequent contact, where arrears are owed (or may accrue), active attempts must be made to establish the status of the former tenant's estate and to plan for payment of the debt before the tenancy ends or a payment plan to pay the FTAs thereafter.

Next Of Kin in particular will often claim that there is 'no money' or very limited funds available from the estate. While appropriate sensitivity needs to be considered in cases of death, this will not automatically be considered as the end of the matter, especially where the tenant did not previously receive benefit assistance towards payment of their rent. The Council will consider further investigation and pursuit of the debt owed on a case-by-case basis, dependant on individual circumstances.

Evictions and Abandonments

Eviction: The Council does all it can to sustain tenancies and avoid tenants being evicted from their home. It is a last resort measure. Where this happens, it usually means that the relationship with the tenant has broken down and they are not engaging with us. Nonetheless, the Council will attempt to gain details of the tenant's intentions in terms of finding alternative accommodation, NOK details and to ensure the tenant is aware that any outstanding arrears remain payable.

Abandoned Properties: by their nature, abandoned properties mean that a tenant has left their property, without advising the Council or giving notice. In most cases, these result in rent arrears because the rent has not been paid during the time until the abandonment is discovered or because rent has continued to be paid by HB or UC, but becomes repayable for the period the tenant has not lived in the property.

In both cases, the Council will attempt to find out the new address of the former tenant and to contact them via this information or through NOK, places of employment, by telephone and email, and / or through tracking and debt collection arrangements, as appropriate, to pursue the debt.

Former Tenancy - Active Case Management

Former Tenancy Credits (FTCs)

Where a tenant leaves with a former tenancy credit (FTC), this will be refunded by monthly identification of FTCs and a proactive attempt to make contact and provide a refund where one is due. The tenancy details will be checked and approved through established procedures to ensure that any credit is first used to pay off any other housing debts, such as court costs and rechargeable repairs and such that a credit is not incorrectly applied so as to lead to former tenant arrears arising at a later date.

In the case where a former tenant has passed away, checks will need to be made of the death certificate and identification of the next of kin, executor of the will or other person to whom it is proposed to make the credit to. Credits will need relevant authority:

- Team Leader - Income Management in such cases, up to the amount of £1,500
- Assistant Tenancy Services Manager, up to £3,000.
- Amounts above this, will need further checks of the will and copies of probate/letters of administration and will only be made to the solicitor or executor of the will, with the approval of the Tenancy Services Manager.

Over the lifetime of this policy, the tenancy services team will seek to improve work with other departments of the council, particularly those in Council Tax and Housing Benefit so that other debts owed to the Council can be offset before any residual amount is repaid to the former tenant.

FTA Debt - Quick Identification

Where pre-termination action has not resulted in rent accounts being cleared at the point of termination, the Council will identify former tenant arrears immediately at the end of the tenancy.

Action will be taken quickly to remind the former tenant of their responsibility to repay the debt owed and to make a payment agreement, as well as to advise them that the Council will pursue the debt if payments are not made, or a payment arrangement is not agreed.

This will form the beginning of any former tenant arrears recovery processes.

FTA Processes

The former tenancy arrears procedures and the resources deployed in managing them will be reviewed in 2025/26, then monitored and amended on an ongoing basis. This will enable the income management team to pursue former tenant arrears through escalated arrears recovery processes and ensure that steps can be taken to improve income collection and performance as processes are rolled out.

Our improved processes will include proactive action to trace and contact former tenants (directly or via NoK / others) in writing, by telephone, visit, text or WhatsApp, and include potential legal action or referral to other teams or agencies for other recovery action, as appropriate.

The cost of pursuing former tenant arrears will be balanced against the potential likelihood of all or some of the debt being recovered, the level of debt, location of the former tenant, and the need to enforce tenant responsibility for payment of the rent or arrears due.

Indicative levels of action, which may be varied depending on individual circumstances, based on the size of debt are as follows:

- Up to £25: two attempts to contact, by phone plus text or email
- £25 - £100: basic steps (calls, local visit, initial recovery letters / texts)

- £100 - £250: all steps up to legal action, including no collection no fee debt recovery referral
- £250 - £500: all steps up to and including consideration of some legal proceedings, plus no collection no fee debt recovery
- £500 plus: all steps including legal action where there is a reasonable chance of success

Where a resident has passed away, special consideration will be made in relation to whether or not there are funds in the estate which can pay some or all of the debt, in liaison with the next of kin and/or executor of the will or the deceased tenant's legal representatives, as appropriate.

The FTA process review will be kept up to date through consideration of positive sector practice and new initiatives, as well as improving customer information and advice, during a live tenancy and as former tenants.

Once these processes are exhausted, consideration will be given to direct legal proceedings by the income management team, referral to other Council teams or external agencies to pursue the debt through tracing and debt recovery action or other legal processes, such as money claim judgements ordered by the court.

Reductions and Similar Payment Incentives

The Council aims to maximise collection of all debts owed to it. For former tenants, this is more challenging than with current tenants because the Council does not retain the same landlord-tenant relationship and the customer no longer has a Council tenancy, where keeping their security of tenure is an incentive to maintain rent payments. This is particularly the case for debts where the debtor does not correspond or engage with the team initially, where debts have been outstanding for some time or where the debt is large.

The Council will therefore keep as an option the offer of a reduction on the whole debt or similar incentives as described below, where this provides scope for collection of some of the debt owed which otherwise might not be recovered. These will however only be employed where records of recovery action demonstrate that successful recovery of the debt is otherwise unlikely to be achieved, where there is evidence to show the former tenant can not reasonably afford the whole debt or this offers the best value-for-money approach compared to other steps that could be pursued:

Income Management Team:

Can offer up to a maximum reduction of 20% of the total debt, up to a maximum of £250 or an incentive equivalent to this (for example, pay 6 months instalments instead of 8), if this is to clear the debt.

Team Leader - Income Management:

Can offer up to a maximum reduction of 33% of the total debt up to a maximum of £1,500, where at least the same amount is recovered from the applicant, or a similar incentive equivalent to this, if this clears the debt.

Assistant Tenancy Services Manager:

Can approve any other reduction or incentive, where the former tenant (or another person on their behalf) agrees to pay the remainder of the debt owed.

Any such use of a reduction or incentive will be recorded and reviewed, on a quarterly basis, by an officer more senior than the officer authorising the decision.

Exclusion from (or Terms of Inclusion on) the Housing Register

Applicants for the housing register are required to identify if they have previously applied for or held a CCDC tenancy. The allocations team will also check the applicants' housing history and identify any previous council tenancies.

Any applicants with former tenancy arrears will be subject to the Council's Housing Application exclusion process and the ineligibility clauses of the Allocations policy. This could include:

- An invitation to make payment or a payment plan to inform what action is taken in relation to a potential exclusion
- Agreement with housing options to split the debt into thirds - with one third paid by housing options, one third written off and one third remaining payable by the applicant
- Exclusion from the Housing Register for non-payment or not maintaining payments
- Inclusion on the housing register while a payment plan is made / kept for a period of time before an offer is made
- Write off of part or all of a debt owed, with terms for payment of any remaining debt to be included on the housing register

Former Tenant Arrears Write Offs and Writing Debts Back On

Unfortunately, despite best efforts, not all former tenant arrears are recoverable.

Where debts are considered uncollectable, they will not be pursued and considered for write-off. Debts become uncollectable where all potential avenues of recovery have been exhausted, the debt is beyond the 6-year statute of limitations, the debt is older than two years outstanding and there is no avenue for collection and no payment arrangement in place or it is not viable to seek recovery further due to a low level of debt or the former tenant's individual circumstances. A full list of the type of uncollectable debt types is set out in Appendix One to this policy.

Write-off reports will be provided by the Team Leader - Income Management to the Council's Chief Council Accountant seeking approval for write-off in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and write off policy. Currently, the Council's Chief Accountant can approve write offs of debts up to £10,000, on behalf of the S.151 Officer and Deputy Chief Executive (Resources).

Any amounts above this, which are unlikely, will require approval of the Council's Cabinet, on the recommendation of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets. In such a case, a specific report to Cabinet would be provided for their consideration.

On occasion, a former tenant debt which has been written off may be written back on, so that it is again recoverable. This may be in cases such as where a former tenant contacts us after their debt was written off, re-applies for housing with the council or where we otherwise gain contact details or other information, which suggests the debt may be recoverable, where this was not the case previously. Write-ons can be approved by the Team Leader – Income Management at any time where new information is available to suggest the debt can again be pursued.

6. Risk Management

Risks of non-recovery will be managed through the associated process and procedures and monitoring of the amount of debt owed and the amount recovered. These will aim to help maximise income through processes which are efficient, effective and consistently applied.

The risk of re-housing a tenant with former tenant arrears still outstanding will be managed through the effective application of the Allocation Policy and associated exclusion policy / process.

7. Measuring the Impact and What Does Success Look Like

The Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) policy aims to help maximise Council property rental income.

Key Performance Information:

- FTA Outstanding (£)
- FTA arrears collection (£ and as % of FTA Outstanding)
- FTA Written Off (£)
- FTA Reduced debt written off (3)
- Comparator with peers

8. Related Policies and Procedures

- CDDC Financial Regulations
- Income Management Policy and Procedures
- Tenancy Management Policy and Procedures
- Allocations Policy and Procedures
- Write-Off Policy and Procedures
- Garage Management Policy

9. Consultation and Equality & Diversity

The Council is committed to engaging with its tenants about key policies and service delivery. In relation to this policy, it will consult existing tenants about the approach taken to tenancy management and what happens when tenancies end.

The Council will ensure its policies and practices are non-discriminatory and will promote equal opportunity by preventing and eliminating discrimination on legally protected characteristics, including on the grounds of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief and age.

Processes and information related to former tenant arrears will be accessible, responsive and sensitive to the needs of diverse individuals.

10. Review

Former Tenants will have the same right as existing tenants to ask for their case to be reviewed and / or to make a complaint about the service offered to them. These rights will be explained where relevant.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

11. Contact

To find out more about former tenant arrears, please contact:

Income management Team
Housing Services,
Cannock Chase Council
Civic Centre,
Beecroft Road,
Cannock,
Staffs,
WS11 1BG

Telephone: 01543 462621

E-Mail: rents@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Appendix One – Uncollectable Debts

- a) Debt is beyond economic recovery-Where the debt is less than £100 and two attempts have been made to contact the tenants. It is not economic to pursue the debts.
- b) Sensitive cases -Vulnerable individuals (authorised by manager).
- c) Deceased – no estate. Where the former tenant has died and the executors or next of kin have confirmed in writing that there is lack of funds and recovery action would cause undue hardship and distress. Appropriate notification by either the next of kin or legal executors that there are insufficient income/funds to clear the debt.
- d) Tenant admitted to permanent residential care- Where the Tenant has moved into residential care, such as a nursing home, extra care scheme or hospital on a permanent basis and will not be returning and there are insufficient income/funds to clear the debt.
- e) Emigration- with no ability to chase or collect the debt- Where notification is received that the customer has emigrated and therefore the debt cannot be recovered.
- f) Debts that have are not legally recoverable after the 6-year statute of limitations.
- g) Debts where all legal recovery powers have been exhausted
- h) Debts included in bankruptcy, Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA) and Debt Relief Orders
- i) Debtors inability to pay - credit check system and income check shows no reasonable propensity to pay or where the former tenant already has a CCJ and chasing the debt could lead to an eviction from their home

Current Former Tenant Arrears (FTA) Position

At 24 October 2025, the following FTA debts are owed to the Council:

- Total FTA Debt Outstanding: £489,615.50
- Total No. of Cases: 688
- Average Debt per case: £711.65
- Debts Below Average: 486
- Debts Above Average: 202

There are no debts above £10,000, for which Cabinet approval is required before a debt is written off.

Revenues and Benefits Collection Report - Quarter 2

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	6 November 2025
Report of:	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources
Portfolio:	Resources and Transformation

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the performance of the Revenues and Benefits Service as regards:
- The collection of Council Tax during quarter 2 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
 - The collection of Business Rates during quarter 2 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
 - The recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit during quarter 2 of the 2025-2026 financial year.
- 1.2 To seek approval to the write-off of the arrears listed in the **confidential appendix 1**.

2 Reason(s) for Appendix being 'Not for Publication

- 2.1 In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), appendix 1 of the report is considered 'not for publication' under the following categories of exemption:
- Exempt Paragraph 1 – Information relating to any individual.
 - 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 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the information regarding collections be noted.
- 3.2 That the arrears listed in the **confidential appendix 1** be written off.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.3 Efficient collection of the Council's revenues is of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by our preceptors.
- 3.4 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.

4 Key Issues

- 4.1 Council Tax due for the 2025/26-year amounts to £70.5M of which some **54.7%** was collected by the 30 September.
- 4.2 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £40.6M of which some **53.8%** was collected by the 30 September.

5 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6 Report Detail

6.1 Council Tax

- 6.1.1 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 11% of the council tax collected.
- 6.1.2 Council Tax due for the current year amounts to £70.5M and we have collected 54.7% to 30 September Last year's collection figure was 54.6% for the same period.
- 6.1.3 Whilst trying to maintain this rate in the coming year, the team will also increase its efforts to recover older years' arrears owed to the Council.
- 6.1.4 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.

- 6.1.5 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.
- 6.1.6 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.

- 6.1.7 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 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.

6.2 Business Rates

- 6.2.1 Business rates income 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.
- 6.2.2 Business Rates due for the current year amounts to £40.6M of which some **53.8%** was collected by the 30 September. This compares to 54.9% collected in the same period last year.
- 6.2.3 Repeating last year's performance in the coming year will be challenging as many retail, hospitality and leisure establishments are facing increased bills as the government relief to these premises has reduced from 75% last year to 40% this year. The team are also increasing our efforts to recover older debts, which may impact on some businesses' ability to pay their current charges.
- 6.2.4 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.
- 6.2.5 Where rates are owed by an individual, similar safeguards exist for the debtors and trace facilities are used by the Council for absconding debtors, as described above.
- 6.2.6 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.

- 6.2.7 4 Irrecoverable business rates debt of £91,282.45 are listed in the confidential appendix to this report.

6.3 Housing Benefit Overpayments

- 6.3.1 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.
- 6.3.2 Sometimes a claimant will be paid too much Housing Benefit, for example when the Council does not become aware of a change of circumstances until after the claimant has been paid the benefit. This is called an Overpayment of Housing Benefit. The Council is expected to recover these overpayments from the claimant in all but a few limited circumstances. DWP will fund only 40% of benefit which is overpaid as a result of claimant error or fraud.
- 6.3.3 Where an overpayment occurs as a result of a local authority error, DWP will provide 100% funding provided our error rate remains below a threshold of 0.48% of benefit paid, as it has routinely done for many years.
- 6.3.4 Recovery of overpaid Housing Benefit continues to progress well, with some £156K being collected in the financial year. This income is received into the General Fund, in addition to the Government subsidy and is not shared with preceptors.

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. There are no Council Tax write-offs on this report.

The amounts being recommended are well below the value of the bad debt provision, which the Council includes within its accounts in expectation that some amounts owed will not be paid and cannot be recovered.

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 is 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 recommenced.

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 recommenced.

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 Equalities and Diversity

None.

7.6 Health

None.

7.7 Climate Change

None.

8 Appendices

Confidential Appendix 1: Business Rate write offs over £10,000.

9 Background Papers

None.

10 Previous Consideration

None.

Contact Officer: Rob Wolfe

Report Track: Cabinet: 06/11/25

Key Decision: No