



Please ask for: Wendy Rowe
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27 August 2025

Dear Councillor,

Cabinet

6:00pm on Thursday 4 September 2025

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

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

Yours sincerely,

T. Clegg
Chief Executive

To:

Councillors:

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

Agenda

Part 1

1. Apologies

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

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

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 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 September to November 2025 (Item 5.1 - 5.2).

6. Community Asset Transfer of Prince of Wales Theatre

Report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 6.1 - 6.202).

7. Quarter 1 Performance Report 2025/26

Report of the Head of Transformation and Assurance (Item 7.1 - 7.27).

8. Housing Services Quarter 1 Performance Report 2025/26

Report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 8.1 - 8.21).

9. Updated Strategic Risk Register

Report of the Head of Transformation and Assurance (Item 9.1 - 9.22).

10. Governance Improvement Plan - Progress Report for Quarter 1 2025/26

Report of the Head of Transformation and Assurance (Item 10.1 - 10.13).

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 31 July 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

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

20. Apologies

Apologies for absence were noted for

- Councillor J. Preece, Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader, and
- Councillor J. Prestwood, Resources & Transformation Portfolio Leader.

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

None received.

22. Minutes

The Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio advised that under the Portfolio Updates, it had been incorrectly reported that the first two Council homes at the Aelfgar site would be ready in September. The correct expected date was in fact December.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2025 be approved subject to the above amendment.

23. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

(i) Regeneration and High Streets

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Bridgtown Heritage Trail**

"I attended the launch of the Bridgtown heritage trail a couple of weeks ago with the PR & Marketing Officer and the Community Education Officer. It was a very good presentation with a few people in attendance."

- **Meeting with Cannock Police**

"I recently met with Detective Chief Inspector Lyford and Inspector Walker from Cannock Police to discuss anti-social behaviour issues and hotspots in the area. The Detective Chief Inspector had also agreed to come and meet with all District Councillors soon. It was good to see that both organisations could perhaps work better together."

(ii) **Housing and Corporate Assets**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Sale of Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge**

"Stile Cop Cemetery Lodge had been sold subject to contract, with a sale price of £275,000. Additionally, the electricity sub-station on site would not have to be relocated, thereby saving the Council significant costs."

24. Forward Plan

Resolved:

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

25. Permission to Spend - Swimming Pool Support Fund

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Wellbeing (Item 6.1 - 6.3).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) Council, at its meeting to be held on 24 September 2025, be recommended to include £145,000 in the capital programme for the installation of Photo Voltaic Panels at Chase Leisure Centre.
- (B) Subject to Council approval of (A), above, retrospective permission to spend the funding be approved.

Reason for Decisions

Funding was awarded to the Council for energy efficiency measures at Chase Leisure Centre from Sport England's Swimming Pool Support Fund. To proceed with the interventions, permission to spend the funding was required.

26. UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 7.1 - 7.9).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The success of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2022-2025 programme be noted, along with the impact the investments and interventions had had across the District.
- (B) The contents of the Urgent Executive Decision, as set out in report appendix 1, in respect of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025-2026 programme and delegations required to commence delivery, be noted.
- (C) The award to the Council of £988,573 of UK Shared Prosperity Fund for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 be noted.
- (D) Council, at its meeting to be held on 24 September 2025, be recommended to amend the current capital programme to accommodate the sum of £210,000 in respect of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to ensure delivery of capital projects identified in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme for 2025-2026.
- (E) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Development and Planning, in consultation with the Regeneration and High Streets Portfolio Leader, to take any associated decisions as required to ensure that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme was delivered on time and on budget, including, but not limited to:
 - i) Producing and submitting s151 Officer certified financial and output returns and monitoring and evaluation information as required, to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
 - ii) Developing and commencing the commissioning of external projects to be funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and commence commissioning of Council led projects to be funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
 - iii) Working with the Head of Law and Governance to develop and produce any legal agreements required for external projects funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
 - iv) Continuing the existing governance arrangements in respect of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Board.

Reasons for Decisions

The Government announced in the autumn budget 2024 that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme would be extended by 12 months from 1 April 2025. Council allocations were provisionally announced in early March 2025 but only confirmed on 1 April 2025 once the 2022-2025 programme was complete.

The way in which the UKSPF programme was administered had been modified for the extension period and the previously published Investment Plan was no longer a requirement of the scheme. Instead, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government required all councils to submit a forecast of their programme spend by no later than 1 May 2025, meaning that an Urgent Executive Decision had to be sought to secure the funding.

As with the original scheme, a proportion of the funding was specifically for capital projects which required a recommendation to Council to amend the existing capital programme.

27. Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council Joint Tree Management Proposals: Tree Management System and Tree Re-inspections

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Operations (Item 8.1 - 8.8).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The procurement of a shared integrated software system for all areas of tree management be agreed, including Council owned trees, Tree Preservation Orders, and trees which are the subject of a Conservation Area designation.
- (B) The drawing down from reserves to fund the procurement of a shared integrated electronic tree management software system, including a customer facing web portal, be noted.
- (C) The carrying out of routine tree inspections at both Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council by an external contractor be agreed, in parallel to the procurement and installation of the shared integrated software system.
- (D) It be noted that provision would be made in the budget for 2026/27 onwards for the routine inspection of the Council owned trees using external sub-contractors.

Reasons for Decisions

The tree management services had the same remit at both Cannock Chase District Council and Stafford Borough Council ('the Councils'), but there were some differences in the way the Councils managed and delivered them. It was intended to fully align the team and service provision across both Councils.

The management of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and trees in Conservation Areas was guided by the statutory framework of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The related processes were not supported by any software at either Council, which meant the current processes were time consuming for officers across a number of different sections. The majority of these enquiries could be addressed by a self-service customer-facing portal.

In terms of the TPOs themselves, the majority of Cannock Chase TPOs had been digitised and partly reviewed, whereas Stafford Borough's had not. However, both Councils were now in a position where they needed to comprehensively review and updated all of their TPOs.

Similarly, one of the biggest sources of enquiries at both Councils were trees on open spaces. Updating the software would allow tree enquiries to be more efficiently dealt with via a self-service customer portal.

Aligning the service and updating the software would support the Councils in meeting their legal requirements to have an effective system for managing trees.

28. Development of Heath Hayes Park: Masterplan and Play Area Refurbishment

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Operations (Item 9.1 - 9.11).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) Approval to proceed with the proposed development of the phase 1 improvements to Heath Hayes Park be approved, as set out at option 2 of report paragraph 3.8 and the proposals set out in report appendix 1.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 24 September 2025, be recommended to include £47,580 (Forest of Mercia grant funding) to the capital programme for 2025/26, as detailed in report paragraph 6.1, to deliver phase 1 of the Heath Hayes Park development project.
- (C) Permission to spend £662,580 (made up of Community Infrastructure Levy, S106 monies and grant funds) as detailed in report paragraph 6.1, to deliver phase 1 of the Heath Hayes Park development project, be granted.
- (D) The investigation of appropriate capital funding opportunities toward the funding of phase 2 be approved, which would enable a further report to be considered when a clear funding strategy was in place.

Reasons for Decisions

Councils had a major role to play in contributing to the promotion and delivery of increased participation in sport, recreation and physical activity. The provision of first-class sports and recreation facilities that were sustainable and met the needs of the community could assist in this role.

Heath Hayes Park sat within the Heath Hayes and Wimblebury ward, which had elevated levels of childhood obesity in the 0-5 age range and a higher number of households with dependent children (compared to the national average). Heath Hayes and Wimblebury currently had four small play areas. The development of this park would enable the Council to continue its work to provide seven main parks across the District, as per previous reports.

Outdoor spaces were essential in enabling the residents to have access to healthy and active lifestyle choices. This could be accommodated through play, sports, socialising and/or even, simply by walking through a site on the way to school, college, work, or riding through and around a site for fun or social purposes. All of the above were proven to have a positive impact on physical health and supporting mental wellbeing. Heath Hayes Park was part of the Green Space Network, which fell within section 4.16 of the Local Plan Part 1, highlighting the need for good quality formal and informal outdoor spaces for recreation and nature conservation.

The proposed play area improvement scheme at Heath Hayes Park was already included within the Community Infrastructure List with a budget of £500,000 agreed for phase 1 of the works. The balance of the costs for phase 2 were to be considered once match funding could be obtained. Having scoped the works in detail it was considered that additional works were required to fully redevelop the whole site.

Potential new local housing developments would lead to larger demand on the park and play area facilities and provision.

With this in mind, the Council had been talking to the land developer with the option to allocate any Section 106 funds toward phase 2 of the works. Further Cabinet reports would be submitted once the depth of this work and funding had been confirmed.

The proposal aimed to improve of the Council's primary parks and encourage its links to local history, Chasewater, and Cannock Chase National Landscape.

It was proposed to split the scheme into two separate phases:

Phase 1: Preparation, Junior / Toddler play spaces, main pathway construction, football pitch drainage and ground modelling and extending the existing parking area (appendix 1).

Phase 2: Further pathways, site safety and security, infrastructure development and building.

Both phases of the works were considered too large and costly to be carried out in one, and as such, the scheme had been split into two phases, as per the above. The cost to fully develop both phases was currently estimated at circa £2,614,930.

Redevelopment works to Heath Hayes Park would link into several of the Local Plan objectives, via the inclusion of wide access corridors for walking and cycling, and improvements to the sports fields. Additional tree and orchard planting would not only protect habitats and wildlife but would also mitigate against pollution and its increasing environmental impact. The installation of accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging units on site was in line with the Council's climate change agenda and increased accessibility options to them for residents.

The Council was keen to progress the proposed phase 1 development and for it to be completed within the 2026-2027 financial year. To achieve this deadline, it had been necessary to include the estimated cost of the proposed phase 1 scheme into the Council's capital programme for 2025-2026 and to secure approval to spend the S106, Community Infrastructure Levy and Forest of Mercia funds.

It should be noted that given the level of information at this stage of the project, the estimated costs provided must be viewed as budget estimates only. They would need to be subject to further scrutiny at each element of the design and tender submission stage and may be subject to value engineering to ensure the final expenditure was within the approved budget.

29. Housing Services Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement and Self-Assessment

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 10.1 - 10.46).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The contents of the Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report and self-assessment be noted.
- (B) The report and outcomes from the self-assessment form be approved, further to its subsequent publication on the Council's website and submission to the Housing Ombudsman.

Reason for Decisions

To adhere to membership requirements of the Housing Ombudsman and its Complaint Handling Code 2024 for Landlords to produce an annual complaints and service improvement report for scrutiny and challenge by Cabinet, which must include the self-assessment against the Code to ensure complaint handling policy remained in line with the Ombudsman's requirements.

30. Tenancy Management Policy 2025-2028

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 11.1 - 11.19).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The proposed Tenancy Management Policy, as set out in report appendix 1, be approved.
- (B) The contents of the Policy be noted.

Reason for Decisions

An understanding of the rights and responsibilities of both landlord and tenant was a keystone for providing high-quality council homes and landlord services. Having a clear, unambiguous Tenancy Management Policy was vital to this.

31. Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3, 5, and 6, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 31 July 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 2

32. Housing Services - Repairs and Maintenance IT Transformation

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication report of the Head of Housing and Corporate Assets (Item 13.1 - 13.12).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The conditional budget as referred to in report paragraph 3.1 be approved (conditional on the S151 Officer, Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader and Head of Housing and Corporate Assets signing off the affordability once the draft Housing Revenue Account Business Plan was approved as per the report's financial implications), for making improvements to the current Housing software in place and purchase a replacement software module. The new module would replace NEC's Scheduler and Go Mobile, and the wider investment would improve the remaining NEC modules, processes and automation, and improve the digital offering.
- (B) The recruitment of external resources to implement the changes be approved. This to include extending the contract for the Project Manager, recruiting two interim Business Analysts and an interim NEC Technical resource to deliver the proposed changes.

Reasons for Decisions

Software required ongoing maintenance, support and development. The NEC Housing software required significant work to meet the needs of the Housing Service.

An alternative solution was to procure a replacement for NEC's Scheduler and Go Mobile. This required a full requirement gathering exercise, procurement of the new software and implementation. This would be completed by the NECH project team once procured. New software would also provide an opportunity to improve digital access to the service for tenants.

There was a lack of internal expertise, knowledge and capacity to complete this work. Procuring external interim resources would be necessary to ensure the successful delivery of the project. The resource requirements were for:

- Project Manager to oversee the procurement of the new software and the co-ordination of the work of the project team.

- Business Analyst to conduct a detailed requirements gathering exercise for the procurement of the new scheduling module and mobile app and support the procurement process.
- Second Business Analyst to review processes, system functionality and identify opportunities for improvement, automation and digitisation; to support the changes by updating processes and training materials; and to help manage the change into the business to maximise system usage.
- Technical resource to make the changes, especially the implementation of new modules as there would need to be integration between software, and to implement the improvements, automation and digitisation.

A full business case had also been completed and previously presented to the leadership team. An options appraisal was completed to assess various approaches, and this was included in report appendix 3. Option 3 was the recommended choice from the options appraisal.

The meeting closed at 6:57 p.m.

Leader