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22 March 2022

Dear Councillor,

**Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee**

**6:00pm, Wednesday 30 March, 2022**

**Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock**

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

Yours sincerely,

Tim Clegg  
**Chief Executive**

To: Councillors:

Thompson, Mrs. S.L. (Chairman)  
Kraujalis, J.T. (Vice-Chairman)  
Dunnett, Ms. A.J.     Startin, P.D.  
Frew, C.L.             Sutton, Mrs. H.M.  
Haden, Mrs. P.K.     Wilkinson, Ms. C.L.  
Johnson, T.B.         Wilson, Mrs. L.J.  
Lyons, N.                 Witton, P.T.  
McCall, M.

# Agenda

## Part 1

### 1. Apologies

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

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

(ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.

### 3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee held on 1 December, 2021 (enclosed).

### 4. Quarter 3 2021/22 Performance Update

To receive the latest performance information (Item 4.1 - 4.18).

### 5. Affordable Housing Delivery Scrutiny Review - Update

Verbal update by the Head of Housing and Partnerships.

### 6. Car Parking Pilot Scheme

Briefing Note of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 6.1 - 6.6).

### 7. Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021-22 - Update

Verbal update from the Head of Economic Prosperity and the Head of Housing and Partnerships.

## Part 2

### 8. Exclusion of the Public

The Chairman to move:

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

### 9. Levelling Up Fund

To receive a confidential presentation from the Head of Economic Prosperity.

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee**  
**Held on Wednesday 1 December 2021 at 6:00pm**  
**in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:** Councillors:

Thompson, Mrs. S.L. (Chairman)

Kraujalis, J.T. (Vice-Chairman)

Dunnett, Ms. A.J.      Lyons, N.

Frew, C.L.              Sutton, Mrs. H.M.

Haden, Mrs. P.K.      Wilkinson, Ms. C.L.

Johnson, T.B.         Witton, P.T.

**13. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P.D. Startin.

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

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

**15. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

**16. Quarter 2 PDP and Recovery Performance Information**

Consideration was given to the Quarter 2 PDP and Recovery Performance Information for Supporting Economic Recovery (Item 4.1 – 4.17 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Economic Prosperity led Members through the information outlining some of the projects/actions achieved in Quarter 2. In particular, he confirmed that notification had been received that the Council had been successful in securing £20m for Cannock Town Centre via the Levelling Up Fund. The public were encouraged to view the online consultation and visuals and offer their ideas and views. Further details would be released in due course.

A Member commented on the difficulty she had experienced navigating the website to complete an application form for ARG funding on behalf of a resident. However, once the

application had been submitted it had been dealt with quickly. The Head of Economic Prosperity advised that he would look at simplifying the process and if any businesses had issues in applying for ARG funding they should contact the Economic Development Team.

The Strategic Housing Manager then referred to the progress with all three key housing projects in Quarter 2 confirming that the Hawks Green site was on target for completion by March 2022. With regards to the Aelfgar development scheme she advised that the land sale had been completed and outline planning permission had been sought. She confirmed that the procurement exercise and selection of a contractor may slip into Quarter 4 due to the complex nature of the scheme. Finally, she confirmed that work was almost complete in relation to submitting the planning application for the Chadsmoor development; however, it may also slip into Quarter 4.

A Member referred to the Chadsmoor development and considered that this should be dealt with in a sensitive manner given that residents had expressed concern over developing the site. The Officer confirmed that residents would be consulted during the planning process.

In response to a question, the Officer confirmed that the Aelfgar development was more complex as it was a Passivhaus scheme and developers and contractors were not as knowledgeable. It was possible that the Chadsmoor development may also be a Passivhaus scheme.

The Head of Economic Prosperity then referred to the Direction of Travel Indicators. He advised that both unemployment rate and youth unemployment were down in Quarter 2. This was good progress and showed that as covid restrictions were eased jobs had been created.

Members asked whether there was any information available on the types of jobs being created and whether the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet had helped in creating jobs, particularly for local people.

The Head of Economic Prosperity advised that he did not have any data on types of jobs available, however, he could circulate this to Members following the meeting. He confirmed that McArthurGlen worked with the Walsall Skills Academy to assist local people in gaining the necessary skills to apply for vacancies. He added that 70% of McArthurGlen employees lived within a 20-minute timeframe and the outlet had created 600-700 jobs since opening.

He then referred to town centre vacancy rates which, although high in Cannock, had fallen in all 3 town centres during Quarter 2. He commented that there was an oversupply of retail units in Cannock and not enough demand. This was one of the reasons why the Council had been successful in obtaining funding through the Levelling Up Fund.

Members noted that the smaller village centres did not appear to have difficulty with empty retail units. The Officer commented that data in respect of District centres was not measured. However, District centres such as Heath Hayes had smaller retail units which were occupied by independent businesses or coffee shops, whereas in Cannock Town Centre many of the units were too large for these independent businesses. It was therefore important to think differently about town centres and their usage in the future.

**Resolved:**

- (A) That the Quarter 2 PDP and Recovery Performance information be noted.
- (B) That the Head of Economic Prosperity circulate data on the types of jobs available to Members.

**17. Briefing Note – Local Plan Consultation Scrutiny Review**

Councillor T. Johnson, Chairman of the Local Plan Consultation Working Group, was invited to outline the Briefing Note. He explained that the Group had met on two occasions, 7 September and 11 November and had considered what could be done to increase and improve consultation methods in the future. The Group had formulated several recommendations and he outlined these for the benefit of Members.

**Resolved:**

Members noted the following recommendations of the Working Group and agreed that these be submitted to Cabinet for consideration: -

- (a) consideration be given to having a stand at public events such as the local farmers markets that take place throughout the District.
- (b) consultation be directed to areas in the District where higher levels of development were taking place.
- (c) make better use of social media by setting up a dedicated Facebook page for the Local Plan consultation; this could then be shared/promoted by all political groups.
- (d) Councillors should be encouraged to liaise and engage with residents to seek their views, particularly in areas where significant development was taking place.
- (e) Improve the communication between Officers and Ward Members in order to share knowledge of any development activities in a particular area.
- (f) To look at using virtual consultation methods similar to those used for the Levelling Up Fund – build this into the next stage of the consultation process.
- (g) That the non-technical document be circulated to Members of the Group for them to review and feedback any comments to officers.
- (h) To look at how the Council publish the information in respect of the Local Plan – do something different to capture the interest of the public when consultation was launched.
- (i) The need for better engagement with Parish Councils – suggest Officer attendance at Parish Council meetings to outline the consultation process and advise how the public can get involved.
- (j) The need for the provision for gypsy/traveller families in the Local Plan – although this was a key theme in the Local Plan it was considered this could be highlighted better in the consultation process.

## **18. Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021-22 – update**

The Head of Economic Prosperity explained that the Committee had agreed two reviews during 2021/22. The Local Plan Consultation Review had been completed and the first meeting of the Affordable Housing Delivery Scrutiny Review was scheduled to meet on 24 January, 2022.

He confirmed that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 30 March, 2022. The Committee would receive the Quarter 3 performance update report, an update on the Affordable Housing Delivery Scrutiny Review and an update on the Car Parking Pilot which had been extended until the end of January.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.

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CHAIRMAN

**Priority Delivery Plan for 2021-22**  
**Priority 1 – Supporting Economic Recovery**

**PROJECTS – Summary of Performance**

**Delivery of Projects for Q3**

				N/A	<b>Total Number of Projects</b>
Action completed	Project on Target	Work in progress but project slightly behind schedule <3 months	Action more than 3 months behind schedule – specific action required to address delay	Project not yet started	
<b>4</b> <b>(10%)</b>	<b>19</b> <b>(49%)</b>	<b>12</b> <b>(31%)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(8%)</b>	<b>1</b> <b>(2%)</b>	<b>39</b>

**Summary of Successes as at Quarter 3**

- The Council was successful with its £20m bid for Cannock town centre to the Levelling Up Fund.
- Delivery of Apprenticeship initiative (in partnership with Staffordshire County Council) - full delivery of targets and spend.
- Federation of Small Businesses membership initiative - all free memberships allocated to local small businesses.
- Engineering Academy - good growth in engineering and apprenticeship enrolments.

**Summary of Slippage as at Quarter 3**

- Cannock Masterplan - not progressed as no budget secured for this work and officer resources have been diverted to support the delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project for Cannock town centre.
- Local Plan Review - slippage of timetable and delay to next stage of the Local Plan process i.e. Pre-submission / Regulation 19 consultation.
- Continued delay with disposal of Avon Road car park site
- Slower than anticipated take up for courses offered at the new Digital Skills Academy.
- Housing Stock Condition Survey - Access agreement with Stoke City Council Framework in place; Call off contract T&C amendments 99% complete; Finalisation of specification nearing completion due end of w/c 7/2/22. 3 out of 6 suppliers have expressed interest.

## 1.1 Supporting jobs, enterprise, and skills

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.1.1. Maximise the economic benefits of the opening of McArthurGlen Designer Outlet West Midlands</b>							
Review and refresh of Economic Prosperity Strategy.	Production and consultation.			✓		Workshops held with officers and Members during November 2021 to review the vision, themes and priorities. Feedback report has been produced and will be presented to Cabinet for consideration during Q4.	✓
	Present to Cabinet for approval.				✓		
Promotional leaflet production to coincide with opening of Designer Outlet.	Production and launch of leaflet.	✓				Leaflet now in circulation and PR launch carried out.	★
Work with McArthurGlen to develop a joint marketing plan to promote the District and encourage linked trips and dwell time in Cannock Chase.	Develop and implement marketing plan and identify resources.				✓	Meeting planned for Jan/Feb 2022 to progress this piece of work. Discussions also taking place with county wide Destination Management Partnership to maximise opportunities for linked trips.	✓
Transformational upgrade of Cannock Railway Station <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business case development / design</li> <li>Submit bids for funding</li> </ul>	Work with partners to commission next stage of design and engineering work.	✓				Network Rail have been commissioned to undertake further design and feasibility work for preferred option.	▲
	Report to Cabinet presenting outcome of design work, including updated cost plan and funding strategy.				✓	Inception meeting has taken place and programme has been agreed between CCDC/partners and Network Rail.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.1.2. Supporting local businesses</b>							
Provision of advice and support to local businesses to resume operations and recover from Covid restrictions.	Support to businesses to enable them to comply with Covid regulations and guidance in line with timescales set out in Government roadmap.		✓			Covid support team has been disbanded following ending of Covid restrictions on 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2021. On-going support for local businesses is being provided by Economic Development, Food Safety and Licensing teams as part of 'business as usual' activity.	★
Full allocation of Government funded Covid business support programmes i.e. Local Restrictions Support Grant, Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) focusing on businesses affected by the pandemic and lockdown restrictions	Aim for full allocation of ARG by 30 <sup>th</sup> July as per MHCLG guidance.		✓			Full spend achieved. Additional top up monies awarded to Council. New ARG Policy went live in October 2021 and further top up to be made to support businesses affected by Omicron variant. Top up ARG monies will be targeted on hospitality and leisure businesses. ARG monies need to be fully spent by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022.	✓
	Payment of Re-start grants.	✓					
	Delivery of Apprenticeship and Training initiatives in partnership with Staffordshire County Council.					✓	Apprenticeship targets and spend achieved already – nil cost training grant funding still available. Council has until March 2022 to spend full amount. Defrayal spend targets projected to be met by 31/3/2022 - project will be successfully delivered on time and within budget

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
Delivery of Enterprise for Success and Let's Get Started initiatives in the District to help new businesses to start up.	Promote available support to eligible local residents.				✓	Marketing of initiatives on-going. ERDF Project extension request made by Solihull MBC has been approved - project will continue to operate across District up to 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	✓
Expand Federation of Small Business Membership in District to help survival rates of businesses.	Promote initiative and secure new Members take up.		✓			All 27 Memberships now allocated - project completed on time & in budget	★
<b>1.1.3. Support for newly unemployed residents</b>							
Working in partnership with LEAs, DWP, Staffordshire County Council to proactively respond to redundancy announcements	Monitor through Countywide redundancy task group numbers of reported redundancies and HR1 forms from Cannock Chase employers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unemployment figures are regularly monitored. Maintaining a watching brief given Covid/Omicron evolving situation - no major impact to date.	✓
Identify gaps in local provision and develop initiatives (if required) to further support unemployed residents.	Post furlough ending consider whether additional provision is needed to help address growing unemployment levels.			✓		Additional short-term DWP facility established in Cannock town centre to support Universal Credit claimants. Not seeing any major detrimental impact to date on unemployment rates.	✓
<b>1.1.4. Increasing skills levels and access to employment opportunities</b>							
Work with Cannock College to deliver skills and apprenticeships opportunities to local residents	Assist with delivery of apprenticeships linked to engineering academy and recruitment of local employers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Year on Year comparison of enrolment figures carried out - demonstrates good growth in engineering apprenticeship figures and very positive upwards trajectory.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
	Aide the roll out of a new digital skills hub in Cannock and promote the local offer to local employers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Take up is slower than predicted - College have employed new digital academy lead - broadening out the range of courses provided - may take time to embed and for numbers to grow.	
<b>1.1.5. Ensure sufficient supply of employment land and workspace for small businesses</b>							
Explore feasibility of encouraging more managed workspace in the District	Work with key partners to identify potential locations for future sites.				✓	Levelling Up Fund £20m award will enable development of provision of managed workspace in Cannock Town Centre to be taken forward. Looking at other potential sites and this is being factored into piece of work to develop future pipeline of projects.	

## 1.2 Reshaping our town centres

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.2.1. Identify external funding / investment opportunities</b>							
Identify external funding opportunities	Submit a business case for the Levelling Up Fund for Cannock Town Centre	✓				Funding award announced and full £20m ask has been allocated to the project. Inception meeting scheduled for Jan 2022	
	Fully commit and spend the Council's Welcome Back Fund to support re-opening of town centres				✓	All areas advised of cut-off date for approving spend items as 31/12/2021 Any underspend will be re-allocated to ensure full spend target by 31/3/2022 is met.	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
Develop a pipeline of projects to reshape our town centres and provide focus for future bidding opportunities	Develop an investment plan to include pipeline of projects			✓	✓	Project proformas issued to all officers for submission back by 19 <sup>th</sup> November - workshops scheduled in Jan 2022 to collate and prioritise projects into the District Investment Plan.	✓
<b>1.2.2. Regeneration / reshaping of Cannock Town Centre</b>							
Cannock Town Centre Prospectus	Engagement with private sector with the aim of securing investment for identified Cannock Prospectus sites	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ongoing discussions with local developers. Current focus is on Church Street / MSCP site and Avon Road disposal.	✓
Land disposal at Avon Road	Agree Heads of Terms for disposal	✓				Issue with establishing a secondary access – may affect delivery of overall scheme. Discussions ongoing with purchaser as looking to remodel within development proposed on site (with slight increase in proposed site area) - would protect current access arrangements - awaiting proposal from purchaser, likely to be received Jan 2022. This issue is outside of the Council's control and a solution needs to be found by the prospective purchaser.	✗
	Planning application to be submitted by purchaser		✓			See above comment.	
Business case for demolition of MSCP and Indoor Market site to Cabinet	Report to Cabinet setting out business case for demolition including options appraisal		✓			Given the announcement of the Levelling Up Funding (LUF) award £20m a detailed Cabinet Report is anticipated to be brought forward in February 2022.	▲

Item No. 4.7

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
						<p>Report from demolition consultant outlining the feasibility of demolition was received and completed on time and in budget. This will be included as part of the LUF Cabinet report.</p> <p>Further scenario work has now been commissioned to understand in greater detail what cost, programme and delivery issues there would be taking into account third party land ownership issues.</p>	
Develop a Cannock Masterplan	Procure consultants to undertake masterplan production					<p>There is no funding available at present time to support production of masterplan – alternative sources of funding need to be identified. Given Levelling Up Fund allocation for Cannock town centre it has been necessary to divert officer resources and capacity to support delivery of this project and as such work on Cannock Masterplan will not be progressed as an immediate priority but will likely be featured in the District Investment Plan as a potential future priority project and a budget allocation will be needed to take forward this work if agreed with members.</p>	
	Prepare specification / undertake procurement			✓			
	Award contract				✓		

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.2.3. Reshaping Rugeley Town Centre and surrounding areas – capitalising upon the re-development of Rugeley Power Station</b>							
Identify options for the Rugeley Market Hall and adjoining land	Undertake an options assessment				✓	There are very limited options at this stage aside from continuing to promote vacant stalls to prospective traders.	✓
Identify options for addressing vacant units in Rugeley Town Centres	Undertake a Baseline assessment of vacant units including engagement with private landlords and partners				✓	Vacant units in town centres continue to be monitored, however there is insufficient officer capacity to pro-actively engage with landlords and partners as resources have been diverted to concentrate on delivery of Levelling Up Fund project for Cannock town centre.	▲
<b>1.2.4. Review the Council's car parking strategy</b>							
Undertake parking review across the District	Undertake pilot car parking initiative in Cannock & Rugeley Town Centres	✓	✓	✓		Pilot was completed on time and in budget	▲
	Report to Cabinet setting out outcome of Pilot and options for future			✓		Cabinet approved an extension to the Pilot to cover Christmas period and this will end 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2022.	
	Review of car parking across District - Procure consultants - Undertake review			✓	✓	Scope for consultants has been developed and cost estimate obtained from potential supplier. However, there is no budgetary provision for this work to be commissioned. Paper to be considered by Leadership Team in early 2022	

### 1.3 Increasing affordable housing

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.3.1. Investment of £12.9m to deliver in the region of 100 new Council properties for rent</b>							
Hawks Green – complete development	Completion of handover of Council Houses			✓		Handover of Council homes commenced in Q1.  Final tranche of handovers slipped to Q4 (February) due to slight delay in completion of groundworks and finishing works.	✓
	Completion of Hawks Green Development by 31 March 2022				✓	Scheme in progress and slight slippage in final Council handover is not expected to impact on target deadline to complete whole development by 31 March 2022.	
Aelfgar Development Scheme	Completion of land sale		✓			Land sale completed in Q2.	▲
	Seek outline planning permission		✓			Outline planning permission issued Q2.	
	Completion of procurement exercise and selection of contractor			✓		Initial actions with framework continuing. Requirement for passivhaus specification has resulted in extended initial process. Revised procurement timetable and start on site date to be agreed.	
	Start on site				✓		
Chadsmoor development	Submission of Cabinet report for scheme approval		✓			Pre-planning consultation completed Q2 and report prepared and considered at August Cabinet briefing. Scheme approval report to be submitted following planning approval.	▲

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
	Planning application submission			✓		Planning application submission work is in progress. Delay to submission due to complexity of site constraints.	
<b>1.3.2. Ensure the Local Plan includes the necessary provisions for affordable housing contributions</b>							
Emerging Local Plan will update affordable housing contributions with new viability evidence	Viability Study to be available Summer 2021 that will inform affordable housing requirements in Reg 19 Local Plan.			✓		Viability Study has taken longer to complete. In final stages of preparation and expected February 2022.	
Undertake revision of affordable housing policies in line with Local Plan timetable	To be undertaken on receipt of viability study and incorporated into policies in Reg 19 version of Local Plan.			✓		See above.	
<b>1.3.3. Work with partners / Affordable Housing Registered Providers</b>							
Set up and deliver an annual Stakeholder Event to make strategic links and build strong relationships with key registered providers	Arrange first meeting since pandemic, to be held virtually.	✓				An operational meeting has taken place to discuss on-going issues.	

## 1.4 Well designed communities

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.4.1 Adoption of a new Local Plan for the District by the end of 2023</b>							
New Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2021 to set out timetable for delivery by 2023	New LDS adopted April 2021 which sets out timetable for Local Plan Review and adoption before end 2023.	✓				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ LDS adopted April 2021.</li> <li>▪ Preferred Option consultation completed April 30<sup>th</sup> 2021</li> </ul>	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
	Regulation 19 Local Plan – Winter 2021/22 Consultation			✓	✓	Local Plan timetable under review. Viability and Open Space evidence has been delayed with impact on timetable going forward.  LDS will need to be revised.	
<b>1.4.2 Ensure our Local Plan policies achieve higher design and environmental standards with new housing developments</b>							
Local Plan 'Greener Futures' policy in preparation that will include higher environmental and design standards applied to new housing developments.	Preferred Option introduces Greener Futures Policy. Consultation responses and Viability Study will be considered in potential revisions to the policy.	✓				Further policy refinement to take place once Viability Assessment has been provided and consultations responses have been compiled and considered	
<b>1.4.3 Support our towns and parishes to plan their neighbourhoods</b>							
Progress current and future Neighbourhood Plans within the district.	Continue to work with Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Planning Groups to progress Neighbourhood Plans.				✓	Limited engagement to date - Norton Canes and Cannock Wood NP's progressing. Further liaison will take place at next stage of the Local Plan.	
<b>1.4.4 Ensure our local communities secure benefits from new developments and investment in local infrastructure</b>							
Emerging Local Plan will prioritise new sustainable development allocations with emphasis on supporting infrastructure.	Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan scheduled Winter 2021, however timetable is under review.			✓		Local Plan Review prioritises sustainable development and provision of required infrastructure. Delays to evidence and further work required - timetable under review.	

## 1.5 Clean and green recovery

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.5.1 Support our clean growth ambition by encouraging green jobs and investment</b>							
Identify and support businesses, supply chains and investors that are seeking to create green jobs in our District.	Investigate potential opportunities to attract new businesses or grow existing businesses to create new jobs				✓	Discussions have taken place with Make it in Stoke and Staffordshire to promote available sites to 'green businesses'. Officers are promoting existing initiatives to support businesses to be improve their carbon efficiency.	✓
<b>1.5.2 Work with public bodies and site owner to regenerate the Rugeley Power Station site and deliver 'zero carbon' ambitions</b>							
Work with Engie to progress plans for the site.	Completion of demolition of site	✓	✓			As of December 2021; 85% of the site is cleared. Remediation work is progressing.	✓
	Planning application for Riverside Park and spine road				✓	Planning application for Riverside Park received in July 2021 and currently being processed.	
Zero Carbon Rugeley – completion of Pilot project for Smart Local Energy System and dissemination of findings.	Disseminate findings of project and work with Engie to identify implementation options				✓	Senior officers represent the Council on the Zero Carbon Rugeley Advisory Board. The project has received a further 12 months of funding to extend it to March 2023.	✓

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
<b>1.5.3 Work towards developing zero carbon homes (Passivhaus standard) on Council housing developments</b>							
Aelfgar Development Scheme – undertake a design and build procurement based on Passivhaus principles	Outline planning permission granted		✓			Land sale completed in Q2. Outline planning permission granted Q2.	
	Completion of land sale		✓			Completed	
	Completion of procurement exercise and selection of contractor			✓		Initial actions with framework continuing. Requirement for passivhaus specification has resulted in extended initial process. Revised procurement timetable and start on site date to be agreed.	
	Start on site				✓		
<b>1.5.4 Produce a funded retrofit (carbon zero) programme for the Council's housing stock and commence implementation</b>							
Stock Condition Survey – Commission survey to establish stock condition for 20% of stock and produce 5 year cyclical programme to establish and monitor 100% of stock	Develop Asset Management system to record and report on asset data	✓				Asset Management system built, go live occurred in August.	
	Completion of procurement exercise and selection of service provider		✓			Procurement team workload and internal resource delaying work. Internal Capacity still an issue. Challenge to recruit to vacant technical posts impacting managers workload, operational work falling on Managers.	
	Completion of Surveys			✓		Delayed due to knock on effect of procurement delay.	
	Annual update of 30yr business plan					Action for next financial year	

Projects	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress	Symbol
Development of strategy to deliver carbon neutral housing stock and development of retro fit work programme	Procurement of Housing Climate Change Action Plan		✓			This work has been added to the wider piece of work to develop a costed action plan for delivering the Council's targets re carbon neutrality. A provider has been appointed	
	Production of the Housing Climate Change Action Plan			✓		Costed Action plan now due in quarter 4 due to delays with the consultants	
	Produce Housing Asset Management Plan				✓	Above delay will likely delay the production of the Asset management Plan to 2022-23	
	Develop work programme to incorporate Climate Change Actions	2022-23					
	Participate in a joint bid to pilot retrofit of properties to gain an understanding of new technologies and measures required for CCDC stock						
EPC – Carry out programme over 5 years to establish Energy Performance for the stock	Completion of procurement exercise and selection of service provider			✓		This element of work is incorporated within the procurement of the stock condition surveys	N/A
	Record EPC's in Asset Management system annually for reporting purposes				✓		

**Priority Delivery Plan for 2021-22**  
**Priority 1 – Supporting Economic Recovery**

**DIRECTION OF TRAVEL INDICATORS**

<b>Improved situation</b>	<b>Situation worsened</b>	<b>No change</b>
		
2	3	1

Direction of Travel Indicator	Reporting Frequency (Q or A)	Last year's outturn	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend
<b>Objective 1.1 - Supporting jobs, enterprise and skills</b>								
Unemployment rate	Q		Aim to keep below WM rate					
• Cannock Chase		5.4%		5%	4.2%	3.6%		
• West Midlands		7.4%		7%	6.1%	5.5%		
Youth unemployment	Q		Aim to reduce gap to reach WM average					
• Cannock Chase		11.2%		10.7%	7.2%	6.0%		
• West Midlands		10.3%		9.6%	7.8%	6.5%		
NVQ 3 attainment rates	A	46.9% Jan 2020- Dec 2020	To increase levels year on year					
NVQ 4 attainment rates	A	28.3% Jan 2020- Dec 2020	To increase levels year on year					

Direction of Travel Indicator	Reporting Frequency (Q or A)	Last year's outturn	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Trend
<b>Objective 1.2 - Reshaping our town centres</b>								
Town Centre vacancy rates: (measured as % of total units)	Q		Keep vacancy rate under 10%					
Cannock		25.8%		26.6%	21.1%	21.1%		
Hednesford		4.3%		4.3%	3.2%	5.4%		
Rugeley		5.6%		5.6%	4.8%	6.3%		
Combined		n/a		13%	10.4%	11.5%		
<b>Objective 1.3 - Increasing affordable housing</b>								
Number of Affordable Housing units delivered per annum	A	60	231					
<b>Objective 1.4 Well-designed communities</b>								
Housing completions	A	New indicator	*					
Employment land developed	A	New indicator	*					
Neighbourhood Plans adopted	A	New indicator	*					

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

## Summary of Performance as at Q3

			
Target Exceeded	Target Achieved	Performance Slightly Below Target	Performance Significantly Below Target
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency (Q or A)	Last year's outturn	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target Achieved?
<b>Objective 1.1 - Supporting jobs, enterprise and skills</b>								
Number of businesses supported	<b>A</b>	60 for each LEP	n/a					
Number of enrolments on Digital Academy and Engineering Academy at Cannock Campus of South Staffordshire College	<b>A</b>	New indicator for 21-22	*					
<b>Objective 1.2 - Reshaping our town centres</b>								
Number of residential units consented / completed in Town Centre	<b>A</b>	New indicator for 21-22	*					
Commercial and non-retail floorspace consented / completed	<b>A</b>	New indicator for 21-22	*					
<b>Objective 1.3 - Increasing affordable housing</b>								
Number of Council homes delivered	<b>Q</b>	0	22	4	8	4		

Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency (Q or A)	Last year's outturn	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target Achieved?
<b>Objective 1.4 - Well-designed communities</b>								
Amount of CIL funds secured	Q	£461k	N/a	£37k	£90k	£67.8k		n/a
Amount of S106 funds secured	Q	£191k	N/a	£621k	£0	£386,480		n/a
Major Planning Applications determined within time	Q	100%	> 60% within 13 weeks	50%	100% within 13 weeks	100%		
Number of Major Planning Applications	Q	n/a	n/a	2	3	2		n/a
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time	Q	75%	> 70% within 8 weeks	62%	75%	72%		
Number of Non-Major Planning applications	Q	n/a	n/a	98	88	89		n/a
Number of Planning Applications	Q	n/a	n/a	107	114	77		n/a
Number of Enforcement Cases	Q	n/a	n/a	56	52 (new cases)	33		n/a

<b>Briefing Note of:</b>	<b>Head of Economic Prosperity</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Dean Piper</b>
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**Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee**  
**30 March 2022**  
**Briefing Note - Car Parking Pilot Scheme**

## **1 Purpose of Briefing note**

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to provide Members with feedback on how the extended car park incentive / payback initiative has performed and been operated across Cannock and Rugeley Town centres during 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

## **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed in October 2021 to extend the car park pilot incentive scheme for a further 3 months from November 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
- 2.2 The pilot and extension were both funded as part of the Additional Restrictions Grant Policy adopted by the Council. Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) monies were allocated to the Council primarily to assist those businesses that were affected by Covid 19 and to help recovery.
- 2.3 All ARG funding has to be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and therefore, there is no further funding available to extend this initiative further without additional budgetary provision being made available.
- 2.4 Based on the pilot feedback (obtained during June 2021 to September 2021) and Cabinet approval in October 2021 the level of grant awarded to participating businesses in the extended scheme was reduced from £500 to £250 per business.
- 2.5 Changes to the qualifying spend amount were agreed by Cabinet and subsequently implemented for the extension e.g., changes to the transaction amount from £10 reduced to £5 or more in the extension. This change was to try to capture more customers and was envisaged to increase the volume of refunds being given. This has not been evidenced through the data captured for the extension.
- 2.6 A key finding from both the pilot and extension is that none of the participating businesses have refunded car parking vouchers to the value of the grant provided.
- 2.7 An initial PR & marketing campaign promoting and advertising the pilot was financed to run in parallel with the initiative period. The funding for additional

marketing to continue for the extended period was not incurred. That said all businesses were given window decals, promotion leaflets and signage/banners were maintained throughout the pilot and extension.

- 2.8 The overall take up rate of participating businesses in the extension has been lower than during the pilot (dropped from 49 to 22 for both combined areas). Feedback received from businesses has identified that this has been partly due to the monitoring requirements as part of the Terms and Conditions and auditing requirements of providing car park ticket refund ticket evidence. This could also be a consequence to the introduction of a minimum refund requirement of 3 tickets during the pilot period as a pre-qualification requirement to participation in the extension.
- 2.9 Rugeley Town Centre car park voucher reimbursement rates may have been affected by the number of existing free short stay parking facilities at the local supermarkets that are all within walking distance of the town centre. This has meant that there has been little advantage in seeking a car park refund by customers shopping in the town centre through the initiative.
- 2.10 Businesses have not actively promoted the scheme to customers, and this has had a direct effect on the number of vouchers being redeemed. It is difficult to police and enforce marketing expectations upon participating businesses, but every encouragement was given for businesses to be proactive with their social media accounts and in store customers to facilitate this.
- 2.11 Other material external factors outside of the Council's control have potentially led to lower than anticipated footfall and sales/transactions figures being evidenced:
- Footfall was lower due to the emergence of the new Omicron variant being prevalent in the Community and the introduction by the Government of Plan B restrictions.
  - It should be noted that the extension period ran into the Christmas retail trading period which was largely welcomed by the traders. However, FREE car parking was also operated on all Saturdays during December without the need for any refund by the Customer or pre-qualification.
  - Christmas and New Year holidays (several town centre businesses closed for an extended period to normal due to the Omicron situation), so the trading period was reduced.
  - The post-Christmas period is renowned for lower sales on the High Street - and this is evidenced by the reduced number of car park refunds being given.

### **3 Detail**

- 3.1 In accordance with the ARG Policy, Terms and Conditions were drawn up for all participating businesses to adhere to. The pilot was only rolled out in Cannock and Rugeley Town Centres as Hednesford Town Centre already has free car parking operating in the area.
- 3.2 All administration of the pilot has been carried out by the Economic Development Team.

- 3.3 The extension saw a total of 22 businesses participate across the two town centres (15 in Cannock and 7 in Rugeley – please see Appendix 1 for full list of participating businesses). Only half of the businesses that participated in the pilot qualified or chose to participate in the extension.
- 3.4 The total value of grants awarded across both areas is £5,500 (£3,750 in Cannock and £1,750 in Rugeley)
- 3.5 The extension resulted in a total of 261 car parking £2 refunds being processed by the participating businesses. This equates to a value of £522 of refunds being given to customers of the businesses (Cannock refunds equate to 213 tickets i.e., £426, Rugeley refund tickets 48, equates to £96) The data shows that many of the refunds have been made by a small number of businesses in each of the town centres. Furthermore, analysis shows there has been no significant effect in the levels of ticket reimbursements made on market days (no correlation between the two) linked to Cannock Town Centre.
- 3.6 As part of the Terms and Conditions, businesses were expected to capture the value of each transaction that related to the voucher refund. Transactions had to be to the value of £5 or more. Collectively a total of £6,340.89 worth of sales from the businesses. (Cannock £5,099.57, Rugeley £1,241.32) were recorded during the extension period.
- 3.7 It is difficult to say if the transactions above are solely due to the car park refund initiative, or whether these sales figures would have occurred even if the extension scheme was not operating. Furthermore, if comparing solely the total number of transactions versus the total amount of grants awarded, the scheme has been successful in generating additional business. However, when broken down to the two town centres Rugeley is slightly below the level of grants awarded compared to sales. Grants awarded total £5,500 (Cannock £3,750 and £1,750 in Rugeley). Transaction's total £6,340.89 (Cannock £5,099.57 sales, Rugeley £1,241.32 sales)
- 3.8 If we consider the total administration (Economic Development staff costs) and operating costs (marketing, ticket machine adaptations) incurred by the Council for the extension, the scheme did not offer value for money based purely on the sales achieved.
- 3.9 Savings were achieved linked to the extension of the scheme where possible e.g., ticket machine adaptation and re-use of marketing materials and original signage installed/banners.
- 3.10 Feedback from participating businesses during the extension period have been obtained (summarised below) on what they thought of the initiative

**Positive comments and testimonials include :**

- How good the scheme was for the town centre
- For me it was a success
- Cannock Town Centre Partnership: We write to you relating to the Car Parking refund initiative we have supported and find that a good take up on the first round was followed up by a lesser take up on the second round of the initiative.

## Item No. 6.4

- Rugeley Town Council: When we heard about this scheme we were delighted to promote this to our local businesses and anticipated a good take up. Unfortunately, my understanding is that that the take up was not popular with businesses because of the complexity of the scheme in the set-up phases.
- I feel that offering free parking on Saturdays would have worked just as well.
- Make it clearer for shoppers at the ticket machines
- We saw a much bigger difference in trade on free parking days in the run up to Christmas.

### **Lessons learnt and areas to consider further:**

- Timing is crucial for a one-off initiative and can be detrimentally affected if not timed appropriately - co-ordination on Free car parking initiatives needs to be addressed as does the perceived inequality of some areas being included and other excluded etc.
  - The significant amount of resource required to administer and monitor the scheme when it is externally funded, audited, and monitored can be seen as onerous on both those carrying out the monitoring but also the participating businesses.
  - Staffing resource should not be underestimated (the number of physical visits to collect the necessary data and evidence is considerable) and should be considered in the context of other priorities being delivered at the time. The available resource must be set against the size of the Team and be realistic if changes occur outside of the control of the Council which demand re-direction of all resources.
  - The reliance on businesses to electronically submit information e.g., monitoring returns was not achievable. This places extra pressure on resources and whilst it did build up relationships and engagement with our businesses it has been difficult to manage.
- 3.11 When comparing historical car parking income for the same period as the pilot the Council has no ticket data for 2020. The car park ticket machines had SIM card issues from May 2020 until the machines were changed in December 2020 (when new SIMS were installed). Therefore, we only have cash data from the ticket machines once emptied.
- 3.12 A snapshot of actual car park income received by cash from machines and pay by phone during the pilot period, from 1 November 2021 to 30 January 2022 was £193,185.08.
- 3.13 Ticket sales for the same period above are 114,667
- |         |   |                       |
|---------|---|-----------------------|
| Cannock | - | Redeemed 213 vouchers |
| Rugeley | - | Redeemed 48 vouchers  |
- Showing 0.23% redemption of tickets issued.

- 3.14 It is worth stressing overall car parking income to the Council is down approx. 40% since COVID, therefore it is risky comparing any like for like figures against previous years. People have changed their shopping habits and lockdowns, limited high street openings have all impacted on the car parking figures. There is no way of determining whether the Refund Initiative has brought people back to the high street through this comparison.
- 3.15 In summary, the extension has received a mixed take up by the business communities benefiting from the initiative and if purely assessed on the VFM case are not justified on financial grounds. That said, there are significant material factors outside of the Councils control that no doubt affected the take up of the initiative, so timing has affected the results of the initiative.
- 3.16 The positive messages achieved through direct engagement with businesses operating in the town centres by the Council, especially at a time that has been a particularly challenging period should be acknowledged.

## **4 Implications**

### **4.1 Financial**

The Scheme and its extension have been funded from ARG monies awarded to the Council from BEIS; any ARG money unspent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 22 will need to be refunded to BEIS. ARG money cannot be used to replenish lost Council Income from the operation of the Scheme; it can only be spent on those businesses that have been or continue to be affected by Covid-19.

## **5 Appendices**

Appendix 1: Businesses Participating in the Extended Car Park Incentive Scheme.

## Businesses Participating in the Extended Car Park Incentive Scheme

### **CANNOCK:**

- Bellissimo Beauty and Hair
- Funky Shoes
- Heavenly Treasures
- Cannock Ink
- Lavender Blue
- Trade 2 Play
- The Engraving Company
- A B Blinds
- Trendy Tanya
- Chase Games
- Alcame Printing
- Greetings from the Heart
- Cannock Print
- Hannah's
- F A Studios

### **RUGELEY:**

- The Cutting Edge
- Blush Lingerie
- Peak Health Foods Ltd
- The Little Wool Shop
- Great Living Overall Wellbeing
- Rugeley Fire Place
- Blue Print