



Please ask for: Matt Berry
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15 June 2021

Dear Councillor,

Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee

4:00pm, Wednesday 23 June 2021

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

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

Yours sincerely,

Bob Kean
Interim Managing Director

To: Councillors:

Hughes, R.J. (Chairman)
Adamson, G. (Vice-Chairman)
Allen, F.W.C. Muckley, A.M.
Davis, Mrs. M.A. Smith, C.D.
Hoare, M.W.A. Startin, P.D.
Jones, P.G.C. Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Kruskonjic, P. Woodhead, P.E.
McMahon, J.B.

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 note the Minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 2 March 2021 (enclosed).

4. Introduction to the Role of the Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee

Presentation of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services.

5. End of Year PDP & Recovery Performance Information

End of Year Performance Information:

Copy of Report to Cabinet (Item 5.1 – 5.8) including:

- Appendix 1d (Item 5.9 – 5.11)
- Appendix 2d (Item 5.12 – 5.27)
- Appendix 3 (Item 5.28)

6. Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021-22

Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 6.1 – 6.21).

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Held on Tuesday 2 March 2021 at 4:03pm
Via Remote Access
Part 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Sutherland, M. (Vice-Chairman)

Crabtree, S.K.	Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Wilkinson, Ms. C.L.
Jones, B.	Witton, P.T.
Startin, P.D.	

12. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors F.W.C. Allen (Chairman), C. Bennett, Mrs. S.M. Cartwright, R.J. Hughes, and Miss M.A. Freeman (Invitee).

In the Chairman's absence the meeting was chaired by Councillor M.S. Sutherland (Vice-Chairman).

13. Declarations of Interest of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No other declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

14. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 and 19 January 2021 were approved as a correct record.

15. Corporate Priority Delivery Plan Performance Update – Q3 2020/21

Consideration was given to the latest performance information (Item 4.1 – 4.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Governance Corporate Services advised that as at the end of December 2020, 5 actions were complete, and 3 in progress but slightly behind schedule. Updates on those actions not yet complete were as detailed in the report.

A Member noted it was encouraging that e-payments transactions appeared to be performing better than 2019/20, and the level of payments made had remained consistent throughout each quarter of 2020/21.

16. Covid-19 Recovery Action Plans Progress Report

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 5.1 – 5.42 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised that the Committee had received the full progress report due to scrutiny of the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic being within the Committee's remit. Overall, 92% of actions had either been completed or were in progress. As a result of moving back into lockdown during quarter 3, it had been necessary to shift focus from restoration / recovery back to response in some areas.

In respect of organisational recovery, the Head of Governance and Corporate Services took Members through the updates as detailed in the relevant action plan, as detailed on report pages 5.29 to 5.40.

In response to a query from a Member concern the review of virtual meetings, the Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised that most of the work carried out so far related to protocols and guidance for operating meetings in this way, and training for Members had been provided on an individual basis rather than broader in scope. The provision of more formal training would be considered for the 2021 Members' induction programme as well as looking at how to take forward more general IT training. It was also noted that moving forward, the provision of standardised IT equipment would make it easier for the ICT team and Democratic Services to provide support to Members.

In response to a query from a Member regarding outcomes from the Carbon Literacy training attended by Councillors and senior Officers, the Head of Governance and Corporate Services advised that the purpose of the training was to help with development and production of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan, although it was not clear as to when feedback would be provided to the Council by the course trainers.

The meeting closed at 4:20 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

Report of:	Head of Governance and Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Adrian Marklew
Contact Number:	01543 464411
Portfolio Leader:	Innovation and High Streets
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Cabinet: 10/06/21

Cabinet
10 June 2021
End of Year Performance Report 2020/21 -
Priority Delivery Plans and Recovery Plans

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise Members on the position at the end of 2020/21, in respect of the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) and the Recovery Plans.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the year end performance information relating to PDPs as detailed at Appendices 1a-1d.
- 2.2 To note the year end position relating to the Recovery Plans as detailed at Appendices 2a-2d.
- 2.3 To note the actions which have been flagged with a yellow circle or an amber triangle at year end which will roll forward into the Priority Delivery Plans for 2021-22.

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Priority Delivery Plans set out the key projects and actions for delivery in 2020/21. These were revised in July 2020 to reflect the impact of the pandemic on delivery.

Overall, 80% of the actions have been achieved or are in progress with minor slippage. Progress in delivering the PDPs is summarised in section 5 of the report and set out in detail in Appendices 1a to 1d.

- 3.2 Alongside the revision to the PDPs, a Recovery Strategy and supporting action plans were produced setting out the key projects and actions of the Council in responding to and recovering from the pandemic. Overall, 70% of the actions have been achieved. Progress in delivering the Recovery Plans is summarised in section 5.9 of the report and set out in detail in Appendices 2a to 2d.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.3 The performance information allows Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of:
- the Council's Corporate Priorities and the delivery of the Recovery Strategy; and
 - the Recovery Actions essential for maintaining the delivery of critical services, restoring services and supporting the District with recovery from the impacts of lockdown and the pandemic.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The indicators and actions contribute individually to the Council's priorities Objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan 2018-23 and the objectives set out in the Recovery Strategy.

5 Report Detail

- 5.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2018-23 was approved by Cabinet on 19 April 2018, setting out the mission, priorities and strategic objectives of Cannock Chase District Council for a five-year period.
- 5.2 The supporting Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) are the annual documents that set out how the Council will achieve progress against its strategic objectives; these plans establish the actions, performance measures and timetables for delivery that are the basis of the Council's quarterly and annual performance reporting framework.
- 5.3 The PDPs for 2020/21 were approved by Cabinet on 18 March 2020. However, it was necessary to review the PDPs due to the impact that the pandemic has had on the Council and the delivery of services/projects. Cabinet approved a revised set of PDPs on 16 July which set out those projects which would:
- Continue as planned or with some slippage;
 - Need to be deferred; and
 - Need to be re-framed in the context of the recovery plans.
- 5.4 Alongside the revision of the PDPs, work commenced on developing a recovery framework which was approved in May 2020. A more detailed recovery strategy was approved by Cabinet on 15 October 2020. The Recovery Strategy set out four work streams and there was a high-level action plan for each of these setting out the actions to support response to and recovery from the pandemic.

Item No. 5.3

5.5 This report brings together progress relating to the PDPs and the Recovery Plans to give a comprehensive picture of achievements and the progress made during 2020/21.

5.6 Whilst the pandemic has had a considerable impact on the District and its residents, the Council has worked well in continuing to deliver on key projects at the same time as responding to the pandemic and supporting recovery from it. Overall:

- (i) 65% of the PDPs actions have been delivered and a further 15% are in progress and will be completed with only minor slippage. The remaining 20% of actions will be progressed in 2021/22; and
- (ii) 70% of the recovery actions have been delivered and a further 25% are in progress.

Priority Delivery Plans

5.7 A commentary on performance and a rating for each of the projects/actions set out in the PDPs is set in Appendices 1a-1d. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in the table below.

Delivery of actions as at 31 March 2021					
					Total number of actions
Priority Delivery Plan	Action completed	Work in progress but slightly behind schedule	Actions > 3 months / 1 Quarter behind schedule	Action / project to be closed	
Promoting Prosperity	7	5	1	0	13
Improving Community Wellbeing – Health and Culture and Sport	7	0	8	0	15
Improving Community Wellbeing – Environment, Partnerships and Community Safety	22	2	3	0	27
Corporate	7	3	1	0	11
TOTAL	43 65%	10 15%	13 20%	0 0%	66

5.8 Data for performance indicators relating to each priority and the underpinning objectives is also set out in Appendix 1a-1d.

5.9 The key projects progressed during 2020/21 were:

- The Council helped South Staffordshire College secure government funding for new Digital Skills Academy from Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP).
- Approval of the outline planning application for Rugeley Power Station which includes the provision of new housing, employment land and a new Through School.
- Practical completion of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet.
- Shutters of empty shop units in Cannock town centre given a makeover.
- The Council approved funding towards the new mountain bike trail at Birches Valley as legacy project for Commonwealth Games.
- Work is underway to build 44 new homes on the former Council depot land in Hawks Green.
- Progression of a new Local Plan for the District and commencement of a consultation on the Council's Preferred Option.
- Pay by phone service and contactless ticketing machines introduced in car parks.
- Football Foundation grant announced to help cover costs of providing new artificial grass pitch in Rugeley in time for next football season.
- Retention of the 6 Green Flag awards.
- Work commenced on the development of the new cemetery.

Recovery Action Plans

5.10 A commentary on the progress made during response and recovery, together with a rating for each of the key actions set out in the work stream action plans is set in Appendices 2a-2d. A summary of progress, by rating, is given in the table below.

Delivery of actions as at 31 March 2021					
					Total number of actions
Recovery Action Plan	Action completed	Work in progress	Work has not yet started /action has slipped and is behind schedule	Action / project cannot be completed / delivered	
Finance	30	0	6	0	36
Economy	18	14	0	0	32
Community	19	4	0	0	23
Organisational	32	18	1	0	51*
TOTAL	99 70%	36 25%	7 5%	0 0%	142

* 2 actions have been deferred to 2021/22 and 2 to 2022/23

5.11 Progress in delivering the actions across the four work streams has also been analysed by the three phases of our approach to response and recovery and this is set out in the table below:

Delivery of actions as at 31 March 2021					
Recovery Action Plan					Total number of actions
	Action completed	Work in progress	Work has not yet started /action has slipped and is behind schedule	Action / project cannot be completed / delivered	
Phase 1 – Response	29	4	0	0	33
Phase 2 – Restoration	38	10	0	0	48
Phase 3 – Reshaping	32	22	7	0	61
TOTAL	99 70%	36 25%	7 5%	0	142

5.12 The key achievements in responding to and recovering from the pandemic were:

- Processing of business support grants - by the end of March 2021 over £30m of grants had been paid out.
- Vulnerable people across the District have been supported via the setting up of the Cannock Chase Community Vulnerability Hub and through co-operation with Staffordshire County Council and local voluntary organisations.
- Covid Support Team set up to help retail and hospitality businesses with their Covid security measures in partnership with Staffordshire Police. The Team has also supported enforcement activities during the national lockdowns.
- Support for 19 rough sleepers.
- All essential services continued to be delivered whilst the majority of employees moved to homeworking.
- Covid secure arrangements put in place to protect staff and residents when delivering services.
- Committee meetings moved online and broadcast to the public.

5.13 Progress in delivering the recovery action plans was affected by the move from recovery back into response as a result of further government restrictions and national lockdowns. Whilst work continued in some areas in delivering the recovery actions, in others progress regressed with services reverting back to the response mode and revisiting actions from the 1st and 2nd national lockdowns.

- 5.14 The recovery dashboard of performance measures (Appendix 3) shows the position in March 2020 (pre-pandemic), at the end of June, September, December and March 2021 to show the impact that the pandemic has had on the District's businesses and residents and key Council services.
- 5.15 2020/21 was a challenging year, largely due to the pandemic, and a number of planned projects were affected; progress has been slower than anticipated. Officer resources needed to be re-deployed to support the local response to the pandemic and this has required new services and initiatives to be set up i.e. Community Vulnerability Hub, Covid Support team. Furthermore, a number of other issues arose during the year which needed to be addressed. These are summarised below:
- IHL – service delivery badly affected by successive lockdowns and the decision by Wigan MBC to end their contract with IHL which affected their ongoing viability.
 - Waste/Recycling – ensuring the Council's waste collection service was uninterrupted. Increases in contamination levels, rejected loads and contractual charges.
 - Reception – the Council's reception desks have been closed since the start of the first lockdown. Despite this, customers have still been able to access Council services. Plans are however now in hand to re-open reception for appointments and to trial a limited drop-in service.
 - Cannock Town Centre regeneration – plans to competitively procure a development partner for the former Multi-Storey Car Park were put on hold due to adverse market conditions.
 - Economic Prosperity Strategy – progress in delivering the action plan within the Council's Economic Prosperity Strategy (approved by Cabinet in January 2020) has been hampered by the pandemic and officer resources have been pivoted towards supporting local businesses with payment of Covid support grants.
 - Housing Services has been affected by the national lockdowns. This has had a particular impact on the re-letting of empty council properties and undertaking the work necessary to bring them to a lettable standard, non-urgent repairs, the processing of housing applications/mutual exchanges and the delivery of disabled facilities works. This is now being addressed as restrictions ease and new working practices are being put in place.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

The financial management of the PDPs is standard in accordance with Financial Regulations and any measure to address a performance shortfall as reflected in a

PDP report will require compensatory savings to be identified in the current year and be referred to the budget process for additional resources in future years.

The financial implications of the pandemic and the impact on projects and services was considered as part of the Action Planning process.

6.2 Legal

None.

6.3 Human Resources

While there are no direct human resources implications arising from the report, the human resources implications of the pandemic have been considered as part of the Recovery Action Planning process.

6.4 Risk Management

The Council's Strategic Risk Register sets out the risks the Council faces in delivering its priorities. This has been updated to reflect the impact of the pandemic and many of the actions set out in the Recovery Strategy are designed to manage and mitigate the risks

6.5 Equality & Diversity

None.

6.6 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1a:	Performance information for the Promoting Prosperity Delivery Plan
Appendix 1b:	Performance information for the Improving Community Wellbeing – Health and Culture & Sport Delivery Plan
Appendix 1c:	Performance information for the Improving Community Wellbeing – Environment, Partnerships and Community Safety Delivery Plan
Appendix 1d:	Performance information for the Corporate Delivery Plan
Appendix 2a:	Financial Recovery Action Plan
Appendix 2b:	Economic Recovery Action Plan
Appendix 2c:	Community Recovery Action Plan
Appendix 2d:	Organisational Recovery Action Plan
Appendix 3	Recovery Dashboard of Performance Measures

Previous Consideration

None

Background Papers

PDPs:

- Corporate Plan and Priority Delivery Plans 2018/23 Report to Cabinet, 19 April 2018
- Priority Delivery Plans Report to Cabinet 18 March 2020 and revisions for 2020/21 report to Cabinet 16 July 2020

Recovery Strategy:

- Approach to Recovery Planning from the impact of Covid 19 Report to Cabinet 21 May 2020
- Covid-19 Recovery Strategy Report to Cabinet 15 October 2020
- Recovery Strategy and Action Plans – progress report – 14 November 2020 and 4 March 2021

Corporate Priority Delivery Plan 2020/21 – As at 31 March 2021

Delivery of actions for Q4				
				Total Number of Actions
Action completed	Work in progress but slightly behind schedule. Action will be completed in next Quarter.	Action > 3 months / 1 Quarter behind schedule and action is required to address slippage	Action / project cannot be completed / delivered. Option to close to be agreed by Leadership Team / Cabinet.	
7	3	1	0	11

Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Reporting Frequency (Q or A)	Last year's outturn	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Customer contact data – response to telephone calls	Q	89.5% Average	94%	93%	87%	93.5%	91.1%
Use of Online Forms	Q	1,856 per annum	475 per qtr	587	710	671	860
E–payments transactions – Payments made via the Council's website	Q						
• Number of transactions		27,435	6,000 per qtr	7,122	7,278	7,574	6,245
• Value of transactions		£3,570,705		£1,041,146	£1,076,116	£1,213,257	£1,098,225
Payments made via the Council's automated telephone payment system	Q						
• Number of transactions		23,011	5,750 per qtr	6,383	6,331	8,270	9,174
• Value of transactions		£ 2,674,262		£852,456	£899,062	£995,099	£922,054
Payments made by Direct Debit (Council Tax)	Q						
• Number of transactions		317,460	320,000	87,482	87,762	87,965	51,672
• Value of transactions		£42m	£45m	£11.94m	£12.07m	£12.18m	£6.90m

Projects being progressed during 2020/21

Approach	Key Project	Milestone(s)	Action Required	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<i>Delivering Council services that are customer centred and accessible - giving choice to our customers in how they access our services</i>								
<i>Making the best use of limited resources – managing our people, money and assets</i>								
Maintenance and compliance issues – civic buildings	Passive Fire Protection and Fire Door Repairs	Completion of on site contract works			✓			
	Toilets Refurbishment	Tender process for toilet refurbishment	Tender process completed however Reviewing			✓		
		Contractor appointed	Contractor not appointed as cost exceeds the budget available.			▲		
		Options Reviewed	options reviewed Q4 to reduce costs before re-tendering				✓	
		Re-tender and completion of onsite works	Re-tender to be undertaken for a reduced contract of essential works only - Q1 2021-22				●	
Replacement and upgrade of IT systems	Planning system – interim solution.	Documents moved to new system		✓				
		Staff using the replacement system	Implementation delayed by Covid work.				●	
	Exchange 365	Mailboxes migrated to new system.			✓			
	Office 365	New software installed and hardware rolled out.	Some delay in obtaining the remaining 20 laptops due to a global shortage.				●	
	Finance system	Contract awarded				✓		
		Implementation commences				✓		
		System goes live			Go live 1 st April 2021			

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ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY – ACTION PLAN

Delivery of actions – Cumulative at Q4					
					Total Number of Actions
Phase	Action completed	Work in progress	Work has not yet started /action has slipped and is behind schedule	Action / project cannot be completed / delivered	
Response	14	1	0	0	15
Restore	11	7	0	0	18
Reshape	3	10	1	0	14
TOTAL	28	18	1	0	47

ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN
SERVICES – INTERNAL

Services – Internal
Outcomes Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure continuity and resilience of critical services at all times; • To restore services suspended or reduced during the lockdown and identify those that will not be delivered in future; • Plans in place to clear backlogs in service delivery arising from lockdown • To build on changes made as a result of the move to homeworking
COVID-19 Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some services have experienced an increase in demand and others a reduction; • Some new services have had to be set up eg test and trace, business grant payments; • Backlogs have arisen from suspension/reduction of services

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 1 – Response				
Organisational	Identification of critical services and Business Continuity Plans put in place			
Community	Setting up and support for the operation of the Community Hub	Head of Housing & Partnerships	The Community Hub is operational and supporting those shielding during the lockdown	
Economic	Payment of Discretionary Grants	Head of Finance and Head of Economic Prosperity	Additional Restrictions Grant scheme launched and applications being received. Aim is to fully allocate funds by end of June 2021.	
Community	Setting up mechanism for Test and Trace / Local Outbreak Infection Control	Food Safety & Licensing Manager	New responsibility – working in partnership with Public Health Partners. Scheme now set up	

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 2 – Restore				
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Establish plans for restoring services suspended in full or in part, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify services partially or fully suspended • Completion of risk assessments to ensure this is done safely; and • Communications to Contact Centre, staff, the public and Members • Update status and information on the website 	Organisational Recovery Group to set up template for assessment and process Service Managers to complete assessment and plans Leadership Team to monitor return of services	Services were in the main restored after the first lockdown ended. A few services are not yet operating at normal service levels due either to resources being diverted to support the Covid response activities or being impacted by subsequent Government restrictions/lockdown. These services are being reviewed as restrictions are eased.	
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Identify backlogs and establish plans for clearing this work and allocation of resources where necessary to do this	Relevant Service Managers / Leadership Team Plans to be in place by end of August 20	Work was underway on clearing backlogs but this has been hampered by the latest lockdown. This is being reviewed and plans put in place as restrictions ease	
LEADERSHIP TEAM and Organisational Recovery	Assessment of current working arrangements to identify; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employee productivity issues; • service barriers to remote working; and • need for face-to-face contact with customers 	Head of Governance & Corporate Services By end August/early September	Employee productivity has been reviewed. Work arounds have been found for most processes to allow them to operate whilst employees are working from home. Further opportunities to improve this and other efficiencies have been identified as part of the Organisational Recovery Group's work and will be pursued as part of Transformation and Reshaping Proposals in 2021/22.	

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 3 – Reshape				
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Put plans in place for delivery of key projects set out in the PDPs		PDPs have been revised and key milestones produced	
Organisational / Finance	Homeworking/ Agile working – develop business case: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire to assess appetite for homeworking Review of ICT provision with regard to homeworking Identify implications for Council assets 	HR Manager Head of Technology Corporate Assets Manager	2 surveys have now been undertaken. Laptop replacement almost complete Link to new Asset Management Strategy	
	Digitisation of paper-based processes and greater use of technology to support remote/agile working	Head of Governance & Corporate Services and Head of Technology	Working group has been set up to look at this. Findings of group have been reported in “Reshaping Paper” to Leadership Team and will be taken forward in 2021/22	
	Development of an Interim Asset and Energy Management Strategy <i>(from the Corporate PDP)</i>	Corporate Asset Manager	Officers have determined maintenance priorities for key corporate assets and will be prioritising work to be undertaken for 21/22 and beyond. Asset Strategy to be developed during 21/22.	
Organisational and Financial	Service Reviews and Environmental Services Business Case <i>(from the Corporate PDP)</i>	Head of Governance & Corporate Services and Head of Finance	Service reviews have been rescheduled and work is now due to commence in 2021/22 as part of the Financial Plan process	Deferred to 2021/22

ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN
SERVICES – EXTERNAL / KEY CONTRACTS

Services – External
Outcomes Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure continuity of critical services at all times; To restore services suspended or reduced during the lockdown and identify those that will not be delivered in future.
COVID-19 Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste Collection Service has experienced an increase in waste and contaminated loads Contact Centre and Waste Staff experienced an increase in calls and abuse Loss of IHL Memberships and Income

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 1 – Response				
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Suspension of all Leisure & Cultural Services – some of IHL’s staff supporting the work on the Community Hub	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles		✓
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Management of issues arising from impact of COVID-19 on the Waste Contract <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tonnage restrictions at MRF Site 	Waste & Engineering Services Manager	The Council, in partnership with other affected Staffordshire LAs, rejected tonnage restrictions and together following the re-opening of the HWRC’s, the restriction proposals were withdrawn.	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase in contaminated and rejected loads 		Awareness sticker campaign on all recycled bins to be undertaken Mid-August 2020	✓

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 2 – Restore				
LEADERSHIP TEAM	<p>Ensure IHL has a Recovery Plan in place for re-opening of services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf • Leisure Centres (CLC&RLC) • Museum • 5's Bradbury Lane • Theatre <p>Rugeley Swimming Pool -Tiling</p>	Head of Environment & Health Lifestyles	<p>Leisure facilities continue to be affected by successive tiering restrictions and lockdowns. All facilities have been closed as part of the 3rd National Lockdown from 4th January 2021</p> <p>Plans to re-open all culture and leisure facilities aligned to the Government's Roadmap to Recovery are underway. The Golf Course re-opened safely on 29th March plans to re-open all other facilities in Q1 of 2021-22 are being prepared.</p> <p>Part of support to IHLhas involved the Council entering into contracts for the installation of a new boiler and repairs to pool at RLC. Transferring these contracts has been a complicated legal process. Works will now start in Q1 2021-22.</p>	
Phase 3 – Reshape				
Leadership Team	Extension and reshaping of Leisure Management contract	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles	Work continuing with IHL on reshaping services. Consultation with regard to the Transformation proposals has been undertaken.	
Leadership Team	Determine interim strategy to realign waste contracts	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles Waste & Engineering Services Manager	Impact on operation of services and financial	

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Leadership Team	To determine a Waste Management Strategy following outcome of Government consultation and Waste Strategy. (from the Community Wellbeing – Environment, Partnerships and Community Safety PDP)	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles Waste & Engineering Services Manager	Outcomes from Waste Strategy consultation still unknown. Impact on operation of services and financial	
Leadership Team	To commence procurement process for waste collection	Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles Waste & Engineering Services Manager	Tenders have been evaluated for the Dry recycling contract and will be reported to Cabinet in Q1 2021-22.	
Leadership Team	Reshape Housing contracts in line with impact COVID-19	Head of Housing & Partnerships	A timetable was developed to complete procurement of an array of contracts during period Q3-2020/21 to Q4 2021-22. The timetable for Key contracts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Envelope • Communal Block Fire Risk Assessments • Refurbishing/Replacement of Sheltered Scheme Lifts have been delayed due to resource in HPS. A revised timetable alongside a recruitment timetable to be implemented during Q1-2021-22 	

ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN
CUSTOMERS

Customers
Outcomes Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers can access Council services through a variety of means • Improved accessibility to services via greater use of technology
COVID-19 Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No access to services via Reception/face to face • Increased use of website to access services?

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 1 – Response				
	Closure of Reception and move to on-line and telephone service	Customer & Support Services Manager		
Phase 2 – Restore				
	Plan for the re-opening of key Receptions for appointments only initially – plan to include tenants usage (including Citizens Advice)	Customer & Support Services Manager Plan to be in place for September/October 20	Risk assessment completed and Covid secure arrangements are in place. Plans for opening for appointments were put hold due to 3rd national lockdown but will be put into effect as restrictions ease	
	Review of operation of telephony system and processes	Customer & Support Services Manager and ICT	Options to improve the problems with the telephony system are being identified	

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 3 – Reshape				
	Review of Customer Engagement Strategy <i>(from the Corporate PDP)</i>	Customer & Support Services Manager	This is being developed alongside alongside the work to procure a replacement CRM system and the reshaping proposals for Customers	
	Procurement of Replacement CRM system <i>(from the Corporate PDP)</i>	Head of Governance & Corporate Services and Head of Technology	Work has commenced on establishing the requirements for a replacement system. This project is being done jointly with Stafford Borough Council	
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Review of Contact Centre Operating Model (to include potential withdrawal of support for Housing calls)	Head of Governance & Corporate Services	Sub Group set up and several meetings held. Housing are currently considering potential changes for the Housing Repairs calls	
	Review and enhancement of website information	Policy & Communications Manager	Work ongoing	

ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN
EMPLOYEES

Employees
Outcomes Required: Ensure that employees are safe, feel supported, engaged and productive
COVID-19 Impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase in homeworking • reduction in productivity for some services/employees • challenges of managing employees remotely

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 1 – Response				
	The majority of employees were moved to homeworking	Leadership Team	At the outset of lockdown	✓
	All employees who are shielding or clinically vulnerable were advised to stay at home and to work remotely if possible	Leadership Team		✓
	Revised opening hours put in place for Civic Centre and Depot	Customer & Support Services Manager		✓
	Additional day time cleaning put in place at the Civic Centre	Customer & Support Services Manager		✓
	Suspension of some T&Cs and HR processes eg flexi-time	Leadership Team		✓
Phase 2 – Restore				
Organisational	Complete risk assessment for all operational sites and implement Covid Safe Working Practices and changes to Council	Corporate Asset Manager	Completed for Civic Centre, Hawks Green Depot (office buildings), Markets.	✓

Item No. 5.22

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Organisational	Issue guidance to employees re new COVID secure arrangements	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager		
Organisational	Phased return to normal building opening hours for the Civic Centre – for employees only (Caretaking & Cleaning Service)	Customer & Support Services Manager	The building continues to remain open but for slightly shorter hours due to the low number of employees on site and the need to maintain COVID secure arrangements for cleaning. Planning is underway for returning to normal building opening hours.	
Organisational	Issue guidance to managers on planning for and supporting the return of essential employees to the workplace	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager	This work has been done but implementation plans were put on hold due to ongoing restrictions and lockdowns. This will now be progressed as restrictions ease.	
Organisational	Assess any DSE/H&S issues arising from move to homeworking	Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager		
	Review of T&C's suspended with a view to restoring them	HR Manager By end of August 20	Flexi reinstated as of 7 September	
	Review of support provided to and communication with employees	HR Manager	2 surveys have been completed and used to develop tools to support managers and employees in the coming months.	

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 3 – Reshape				
	Employee Health & Wellbeing Strategy (from the Corporate PDP)	HR Manager	Work on this has been deferred and included in the new Corporate Plan. Content will need to reflect potential longer terms changes in the working environment	Deferred to 2022/23
	Work force Development (from the Corporate PDP)	HR Manager	Work on this has been deferred and included in the new Corporate Plan. Content will need to reflect potential longer terms changes in the working environment	Deferred to 2022/23

ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN
MEMBERS & DEMOCRACY

Members and Democracy

Outcomes Required:

Transparency and accountability for actions and decisions

COVID-19 Impacts:

Council meetings now have to be held virtually – this has:

- Created challenges for those Members with limited ICT skills;
- Resulted in a small increase in public engagement with the public viewing meetings; and
- Increased the officer time spent in setting up and administer some meetings.
- Cancellation of some meetings

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 1 – Response				
	Suspension of normal Council meetings	Managing Director		
	Urgent decision making protocol put in place	Deputy Managing Director		
	Weekly telephone calls with MD and all Group Leaders	Managing Director		
	Use of Zoom for virtual meetings established to allow key Council meetings to take place (eg Planning Committee, Cabinet Meetings)	Democratic & Resilience Services Manager		
Phase 2 – Restore				
	Council Meetings - plan for return to normal meeting cycle	Democratic Services Manager		
	Review of operation of virtual meetings, preparation of guidance and protocols. Delivery of training to support virtual meetings in the short term	Democratic & Resilience Services Manager and Head of Technology	Joint working group set up with SBC. Initial pilot of a hybrid meeting delayed due to Covid restrictions.	

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 3 – Reshape				
	To review role of virtual meetings in the longer term and implications re equipment, staffing of meetings etc	Democratic Services Manager and Head of Technology	Joint working group set up with SBC. The role of virtual meetings in the future is unclear at present.	

ORGANISATIONAL RECOVERY ACTION PLAN
ORGANISATIONAL

Organisational

Outcomes Required:

- Co-ordinated response to the pandemic
- Resilience of critical services

COVID-19 Impacts:

- Decision making had to be quick to respond to Government guidance

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 1 - Response				
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Team created to lead the response to the pandemic – initially meeting 3 times a week	Leadership Team	Team currently meeting weekly	✓
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Participation in County wide, Regional and National meetings	Managing Director		✓
Phase 2 - Restore				
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Review of priorities and re-aligning resources to support work on response and recovery, key projects and operational service delivery	Leadership Team	PDPs for 2020/21 reviewed and a number of projects rescheduled to 2021/22. Reported to July Cabinet. Review of Corporate Priorities completed and new Corporate Plan prepared for 2021-24	✓
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Incident debrief, Lessons Learnt and Review of Incident Management Plans and BCP	CCU Liaison Officer	Completed 28 September	✓
LEADERSHIP TEAM	Develop plan to support local or national lockdowns, taking on board lessons learnt from the initial lockdown	Leadership Team	Lockdown response plan completed. Plan reviewed to reflect changes in Government restrictions as appropriate	✓

Recovery Work Stream	Action	Lead Officer and Timescale	Comments	Progress Indicator
Phase 3 – Reshape				
	Management Restructure	Managing Director	Superseded by proposal to share a Chief Executive with Stafford Borough Council for a period of 12 months pending development of proposals on further sharing	Deferred to 2021/22

Recovery Dashboard of Performance Measures

Economy	March 2020	June 2020	September 2020	December 2020	March 2021
Number of People 16-64 claiming out-of-work benefits	2.6%	5.7%	5.8%	5.3%	5.4%
Number of People 18-24 claiming out-of-work benefits	5.0%	10.7%	10.8%	10.4%	10.0%
Number of employments furloughed on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	Scheme announced 20 th March 2020	16,700	17,600 July 2020 latest figures	3,300 as at 31 st October 2020 5,400 at 30 th November 2020 5,600 at 31 st December 2020 PROVISIONAL FIGURES	6,700 as at 28th February 2021
Number of claims made for the Self Employment Income Support Scheme	Scheme announced 26 th March 2020	4,100 (first stage scheme)	3,600 (second and final stage scheme)	3,700 (second stage) as at 31 st October 2020 3,100 (third stage) as at 31 st December 2020	3,500 as at 31st January 2021
Number of Job Vacancies (Unique postings)	2,184 (Feb 2020)	1,491	1,978	2,148	2,082 February 2021
Town Centre Vacancy Rates	Jan 2020		Sept 2020	Jan 2021 not available due to lockdown	
• Cannock	16.4%		20.3%		25.8%
• Hednesford	6.5%		8.6%		5.6%
• Rugeley	2.4%		6.3%		4.3%
% of Businesses subject to void rates		5.8%	5.8%		
Businesses subject to commercial exemption from business rates (value)	£337,000	£180,000	£311,000	£259,000	
Businesses subject to industrial exemption from business rates (value)	£987,000	£324,000	£555,000	£441,000	
Businesses subject to exemption due to administration / insolvency	£97,000	£165,000	£221,000	£180,000	
Business Rate Arrears		£649,685	£1,151,639		

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Report of:	Head of Governance & Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Judith Aupers
Contact Number:	01543 464411
Portfolio Leaders:	Leader of the Council Innovation & High Streets
Key Decision:	No
Report Track:	Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee: 23/06/21

Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee

23 June 2021

Work Programme for 2021-22

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out the draft work programme for the Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee for 2021-22.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Committee review the draft work programme for 2021-22 and advise on what they wish to include for the forthcoming year (see Appendix 5).

3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising the element of the Corporate Plan that relates to the priority for being a Financially Resilient Council and the supporting 3 Year Delivery Plan. An extract from the Corporate Plan setting out details of the priority and strategic objectives is attached at Appendix 1. A copy of the 3 year delivery plan is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.2 The services or functions of the Council falling with the remit of the Committee are set out at Appendix 3.
- 3.3 The Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee is encouraged to identify corporate issues and/or ones that are a priority for local people and communities. If a matter is a recurring issue for the people you, as Councillors, represent, the

likelihood is that it is something that the Committee should consider. The more relevant the issue is to local communities then the greater the likelihood of engaging those communities in the scrutiny process and of producing outcomes that will be visible to those communities you represent. Guidance on selecting reviews is included in Appendices 4A and 4B.

- 3.4 Members are invited to comment on the draft Work Programme attached at Appendix 5. Members are also encouraged to propose issues that could be included for consideration in the work programme. The work programme may be revised during the year as necessary.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.5 The scrutiny committee structure has been designed to ensure effective accountability for the delivery against the Council's priorities and strategic objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-24.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

- (i) It provides for effective scrutiny of the Council's priority for being a "Financially Resilient Council".

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 A new Corporate Plan for 2021-24 was approved by Council on 24 February 2021. The Plan sets out 3 priorities and this Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising Priority 3 – Financially Resilient Council and the supporting 3 year delivery plan.

- 5.2 The Financially Resilient Council Priority has 3 objectives:

- (i) To make the best use of limited resources – managing our people, money and assets
(ii) Being a financially sustainable Council that lives within its means
(iii) Consider the impact on the environment in managing our assets and use of resources

An extract from the Corporate Plan setting out details of the priority and strategic objectives is attached at Appendix 1. A copy of the 3 year delivery plan is attached at Appendix 2.

- 5.3 The Financially Resilient Scrutiny Committee also has responsibility for scrutinising the corporate and support functions of the Council as set out in Appendix 3.

Developing the Work Programme

- 5.4 To support Members in their Scrutiny role and in particular in developing a work programme a Scrutiny Toolkit has been produced; a copy of this has been circulated separately to Members. An extract from the toolkit relating to developing a work programme is attached at Appendix 4A and an extract from the LGA's guidance is attached at Appendix 4B.
- 5.5 In developing the work programme Members are encouraged to consider the following questions:
- Is the matter a concern to local people? (You may wish to reflect on topics raised with you when canvassing).
 - Is the issue an identified priority for the Council or partners?
 - Does the issue relate to an area of service with a trend in weak performance?
 - What difference could scrutiny make?
 - What would happen if you did not look at this issue?
- 5.6 The Work Programme can be revised during the year to reflect emerging priorities, but it is important to plan ahead and allow time for reports to be prepared and invitations to be sent to relevant parties.
- 5.7 Whilst it is for the Committee to determine what they want to include in the Work Programme, a draft Work Programme is attached at Appendix 5 to this report which includes some standing items (eg Performance Progress Reports) and some suggestions as to potential reviews.

Undertaking the Scrutiny reviews

- 5.8 Once Members have identified the matters they wish to scrutinise, consideration should be given to scoping the subject in more detail including the timing and method of scrutiny to be used. Support in this process will be given by the Lead Officer for the Scrutiny Committee. A template to assist with scoping the review is also attached at Appendix 6.
- 5.9 Members may wish to:
- Allocate the work to a small working group of Members to investigate the issue over a period of 2-3 months (this may involve visits to see how services are working in practice);
 - Invite expert witnesses to give their views;
 - Seeking the views of service users and/or the general public.
- 5.10 Members should also consider what they can do to support the review eg:
- Undertaking research eg via the internet;
 - Seeking the views of ward members or specific interest groups

Reporting on Scrutiny Reviews

- 5.11 In addition to reporting to the Committee on the outcome of any reviews, the Committee may wish to make recommendations to Cabinet or another Committee.

- 5.12 At the year end, the Chair of the Committee will prepare a report for Council on the outcome of the Committee's Work Programme.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

Any costs to be incurred in undertaking any review will need to be contained within existing budgets.

6.2 Legal

None

6.3 Human Resources

None

6.4 Risk Management

None

6.5 Equality & Diversity

The Council has a responsibility to undertake adequate Equality Impact Assessments to ensure services do not have a negative impact on any one section of the community and the scrutiny committees have a role in ensuring that this responsibility is fulfilled, particularly in regard to health impact. Scrutiny as a function must also comply with the relevant legislation. When considering work programme items, especially when undertaking reviews of policy, the scrutiny committees must always consider whether their recommendations may impact differently on various individuals/sections of the community.

6.6 Climate Change

None

7 Appendices to the Report

Appendix 1: Extract from the Corporate Plan – Priority 3 Financially Resilient Council

Appendix 2: 3 Year Delivery Plan for Financially Resilient Council

Appendix 3: Overview of services falling with the Committee's remit

Appendix 4A: Extract from the Council's Scrutiny Toolkit

Appendix 4B: Extract from the LGA Guidance on Scrutiny Work Programming

Appendix 5: Draft Work Programme 2021/22

Appendix 6: Template for scoping a scrutiny review

Previous Consideration

None

Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2021-24 – Report to Cabinet 28 January 2021

3 Year Delivery Plans 2021-24 – Report to Cabinet 1 April 2021

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Cannock Chase Council

Our Corporate Plan 2021-24

Priority 3 - Financially Resilient Council

Why this is important:

The Council has been facing increasing challenges over the last few years in balancing its budget. The Council has seen its core funding from Government fall by 30% over the last four years and the loss of significant business rates income from the closure of Rugeley Power station. While the opening of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet West Midlands will offset some of this reduction, the Government's funding regime only enables us to retain this income for five years. The Council prior to the pandemic was still estimating a shortfall of approximately £0.58 million in 2022/23 due to the reduction in Government funding.

The pandemic has had a considerable impact on the Council's finances and while the Council has received some additional funding from the Government that has helped to cover the additional costs incurred, the Council has lost income from car parking and other sources.

The Council has also helped to support its key contractor, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL), which runs the Council's leisure and culture facilities. The overall impact of COVID-19 is likely to last for a number of years. The Council is facing uncertainty as to future funding and in the short term we are balancing the budget by using the Council's reserves. If the additional business rates achieved to date is withdrawn by Government, it is estimated that the Council will face a further reduction in funding of 18% by 2023-24 and will need to find a saving of a minimum of £1m in 2022/23 and onwards.

The Council has been under financial pressure for a number of years and efficiency savings have been delivered by providing services in partnership with not for profit organisations such as IHL and the sharing of back office services with Stafford Borough Council. The Business Rates Pool for Staffordshire has enabled additional income to be retained by this Council of £0.8 million in 2019/20.

Prudent financial management has meant there has been no service reductions for a number of years, but this is now looking impossible to maintain. We will continue look to deliver efficiency savings by doing things differently wherever we can, but this alone will not be enough. We will also need to look at reducing or stopping some services. The Council is committed to maintaining the services that matter the most to the public and those we have a statutory duty to provide. We will look to protect the services as much as we can and make savings from non-essential services or by increasing the income we collect.

The result will be:

- Continued delivery of those services that matter the most to the public

Objective 3.1 To make the best use of limited resources – managing our people, money and assets

How we will deliver this:

We will make effective use of the Council's assets by acting in a manner that ensures the long-term financial viability for the benefit of our residents and the environment. In particular we will:

- (i) Review our services to ensure that they are cost-effective and efficient
- (ii) Increase our use of digital solutions in delivering services to:
 - maximise the efficiencies arising from the change to working practices presented by the pandemic
 - provide residents with greater access to online services and assistance for those that don't have such access; and
 - encourage electronic payments or direct debits
- (iii) Develop an asset management strategy and maintenance plan.
- (iv) Identify opportunities to enhance, redevelop and transfer the Council's assets to maximise income and / or benefit to the District.
- (v) Develop an Organisational Development Strategy and action plan to provide an effective workforce

Measures:

- Use of online forms
- Reducing the number of cheque payments
- Workforce diversity statistics

Objective 3.2 Being a financially sustainable Council that lives within its means

How we will deliver this:

We will explore and actively consider all avenues to deliver financial stability, including maximising income available to the Council. In particular we will:

- (i) Continue to manage our finances prudently, identify new sources of revenue to balance our budgets and maximise local revenue streams including council tax and business rates collection to fund services
- (ii) Apply for all relevant grants

- (iii) Set a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to fund Council services by a prudent mix of investment, services and tax income, while maintaining adequate reserves
- (iv) Identify opportunities to generate additional income from our services and assets and review these annually as part of the budget setting process
- (v) Review the schedule of existing contracts to identify opportunities for rationalisation and savings
- (vi) Lobby for a fairer distribution of Government funding to sustain essential local services

Measures:

- Level of council tax collected annually
- National non-domestic rates (NNDR) collected
- Value of successful grant applications, investment secured for the District
- Delivery of the Council's cost savings and income targets
- Total income from service fees and charges
- Income from new sources
- Amount of external funding secured to support the delivery of projects and programmes

Objective 3.3 Consider the impact on the environment in managing our assets and use of resources

How we will deliver this:

We will encourage our employees to think about our use of resources throughout the operations of the Council and in delivering services. In particular we will:

- (i) Undertake an assessment of our current carbon footprint and develop an action plan to reduce this.
- (ii) Develop a management plan to inform how our buildings may be most efficiently maintained and reduce our carbon consumption;
- (iii) Identify opportunities for funding for green initiatives

Measures:

- Carbon emissions baseline
- Reduction in utilities usage

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Corporate Plan 2021-24 – 3 Year Delivery Plan
Priority 3 – Financially Resilient Council

3.1 To make the best use of limited resources – managing our people, money and assets

Projects and Actions	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1. COVID Recovery / Service Restoration			
Ongoing restoration of services and clearing of backlogs	✓		
Re-introduction of face-to-face customer services, where necessary and by appointment	✓		
2. Service Reviews			
Programme of services reviews to be developed, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review of expenditure • review of existing fees & charges • identify potential new service charges • development of options for savings 	✓		
Identify services that could be shared and develop high level business case	✓		
Align funding with corporate priorities through the service reviews and development of Cabinet options	✓		
Engagement with public on savings options and present package of options to Cabinet for consideration	✓		
Council approval of budget and savings options	✓		
Delivery of savings		✓	✓
Contract Reviews - identify significant/key contracts and potential areas for rationalisation and savings	✓		
Restructure contracts		✓	
Deliver savings from contracts review			✓

Projects and Actions	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
3. Review and Reshaping of Operational Delivery Model			
<p>Review the changes and progress made during the pandemic and outline the options for reshaping operational delivery with regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers – to include future Reception Services, the Contact Centre and making more services available on-line which will form the basis for a Customer Engagement Strategy • Employees – to include development of business case for increased use of homeworking and flexible working in the future, the infrastructure needed to support this and the implications for office space • Members – to include the ongoing use of virtual meetings in the longer term and the implications of this 	✓	✓	✓
4. Increase our use of Digital Solutions in Delivering Services			
Establish changes made to working practices brought about by the pandemic and how these can be improved or be extended further	✓		
Development of a digital strategy and action plan	✓		
Ongoing development of cyber security arrangements utilising Government funding	✓	✓	✓
Procurement and development of customer portal (replacement of current CRM system) to include e-forms package	✓	✓	
Identification of transactions that could be done on-line, development of forms and processes		✓	✓
Procurement of new website software and re-design/review of content	✓	✓	
Campaign and contact with customers to encourage move to direct debit payments	✓		

Projects and Actions	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
5. Organisational Development			
Develop an Organisational Development Strategy and action plan to provide an effective workforce		✓	
Employee Health & Wellbeing Strategy			✓
6. Asset Management and Maintenance			
Develop new asset management and energy management strategies (aligned to the corporate priorities)	✓		
Develop a maintenance strategy and plan (aligned to the asset management and energy management strategies and corporate priorities)	✓		
Identify opportunities to enhance, redevelop and transfer the Council's assets (aligned to the asset management strategy)	✓	✓	✓
Undertake Feasibility Study for Elmore Park Rugeley and report findings to Cabinet	✓		
Undertake a review of the bridges and boardwalks across the district and report the findings to Cabinet identifying options for improvement and resource implications	✓		

3.2 Being a financially sustainable Council that lives within its means

Projects and Actions	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Prudent Financial Management			
Income and fees/charges will be reviewed as part of the service review process	✓		
Manage the collection of council tax and business rates collection and ensure outstanding debts are chased in accordance with Council policy	✓	✓	✓
Identify opportunities to apply for grants and submit applications as appropriate	✓	✓	✓
Set a Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to fund Council services by a prudent mix of investment, services and tax income, while maintaining adequate reserves. MTFS to be reviewed annually as part of budget setting process	✓	✓	✓
Review of income generation opportunities	✓	✓	✓
Identify potential Invest to save initiatives	✓	✓	✓
Lobby for a fairer distribution of Government funding to sustain essential local services	✓	✓	✓

3.3 Consider the impact on the environment in managing our assets and use of resources

Projects and Actions	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Undertake an assessment of our current carbon footprint and develop an action plan to reduce this.	✓		
Develop a management plan to inform how our buildings may be most efficiently maintained and reduce our carbon consumption.	✓		
Identify opportunities for funding for green initiatives.	✓	✓	✓

**Services/Functions falling within the Financially Resilient Council
Scrutiny Committee's remit**

Service Area	Sub-Areas
Corporate Issues	• Budget Consultation (as appropriate)
	• Complaints (includes Ombudsman and MP enquiries)
	• Corporate / Cross Cutting Issues
Civic Support	• Civic Events
Governance and Corporate Services	• Internal Audit
	• Risk Management
	• Insurance
	• Health & Safety
	• Procurement
	• Democratic Services
	• Electoral Services
	• Emergency Planning
	• Business Continuity
	• Policy
	• Performance
	• Equality & Diversity
	• Consultation & Engagement
	• Communications
	• Website
	• Data Protection
	• Freedom of Information
	• Customer Services
	• Support Services
	• Caretaking & Cleaning
• Land Charges	
Finance	• Financial Management
	• Treasury Management
	• Creditors and Debtors
	• Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates Collection

Service Area	Sub-Areas
Corporate Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land and Property Holdings (excluding HRA Property) – Maintenance of Assets and Purchases / Disposals
Stafford Led Shared Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology (including Reprographics)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Resources

DEVELOPING THE WORK PROGRAMME

Members have a key role to play in developing the work programme for the Scrutiny Committees and it is important that manageable programmes are developed. The Scrutiny Committees will need to filter potential items of work; to be selective and to prioritise.

Given the limited resources available, in particular the constraints on member and officer time, it is unrealistic to select more than a few items for intensive review. Realistically, a single committee cannot undertake more than two in-depth reviews per year.

In developing the work programme Members are encouraged to consider the following questions:

Public interest – the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen.

Things to think about include:

- Any issues raised with you when canvassing;
- Have any surveys or research undertaken by the Council identified any concerns
- Is the issue an identified priority for the Council or partners

Ability to change - priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence. Think about what difference Scrutiny could make and what would happen if you did not look at this issue.

Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well. You should consider, the scale of the underperformance, whether it is a one off or whether there is an ongoing issue. Has the service been flagged up in an external inspection report for poor performance?

Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the District

Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication or wasted effort

Work programmes should be determined at the start of each municipal year and reviewed and revised regularly. Any reviews not started or completed by the year end can be referred for consideration as part of the following year's work programme. The best advice is to start small, learn what works well and what does not and then be more ambitious. It is far easier to add items to the workload than to remove them.

Stage 1: Agree the Issue

The first step is for scrutiny members to be sure that the subject to be reviewed is significant. Undertaking in-depth reviews is resource-intensive – of member and officer resources. Investing such a high level of resources should only be undertaken for **high priority issues**. The following are criteria which could be used to ‘check’ a topic against, to ensure that it would make a worthwhile review:

- Issue identified by members as key issue (through members’ surgeries and other constituency activities);
- Performance issues within a service (e.g. significant under or overachievement of targets);
- Service considered to be important by the community (through market research, citizens’ panels and so on);
- High level of user/general public dissatisfaction with service;
- Public interest issue highlighted in local media;
- High level of budgetary commitment to policy/service area;
- Persistent financial issues e.g. significant under or overspends.
- Council corporate priority area;
- Central government priority area;
- Issue raised in Inspection Reports
- Issue referred by the Cabinet or the Audit & Governance Committee
- New government guidance or legislation.

Stage 2: Determine the nature of member involvement

The committee will need to decide how members will drive the review. There are three possible approaches to member involvement:

- The whole committee investigates the issue;
- A task and finish working group is established to drive the investigation;
- Individual or paired members drive the review.

Vital to the whole review activity is that members take full control of which policy problems and solutions are explored and how that exploration takes place. Members need to take responsibility for, and ownership of, the outputs and outcomes of reviews.

Stage 3: Scoping Exercise

There are 4 key issues to consider when scoping the review:

- What are the core questions the review is seeking to answer? (no more than 3)
- What is the purpose of the Review? (in one sentence)
- What will not be included?
- What is the timescale?

Work programming

The role of scrutiny is to achieve positive outcomes for local people by undertaking a thorough, targeted examination of the council's service provision and procedures. However, it is not possible to examine every service in detail, so it is important for the scrutiny committee to prioritise and plan its workload. Some councils do this at the beginning of each year and some do it on an ongoing basis.

Planned scrutiny

Work programming is the process for determining which topics scrutiny will look at over the coming year, either at committee meetings or

in task and finish groups. This involves evaluating a number of factors to decide which topics are to be investigated and when. The process will typically involve long-listing and then short-listing topics before making a final decision.

Responsive scrutiny

Whether planned scrutiny takes place at the beginning of the year or on an ongoing basis, the priorities for scrutiny need to be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. This makes sure scrutiny can be flexible and responsive to high-priority issues or policy changes that occur throughout the year.



The scrutiny topic selection process

Each council has its own method for selecting topics for scrutiny; in some councils there may be a very structured selection process, whilst in others it may be more informal. Whatever level of detail is involved, the general process should include the following activities.

1. Identify issues

You can identify potential issues by:

- consulting with all members of scrutiny committees, senior officers, cabinet members and council officers
- looking at corporate priorities, business plans and the Forward Plan of the council (and the council's neighbours)
- considering events and decisions in the council's calendar that could require an input from scrutiny, such as setting budgets
- evaluating previous council performance and identifying any follow-up work required to previous scrutiny work
- carrying out work to engage with local people, for example through surgeries, local media, opinion surveys and online forums.

2. Prioritise topics

Identify and prioritise potential scrutiny topics, considering the resources they would require and the level of impact they could achieve.

3. Plan scrutiny work

Decide which scrutiny topics to review and include them in the work programme.

4. Review and evaluate

Review progress and evaluate outcomes to demonstrate the value added by scrutiny.



Criteria for selecting scrutiny topics

The following criteria provide a useful guide for prioritising and selecting which topics are suitable for scrutiny to review.

Topics **are** suitable for scrutiny when:

- scrutiny could have an impact and add value
- the topic is of high local importance and reflects the concerns of local people
- the resources are available that would be required to conduct the review, in terms of manpower and budget
- it avoids work duplication elsewhere
- the issue is one that the committee can realistically influence
- the issue is related to an area where the council, or one of its partners, is not performing well
- the issue is relevant to all or large parts of the local area
- the review would be in the council's interests.

Topics **are not** suitable for scrutiny when:

- the issue is already being addressed elsewhere and change is imminent
- the topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and will be referred there)
- scrutiny involvement would have limited or no impact upon outcomes
- the topic may be sub-judice or prejudicial to the council's interest
- the topic is too broad to make a review realistic
- new legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected within the next year
- the topic area is currently subject to inspection or has recently undergone substantial change.

Defining scrutiny topics

For every item on the work programme/new referral, it should be clear:

- What is the issue/activity/project under consideration?
- What is scrutiny being asked to do?
- What are the reasons for/expected benefits of involving scrutiny in the matter?
- Is there a specific deadline for the piece of work?



Exercise 1 – prioritising topics

Consider the issues that are important to the people you represent in your ward. List the five issues you think are the most important, then put them in order of priority; make a note of your reasoning. Do you know all the information you need to handle complaints effectively? Consider these statements to identify any gaps. If you answer 'no' to any of them, take some time to find the answers from your council's website or your work colleagues.

1

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Think about how you would translate these into strategic issues. Here is an example:

The issue

A number of residents have been complaining that the trees in the local area are not being pruned regularly enough, becoming a hazard and presenting a potential danger to the public. Complaints include difficulty in walking on the pavement, damage to tall vehicles, trip hazards from tree roots and gardens being overshadowed by trees.

Strategic considerations

The council needs to consider how it allocates its Environmental Services' resources so that it can be efficient whilst also meeting the needs of local residents. It can look at:

- how services are procured, commissioned and contracted
- which are the most hazardous streets and where the biggest improvements can be made
- prioritising and planning a programme of work for tree pruning.

**Proposed Work Programme for 2021-22 for
the Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee**

Meeting Date	Item
23 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of Year Outturn for Corporate PDP for 2020-21 • Determine Review Programme for 2021-22
21 September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially Resilient Council PDP – Qtr 1 Progress Report April to June 2021 • Scrutiny Review (to be determined)
7 December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially Resilient Council PDP Progress Report July to September 2021 • Scrutiny Review (to be determined)
January 2022 -Date to be determined	This meeting is for consultation on the budget/financial strategy only
22 March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially Resilient Council PDP Progress Report October to December 2021 • Outcome of Scrutiny Review(s) – Preparation of Annual Report

Suggestions for Reviews:

- Customer Service Standards / Access Strategy
- Consultation & Engagement Strategy
- Review of proposals for Hybrid Working for Employees
- Review of the Council's assets



Scrutiny Review Template

Review Title
Scope of the Review / Terms of Reference
Reason for Scrutiny
Membership of the Review Group
Key Tasks / Review Plan
Sources of Evidence
Timescale