

Dear Members

**Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

A meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee will be held in the **Craddock Room, Civic Centre, Riverside Stafford** on **Thursday 17 October 2024 at 6.30pm** to deal with the business as set out on the agenda.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Members are reminded that contact officers are shown at the top of each report and members are welcome to raise questions etc in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.



Head of Law and Governance

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 OCTOBER 2024

Chair - Councillor F Beatty

## AGENDA

- 1 Minutes of 27 June 2024 as previously published on the Council's website.
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Public Question Time - Nil
- 4 Councillor Session - Nil

### Page Nos

- 5 Members' Items
- ITEM NO 5(a) **Review of Business Planning Report** 3 - 5  
COUNCILLOR F BEATTY
- 6 Called In Items - Nil
- 7 Officers' Reports
- ITEM NO 7(a) **Development Management Update (Presentation)** -  
HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
- ITEM NO 7(b) **Business Growth Programme Update (Presentation)** -  
HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
- ITEM NO 7(c) **Regeneration Projects - Update** 6 - 10  
HEAD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
- ITEM NO 7(d) **Work Programme** 11 - 15  
HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

## Membership

Chair - Councillor F Beatty

J A Barron	A M Loughran
F Beatty	D M McNaughton
B M Cross	A Nixon
P C Edgeller	J S Powell
E G R Jones	D P Rouxel

## Appendix 2

# Business Planning Report

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	27 June 2024
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Law and Governance
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Economic Development and Planning

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## 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review the programme of business considered by the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee in 2023/24 with a view to the report being submitted to the Council.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee approve this report as its Annual Report to the Council.

### Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.2 To update the Council of items considered at the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee in the 2023/24 Municipal year.

## 3 Key Issues

- 3.1 During the past Municipal Year, the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee considered a wide variety of issues that has helped to embrace its continuing role to ensure that the Council delivers sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.
- 3.2 The Committee controls its own Work Programme which is already populated with a range of issues for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

## 4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following Corporate Business Objective 1:-

To deliver sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 During the 2023/24 Municipal Year, the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee has considered a wide variety of issues that supported the Council's Business Objective of delivering sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.
- 5.2 In order to achieve this, the Committee have received regular updates concerning the Economic Growth and Regeneration Projects throughout the Borough.
- 5.3 A Task and Finish Review Group has commenced regarding Town Centre Events.
- 5.4 Other items that the Committee considered included the following:-
- Biodiversity Net Gain
  - Development Management Performance
  - New Local Plan 2020-2040
  - Meecebrook Garden Community
  - Stafford Town Centre Transformation / Future High Street Fund
  - Economic Growth Development and Regeneration Projects
- 5.5 The Committee has received presentations on the following:
- Business and Leisure Tourism
  - Development Management
- 5.6 The Committee continues to control its own Work Programme and regularly makes appropriate adjustments.
- 5.7 Under its Terms of Reference, the Committee has received regular reports that monitored both operational and financial performance.
- 5.8 The Work Programme is populated with a variety of issues for the forthcoming Municipal Year.
- 5.9 It is intended that this report, with the addition of any appropriate information concerning the current meeting, be taken to the next available meeting of the Council as the report back from this Scrutiny Committee in accordance with Article 6, Paragraph 6.3 of the Constitution whereby the Committee is required to report annually to the Council on its workings and future Work Programme.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

None

**6.2 Legal**

None

**6.3 Human Resources**

None

**6.4 Risk Management**

None

**6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

The Borough Council considers the effect of its actions on all sections of our community and has addressed all of the following Equality Strands in the production of this report, as appropriate:-

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

**6.6 Health**

None

**6.7 Climate Change**

None

**7 Appendices**

None

**8 Previous Consideration**

None

**9 Background Papers**

File in Law and Governance

**Contact Officer:** Jackie Allen

**Telephone Number:** 01785 619552

**Ward Interest:** Nil

**Report Track:** Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee - 27 June 2024 (Only)

**Key Decision:** N/A

**Agenda Item 7(c)**

## Regeneration Projects Update

<b>Committee:</b>	Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	17 October 2024
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Economic Development and Planning
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Economic Development and Planning

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### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Committee on progress across a number of development and regeneration projects within Stafford town centre.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the report is noted.

### **3 Key Issues**

- 3.1 The report sets out the main updates that have occurred since Committee was last updated in August. Work continues across the full programme of projects.

### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 The development and regeneration programme currently underway in Stafford town centre supports delivery of all four Business Objectives in the Council's Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024. It also delivers against the five Growth Priorities in the Economic Growth Strategy for Stafford Borough 2020-2025

### **5 Report Detail**

#### **Stafford Future High Street Fund**

- 5.1 On 26 December 2020 it was announced that Stafford Borough Council has been successful in receiving a provisional Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) award of £14,377,723. The final award was confirmed, and Council approval was sought in February 2021 for inclusion in the capital programme and also to secure the necessary co-funding from the Council. With Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Council contributions the total programme budget

was set at £21.5m. As at October 2024, the refurbishment of the Market Square is complete, on site works are due to start in the new year for Station Approach, the Council has acquired the Guildhall Shopping Centre and are finalising contracts for the acquisition of the former Co-op, with the Council entering into a contractor with a demolition contractor to clear the sites for future re-development.

- 5.2 The bidding process required a Green Book Five Case model business case submission which ultimately linked the funding award to specific projects. The first of those projects to get underway on site was the refurbishment of Stafford's Market Square.
- 5.3 One of the main aims of the FHSF programme is to create an environment in which people are encouraged back into the town centre. The full renovation of the Market Square was intended to bring improved infrastructure to support events and create an attractive focal point at the heart of the County town.
- 5.4 Following a detailed design process that involved a number of partners and stakeholders' contractors McPhillips started on site in January 2023 and the Square was officially re-opened with a very well attended Celebration Event on Saturday 28 October 2023.
- 5.5 The Square is a main meeting point and community space within the town centre whereas the approach to Stafford Railway Station provides important connectivity through to the high street. As such the Station Approach project includes the refurbishment of the concourse, road resurfacing, a new public short stay car park and increased disabled parking close to the station. The main aim of this project is to improve the pedestrian and cycle routes into the town with a stronger link through Victoria Park and create an attractive welcome to the town to those visiting via train. The Council has entered into a contract with McPhillips to undertake the project, with onsite works set to begin in January 2025.
- 5.6 The remaining projects within the FHSF programme relate to the mixed-use re-development of the former Co-op department store site and the Guildhall Shopping Centre.
- 5.7 The Council has acquired the Guildhall Shopping Centre and is near to concluding the purchase of the former Co-op department store. Proposals for the former Co-op site, which has been empty for more than a decade, include a mixture of retail, commercial and residential uses. It is anticipated that the Guildhall site will be attractive for a residential led development scheme. Increasing the residential offer within the town centre creates increased footfall supporting the existing retailers in the town.

- 5.8 The Council has entered in a contract with a specialist demolition contractor to undertake the partial demolition of the former Co-op and Guildhall Shopping Centre and multi-storey car park. Subject to securing the necessary planning approvals, works will start in November/December.
- 5.9 Over the next 6 to 12 months, the Council will be working to develop a development framework and prospectus for the Co-op and Guildhall sites, this will include a detailed assessment of the best route to market to secure a development partner to bring forward a comprehensive re-development scheme and will involve public engagement.

### **Stafford Station Gateway**

- 5.10 The Stafford Station Gateway project is a partnership between Stafford Borough Council (SBC), Staffordshire County Council (SCC), placemaking and regeneration expert LRC and Network Rail (NR).
- 5.11 In February 2023, the Council agreed and published a Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) for the Stafford Station Gateway.
- 5.12 Initial delivery of ambitions set out in the SRF include unlocking employment land opportunities, housing, community space, leisure provision and the construction of a new Institute of Technology for Stafford College (which is now underway). That element of the development is supported by £13 million of government funding via a partnership that includes Stafford College, Keele University, and private technology companies.
- 5.13 In November 2023, the Council was provisionally awarded a sum of £19,998,144 from the third round of the Levelling Up Fund based on the second-round bid. Drawdown of the funding was dependent upon completion of a validation exercise which was completed in February 2024. The grant funding is to be used to fund site clearance and remediation works to prepare the site for development.
- 5.14 In March 2024, the Council's Cabinet agreed to accept the Levelling Up Fund award and to establish the necessary governance and programme / project management arrangements to manage the funding and deliver the project.
- 5.15 Before the project can proceed, the Council requires confirmation from MHCLG via a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that the funding will be available to the project. It was anticipated that the MoU would be sent to the Council by MHCLG in June, but this has been delayed. MHCLG have advised that they are currently unable to confirm when the MoU will be circulated, and it is not expected that this will be before the October budget.



## **Other projects**

- 5.16 The County Council are also leading on two further significant developments within the town centre at Eastgate and the Staffordshire History Centre. The Eastgate regeneration project is focused on the former Magistrates Court site and the Wedgwood Building. Following a competitive procurement process, the County Council have appointed a development partner ION Developments. Proposals for the site are set to include residential and mixed-use developments and new public realm/green spaces.
- 5.17 As the range of projects set out here demonstrates there is significant investment focussed on transforming the County Town that will create a town centre that is welcoming to residents, businesses and visitors and support the growth of the local economy.

### **6.1 Financial**

None

### **6.2 Legal**

None

### **6.3 Human Resources**

None

### **6.4 Risk Management**

None

### **6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

None

### **6.6 Health**

None

### **6.7 Climate Change**

None

## **7. Appendices**

None

## **8. Previous Consideration**

Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny - September 2022 to date

## **9. Background Papers**

None

**Contact Officer:** Dean Piper

**Telephone Number:** 01543 464223

**Ward Interest:** Forebridge

**Report Track:** Economic Development and Planning 17 October 2024

**Key Decision:** No

**Agenda Item 7(d)**

# **Work Programme - Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

**Committee:** Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny

**Date of Meeting:** 17 October 2024

**Report of:** Head of Law and Governance

**Portfolio:** Economic Development and Planning Portfolio

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## **1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee’s Work Programme

## **2 Recommendations**

2.1 That the report be noted.

## **3 Key Issues**

3.1 The first stage in achieving a Member-led Overview and Scrutiny process is to develop a Work Programme for the Members of the Committee to own.

3.2 Accordingly, an up-to-date copy of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee’s Work Programme is provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.

## **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 This report is most closely associated with the following Corporate Business Objective 1:-

To deliver sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs.

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 Members will recall that one of the fundamental philosophies behind the creation of Overview and Scrutiny is that the process should be Member-led and the first stage in achieving this is to develop a Work Programme that is:-
- Owned by all Members of the Scrutiny Committee
  - Flexible to allow the Committee to react to urgent items
  - Contain aspects of both Overview and Scrutiny
- 5.2 Therefore, at each scheduled meeting of the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee, an up-to-date copy of the Work Programme will be provided for Members to consider or amend as appropriate.
- 5.3 The Work Programme includes provision for the Committee to scrutinise appropriate items delivered through the Council's Service Delivery Plan up to twelve months in advance, whilst maintaining the flexibility to respond to any issues that may arise.
- 5.4 Accordingly, attached at **APPENDIX** is the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee's current Work Programme to consider or amend as appropriate.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

None.

### **6.2 Legal**

None.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

None.

### **6.4 Risk Management**

None.

### **6.5 Equalities and Diversity**

The Borough Council considers the effect of its actions on all sections and has addressed all of the following Equality Strands in the production of this report, as appropriate:-

Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

**6.6 Health**

None.

**6.7 Climate Change**

None.

**7 Appendices**

Appendix: Work Programme

**8 Previous Consideration**

None.

**9 Background Papers**

File available in Law and Governance.

**Contact Officer:** Ian Curran

**Telephone Number:** 01785 619220

**Ward Interest:** Nil

**Report Track:** Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny  
Committee - 17 October 2024 (Only)

**Key Decision:** N/A

## **Work Programme - Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 19 November 2024 at 6:30pm**

**Report Deadline:** Monday 4 November 2024

**Officer Reports:**

**Task and Finish Update**  
Councillor D M McNaughton

**Q2 Performance Report**  
Head of Transformation and Assurance

**UKSPF Update**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**S106 Update**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Stafford Station Gateway Update**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Solar and On-Shore Wind Farms**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Work Programme**  
Head of Law and Governance

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**Thursday 13 March 2025 at 6:30pm**

**Report Deadline:** Wednesday 26 February 2025

**Officer Reports:**

**Q3 Performance Report**  
Head of Transformation and Assurance

**Local Plan / Meecebrook**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Tourism / Visitor Economy**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Development Management Update**  
Head of Economic Development and Planning

**Work Programme**  
Head of Law and Governance

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**Future Items:**

Task and Finish Group - Town Centre Events (ongoing)