



CABINET

19 April 2023

A meeting of the CABINET will be held on Thursday, 27th April, 2023, 6.00 pm in Town Hall, Market Street, Tamworth

A G E N D A

NON CONFIDENTIAL

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 12)

3 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of Members' interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) in any matters which are to be considered at this meeting.

When Members are declaring a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of which they have dispensation, they should specify the nature of such interest. Members should leave the room if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of which they do not have a dispensation.

4 Question Time:

To answer questions from members of the public pursuant to Executive Procedure Rule No. 13

5 Matters Referred to the Cabinet in Accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Pages 13 - 14)

(Report of the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee)

6 Income Management & Recovery Policy - Council Housing (Pages 15 - 70)

(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing)

7 ECO4 Statement of Intent (Pages 71 - 78)

(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing)

8 Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026 (Pages 79 - 152)

9 Exclusion of the Press and Public

To consider excluding the Press and Public from the meeting by passing the following resolution:-

“That in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meeting and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, and Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public”

At the time this agenda is published no representations have been received that this part of the meeting should be open to the public.

10 Update on commercial lease (To Follow)

(Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Risk and Customer Services)

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

Access arrangements

If you have any particular access requirements when attending the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01827 709267 or e-mail democratic-services@tamworth.gov.uk. We can then endeavour to ensure that any particular requirements you may have are catered for.

Filming of Meetings

The public part of this meeting may be filmed and broadcast. Please refer to the Council's Protocol on Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Council meetings which can be found [here](#) for further information.

If a member of the public is particularly concerned about being filmed, please contact a member of Democratic Services before selecting a seat.

FAQs

For further information about the Council's Committee arrangements please see the FAQ page [here](#)

To Councillors: J Oates, R Pritchard, M Bailey, T Clements, S Doyle, A Farrell and M Summers.

This page is intentionally left blank



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 6th APRIL 2023

PRESENT: Councillors R Pritchard (Vice-Chair), M Bailey, T Clements, S Doyle, A Farrell and M Summers

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive) and Tina Mustafa (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods)

Councillor T Jay Chair of Corporate Scrutiny and Councillor S Goodall Chair of Infrastructure, Safety & Growth Scrutiny were in attendance.

129 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Oates

130 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2023 and previous meeting held on 16th March 2023 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor A Farrell and seconded by Councillor T Clements)

131 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

132 QUESTION TIME:

None

133 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

None

134 CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Report of the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to update Cabinet and to make recommendations to it following consideration of the report of the Chief Executive on the Solway (Tamworth) Limited Update.

Following its consideration of the above item, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee agreed to make recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

Recommendations

RESOLVED that the Committee recommended:

1. That Cabinet wind up Solway (Tamworth) Limited.

(Moved by Councillor A Cooper and seconded by Councillor S Goodall)

RESOLVED That Cabinet

agreed that Solway (Tamworth) Ltd be put into dormancy to release associated savings

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor M Summers)

135 INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY AND GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Report of the Chair of the Infrastructure Safety & Growth Scrutiny Committee to update Cabinet and to make recommendations to it following consideration of the Staffordshire Sustainability Board at the meeting on 23rd March 2023.

Following its consideration of the above item, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee agreed to make recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

Recommendations:

Resolved: That the Committee endorsed the recommendations from the report:

1. That the Staffordshire Sustainability Board joint communications plan (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), which sets out the 12-month programme of climate change awareness-raising and behaviour change activity, be adopted.
2. That the Staffordshire County Council Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy (as attached in Appendix 2 to the report), be adopted.
3. That the Borough Council commissions a borough-wide bespoke strategy to provide a framework for making decisions around EV charging in Tamworth, is endorsed.

4. That the EV Charging update on the installation of 4 fast charging points is endorsed.

The Committee recommended to Cabinet the following additional recommendations be added to the report:

5. That the Tamworth Borough Council EV Charging Strategy is received by the Committee in its draft form before the end of 2023.
6. That the Installation of Charging Points within Tamworth be treated as a Cabinet Priority moving forward.

(Moved by Councillor S Goodall and seconded by Councillor P Turner)

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

Endorsed the recommendations from Infrastructure Safety & Growth Scrutiny Committee including the additional recommendations 5 & 6.

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)

136 SOCIAL HOUSING REGULATION AND COMPLIANCE - COUNCIL HOUSING

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing To update Cabinet on the requirements of the consumer regulation agenda significantly impacting the Councils Housing Service, previously reported on 10/11/22 and set out the resourcing arrangements over the next 2-years to fulfil the Councils' obligations to meet the required regulatory standards across its housing stock including collation and submission of the 22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures required by the Regulator of Social Housing from April 2023/2024.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. Acknowledged the findings of the Internal Audit report (February 2023) giving Audit & Governance Scrutiny Committee substantial assurance that the Councils preparedness for the proposed legislation is robust
2. Agreed that Homelessness Prevention & Social Housing Sub Committee will debate progress of the Councils

preparedness for the Social Housing (Regulation) legislation and that this will inform policy proposals to Cabinet on overall compliance; further noting that the co-opting of members of Tenant Consultative Group is being built into the next Constitutional review.

3. Agreed to delegate the final detail and submission (including the Tenant perception measures) to the Portfolio Holder of Homeless Prevention and Social Housing to ensure collation (from April 2023) & formal submission (in April 2024) as required under the Regulators directions using the Regulatory portal
4. Supported feedback from Corporate Scrutiny on 14/3/23 & Homelessness Prevention & Social Housing Sub Committee on 16/2/23, resulting in a proposed Programme/Project plan (shown at Annex Two) that will replace the raw detail in the improvement plan previously shared & developed to ensure it is SMART, appropriately rated so that progress is clear and that the improvement plan is simplified for easy reference publicly.

(Moved by Councillor A Farrell and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)

137 STAFFORDSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY BOARD UPDATE

Report of the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning, Economy and Waste to ask Cabinet to adopt the joint Staffordshire Sustainability Board Communications Plan 2023 which has been developed with the Staffordshire Sustainability Board in conjunction with all district and borough councils to help residents to reduce their carbon emissions and also to adopt the Staffordshire County Council Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy which has been developed in conjunction with all district and borough councils to help residents to transition to electric vehicles.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. Agreed to adopt the Staffordshire Sustainability Board joint communications plan (attached as Appendix 1 to the report), which sets out the 12-month programme of climate change awareness-raising and behaviour change activity,
2. Agreed to adopt the Staffordshire County Council Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy;
3. Endorsed that the Borough Council commissions a borough-wide bespoke strategy to provide a framework for making decisions around EV charging in Tamworth, is endorsed;
4. Endorsed the EV Charging update on the installation of 4

fast charging points;

5. Agreed to receive the Tamworth Borough Council EV Charging Strategy in its draft form before the end of 2023; and
6. Agreed that the Installation of Charging Points within Tamworth is treated as a Cabinet Priority moving forward.

(Moved by Councillor S Doyle and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)

138 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor A Farrell)

139 RECOVERY & RESET PROGRAMME - EXIT STRATEGY

Report of the Leader of the Council to provide an overview of the Recovery and Reset programme's achievements against its original aims, reflecting on the narrative of change due to several external factors impacting the programme, such as the Pandemic itself, dynamic and changing citizen expectations, the Government's Levelling Up agenda, and the Councils continued need to deliver high quality responsive and accountable core and statutory services.

To celebrate the success of the programme, specifically the associated £6.9m in efficiencies attributable to Recovery and Reset and its wider reach, as confirmed in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy report of 28th February 2023

And also to reflect on the delivery of Recovery and Reset as a blueprint for programme infrastructure going forward, with internal learning supported by views of both internal and external auditors, with substantial assurance and recognised good practice in terms of its governance and oversight.

RESOLVED That Cabinet

1. Endorse the formal closure of the programme and associated governance arrangements through Scrutiny Committees; further noting the internal learning, external assurances, and governance of the programme have provided a framework for project and programme infrastructure for corporate projects going forward;
2. Recognise the achievements associated with the Recovery

and Reset programme, specifically:

- a. **Customer Service** – Reception Facilities at the Assembly rooms operating 6-days a week with an acceleration of digital platforms allowing citizen contact and 24hr electronic access.
 - b. **Supporting Vulnerable People** – assessed pandemic impacts leading to a range of community outreach services; officer surgeries and increases in home visits.
 - b. **Financial Efficiencies & Re-purposing** of budgets - £6.9m in efficiencies built into the Council's [MTFS as of February 2023](#).
 - c. **SMART workforce** that identifies site, hybrid and home working to ensure responsiveness and accountability to citizens supported by a suite of policies to reflect new ways of working;
 - d. **Service Re-design** approach providing cultural transformation across key services such as treasury management, revenues and benefits shared head of service and transition from Community Wardens to a Neighbourhood Impact service.
 - e. **Making better use of our Physical Assets** – De-commissioning Marmion House for re-development & Investment in our Town Hall as the Council's municipal headquarters; with a staged move to the ground floor of Marmion House pending its closure.
 - f. **Organisational Effectiveness** – Transformation and Culture Change through co-ordinated Programme activity based on shared and collaborative aims.
3. Acknowledged the final project highlight reports, and programme dashboard which outline which activities and risks are to be carried over into legacy projects as the Programme ends and projects transition back to Business as Usual.

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor M Bailey)

Leader

This page is intentionally left blank

27th April 2023**Report of the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee****Matters referred to Cabinet in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules****Exempt Information**

None.

Executive Summary

The following Committee has referred the following matter to Cabinet:

Scrutiny Committee	Title of Matter referred	Date of Scrutiny meeting
Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	Public Toilet Provision Within Tamworth	28 th March 2023

Background

To update Cabinet and to make recommendations to it following consideration of matters by the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

Following a petition received at Full Council meeting in July 2022, the Assistant Director, Assets attended the meeting to update the Committee on the current toilet provision within Tamworth.

The Assistant Director, Assets highlighted to the Committee:

1. the current toilets which were open to the public and the opening times, which included that the castle grounds toilets were open daily between 9-5pm (year round) and these included a Changing Places facility which was accessible on request to the CCTV control centre.
2. The cleansing arrangements in place currently, which for the Castle Grounds toilets and the challenges faced
3. The potential alternatives available to improve public access to toilets, including community toilet schemes.

The Committee commented and sought clarification in the following areas:

1. Whether the Changing Places facility could be made accessible for those users who needed those facilities on a 24/7 basis, and any arrangements which would need further consideration. The Assistant Director reported that as access was granted via the CCTV control room there was 24/7 capability, however there would be very limited assistance available locally out of hours if any alarm were activated. The Committee discussed and suggested that a safety feasibility assessment could be considered prior to extending the operating hours, which could indicate if additional facilities could be installed, such as an intercom, in addition to an alarm, inside the Changing Places facility.
2. The adequacy of the current hours of cleaning of the Castle Grounds toilets which did not appear sufficient, and which could impact on the users' experience of the free childrens' play facility and other facilities within the area. The Committee requested that further consideration be given to methods of recruitment of cleaning staff, as well

as to the number of hours allocated to the Castle Grounds toilets' cleaning, in particular at busy times which had been noted as weekends and school holidays.

3. Whether Officers had explored the community toilet scheme alternatives, where it was reported that this had not been explored as yet.

Following its consideration of the above item, the Committee agreed to make the recommendation to Cabinet as set out below.

Recommendations

RESOLVED that the Committee make the following recommendations:

1. That Cabinet explore the allocation of contingency funds to adequately resource and fund the cleaning of the Castle Grounds toilets, with sufficient cleaning allocated to weekends and holiday periods.
2. That Cabinet explore with Officers the Community Toilet Scheme with local businesses.
3. That Cabinet continue with the current daily (7 day a week, 9-5pm) opening of the Castle Grounds toilets and explore extending the opening hours during the summer period to 7pm in the evening.
4. That Cabinet explore the installation of an intercom in the Changing Facilities.

(Moved by Councillor D Maycock and seconded by Councillor R Claymore)

Options Considered

None.

Report Author

Councillor D Maycock
Chair of Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 27 April 2023

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing

Income Management & Recovery Policy - Council Housing

Exempt Information

None

Purpose

To set out the Council's approach to its Council Housing income recovery policy in order to maximise income to its Housing Revenue Account, whilst also providing support to its tenants that need it.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Acknowledge the current tenancy rent arrears performance position reported to year end (2022/2023); noting this is an improved position on last year; and subject to benchmarking is likely to remain upper quartile when compared with 'best in class'.
2. Approve the new Income Management Policy 2023 (Appendix 1) and the associated Community Impact Assessment (Appendix 2) with any final amendments delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing.
3. Endorse the Rent Accreditation Improvement Plan 2022-25 (Appendix 3) progress update report.
4. Acknowledge Corporate Scrutiny input into the data analysis improving the overall understanding informing the policy for approval.

Executive Summary

Maximising housing income collection is central to funding the Council's landlord services function, the delivery of its services, the investment in its housing stock, and supports the Council's Vision, **Tamworth – celebrating our heritage, creating a better future**.

Ensuring that housing rent arrears are kept to a minimum helps sustain tenancies, prevent homelessness, and maintain stable communities. The Council remains committed to using evictions as a last resort, after all attempts to engage and fully support tenants with paying their rent have failed.

The Neighbourhood Income team is responsible for collecting rent and services charges on current council homes and garages, and the Revenues team are responsible for collecting former debts.

Over the past 3 years, housing income collection is one of the key challenges that Neighbourhood Services has faced against the backdrop of the financial impact of the recent coronavirus pandemic, the current cost-of-living crisis where living costs are increasing significantly faster than household incomes, and the everyday pressures on tenant’s incomes.

The table below shows performance trends, over the past 3 years, against recognised key performance indicators.

Whilst the figures are still subject to year-end audit and national benchmarking – performance for current rent arrears collection is better than last year. With a rent debit of around £19.5m and over £275k collected in the final two rent free weeks, the arrears total has reduced from c£518k year end 2021/22 to c£506k end of year 2022/23. This is a reduction of over £12k. Based on a forecasted bad debt of £800k this is significantly better than anticipated.

Indicator	End of Year Position 2019/20	End of Year Position 2020/21	End of Year Position 2021/22	End of Year Position 2022/23
BV66a Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery (Collection as a % of debit inclusive of arrears brought forward)	101.92%	101.57%	101.44%	101.50%
Arrears as a % of debit	2.87%	2.66%	2.77%	2.60%

- **The Councils collect around £19.5m in rent and £909k in service charges. So, the performance indicator shown in the table (BV66a) calculates all the rent debit collected plus any arrears which is why the figure is >100% - higher being the better.**
- Current tenant Arrears total at year end (27/3/23-2/4/23) were £506,958.37, a reduction of £11,809.27 from the same time last year. Total arrears (including former tenant arrears, recharges, court costs and garages etc.) are £1.92m at 31st March 2023, compared to £1.83m at 31 March 2021, an increase of £94k (compared to a £45k increase between 31 March 2021 and 31st March 2022). (Total arrears (including former tenant arrears, recharges, court costs and garages etc.) were £1.83m at 31st March 2022, compared to £1.78m at 31 March 2021, an increase of £45k (compared to a £64k reduction between 31 March 2020 and 31st March 2021).
- Figures below will form part of the benchmarking submission in due course and be reported in the Tenants’ Annual report later in the year. Should any final payments exceed £25K, i.e., payments received after April be for rent due in March 2023 (such as alternative payment arrangements (APAs) or from direct debits) then this could mean the arrears **are less for four years in a row.**

2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
583532.97	481375.48	518767.64	506958.37

The increased rising cost of living is a predominant factor as the reason for non-payment or under-payment of rent.

During the cost-of-living crisis, the Department of Levelling up Communities and Housing (DLuCH) issued a range of guidance and support to people facing financial hardship, including; some examples as listed below;

- Energy Price Guarantee & Energy Bill Support Scheme
- Cost of Living Payment
- Disability Cost of Living payment
- Pension Cost of Living payment
- Winter fuel payments
- Cold weather payments
- Warm home discount
- Free Money Helper service, confidential and impartial help tailored to individual needs
- Household Support Fund
- Discretionary Housing Benefit
- Cost of living support payment
- Rent cap of 7% across social housing

With continued high living costs for the foreseeable future, increasing demand for money advice from tenants, national cost-of-living support payments only being provided to benefit claimants and pensioners from April 2023, and increases to service charges alongside the 7% rent increase all pose significant challenges for tenants paying their rent and therefore rent collection during 2022/23 and going forward for 2023/24.

The new `Income Management Policy 2023` set out in **Appendix 1** together with the `Rent Accreditation Improvement Action Plan 2022–2025 Update Report` set out in **Appendix 3**, fully supports the delivery of the Council's corporate plan, the governments agenda to prevent financial exclusion, compliance with housing legislation. Aimed at fully supporting tenants to maximise their income and manage their rent payments during such difficult and challenging financial times.

Overview Rent Collection & Rent Arrears Performance

Following feedback from Corporate Scrutiny a review has taken place on arrears bands and trends available data. From the table below, the total number of households with rent account arrears has increased over the year from 1627 as at 27.03.2022 to 2109 as at 01.02.2023, an increase of 482 cases as predicted due to the economic climate. The Councils approach for early intervention and support strategies are therefore being focused on preventing debt escalating as arrears levels are highest under £500 and between 1-2 months in arrears.

Summary Arrears breakdown as at 1st February 2023

Level	Number of Cases	Cases (%)	Arrears Value (£)	% Arrears Value
Clear rent account	678	15.94%	0.00	N/A
Credit balance	1467	34.49%	-£220,393.69	N/A
Arrears up to £500	1652	38.83%	£273,542.43	35.21%
Arrears between £500-£1000	271	6.37%	£187,533.49	24.14%
Arrears between £1000-£1500	107	2.52%	£130,631.30	16.81%

Arrears between £1500-£2000	34	0.8%	£57,860.56	7.45%
Arrears over £2000	45	1.06%	£127,399.00	16.4%
TOTAL - arrears cases only	2109	49.58%	£776,966.78	
TOTAL - all cases	4254		£556,573.09	

Months in Arrears	Number of Cases	Cases (%)	Arrears Value (£)	% Arrears Value
Less than a month	1515	71.83%	£215,160.17	27.69%
Between 1 and 2 months	345	16.36%	£194,747.68	25.07%
Between 2 and 3 months	114	5.41%	£110,558.07	14.23%
Between 3 and 4 months	59	2.8%	£78,333.69	10.08%
Between 4 and 5 months	29	1.38%	£49,317.30	6.35%
Between 5 and 6 months	15	0.71%	£30,507.80	3.93%
6 months and over	32	1.52%	£98,342.07	12.66%
TOTAL	2109		£776,966.78	

UC (Universal Credit) expansion continues to be a factor affecting rent collection and arrears performance. Every case where a claimant is waiting 5 weeks for payment, costs the Council on average £446.25 (£89.25 average rent x 5 weeks). This is an improved position as previous waiting times was around 10 weeks. The Council remains a trusted partner with the Department of Working Pensions (DWP) to verify income and rent payment details which inevitably contributed to the improvement in waiting times.

Summary information provided below explains the increase in numbers of those in receipt of Universal Credit as per 2021-2022 and 2022-2023

Indicator	Qtr 4 2021/22	Qtr 1 2022/23	Qtr 2 2022/23	Qtr 3 2022/23	Qtr 4 2022/23
Number of Council Tenants on Universal Credit	1617	1655	1671	1701	1707
Number of Council Tenants on Universal Credit in Rent Arrears	749	1063	1170	1165	1112
Percentage of Council Tenants on Universal Credit in Rent Arrears	46.32%	64.23%	70.02%	68.49%	65.14%
Number of Council Tenants on Universal Credit not in Rent Arrears	868	592	501	536	595
Percentage of Council Tenants on Universal Credit not in Rent Arrears	53.68%	35.77%	29.98	31.51%	34.86%

Since April 2022 around 25 Universal Claims (UC) per quarter have been made by tenants, compared to 65 claims over the same period during 2021/22.

The latest updates from Department of Working Pension (DWP) are that final rollout of Universal Credit (UC) will not be completed now until 2028/29. The remaining roll out will now take place in two phases with non-employment support allowance (ESA) claimants

migrating first before the end of 2024. The second phase will be ESA claimants who will migrate to UC between 2025 and end of 2028/29.

The number of evictions for rent arrears have increased back to pre-pandemic levels. Since April 2022, 9 evictions have taken place. All eviction cases owed significant levels of rent arrears and failed to engage with repeated offers of support over a prolonged period. Eviction continues to be a last resort and the package of intervention and approach to rent arrears recover captured in the proposed Income Management Policy is designed to avoid this.

The provision of commissioned `Tamworth Advice Centre` support for tenants continues to be a key factor in good rent arrears management. The main purpose of the team is to support tenants to maximise their income, to maintain rent payments and sustain their tenancy. During 2022/23, the team have supported numerous numbers of tenants through the Tamworth Advice Centre.

Following the Government's rent cap announcement in November 2022, and as a result of the Council's medium term financial strategy agreed February 2023; the Council's rent increases are capped at a maximum increase of 7% during 2023/24, for all social and affordable rents.

Service charges are not covered by the cap and are set each year to cover the actual cost of providing the service to tenants.

Approximately 40% of the Council's tenants are in receipt Universal Credit to support with payment of housing costs. Due to the unprecedented increases in energy costs nationally, properties where electric and gas service charges are applicable may see a significant increase from April 2023, which are not covered by Housing Benefit (HB) or Universal Credit (UC).

Supporting Tenants with the Cost-of-Living

Tenants are increasingly giving rising living costs as the reason for non-payment or under-payment of rent.

While rent arrears levels have been increasing, demand for money advice support from tenants has been higher over the past year.

To support tenants struggling to pay their rent, a wide range of additional early intervention support measures were put in place throughout 2022/23 and will continue throughout 2023/24;

- *benefit take up and money advice has been promoted, to help maximise tenant income and claim any unclaimed benefits*
- *supporting with accessing government support schemes*
- *the team have issued increased numbers of emergency foodbank vouchers to tenants*
- *the team have granted £12,008 of financial hardship funding from a pot of £20,000 to 26 tenants most in need of support.*
- *the Council granted the Government Household Support fund of £150 to a large proportion of Council tenants*
- *the team undertook Energy Awareness training on 10th November 2022. This training was delivered as part of the Tamworth Advice Centre contract to assist customers with the cost-of-living crisis. The energy advice training was beneficial for all income officers so they could confidently pass on their knowledge and advice to the councils' tenants*

- *cost of living support options & money support advice promoted on the Council's website & Tenants Open House Magazine*
- *early notification of rent increase due from April 2023 communicated on rent statements during mid-late 2022*
- *discretionary housing payments are also targeted by the Councils benefit team*

Income Management Policy 2023

The Housing Income Management Policy 2023 (**Appendix 1**) sets out the Council's fair and consistent approach to maximising the housing income it receives, including the following;

- Housing Rent including Service Charges
- Rent Arrears
- Garage Rent and Arrears
- Recharges
- Former tenants

Promoting and supporting financial inclusion through the provision of early intervention including information, advice, and support on money, help with maximising benefits/grants/government funds, and debt management continues to be an integral part of this new policy. It helps to ensure rent payment are met, financial stress is minimised for tenants, and the appropriate action is taken against those tenants who have the ability to pay rent and charges but choose not to, with eviction being the last resort.

In-line with the Council's Corporate objectives, the specific aims of the policy are to:

- Sustain tenancies, preventing homelessness
- Improve the health and quality of life of all tenants
- Protect and support those who are vulnerable
- Contribute to ensuring the viability of the council

The policy principles around housing income collection and the Income Management Policy have been endorsed by the Council's Tenant Consultative Group (TCG) and Tony Newman Housing Quality Network (HQN) associate.

The Council retains its ambition to join up income management practices and there is a separate work-stream reviewing the Councils corporate debt policy. It is necessary however to ensure the council housing Income Management Policy is fit for purpose given the regulatory and consumer landscape.

Progress Report - Rent Accreditation Action Plan 2022-25

As reported to Cabinet in March 2022; in December 2021 the Council was awarded a further 3 years (MIST) Maximising Income and Sustaining Tenancies Accreditation from Housing Quality Network; based on its continued delivery of high-quality services across its full range of services, evidenced through partner and stakeholder feedback to the inspectors.

The Rent Accreditation Action Plan 2022-25 (Appendix 3) was developed by the Council's Neighbourhood Income Team together with the Tenants Consultative group, which incorporates all HQN's recommendations and is subject to annual checks, the next planned for the Summer of 2023 with HQN.

As summary progress report on the Accreditation Action Plan 2022-25 is set out below;

Year 1 progress – 2022/23

- The Income Management Policy was reviewed and updated Oct 2021 and again Feb 2023.
- Service improvements/achievements are recorded annually for all Housing Management service areas and published in the tenant's quarterly newsletter Open House and in the Annual Report to tenants
- The Rent Collection, Arrears Prevention & Recovery Procedural Manual 2015 is currently being reviewed and updated
- An external self-assessment was commissioned to report against the Regulator's updated Consumer Standards and the broader requirements of the Social Housing Charter between February-September 2022
- A new Business Objects report is provided monthly to include total no of cases with a clear rent account, credit balance, arrears cases up to £500, between £500 and £2000 and number of arrears cases over £20000. The same arrears information is also provided by a breakdown of months. This report is provided monthly to Scrutiny or on request and is also shared with the Income Team and Neighbourhood Management.
- To develop/promote an annual tenant engagement recruitment campaign in partnership with TCG an 'A call for all tenants' leaflet was produced and posted to all tenants along with their rent statement

Year 2 Plan - 2023/24

- Work is currently underway to survey and report against 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering five themes. These will commence to be collected during 2023/24 by way of annual tenant survey and data submissions
- Bi annual rent arrears survey
- Review and implementation of the Rent Collection, Arrears Prevention & Recovery Procedure Manual
- Accreditation MIST (maximising income, sustaining tenancies) – 18 month HQN assessment.
- Review and update of Paying Rent Leaflet.
- Define of SMART service standards as part of the local offer review across neighbourhoods.
- Scoping of IT and digital improvements for Income Officers whilst carrying out home visits.
- Bi-Annual rent arrears impact assessment.

Progress and monitoring of the action plan continues to be reported to;

- Members via Pentana project highlight report
- Senior management and officers via monthly performance meetings
- Tenants via tenant consultative groups
- Discussed with the Portfolio Holder and when relevant via the Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing sub committee

Equality Implications

Set out at Appendix 2 is the Community Impact Assessment.

Key headlines include:

- No specific group is disadvantaged as the policy recommended is inclusive.
- Fully supports all tenants who are experiencing financial hardship including those needing an enhanced level of support.
- Policy designed to support all tenants with enhanced support needs, and provide the appropriate help, advice and assistance.
- A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken for tenants who are deemed needing an enhanced level of support.
- Profiling and monitoring will take place of customer accessing the service.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report other than the detail captured with regard to maximisation of the Councils income.

Next Steps & Delivery Timetable

Income Management Policy	Accreditation Action Plan 2022-25
Cabinet approval – April 2023	Cabinet update – April 2023
Staff training on policy – April 2023	Continue to delivery and implement improvement action plan during 2023-2025
Implementation – April 2023	Monitor – continue to monitor and update via Tenants Consultative Group & performance monitoring framework
Monitor – continue to monitor arrears / collection weekly and report performance to management and tenants monthly	During 2023-25 subject to reaccreditation annual progress checks by HQN
Review policy – March 2024	Apply for reaccreditation after April 2025

Report Author

Mrs Lee Birch, Head of Housing Management
Mrs Leanne Lea, Housing Manager
Mrs Tina Mustafa, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods

Appendix

- 1) Income Management Policy 2023
- 2) Income management Policy – Community Impact Assessment
- 3) Rent Accreditation Action Plan 2022-25 – Progress Update Report

**Tamworth Borough Council's
Income Management Policy
Neighbourhoods
March 2023**

DRAFT

Document Control

Directorate	Neighbourhoods
Document Title	Income Management Policy Neighbourhoods
Version	Final Version draft – 21/3/23
Author/s	Leanne Lea Housing Manager Julie Clempson Income Manager Stephanie Norton Income Maximisation Officer David Turner Income Maximisation Officer Lee Birch, Head of Housing Management
Lead Officer	Leanne Lea – Housing Manager
Head of Neighbourhoods	Lee Birch, Head of Housing Management
Approval	Seeking Cabinet approval – April 2023
Scheduled Review Date	This Policy has been produced in-line with good practice and current relevant legislation and any review will take account of changes in legislation, service improvements, regulations and wider policy initiatives. Any proposed changes will be discussed with appropriate stakeholders and updated in-line with related policies. Unless there are any changes to such legislation beforehand, the next review of this Policy is due April 2025 and every two years thereafter.

Contents

1. Introduction		Page 3
2. Policy Scope	2.1 Aims	3
	2.2 Objectives	4
3. Legal Frameworks		5
4. Rent Charge		5
5. Service Charges	5.1 Low rise blocks	6
	5.2 High rise blocks	
	5.3 Sheltered schemes	
6. Rent and Service Charge Payments	6.1 Payment methods	7
	6.2 Support with housing costs	7
7. Policy Detail	7.1 Our Approach	
	7.2 Preventative Measures	
	7.3 Rent statements	
	7.4 Income team staff	
	7.5 Prevention and Recovery of rent arrears	
	7.6 Early intervention	
	7.7 Low level or static debt	
	7.8 Benefits	
	7.9 Enhanced level of service	
	7.10 Joint tenants	
	7.11 Taking Court Action	
	7.12 Escalating Arrears - NOSP	
	7.13 Court Action	
	7.14 Insolvency Arrangements	
	7.15 Eviction	
	7.16 Joint working	
	7.17 Recovery of former tenant arrears	
	7.18 Garage rents	
	7.19 Recharges	
	7.20 Write offs	
	7.21 Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space)	
	7.22 Health and safety	
	7.23 Contacting the Income Team	
8 Monitoring and Measuring Performance		21
9 Equality and Diversity		22

1. Introduction

Tamworth Borough Council manages approximately 4254 homes across the borough, and it is essential that there is a robust income management policy to ensure that we have a stable and secure Housing Revenue Account to allow us to provide the services to our tenants.

It is essential that all efforts are made to recover monies owed to the Council in the forms of current and former tenant arrears. We will take all reasonable steps to trace and pursue tenants who have outstanding housing related debts with the Council.

When appropriate, legal action will be taken to minimise arrears increasing, seeking possession of the property where required. This action must be reasonable, proportionate and adhere to statutory and legal requirements.

The policy has been co-produced and approved by the Tenants Consultative Group and contributes to the outcomes of Tamworth Borough Councils corporate vision and the government's agenda to prevent financial exclusion and create a fairer independent society.

2. Policy Scope

This policy relates to the income collection of Tamworth Borough Council Neighbourhood Services. It outlines Neighbourhood Services approach to the collection of monies owed in

- Housing Rent including Service Charges
- Rent Arrears
- Garage Rent and Arrears
- Recharges
- Former Tenant Arrears

This policy is linked to:

- Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Service Charges Policy
- Rent Setting Policy
- Former Tenant Arrears Policy
- Write Off Procedure Manual
- Guide to Bankruptcy Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Tenant Involvement & Consultation Strategy 2022 - 2024
- Social Housing Regulatory Standards
- Safeguarding Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Community Impact Assessment 2023
- Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025
- Temporary Accommodation charging policy

2.1. Aims

The aim of this policy is to set out the Council's approach to recovering tenant arrear in order to be as effective as we can be in minimising tenant debt.

This policy will be applied to ensure that there is early contact and support to prevent arrears accruing and that the tenant can receive the right help and advice at the earliest opportunity. By taking this approach, the policy aims to sustain tenancies, preventing homelessness, with eviction as a last resort.

2.2. Objectives

- Maximise income by collecting rent, service charges, former arrears and other housing income in an effective and efficient manner.
- Offer comprehensive support to tenants to sustain their tenancies at all stages of the recover process, repeating and exhausting all option of communication i.e. home visits, telephone calls, email and text as appropriate.
- When appropriate, take legal action swiftly to minimise arrears increasing ensuring action is proportionate and adheres to all legislative requirements, i.e., Pre-Action Protocol.
- Maintain a consistent approach to dealing with all income collection and arrears.
- To monitor arrears efficiently to enable early intervention to prevent arrears escalating.
- Encourage prompt payment by offering a range of payment methods, with the ability to access some payment services 24/7.
- To work in partnership with other agencies to offer comprehensive support to tenants to sustain their tenancies.
- To work with the Council's benefits team and Department of Working Pensions to ensure that housing benefit and Universal Credit claims are dealt with in a prompt and timely manner and all benefits are being claimed.
- Give help, support and advice to tenants affected by the welfare reform to limit the impact on the Council and tenants' income.
- Support financial and digital inclusion by working effectively in partnership with internal departments and outside agencies to offer advice and help with bank accounts, fuel poverty, contents insurance, benefits and finding employment and

training courses to improve job prospects to increase tenant's income and prevent escalation of debt including rent arrears.

- Possession action should be used as a last resort, and only where all other methods of intervention have failed.

To achieve the following outcomes in line with the Tamworth Borough Councils corporate vision to:

- Sustain tenancies, preventing homelessness
- Improve the health and quality of life of all tenants
- Protect and support those who tenants who may need and enhanced level of service
- Contribute to ensuring the viability of the Council
- Provide value for money

3. Legal Framework

Tamworth Borough Council's Income Management Policy is set within the following legal and regulatory framework ensuring good practice is adhered to in the collection of income and arrears.

- The Housing Act 1985/1988/1996
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Protection from Eviction Act 1977
- Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) tailored by Data Protection Act 2018
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Civil Justice Commission's Pre-Court Protocol Action
- Social Housing Regulatory Standards

4. Rent Charge

Tamworth Borough Council properties are either charged at an Affordable Rent or a Social Rent. Revenue collected from rent is re-invested in properties to maintain the decent homes standard and to increase Council stock to meet demand.

Rents for new build and acquisition properties are charged at an affordable rent which is 80% of the market rent.

Existing Council properties are charged at a social rent, which is lower than an affordable rent and is calculated in accordance with government rent setting policy.

5. Service Charges

Service charges were introduced from 4 April 2016. Tenants and licensees living in a property with shared services pay a service charge. Service charges are calculated based on actual costs of services being delivered apportioned between all households in flatted blocks and/or shared areas.

There are five service charges:

- Housing Management Plus (sheltered scheme tenants only)
- Communal cleaning
- Communal electricity
- Communal water
- Management/Administration charges

5.1 Low-rise blocks

The service covers communal electricity, water (where applicable) and general cleaning of the shared areas including sweeping and picking up litter within entrance areas.

5.2 High-rise blocks

The service covers communal electricity, water (where applicable) and general cleaning of the shared areas inside the building including sweeping and picking up litter within entrance areas.

5.3 Sheltered schemes

The service covers communal electricity, water (both communal and shared supplies where applicable) and general cleaning of the shared areas including sweeping and picking up litter within entrance areas.

Service charges are charged weekly, except for leaseholders, who will receive an invoice following the end of the financial year and the completion of the final accounts.

6. Rent and Service Charge Payments

The yearly rent (including service charges where applicable) is charged for 48 weeks with four rent-free weeks. When there are 53 weeks in the financial year, rent will be charged for 49 weeks. Tenants can pay for their rent weekly, fortnightly, four weekly or calendar monthly in advance.

6.1 Payment Methods

To give tenants the flexibility to be able to pay their rent 24/7 and to be able to choose a payment method to suit their personal circumstances there are several options available:

- **Direct Debit** – These can be arranged to be paid either weekly on a Friday or monthly on the 1st or 16th of every month.
- **Standing Order** – Tenants can set up a Standing Order to pay their rent at a frequency of their choosing.
- **Pay it Online** – Tenants can pay 24/7 via the internet on Tamworth Borough Councils external website, using a debit or credit card.
- **Automated Telephone Service** – This is also a 24/7 service enabling tenants to pay their rent by credit or debit card any time of the day or night.
- **Paypoint** – Tenants can make a payment by cash using the rent payment card at any outlet displaying the Paypoint sign.
- **Post** – Rent payments can be sent by post in the form of cheque.
- **Council employees** – Tenants who are Council employees can arrange to have their rent paid direct from their salary.

The preferred method of payment for the Council is Direct Debit as this generates consistent payments. Once a direct debit is set up the tenant has nothing further to do. The Direct Debit will automatically be revised following a change in the rent charge.

If a Direct Debit fails due to insufficient funds or because it has been stopped by the tenant, an automated letter is sent to the tenant asking them to contact the Council to discuss the reason.

A notification of the failed Direct Debit is sent to the Income Officers to both monitor rent payments and enable early intervention if needed.

The Council will cancel the Direct Debit if they fail to be honoured on two consecutive occasions.

6.2 Support with Housing Costs

Some tenants may be entitled to receive help towards their housing costs, either in the form of Housing Benefit, or Universal Credit. Housing Benefit payments are paid each week directly to the tenants rent account. Universal Credit payments are normally paid direct to the tenant, and it is the tenant's responsibility to ensure the rent is paid to the Council. However, there are certain circumstances that the Council or the tenant can request that the housing element of the Universal Credit claim is paid direct to the Council, which is known as an Alternative Payment Arrangement and is paid calendar monthly. Discretionary Housing Payments or a Hardship Payment can also be applied for if the tenant has suffered a financial hardship, and these are awarded on a discretionary basis.

Staff will advise and support tenants who are struggling to pay their rent and/or facing financial hardship with seeking access to any additional funding/grants/monetary support schemes, subject to eligibility, including government schemes i.e., Household Support funding, energy support scheme, warm home schemes, winter fuel allowances etc.

7. Policy Detail

The income management process starts at the point of applying for a Tamworth Borough Council property in a framework of preventive measures.

7.1 Our Approach

The Council will collaborate closely with other internal departments and services along with outside agencies to ensure early intervention measures are adopted and timely referrals are made where appropriate.

We will focus on preventative support and advise for our tenants to help them from falling into arrears early in the tenancy and before it gets to the stage of a Notice of Seeking Possession. We will look to create a payment culture with our tenants.

Rent is a priority debt and must be paid without exception. It is one of the most important bills a tenant must pay. It is the tenant's responsibility to pay the rent in full, in advance and on time. This is clearly set out in the tenancy agreement.

Our approach includes;

- Outlining rental responsibilities to tenants as soon as they are accepted onto the waiting list.
- Providing detailed information on how and when to pay rent when the tenancy agreement is signed. We also explain the consequences of not paying rent and what debt support services are offered locally. Where support issues are identified at a new tenancy sign-up, we will refer tenants for local support to Tamworth Advice Centre.
- We will encourage our tenants to speak to their Income Team at an early stage if they are experiencing difficulties with paying rent.
- We will contact tenants promptly if a payment is missed and throughout the recovery process, repeating and exhausting all options of communication i.e., home visits, telephone calls, email and text as appropriate.
- To recover the debt rather than taking possession action.
- Full compliance with the Pre-Action Protocol for Possession Claims by Social Landlords before any court applications are made.
- All possession action must be proportionate to the debt owed to prevent tenants from being unnecessarily drawn further into debt with the addition of court costs.
- We will ensure that all tenants with an entitlement to Housing Benefit make prompt claims, and where necessary will help complete an application. The Income Officers will then monitor each case regularly to ensure there are no delays within the claim which could have been avoided.
- Tenants needing to make a claim for Universal Credit will be directed towards the Department for Work and Pensions website to make their online claim. Where a tenant is identified as need additional support and unable to get alternative assistance to make a claim, the Tenancy Sustainment Officer will help and will notify the Department of Working Pensions of the case.

- Staff will closely monitor Universal Credit claimants to ensure they are paying the rent on time and will offer guidance and assistance to those who need more support and those facing financial hardship.
- Where appropriate staff will apply for an Alternative Payment Arrangement through the Landlord Portal for any tenant who is unable to manage their money or budget appropriately. These will be monitored, and tenants will be removed from the service when, or if, it is felt they can take responsibility for paying the rent themselves.
- All staff are trained in debt advice and can offer advice and assistance to any tenants falling into arrears, make arrangements with them to pay off the debt rather than seeking possession action where it is appropriate to do so.
- Where tenants require more specialist debt advice they will be referred/ signposted to the Tamworth Advice Centre.
- Ensure that all debt relief orders, breathing space orders and bankruptcy orders are reviewed and complied with when received from a tenant.
- The Council's policy is to pursue all former arrears except where to do so is not cost effective. In all cases, the prospects of potential recovery of any former tenant debt will be assessed initially, and cases will also be reviewed and monitored regularly. Former tenant debt will be managed and collected via Tamworth Borough Council's Revenue Team.
- Under General Data Protection Regulations which came into force on 25th May 2018, tenants will need to consent to any support before a referral is made to an outside agency.
- Rent statements will be provided/accessible to all tenants on a regular basis and at every stage of the recovery process.

7.2 Preventive Measures

Arrears prevention is a key strand of this policy.

There is information on the Council's website, which takes prospective tenants through the costs of renting a property. All likely costs with running and setting up a home are listed, with general tips and advice if considering taking out loans for soft furnishings and furniture.

Properties are advertised via the Council's website `Finding a Home`, with details of the rent and services charges, enabling prospective tenants to assess if they can afford the property.

The terms and conditions of the Tenancy Agreement are explained and discussed at the sign up of the tenancy with each new tenant. This includes a discussion about the rent charges, court action due to non-payment of rent and the consequence of what will happen should someone lose their home.

Tenant's income and potential expenditure for their new home is discussed and tenants provided with a benefit calculation. A referral can also be made to the Tamworth Advice Centre for an income and expenditure assessment to be undertaken prior to allocation. In instances where an application is band 1, Statutory Homeless, it is likely that a referral has already been made to the Tamworth Advice Centre during the assessment stages and affordability for social housing confirmed.

Support is given if required to make an application for housing benefit or apply for Universal Credit. The service will also liaise with the Department of Working Pensions in particular assigned work coaches in relation to the affordability of a social housing tenancy offer. During this time discussions are also ongoing in relation to the payment of rent and if a direct payment option would be advantageous.

An affordability assessment is carried out for any tenant who is likely to be affected by:

- A reduction in help towards housing costs due to under occupation.
- Families affected by the benefit cap which may result in a reduction with help towards their housing costs.

The outcome of the affordability assessment is discussed with the tenant and the appropriate advice and recommendations are given in accordance with the tenant personal circumstances.

Tenants identified as requiring support/assistance with budgeting, debt advice, welfare benefit advice or help opening a bank account are referred to the Tamworth Advice Centre.

Alternative Payment Arrangements will be applied for when tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit and identified as needing additional support and/or unable to budget effectively to pay their rent.

All new tenants are provided with an information pack containing information about the terms and conditions of the tenancy and details of help and support available should they need it. In addition, it includes the name and contact details of their Tenancy Sustainment Officer. To further support tenants in their new property, the team will also provide advice in relation to setting up utilities at the address and arranging for a required turn on a test to ensure an active gas supply. Where required, the team will also liaise directly with the Councils contracted repairs team to book in gas appointments.

The Tenancy Sustainment Officer will contact the new tenant by telephone within the first two weeks of their new tenancy followed by a home visit within 6 weeks of their tenancy commencing. This visit is to ensure that the tenants have settled in, that support is in place for those that need it, the rent is being paid and to help resolve any Housing Benefit queries or Universal Credit claims. Where there are concerns about the tenant and/or their tenancy then additional and more frequent contact will be immediately made as deemed appropriate to the case.

Those tenants who have moved into a Tamworth Borough Council property via the mutual exchange process follow a similar process to direct applicants and transfers in regard to the arrears prevention process:

- Tenancy Agreement is explained.
- Rent and Service charges are discussed.
- Affordability Assessment is carried out if required.
- Assistance is given with completing Housing Benefit forms and applying for Universal Credit if required.
- A referral is made for support with budgeting and debt advice if required.

Targeted 'Paying your Rent' initiatives will be used, as appropriate, to encourage and remind tenants of the importance of paying their rent. A 'Paying your Rent' leaflet is available on the Council's website and articles appear in the Tenants Open House magazine to providing ongoing help, advice and support for tenants with paying their rent.

Tenants are regularly informed of the quarterly Rent Incentive Scheme, to encourage prompt and regular rent payments. This information is available on the Council's website and details are displayed on the tenant's rent statements.

A covering letter is enclosed with the Quarterly Rent Statements containing information about welfare benefit changes.

7.3 Rent Statements

Quarterly rent statements are sent via the post to tenants in-line with pre-court protocol and are also available digitally on-line via the tenants individual Tamworth Borough Council housing portal account. The statements detail the tenancy number, name and address of tenants, the rent charge, service charges, payments made, adjustments and credit/debit balance.

Tenants can contact and request a rent statement to be sent if they have any queries regarding payments and rent balances.

7.4 Income Team Staff

The Council will annually train its Income Team staff in procedures to recover rent arrears and debt advice. Training will include seminars, conferences, and participation in the West Midlands best practice group and HouseMark membership.

The continuous training will include legal updates, housing law, welfare benefits/reform updates, equality, diversity, safeguarding, and other relevant topics which will impact on collecting rent income i.e., the cost-of-living crisis, government financial support schemes etc.

Staff will provide tenants with welfare and housing benefit advice. They will also offer basic debt advice to support tenants to sustain their tenancy and signpost to Tamworth Advice Centre where more tailored support is required for the tenant.

Tamworth Advice Centre contract will provide annual debt advice training for the Council's income team.

7.5 Prevention and Recovery of Rent Arrears

A preventative and collective approach is undertaken in the recovery of rent arrears, following the guidance of the pre-court protocol, with any court action including eviction being the last resort.

Analytics is used to effectively monitor specific and relevant accounts that require action by the Income team.

Assistance is provided either by the Income Tam or via a referral to a third sector support agency or a combination of both to:

- Help tenants maximisation their income including claiming unclaimed benefits
- Complete benefit forms
- Provide budgeting and debt advice
- Give advice on fuel poverty and other available support schemes, grants and funds
- Give help and advice on finding employment and training to maximise their income and limit the impact of the welfare reforms.

7.6 Early Intervention

We will help tenants who are in arrears. It is essential that we contact the tenant as early as possible and that the tenants speak to us as soon as they are in difficulties.

We can signpost tenants to Tamworth Advice Centre. This is very important when tenants are trying to pay multiple debts.

We expect arrears to be paid in full, but we will on a case-by-case basis come to an arrangement with tenants to repay arrears.

The recovery process starts the moment the first rent payment is missed to try to prevent the debt escalating and becoming unmanageable.

The Tenancy Sustainment team monitor the rent accounts on a weekly basis, to identify tenants who are not paying, taking any action necessary.

We expect that tenants will work with us to sort out the debt. We expect that tenants will put things right at this early stage.

We use a combination of methods to engage with tenants such as letter, e-mail, text, telephone or by visiting the property.

Communication is important in the collection of rent arrears, so all correspondence is free from jargon and gives clear and appropriate information in regard to money owed and who to contact.

Tenant communication is periodically reviewed by staff in conjunction with the Tenant Consultative Group.

On a weekly basis, Income Officers prioritise accounts requiring intervention through their Orchard recommendations list and through the Income Analytics module.

Where appropriate, officers will signpost to Tamworth Advice Centre and other partner agencies. This is very important when tenants are trying to pay off multiple debts and manage the day-to-day cost-of-living increases. An assessment will be carried out by Tamworth Advice Centre to identify if there is support in place, no support or support is required. The support identified may be:

- Household member, family or friend
- Appointee or Power of Attorney
- Third sector organisation, Citizens Advice Centre, Christians Against Poverty or other appropriate agency
- Social Services
- Local Support Team and partners

If tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit and are 8 weeks or more in arrears, we will make an application for an Alternative Payment Arrangement to the Department of Works and Pensions.

If tenants have fallen into arrears because they are under occupying due to a sudden change in their household composition the option of a move to a smaller property is discussed.

Some tenants may be eligible to the Incentive to Move Scheme, to assist financially with the move.

In under-occupation cases where arrears already exist, and the under-occupation charge is exasperating the debt, a management move is considered.

Tenants, affected by the benefit cap, are given advice on how to increase their income and a referral is made to the Tamworth Advice Centre for budgeting advice.

Before entering into the court process, appropriate steps will always be taken to come to an affordable payment arrangement with the tenants to clear their rent arrears.

All contact made with tenants in rent arrears including all action taken, is recorded and maintained on Housing Management systems.

7.7 Low Level or Static Debt

We will take firm action on low level debt. This is to protect the tenant falling into further arrears and financial difficulties.

This may also apply to small debts which may have been sitting on the rent account for a long time (static debt), even when they are not increasing.

We may serve notice and take legal action to recover money we are owed, where it is cost effective to do so.

7.8 Benefits

Issues with welfare benefit claims are a key factor in arrears. Thus, it is important that tenants discuss with us, promptly, any delays or problems with their claim. We will encourage such engagement in any communication with tenants.

We expect tenants to be paying all rent due which is not covered by Housing Benefit.

Tenants in receipt of UC are also expected to make payments to cover the full weekly rent charge where they receive benefits direct to themselves or any shortfall if their UC housing element does not cover the full rent.

We may suspend any escalation, including court action in cases where a tenant can evidence that they have a genuine chance of receiving benefit and are engaging with welfare benefit providers to resolve any issues including providing all the information requested.

7.9 Identifying Tenants who require an enhanced level of support

We will try to identify tenants who require an enhanced level of support as early as possible to ensure we offer the right help, advice and support. Examples may include tenant with disability, drug or alcohol dependencies, learning difficulties, mental health, elderly and/or needing additional levels of support.

A sensitive approach will always be undertaken in the collection of rent arrears.

We will refer to and work with support workers, social workers and family members to help sustain their tenancies where appropriate.

We can signpost to agencies that offer support that is tailored to tenants' circumstances.

Safeguarding of adults and children will always be adhered by all Council staff and the correct procedures followed when reporting concerns identified.

Where tenants who require an enhanced level of support fail to engage with support or does not comply with the support plan put in place to sustain their tenancy, pay their rent then enforcement action to recover rent arrears will be taken.

If a tenant is pursued for rent arrears, fails to make contact or other concerns are highlighted before court action is taken, a request will be put through to the Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership (TVP) to ascertain if they are known to any other agencies.

While we accept that some tenants may need additional support, help and advice, we will still expect rent to be paid on time and arrears repaid.

7.10 Joint Tenants

All tenants named on the tenancy agreement are responsible for paying the full rent, rent arrears, recharges, court costs, former arrears and where applicable any service charge(s).

Where there is more than one tenant named on the tenancy agreement they are jointly responsible. This means that if one joint tenant does not pay, the other is fully liable.

This will be the case where Universal credit is only paid to one tenant, or where the joint tenant has left the property.

7.11 Taking Court Action

We will take tenants to court to ensure that they pay us arrears that are owed after reasonable attempts have been made to engage with the tenant to settle the debt. This is a serious step and will result in the tenant having to pay for court costs. If bailiffs are involved, their costs will have to be paid by the tenant as well.

We will follow the steps laid out by the Civil Justice Commission's Pre-Court Action Protocol when court action is being taken.

7.12 Escalating Arrears – Service of Notice of Seeking Possession (NOSP)

If arrears continue to escalate and the tenant is not taking the appropriate action to prevent their arrears from increasing, we shall serve a Notice of Seeking Possession.

At this stage, we will remind the tenant of the consequences of legal action, including the risk of additional court costs and of losing their home.

Tenants are reminded to seek independent legal advice in regard to court action being taken against them by Tamworth Borough Council.

During the Notice period, we shall continue to seek engagement and resolution with the tenant/s. If, after the Notice period, the arrears have not been cleared in full or are not reducing in line with an agreed payment plan, we shall commence legal action.

As a guide, Notice of Seeking Possession will be served for arrears where tenant(s) are 28 calendar days / 4 weeks or more in rent arrears. We will normally serve the notice by post, but where appropriate we will serve by hand at the tenants' home address.

We can serve a notice after a shorter time and reserve the right to do this in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where a tenant fails to make payments towards static or low level arrears less than 4 weeks rent.

We still serve a notice even if an arrangement has been made if the arrears remain more than 4 weeks. This is to protect the Council's interest in the debt owed.

We may still serve a notice where benefit eligibility has been established, but a tenant is not making payment towards any rent arrears owed.

We may delay serving a notice where the support needs of the tenant means that there are significant support issues.

The notice is valid for 12 months from the date it becomes 'live', unless the tenant clears the arrears before it became live. A notice will be re-issued after 12 months lapse if the arrears remain and no court action has been taken.

7.13 Court Action

We will only commence legal action where such action is reasonable and proportionate. We will always consider the tenant's circumstances when deciding to seek a possession order, including ability to repay the debt, their benefit situation and their payment history.

We will apply to court for a possession order once the notice has expired and will notify the tenant before applying to court. We will take into account the personal circumstances of the tenant before applying to court.

When taking such action, we shall comply fully with the Civil Justice Commission's Pre-Action Protocol.

The courts will make the decision on which order is granted, this can be either be an:

- **Outright Possession Order** – requires the tenant to give possession of the property to the landlord by a date ordered by the court.
- **Suspended Possession Order** - the tenant can remain living in the property as long as they maintain rent payments and payments off the arrears as ordered by the court.
- **Postponed Possession Order** – the tenant can remain living in the property as long as they maintain rent payments and payments off the arrears as ordered by the court. However, a postponed possession order requires the landlord to request a possession date from the courts before applying for permission to apply for the warrant.
- **Money Judgement Order**- Tamworth Borough Council will always seek a money order judgement for the outstanding rent and court costs when applying for a possession order, to enable the collection of former tenant arrears should they leave.

Changes to the court process is regularly monitored by the Income Maximisation Officers to ensure the correct procedure in line with government legislation.

At set out in section 5 above, Service Charge arrears are recovered within the same process as the arrears for the rent of the property.

As part of our claim, we shall request that the court awards costs to the Council. Court costs will be added to a sub-account for that tenancy and the tenant is required to clear the rent arrears and court costs for the court order to be satisfied.

If tenants breach their court order every effort will be made to contact to the tenant to agree a payment arrangement to enable them to reduce the breach. A request for the warrant for possession will always be the last resort.

Where appropriate a variation order can be applied for by either party. It enables the terms of the court order to be changed if the tenant has had a change of circumstances. A variation order can be made to either increase or decrease the payments the tenant has to make to reduce the arrears.

Support is provided and tenants are either signposted or referred to the Tamworth Advice Centre or other support agency to try to prevent eviction.

Assistance is given with applications for Housing Benefit and Universal Credit, if required.

The Housing Solutions team provide advice to tenants who are facing eviction on the implications of becoming homeless and their housing options.

In exceptional cases and subject to meeting the eligibility criteria a referral can be made to the Housing Solutions team for consideration to approve the case for a Housing Solutions Grant. The tenant must sign up to receive support if a grant is approved. The grant is paid direct to the tenants rent account to either clear or reduce the arrears.

7.14 Insolvency Arrangements – Bankruptcy, Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVA) and Debt Relief Order (DRO)

Where a tenant has an insolvency arrangement they remain liable to pay current rent as usual.

If a tenant has a Bankruptcy Order or Debt Relief Order, the money owed in rent arrears listed within the order may be written off in accordance with the rules and regulations of the individuals' orders. Where rent arrears are not written off, we may deal with repayment of rent arrears in-line with this policy and follow standard procedures for recovery action where arrangements are not kept to.

Possession of a property can still be sought even if the tenant has a Bankruptcy or Debt Relief Order. It is the decision of the courts if outright possession is granted.

The Council will adhere to the Bankruptcy and Debt Relief Order policies and procedures, when dealing with individual tenants who have applied for Bankruptcy or a Debt Relief Order.

The main feature of a Debt Relief Order is a ban (called moratorium) which prevents creditors pursuing debts for a period of 12 months. Tenants with a Debt Relief Order are still liable to pay current rent, and any rent arrears incurred after the Debt Relief Order has been made are not covered by the moratorium. We will deal with repayment of these arrears in line with this policy.

7.15 Eviction

Eviction should be used as a last resort, and only where all other methods of intervention have failed.

No eviction can take place without both the Income Team Leader and Housing Manager approval, who form the pre-eviction panel.

The Council will only carry out an eviction where a county court bailiff is present and work will be undertaken with the bailiff to ensure that it is carried out as sensitively as possible.

Written notification of the date of the eviction will be sent to both the tenant and the Council's Tenancy Sustainment Team and Income Team.

Tenants will be advised to seek independent legal advice following our approval for officer to apply for an eviction.

7.16 Joint Working

The Income team works closely with internal and external partners to ensure that cases are being dealt with in a prompt and effective manner, so that the rent account is maintained and payment are being made in a timely manner e.g. Housing Benefits team, Universal Credit departments, Tamworth Advice Centre.

Partnership arrangements will be adopted where possible to ensure a comprehensive support service is in place for tenants in arrears or experiencing financial difficulties, including social service, community mental health, community safety partners etc.

7.17 Recovery of Former Arrears

Collection of former tenant arrears is important to the Council and is carried out by the Council's Revenue Team.

Former tenant arrears refers to rent arrears left by a tenant/s whose tenancy has ended and they no longer live in their home. It applies to all former tenant accounts including rent arrears, court cost, garage rent arrears, rechargeable arrears and occupation charges.

Any debts owed to the Council greatly reduce the level of service we can provide to our tenants. We will be proactive in collecting former tenant arrears using a range of methods in a flexible, but fair and consistent way. We will use the methods which are considered to be the most effective on a case-by-case basis and that deliver value for money.

The Council is focused on preventing former tenant arrears. While the tenant is living in the home we will work with them to try and prevent them falling into arrears wherever possible. This will include debt, benefit or general money advice where possible. We will also signpost to relevant agencies that can advise the tenant if we are unable to do so.

We understand the importance of acting promptly to increase collection of former tenant arrears. The relevant officer will identify former tenant arrears at an early stage and contact the former tenant. We will contact former tenants using a variety of methods.

Following receipt of a Notice to Quit, the Council will always carry out an exit inspection and will request a forwarding address to enable the collection of former tenant's arrears.

Prior to vacating the property, the Tenancy Sustainment team will contact the tenant to ask request that any outstanding balances prior to leaving are cleared or to make an arrangement to clear. Tenants will be informed that if they do not clear the outstanding arrears, the Council may not re-house them in the future.

If a former tenant refuses to make a payment arrangement to clear any outstanding debt, or has broken a payment agreement, an escalation process is followed in line with the Former Tenants Arrears Policy.

7.18 Garage Rents

Anyone who lives in Tamworth can apply to rent a garage; they are not limited to tenants who rent their homes from the Council.

Council tenants cannot apply to rent a garage if they have any rent arrears, former tenant arrears or garage arrears. They must clear all arrears before an application can be made.

Private tenants are charged VAT in addition to rent, in line with VAT regulations.

If a tenant is registered disabled and can provide supporting documentation, the rent can be reduced when a garage is allocated.

Council tenants will be given priority over private tenants.

The maximum number of garages that can be let to one household is three.

Garage rents are monitored weekly.

If tenants fall into garage arrears they are contacted by telephone, text, email or letter. After 4 weeks of arrears, this process is swiftly escalated to the termination of the garage tenancy if the customer fails to clear their rent arrears.

7.19 Recharges

The Council's repair contractor will provide details and evidence of any damage to Tamworth Borough Council property.

If damage has been caused to the property, which has been identified as rechargeable to the tenant, an affordable repayment plan will be agreed where appropriate.

To establish an affordable repayment plan an Income and Expenditure form will be completed with the tenant.

7.20 Write offs

Where a debt is found to be uneconomical to collect, or the person has passed away and has no estate, the debt will be written off in accordance with the Write off Policy.

7.21 Debt Respite Scheme (Breathing Space)

The Debt Respite Scheme also known as the Breathing Space Scheme, came into force on 4th May 2021 and gives those who owe money further legal protection from their creditors.

The scheme aims to help relieve some of the pressure of dealing with creditors, to focus on getting debt advice and setting up debt solution without worrying about being chased for payment or incurring extra charges.

This is a free scheme, launched by the Government. Application can be made through TAC adviser for sixty days 'Breathing Space' however; an applicant must continue to engage with the debt advisor.

A standard breathing space gives legal protections from creditor action for up to 60 days.

A mental health crisis breathing space is only available to a client who is receiving mental health crisis treatment. If an Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) certifies a client is in mental health crisis treatment, the client or someone else might ask you for a mental health crisis breathing space on the client's behalf. The mental health crisis breathing space has some stronger protections than the standard breathing space. It lasts as long as the client's mental health crisis treatment, plus 30 days (no matter how long the crisis treatment lasts).

The Council cannot presume any housing payment during this breathing space period.

The Income team follow the rules and regulations introduced by the Breathing Space Scheme.

A management framework was jointly set up across the Council and the Tamworth Advice Centre to closely monitor the impact.

7.22 Health and Safety

All Health and Safety procedures must be adhered to, at all times, by staff involved in the management of rent arrears. When carrying out visits all staff must follow the lone working policy and procedure.

All staff sign an annual Risk Assessment as part of Neighbourhoods Health and Safety management framework, with the measures to keep staff as safe as possible whilst carrying out their roles.

The Council operates a Harassment, Alert and Risk (HAT) register, which alerts Income Officers where there is a risk and what measures they need to take e.g., alert must not visit alone.

An alert called (UDC) is added to the Council Income management system (orchard) which also notifies staff of any risks.

7.23 Contacting the Income Team

During Council opening hours, tenants can contact the Income Team in several ways including by phone, email, in-person or by letter.

Tenants can request information in an alternative format or language,
By contacting the Council on telephone 01827 709709 or email:
enquiries@tamworth.gov.uk

8. Monitoring and Measuring Performance – including Tenant Involvement

There are a number of key indicator measures that are monitored weekly, monthly and annually. These help us to determine the success or otherwise of this policy and its underpinning procedures.

The key indicators are reported through to staff, management, Tenant Consultative Group and members via weekly reports, performance meetings, Pentana reports and the Council's corporate performance management system.

Arrears are monitored and reviewed weekly and compared to previous weeks and years and is an important indicator to establishing the financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account.

The Income Team will monitor arrears cases every week, identify the source of arrears and take action as appropriate and in accordance with the Rent Arrears Recovery Procedure.

The Income Management Team will monitor performance weekly, reviewing targets and actions regularly to ensure compliance with policy and procedures and that there is a consistent approach to arrears recovery.

Arrears arising from external factors, including welfare reform, are also monitored carefully and reported.

This monitoring is crucial for Business Planning. An annual Bad Debt forecast report and annual Income Performance Management Report is produced and shared with staff, Senior Management, the Corporate Management team, Tenant Consultative Group and the Executive Director of Finance.

Performance monitoring also helps us to determine and plan any remedial action and improvements to the service. This includes identifying opportunities for innovation and use of new technology.

Performance outcomes are reported to Council Members, the Corporate Management team and The Tenants Consultative Group.

The three-year Rent Accreditation Continuous Improvement Action is monitored by an external assessor from Housing Quality Network.

From April 2024, tenants' satisfaction will be captured via the new Social Housing Regulators '22 Tenant Satisfaction Measures'. The findings from this annual survey will be closely analysed by the Council's Management teams, Tenants Consultative Group, Council staff, stakeholders, partners and members action to learn and improve will be added to the three-year action plan.

9. Equality and Diversity

A Community Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy to safeguard against discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief or age and to make sure it is responsive and sensitive to the needs of each individual.

Community Impact Assessment

Part 1 – Details		
What Policy/ Procedure/ Strategy/Project/Service is being assessed?	Income Management Policy March 2023	
Date Conducted	March 2023	
Name of Lead Officer and Service Area	Leanne Lea – Housing Manager Lee Birch – Head of Housing Management & Neighbourhood Resilience	
Commissioning Team (if applicable)	N/A	
Director Responsible for project/service area	Rob Barnes, Executive Director Communities	
Who are the main stakeholders	Tamworth Borough Council tenants, Neighbourhood Services, Tamworth Borough Council (rental Income), Housing Benefit section, Tamworth Advice Mid Mercia	
Describe what consultation has been undertaken. Who was involved and what was the outcome	TCG have been consulted on the review of the Income Management Policy 2023, comments included within the Cabinet Report April 2023, and further consultation will involve neighbourhood teams, partners and other stakeholders, i.e., Tamworth Advice Mid Mercia. In addition, the updated Policy has been shared with Tony Newman Housing Quality Network (HQN) associate and suggested amendments have been incorporated into the Policy	
Outline the wider research that has taken place (E.G. commissioners, partners, other providers etc)	As outlined above, the Neighbourhood Management Team have sought independent feedback from Tony Newman HQN Associate The portfolio holder for Neighbourhoods will be consulted, as will internal teams.	
What are you assessing? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	A decision to review or change a service	
	A Strategy/Policy/Procedure	x
	A function, service or project	x
What kind of assessment is it? Indicate with an 'x' which applies	New	
	Existing	x
	Being reviewed	x

Part 2 – Summary of Assessment

Give a summary of your proposal and set out the aims/ objectives/ purposes/ and outcomes of the area you are impact assessing.

The purpose of Tamworth Borough Council's Income Management Policy is to ensure fairness and consistency in the housing management function of maximising the income of the council and its tenants. By taking this approach, the policy aims to sustain tenancies, preventing homelessness, with eviction as a last resort.

Early intervention is a priority within this policy to prevent escalation of debt where possible and to give necessary support for those who need it.

Income management activity is as a corporate priority, as effective income and arrears management is crucial to operate a viable business as a main source of revenue income. Maximising income provides excellent customer service and maintains and improves property assets. Without adequate financial resources the council's ability to provide added value services such as welfare and debt advice and other support to help customers sustain their tenancies is hampered. Most importantly, an effective income management ethos not only prevents customers from falling into unnecessary or significant debt but ensures that they can sustain tenancies and reduce their chances of becoming homeless.

The specific objective aims are to

- Effectively collect rent due and maximise income for the Council/tenants
- Monitor arrears regularly to enable early intervention to prevent arrears escalating.
- To ensure all monies owed is collected in a firm but fair approach.
- Encourage prompt payment by offering a range of payment methods
- Work in partnership with other agencies to offer comprehensive support to tenants to sustain their tenancies at all stage of the rent recovery process
- Work with the benefits team to ensure that housing benefit claims are dealt with in a timely manner and all benefits are being claimed.
- Give help, support and advice to tenants affected by the welfare reform to limit the impact on the council and tenants' income.
- Prevent Financial Exclusion by working effectively in partnership with internal departments and outside agencies to offer advice and help with bank accounts, fuel poverty, contents insurance, benefits and finding employment and training courses to improve job prospects to increase tenant's income and prevent escalation of debt including rent arrears.
- When appropriate, take legal action swiftly to minimise arrears increasing, ensuring action is proportionate and adheres to all legislative requirements.

The desired outcomes are to:

- Collect all rent and service charges due
- Promote a payment culture to all customers
- Proactively prevent and minimise arrears
- Deliver a tailored and inclusive service, treat customers as individuals and respond to their differing needs to help them to sustain tenancies, pay their rent and service charges and reduce arrears

- Identify and recover debt promptly with a fair and sympathetic but firm approach
- Ensure systems, processes and performance management measures are in place to demonstrate implementation of this policy

Through our impact assessments, risk assessments and engagement work, it is intended that there will be no negative impact for any section of the community and equality of access to our services will remain.

Who will be affected and how?

TBC Tenants, local communities, partners and stakeholders by raising financial awareness, referring customers to appropriate agencies, Job centre by offering job opportunities and training to the unemployed

Are there any other functions, policies or services linked to this impact assessment?

Yes √ No

If you answered 'Yes', please indicate what they are?

- Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Service Charges Policy
- Rent Setting Policy
- Former Tenant Arrears Policy
- Write Off Procedure Manual
- Guide to Bankruptcy Policy & Procedure
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy Statement & Procedure Policy
- Tenant Involvement & Consultation Strategy 2022 - 2024
- Social Housing Regulatory Standards
- Safeguarding Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Community Impact Assessment 2023

Part 3 – Impact on the Community
Thinking about each of the Areas below, does or could the Policy function, or service have a direct impact on them?

Impact Area	Yes	No	Reason (provide brief explanation)
Age		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Policy should have no differential impact due to age. • Profiling and monitoring will take place of customers accessing the service. • Annual 'Paying your Rent' campaigns will be carried out to increase take up of unclaimed benefits/offer debt

			<p>advice and money management referrals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable i.e., under 18 years of age/care leavers and the elderly.
Disability	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants will be treated on an individual needs basis and assistance/support will be tailored as appropriate. • The policy will be available in different formats. • Liaise with TA Mid Mercia and other support agencies as appropriate. • Profiling and monitoring will take place of customers accessing the service. • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable
Gender Reassignment		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should have no differential impact due to gender reassignment.
Marriage & Civil Partnership		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should have no differential impact due to marriage and civil partnership.
Pregnancy & Maternity		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should have no differential impact due to pregnancy and maternity.
Race		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should have no differential impact due to racial groups. • Witness support for hate crime is available
Religion or belief		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Policy should have no differential impact due to racial Belief.
Sexual orientation		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should have no differential impact due to sexual orientation. • Profiling and monitoring will take place of customers accessing the service. • Witness support for hate crime is available.
Sex		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should have no differential impact due to sex.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Profiling and monitoring will take place of customers accessing the service.
Gypsy/Travelling Community		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Policy should have no differential impact on gypsies/travelling community. Profiling and monitoring will take place of customers accessing the service. Witness support for hate crime is available.
Those with Caring/Dependent responsibilities		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy should have no differential impact due to caring/dependent responsibilities. A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Those having an offending past		√	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy should have no differential impact due to an offending past.
Children	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households with children who are on low incomes and experience financial difficulties/hardship will be supported by this policy. A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Vulnerable Adults	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy is designed to support all vulnerable customers and provide the appropriate support and assistance. A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Families	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households with children who are on low incomes and experience financial difficulties/hardship will be supported by this policy. A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Those who are homeless	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy is designed to support all vulnerable customers and provide the

			<p>appropriate support and assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Those on low income	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People on a reduced/low incomes will be provided with the appropriate support to maximise their income and maximise access to financial assistance. • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Those with Drug or Alcohol problems	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased prevalence of substance misuse is present in the wider community, and the policy has considered the impact of financial management e.g., rent payments. The policy is designed to support all vulnerable customers and provide the appropriate support and assistance. • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Those with Mental Health issues	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased prevalence of mental is present in the wider community, and the policy has considered the mental health impact of financial management e.g., rent payments. The policy is designed to support all vulnerable customers and provide the appropriate support and assistance. • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Those with Physical Health issues	√		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy is designed to support all vulnerable customers and provide the appropriate support and assistance. • A sensitive approach to rent arrears recovery will be taken

			to tenants who are deemed to be vulnerable.
Other (Please Detail)			

Part 4 – Risk Assessment

From evidence given from previous question, please detail what measures or changes will be put in place to mitigate adverse implications

Impact Area	Details of the Impact	Action to reduce risk
<p>There is a risk of people, specifically those effected by the pandemic and recent cost of living crisis to experience difficulties in being able to pay their weekly rent/service charges due to low income/financial hardship. This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable adults • Families • People who have come through the homeless route • People on low incomes • People with drug and/or alcohol dependency problems • People experiencing mental ill-health/ • Physical health 	<p>People on exceptionally low income/means tested benefits may experience financial hardship which creates a financial implication in the form of rent and service charges as appropriate. Rather than add to an already vulnerable situation, the Council's approach attempts to assist with any financial impact for vulnerable people, reducing the impact of this risk in most cases</p>	<p>All staff will be trained on implementation of the updated policy.</p> <p>Information about the importance of paying rent is profiled at viewings, tenancy sign ups and exit inspections.</p> <p>All tenants, new and existing, are informed of whom to contact about rent payment and where to get help if they fall into arrears.</p> <p>Post-tenancy visits arranged as necessary for new tenants - The Tenancy Sustainment team work proactively with tenants to assist them with complying with their tenancy terms and conditions and signposting them for support and advice and ensure rent is being paid and also to provide the help to resolve any Housing Benefit queries or Universal Credit claims.</p> <p>TBC complies with the provisions of the Pre-Action Protocol for Rent Arrears.</p> <p>Income officers will make realistic repayment arrangements with tenants to accommodate changes in circumstances.</p> <p>A wide choice of payment methods is offered to customers and all options are explained clearly.</p> <p>The Income Team actively offer to help and support customers in claiming benefits and make referrals to Citizens Advice Mid Mercia and the Job Centre.</p> <p>The TBC website has benefit check and budgeting links.</p>

		<p>Direct referrals to be made to Citizens Advice Mid Mercia for multiple debt problems and money management.</p> <p>Information and support details are included as standard on all quarterly rent statements and on Tamworth Borough Councils website.</p> <p>The Rent Leaflet includes a wealth of information for debt and money management advice in addition to other support and assistance inclusive of home energy, Counselling service and the Samaritans.</p> <p>The Hardship Fund will continue to be promoted to assist tenants affected financially by the historic pandemic or more recently by the cost-of-living crisis, to help alleviate poverty and stress, to reduce the temptation for tenants to use illegal money lenders and to sustain tenancies.</p>
	On the community in general - social or economic benefits, negative impacts	The Rent and Other charges policy will ensure quality services can be provided to tenants and respond to needs of our communities. Where rent or service charge increases are applied, those with low incomes are eligible for Housing Benefit/Universal Credit to ensure they are not negatively impacted.
	On the council as an organisation - on staff, services or assets	Setting rents and service charges effectively and transparently in line with government legislation reduces risk to the council. It ensures costs can be recovered and will protect the long term financial ability of the Neighbourhood and Housing Management Service to continue and improve services and maintain assets
	On the protected characteristics Age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief,	The policy commits us to ensure that all rents are increased in line with national legislation and all tenants regardless of protected characteristic will receive the same percentage increases. Those living in sheltered accommodation will also find rent and service charge levels have increased but this reflects the enhanced management

	sex, sexual orientation	charges for this type of accommodation.

Part 5 - Action Plan and Review

Detail in the plan below, actions that you have identified in your CIA, which will eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations.

If you are unable to eliminate or reduce negative impact on any of the impact areas, you should explain why

Impact (positive or negative) identified	Action	Person(s) responsible	Target date	Required outcome
Support for people experiencing difficulties in being able to pay their rent/service charges	Post-cabinet implementation of the revised policy will include staff training and awareness raising for partners and signposting organisations with the aim of ensuring all vulnerable people have access to the right support and money management and debt advise is available to all	Neighbourhoods Income Team	June 2023	Publication of new information and delivery of staff training.

Date of Review (If applicable)

Accredit: MIST Maximising income; sustaining tenancies Accreditation assessment Action Plan 2022/23 and 2023/2024

Project Team - Lee Birch, Leanne Lea, Julie Clempson David Turner, Steph Norton,

Following the assessment, HQN's assessor considered that service strengths outweighed weaknesses in all six modules and recommended that TBC was awarded accreditation.

The assessment of TBC's service against each module is summarised.

Module	Assessment
Customers and communities	TBC demonstrates a clear customer focus, is responsive to local priorities and is continuously developing effective partnerships with other agencies to design and deliver services. This includes advice and support to establish and sustain successful tenancies. However, there has not been a customer satisfaction survey for some time. There is also scope to expand the opportunities for involvement in the service.
Income collection	TBC demonstrates an efficient collection and accounting of rent, service charges and other housing-related income. TBC sets rents in line with government guidelines and customer feedback appears positive regarding the perceived value for money for rent.
Arrears management	TBC demonstrates effective measures to prevent and recover current tenant debt. We found the case management to be swift, effective and supportive. TBC's focus on tenancy sustainment is clear. There is scope for some further improvements to the pre-tenancy process to prevent arrears. There is also a need to re-establish a focus on the prevention and recovery of former tenant arrears (FTA).
Welfare reform	TBC demonstrates effective administration/management of rent accounts where HB or UC are being claimed, has positive partnerships with welfare benefit providers and expert advice and support is available in-house and through external partners.

	<p>These also form part of the Cabinet Annual Report to tenants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review customer feedback through a wide range of communication mechanisms i.e., Tell Us, satisfaction monitoring, STAR, bi-annual rent and arrears survey, day-to-day case management. The 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering five themes will be collected during 2023-24 by way of tenant perception surveys. The bi-annual rent and arrears survey will be undertaken Sept 2023 		Ongoing
<p>2. Update the policy framework, including document control to show ownership and review arrangements. This was in hand as we concluded our assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Data Control Master Sheet to be produced to be incorporated into all new and revised Policies. Information to include document title, version, project leads, service area, tenant approved date and SOD/Cabinet approved date – complete and included within the update Income Management Policy A Master spreadsheet to be set up to include a detailed suite of all policies and procedures across Neighbourhood Services which will reflect information within the Document Control sheet information - complete and saved with the Housing Management shared drive The above spreadsheet to be updated by all Neighbourhood Managers in accordance with any policy/procedure update The Rent Collection, Arrears Prevention & Recovery Procedural Manual 2015 to be reviewed and updated Produce a timeline of all remaining Income Policies & Procedures to be reviewed The Rent Collection, Arrears Prevention & Recovery Procedural Manual 2015 is currently being reviewed and updated to be included as an appendix within the April 2023 Cabinet Income Management Performance Report 	<p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Leanne Lea/Julie Clempson/David Turner/Stephanie Norton</p>	<p>Completed February 2022</p> <p>Completed August 2022</p> <p>In progress Feb/March 2023</p>

<p>3. Complete the planned self-assessment against the Regulator's updated Consumer Standards and the broader requirements of the Social Housing Charter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Assessment of Landlord compliance with regulatory consumer standards to include performance on headline areas, compliance with national standards and benchmarking i.e., HouseMark etc. • An external self-assessment against the Regulators updated Consumer Standards was commissioned early 2022 and took place between February-September 2022 • Consult with customers to define a set of SMART service standards for income management as part of the 'Local Offer' review across Neighbourhoods • Publish clear service standards and monitor/report for compliance – Pentana, Open House, Tenants Annual Report etc. 	<p>Lee Birch</p> <p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>Neighbourhood Management Team to feed into the corporate Project</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>2023-2024</p> <p>2023-2024</p>
<p>4. Linked to the above recommendation, whilst resident satisfaction appears high, there has not been a satisfaction survey for some time. We recommend that this is carried out to gather customers' formal and informal views regarding TBC's income management and tenancy sustainment offer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Rent and Arrears Survey was conducted in Sept 2021, the results of which concluded at the time of the accreditation assessment Nov 2021. The next rent and arrears bi-annual survey will be undertaken Sept 2023 • The results of all satisfaction measures will be analysed and will inform service development as appropriate • The results of the next STAR Survey will be analysed - tenants perception that rent provides value for money The 22 tenant satisfaction measures, covering five themes will be collected during 2023-24 by way of tenant perception surveys. 	<p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>Steph Norton</p> <p>David Turner</p>	<p>Sept 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2023-2024</p>
<p>5. The October 2020 audit report cited ongoing budget pressures and constraints. In this context, it is critical that TBC continues to monitor service demand to ensure that appropriate resources are available and allocated efficiently. This includes the income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a bi-annual Impact Assessment, consider findings and incorporate into service improvement/work plan. • Ensure Supplementary support for the team on specific key projects. This is continually monitored through 1-2-1's, team meetings, management performance 	<p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Income Maximisation Officers</p>	<p>Oct/Nov 2023</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

<p>management service and the wider provision of financial inclusion advice and support</p>	<p>meetings and additional resource is requested and will continue to be requested as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the corporate Financial Inclusion Policy with input from customers regarding priorities and service standards and include top level action plans that link to more detailed service improvement plans. • Continued Income representation at the EAG meetings • Income Officers will continue to ensure the maximisation of Income and benefit entitlement as part of day-to-day case management • Income & Expenditure form to be reviewed annually • Referral to CAB/ Debt advice/Monitored via quarterly scheduled TAC meetings i.e., performance – TAC requested Feb 2023 to update their current income and expenditure budget sheet to enable a greater understanding of the clients' current financial circumstances. • Continue to update the Paying your rent leaflet and other associated correspondence/web/budget planning web information – This was updated Nov 2022 and was included within Open House as separate information leaflet in addition to some other useful budgeting information. • Contents insurance annual renewal – standard agenda item to promote tenants' contents insurance to be included in Open House tenants newsletter and advertised on quarterly rent statements/ web/ other income correspondence. The tenants contents insurance was successfully renewed Oct 2022 for a further 12 months and a slightly cheaper rate for tenants • Quarterly rent incentive draw – continue to advertise on the web, Open House, quarterly rent statements as a standard agenda item 	<p>Tenancy Sustainment Income Officers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Quarterly Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annual renewal</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
---	--	--	--

<p>6. To expand slightly on the above recommendation, as more customers migrate to UC, arrears case management is often more complex and calls more time-consuming. We recommend that TBC avoids the income management service becoming too “lean,” which could impact on performance, service delivery and create higher direct and indirect costs to the authority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to provide comprehensive administration support to the team via the TSA’s • Commission external support to include legal and technical expertise, to map and support on key priority projects • Advertise more widely for future vacancies to ensure a quick turnaround for forthcoming vacant posts and avoid agency workers where possible due to associated costs • Review and update standard job advertisement to promote more interest – The job advert and job profile was completely updated to promote greater interest and successfully resulted in the recruitment of a part time Income Officer post • Explore the potential for introducing modern apprenticeships within the income team. • Provide training, updates, awareness and key priorities for all team members, as identified, to ensure resources are targeted efficiently and concludes continual improved case management • Actively promote the My Housing Portal through the website and all Income and other Neighbourhood communication to encourage customer self-reliance – This is included as standard within Open House, the Annual Report to tenants, within rent statements and notification letters and on the website • Monitoring of Income Management PI’s on Pentana and through close case management – team meetings/1-2-1’s/ recording achievements – Performance is routinely monitored at Neighbourhoods Performance Management meetings, at 1-2-1’s and at team meetings. Arrears performance is reported quarterly to Scrutiny and is included within the Cabinet Annual Performance Report and end of year Income 	<p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>Neighbourhood Management</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Routine as vacancies arise</p> <p>Completed March 2022</p> <p>2024</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
--	--	---	--

	Performance summary report, also presented to Cabinet		
7. Continue to work with local partner agencies to raise awareness of the support and advice available to residents across the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record and keep updated all local partner agencies and key contacts by way of a Directory and advertise through Neighbourhoods routine communication channels – Advertised via Open House, Annual Report to tenants, Website, rent letters, rent statements and annual rent notification letters routinely. Monitor CA Mid Mercia performance outcomes, inclusive of case studies, through quarterly partnership meetings as per new contract and updated specification – routinely monitored and shared with the Income Team inclusive of any additional TAC information/updates Actively promote the TAC Mid Mercia Referral system through all communication mechanisms to include website, daily case management, rent statements and letters, Open House etc. Routinely advertised as a set agenda item in key Neighbourhood publications Income representation at regular meetings with the Job Centre and DWP. Key information from all meetings to be shared with Income colleagues. Team members to submit any areas of concern/issues arising, emerging trends in advance of forthcoming meetings - Routine attendance from the Income Team and staff are asked for any issues to be raised in advance of the meetings. Employment Action Group – Income representation to attend meetings and minutes of meetings/key updates to be shared with all Income Team Continue to refer customers to Christians Against Poverty and actively advertise on the Paying Your Rent Leaflet, through case management etc. Make Food Bank referrals on customers behalf and record total number of referrals, family composition and patch for monitoring purposes 	<p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>Steph Norton</p> <p>David Turner</p> <p>Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Scheduled quarterly performance meetings</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>The following has been carried out by the Income Team to support customers through energy and general cost of living increases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council was given discretionary government grant funding (one-off payment of £150) available to Tamworth residents (including tenants) who are vulnerable and struggling with cost of living, up until 30 November 2022• Information was added to Tamworth Borough Councils website in relation to the Money Navigator Tool for anyone who wanted to seek free help and advice regarding their finances• The Paying Your Rent Winter Leaflet was included within the winter edition of Open House, the tenant's quarterly newsletter• Help for Households Campaign – energy saving advice update was also added to the website and included in Open House.• A 'help with energy costs' leaflet was produced and uploaded on the website and a strap line was included on the rent statements directing tenants to useful information• Income Officers and other Neighbourhood staff as appropriate made referrals to Staffordshire CC's Winter warmth project referral for £450.• Staff have promoted Assure tariff. This is a special tariff that can assist some customers on low income pay their water bill.• Income Officers and other Neighbourhood staff as appropriate made referrals to Staffordshire CC's Household Support Scheme e-vouchers - £65 per household plus £20 per child		
--	---	--	--

<p>8. Expand the performance management framework to incorporate reports on the gains secured for TBC and residents through the financial inclusion services and projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the positive impact that some aspects of the service, such as advice with welfare benefit and budgeting, have had on individuals, households and the wider community Monitor outcomes through CA Mid Mercia's quarterly reports providing positive case study examples as part of ongoing performance management – routinely monitored and quarterly reports are shared with the Income Team inclusive of individual case studies Include above as part of the end of year Income Performance report Positive case examples to be routinely recorded and shared with all Income staff as part of ongoing team meetings Record and promote the positive impact of sustaining tenancies in addition to the substantial savings of preventing an eviction. In 2015, the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) estimated the cost of an eviction to the taxpayer, to be between £24k and £26k. 	<p>Leanne Lea Julie Clempson Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p>	<p>Ongoing Quarterly Annual Ongoing</p>
<p>9. The '<i>Tenant Involvement and Consultation Strategy</i>' is strong and we found examples of active involvement. However, we suggest that there is scope to expand involvement and participation, possibly through the Council's wider community development initiatives. The planned local offers review may be a good opportunity to do this. HQN client, whg's '<i>Community Champions Programme</i>' may be a helpful approach for TBC to explore</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop/promote an annual tenant engagement recruitment campaign in partnership with TCG - promote involvement framework, benefits, outcomes, comms and advertise across other Neighbourhood services – 'A call for all tenants' leaflet was produced and posted to all tenants with the quarterly rent statement as part of an ongoing recruitment campaign. Welcome letter and 'Call for all Tenants' leaflet to be emailed/posted to all new tenants – Completed Sept 2022 and also advertised on the web and as part of the new tenancy pack. Continue to support and develop the following involvement groups under the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment framework: Tenant Involvement Group, 	<p>Leanne Lea Helen Rich Sonja Healy Grace Valente Tenancy Sustainment Income Officers</p>	<p>Complete May 2022 Ongoing Ongoing</p>

	<p>Tenant Consultative Group, Complaints Review Panel, ASB Service Improvement Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to review and update the tenant involvement engagement booklet to promote the benefits of tenant involvement – Updated annually to include any new groups, initiatives or involvement opportunities. Next update April/May 2023 • Promote Tenant Involvement, associated involvement literature and contact details of the Tenant Regulation Team at new tenancy visits – A Tenant Involvement introductory letter is posted to all new tenants with an ‘A call for Tenants’ leaflet to promote the opportunities for involvement • Consideration to be given to the introduction of a Repairs Working Group and High Rise Tenants Panel – Arrangements are currently progressing, Feb 2023, for the introduction of a High Rise working group • Explore further options for engagement through the website and through e-communication • Explore WHG Community Champions Programme 		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>April/May 2023</p> <p>Ongoing 2023-24</p>
<p>10. Complete the service charges project to ensure that tenant charges reflect the actual cost of the service and are presented clearly to customers. We understand that the leaseholder service charge review is complete</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update the Rent & Service Charge Setting Policy • Conduct an annual review of both tenancy and leaseholder service charges • Ensure Clarity and transparency for residents regarding service charges within all communication i.e. end of year rent notification letters • End of year rent notification letters advise that the increase in rent, payable for the financial year 3rd April 2023 to 31st March 2024, is in accordance with the government’s decision to cap social rent increases at 7%, below CPI+1%, the standard formula for rent setting for social housing. 	<p>Tina Mustafa</p> <p>Finance</p> <p>Lee Birch</p> <p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>Trevor Wylie</p>	<p>March 2023/24</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March Anually</p>

<p>11. Continue to work with TBC's legal advisers regarding the management of arrears for fixed term tenancies. We understand that TBC is currently unable to take possession action due to the wording of the tenancy agreement and that a new tenancy agreement is in development. In the meantime, there may be other options available, such as pursuing money claims for rent arrears in cases where possession action is not possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek Cabinet approve for the new FFT agreement with forfeiture clause, consultation and overall approach Completed 11.11.2021 • Introduce and implement the new FFT agreement with forfeiture clause from 31.01.2022 for all new tenancies, renewals and transfers - Completed 31.01.2022 • Undertake training and communicate relevant changes with staff as appropriate Completed January 2022 • Complete FFTT and Tenancy Management Policy Risk Assessment Completed 31.01.2022 • Update FFT Literature, website etc. Completed January 2022 • Seek legal clarification with regards to mutual exchanges Completed 15.03.2022 • Procurement of external specialist support to include communication programme, Consultation strategy/methodology, drafting tenancy management policy & impact equality assessments, recommendations to cabinet/committee and implementation of new tenancy management policy • An extensive piece of work was carried out to update the Flexible Fixed Term Tenancy procedures inclusive of a Forfeiture Clause. This was updated in accordance with continued legal advice and NSP's was amended to inform customers 	<p>Lee Birch Leanne Lea Lisa Hall Julie Clempson David Turner Steph Norton</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing 2023/24</p>
<p>12. Strengthen the digital offer, in line with the digital inclusion strategy. The website has some useful information but there is scope to offer more information, advice and functionality.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to review the website with updated with live information as appropriate -The website continues to be updated with any new or additional information for customers- as above • Annual review of the budgeting, planning web link and strapline and promote for both prospective and current tenants – Open House, Annual Report, rent statements, web, Paying your rent leaflet 	<p>Leanne Lea Julie Clempson Steph Norton David Turner</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routinely advertise the My Housing Portal, with Neighbourhoods standard strapline, to be included on rent statements, end of year letters, Open House, Annual Report, all income and other Neighbourhood communication, Also include on email signature strips – This is included on all literature, rent statements, Open House and the Tenants Annual Report as standard • Continue to explore the digital offer through the continued use of text message, email and Whats App facility. 	Tenancy Sustainment Officers	
<p>13.Continue to strengthen the pre-tenancy work, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment in advance for new tenants (unless there are exceptional circumstances) • Ensuring that DDs are set up at the sign-up • Establishing any support needs and ensuring that support is in place from the start of the tenancy • Establishing welfare benefit entitlement and ensure that measures are in place for a successful claim, including gathering UC payment dates • A pre-tenancy training offer for prospective tenants. • Linked to the above, explore the potential for reintroducing viewings rather than emailing photographs to prospective tenants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the rent account and payment card is ready for the start of any new tenancy • Consideration to be given to rent payment in advance for new tenants • Continue with the new process in place at sign up - Key tenant information to be gathered and noted on Orchard to assist income officers with case management. To include Income/benefits, Health/disabilities that may affect the tenant being able to pay the rent, support in place including contact details, current debt/s, deductions from benefits, budgeting advice, referral to TAC, paying rent including method of payment, date, frequency of payments, claiming UC housing costs or HB housing costs – commenced Oct 2021 • Vulnerable tenants to be highlighted to the Income Team as priority and as early as possible – This continues as part of routine day-to-day working practices • Routine monthly meetings to discuss the above new process and any identified vulnerable persons. • Before signing a tenancy agreement, carry out a full risk assessment of new tenant/s to include credit checks, 	<p>Housing Options Housing Solutions</p> <p>Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p> <p>Homes Manager</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p> <p>David Turner</p> <p>Steph Norton</p>	Ongoing

	<p>affordability assessment, determination of benefit entitlement, help with claiming benefit, access to advice (including budgeting and money management), and help to address existing debt, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor new rent arrears – weekly monitoring of all rent account arrears is part or day to day • Initial contact via telephone will be made within the first two weeks, followed up with a face to face visit within 6 weeks • Ensure former tenant arrears are input into the new tenancy agreement • Regularly review New Tenancy Survey feedback – An annual report is produced by the Tenant Regulation & Involvement Team for collated and record all survey responses. • Internal Audit Report Housing Rents Oct 2022 – completed with minimal recommendations one of which was to update the rent collection and arrears procedure 2015 which is currently being updated Feb 2023 		
<p>14.Review the accounts where customers are paying regularly by DD but in arrears, with a view to agreeing a revised plan that brings the payments in line with the tenancy agreement, thus reducing arrears</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should daily DD's be introduced, then a review all DD payers' accounts will be undertaken where customers are paying in arrears to attempt to make contact/arrangements to move payments in line with the tenancy agreement. 	<p>Julie Clempson Steph Norton David Turner All Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p>	<p>Subject to a change in DD</p>
<p>15.Identify households who are paying council tax by DD but not the rent, with the aim of migrating them to DD for the rent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all households paying council tax by DD and compare with above review of DD payers for rent and identify non DD rent accounts • Through a targeted approach write to non-DD rent payers to highlight the benefits as per council tax payments 	<p>Council Tax Julie Clempson Leanne Lea</p>	<p>March 2023 – March 2024</p>

<p>16. Review all accounts with high-level arrears, that are in receipt of UC but where an APA is not in place. This is to ensure that no opportunities have been missed to protect the revenue stream to the Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit and are 8 weeks or more in arrears an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA) application will be made to the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). • Bimonthly arrears monitoring of high level arrears is undertaken as part of routine working practices • Income performance management framework routinely monitors the percentage of tenancies on Direct Debit, breakdown of tenancy type, arrears summary and details, Universal Credit PI's inclusive of APA's and breakdown by patch area. This information is automated by way of Business Objects Reports and is circulated to the team and/or Management to action as appropriate • A new Business Objects report is provided monthly to include total no of cases with a clear rent account, credit balance, arrears cases up to £500, between £500 and £2000 and number of arrears cases over £20000. The same arrears information is also provided by a breakdown of months. This report is provided monthly to Scrutiny or on request and is also shared with the Income Team and Neighbourhood Management. 	<p>Julie Clempson Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>17.Ensure that any arrears or payment issues are addressed when customers call regarding repairs and other housing issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor new tenancies carefully. Missed payments to be chased promptly, using personal contact as appropriate and exhausting all options of engagement i.e. telephone, text, email, letter, face-to-face. This is part of the arrears recovery procedure • Ensure that rent payment issues are addressed during the new tenancy visits/contact This is part of the arrears recovery procedure • Promote culture of paying your rent across all services and to all customers 	<p>Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and support details included as standard on all quarterly rent statements, on TBC website and in Open House tenants newsletter Update the Paying your Rent leaflet as appropriate and promote the budgeting and planning web link across all digital and communication platforms Information/support contact details continue to be included as standard on all quarterly rent statements, TBC website and in the Open House tenants newsletter and the Paying your Rent leaflet is also routinely updated to include new information as appropriate 		
<p>18. Consider introducing pre-court and pre-eviction panels as further opportunities to engage with tenants to prevent escalation to court action and evictions. Ipswich Borough Council has been operating such panels successfully for a number of years and we shall be happy to furnish TBC with contact details</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Ipswich Borough Council to explore the opportunity of introducing pre-court and pre-eviction panels to include purpose, objectives, outcomes, success etc. 	<p>Tina Mustafa</p> <p>Lee Birch</p> <p>Leanne Lea</p> <p>Julie Clempson</p>	<p>March 2023 – March 2024</p>
<p>19. Complete the re-assignment of FTA management to the revenues team to ensure a sustained performance focus on FTA recovery. We have provided some resources that may help, including training materials and our FTA self-assessment toolkit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A specialist officer to manage FTA - in the process of being recruited to – February 2022 Visit Self-Assessment toolkit A FTA Officer was successfully recruited and commenced in post January 2023 	<p>Mike Buckland</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>20. Alongside the above recommendation, ensure that there is also a focus on FTA prevention, including consistent pre-termination visits and/or calls for tenants who are ending their tenancy. These are an opportunity to address any arrears or repair issues, reducing the risk of former tenant debt accruing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement measures to prevent FTA. When a termination notice is received, use pre-termination visits to address arrears issues • Ensure a visit is made to all tenants who give notice ensuring they know their rent account must be clear and gaining a forwarding address • Former tenant’s arrears letters to be sent as soon as a tenancy ends – letter/email • Continue to promote payment culture of ‘Rent First’ • As part of TBC’s ‘Rent First’ culture, Open House, Tenants Annual Report, the website, rent statements and Income publications are routinely used to promote paying your rent first, rent payment options, TAC referrals for debt and budget management, income support and assistance etc 	<p>Tenancy Sustainment Officers</p> <p>Tenancy Sustainment Assistants</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
--	--	---	----------------

Thursday, 27 April 2023

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Homelessness Prevention and Social Housing

ECO4 Statement of Intent

Exempt Information

N/A

Purpose

To seek agreement to declare a statement of intent that enables the Council to participate in the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme known as ECO4 and ECO4 Flex

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Agreement is given to the signing and publication of a Statement of Intent that sets out the eligibility criteria for Tamworth residents to access ECO4 Flex
2. Authority is delegated to the Assistant Director Partnerships to be the dedicated responsible person to enter into any agreements that enable the maximisation of ECO4Flex benefits

Executive Summary

Rising energy costs are impacting significantly on all household budgets and the Council is keen to support its residents to access energy efficiency schemes that will not only reduce their bills, but also help them to reduce their carbon footprint.

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is a government energy efficiency scheme that is designed to tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions and contributes directly to the Housing Strategy Priority to ensure housing plays a key role in delivering Tamworth's response to climate change and was discussed at the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 22 February 2023.

The ECO scheme is administered by Ofgem and places a Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) on medium and large energy suppliers to promote measures that supports low income, fuel poor and vulnerable households to heat their homes.

The target for measures to be undertaken by each energy company is based on their share of the domestic gas and electricity market. ECO4 is the latest iteration of the scheme which is in place between April 2022 and March 2026.

The ECO4 Flex scheme is targeted at households on low income, properties with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of D-G and off-gas properties.

Following the implementation of measures, the EPC band must have increased to a C rating or above (if they were previously assessed as D or E) and D or above if they were previously in bands F or G.

ECO4 Flexibility (Flex) enables the Council to refer owner occupiers or private rented tenants that are unlikely to be in receipt of benefits that it considers are living in fuel poverty or on a low income and vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

There are four routes, as illustrated in Table 1, to identify low income and vulnerable households and each route must be used independently of each other

The four ECO4 Flex routes are:

Route 1	Household income and current EPC rating - EPC rating D, E, F and G with an income cap of £31,000 across the UK regardless of region, property size or number of occupants. (Private rented housing EPC rating is E-G.)
Route 2	Households living in band E,F and G and that meet a combination of two of the following proxies: Proxy 1 – Homes in England in Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) 1-3 on the English Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 * Proxy 2 - Householders receiving a Council Tax rebate (based on low income only, excludes single person rebates) Proxy 3 - Householders vulnerable to living in a cold home as identified in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence Guidance (NICE) * Proxy 4 - A householder receiving free school meals for low income, Proxy 5 – A householder supported by a LA scheme, that has been named and described by the LA in their Statement of Intent as supporting low income and vulnerable households for the purpose of the NICE guidance Proxy 6 – A householder referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier or Citizens Advice because they have been identified by the referrer as struggling to pay their gas and electricity bills Proxy 7 – Households identified through their supplier debt data. This enables obligated suppliers to use their own debt data to identify both non pre-payment and pre-payment meter households * Proxy 1 and 3 cannot be used together
Route 3	NHS/Health referrals – Those who could be severely impacted by the effects of living in a cold home that have respiratory, cardiovascular, limited mobility or immune suppressed conditions.
Route 4	Bespoke Targeting – This enables suppliers and LAs to target households where at least one household member is living in fuel poverty and at least 75% are low income living in owner occupied homes and/ or 90% are low income households living in private rented homes.

For households to access ECO4 Flex, the LA must state publicly through a Statement of Intent (SOI), the criteria it intends to adopt to identify households that meet the Flex eligibility criteria. The SOI confirms the LAs intention to participate in the Flex scheme and enables energy suppliers to engage with eligible residents.

If the Council chooses to publish a SOI it will place an obligation on the Council to assess and approve applications from eligible households. If the Council is satisfied that an application meets the criteria it must provide a declaration to Ofgem confirming that the household qualifies for the proposed energy efficiency measures.

Options Considered

Not to publish a SOI – this leaves vulnerable Tamworth residents able to access funding available under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) increasing risk of fuel poverty.

Resource Implications

Although here is no direct financial cost to the Council there will be a requirement for the Council to assess ECO4 Flex applicants against the stated criteria. This will involve verifying documentation and using datasets to determine eligibility and submitting declarations to Ofgem for eligible applicants.

As the scheme is yet to launch the demand and resulting resource commitment is unknown. Therefore, although it is expected that the work will be deliverable within current staffing resources this will be monitored closely and mitigations considered should the delivery of the scheme impact on other priorities. The implementation will be led by the Private Sector Housing team.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

ECO4 Flex will provide additional grant funding to help low-income households living in homes with poor energy efficiency to access energy efficiency improvement measures and help reduce CO2 emissions.

Equalities Implications

All implications considered in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy - Making Equality Real in Tamworth (MERIT)

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

Energy efficiency measures will be available to all qualifying households as set out in the Statement of Intent at the Appendix 1. Qualifying criteria mainly centres around lower household incomes, health vulnerabilities, and risk of fuel poverty. The scheme is designed to reduce inequalities in terms of living standards, health and wellbeing.

Eco4Flex initiative is directly offered to vulnerable household to improve EPC rating and assist residents to offset CO2 emissions.

The Statement of Intent contributes directly the Council's Climate Change priorities.

Background Information

The SOI updates the previous Statement of Intent issued for ECO3 Flex.

Report Author

Joanne Sands – Assistant Director Partnerships

List of Background Papers

Covered in report

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Statement of Intent

This page is intentionally left blank

Statement of Intent for ECO4

Tamworth Borough Council

ECO4 Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Local Authority name: Tamworth Borough Council

Publication Date: 27/04/2023

Version number: V4.1

Publication on web site: www.tamworth.gov.uk

This statement sets out **Tamworth Borough** Council's flexible eligibility criteria for the Energy Company Obligation (ECO4) scheme from April 2022 – March 2026.

The ECO4 scheme will focus on supporting low income and vulnerable households. The scheme will improve the least energy efficient homes helping to meet the Government's fuel poverty and net zero commitments.

The flexible approach for Local Authorities (LAs) to identifying fuel poor and vulnerable households who may benefit from heating and energy saving measures is referred to as "ECO4 Flex".

The Council welcomes the introduction of the ECO4 Flex eligibility routes as it helps the Council achieve its plans to improve the homes of those in fuel poverty or vulnerable to the cold.

The Council is publishing this Statement of Intent (SoI), on the **XX/03/2023** to confirm that each of the households declared will adhere to at least one of the four available routes outlined below:

Route 1: SAP bands D-G households with an income less than £31,000. This cap applies irrespective of the property size, composition, or region.

Route 2: SAP bands E-G households that meet a combination of two of the following proxies:

<p>Proxy 1) Homes in England in Lower-layer Super Output Area 1-3 (LSOA)¹, or homes in Welsh provision LSOA 1-3 on the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019², or the Index of Multiple Deprivation for 2020, published by the Scottish Government³ *</p>
<p>Proxy 2) Householders receiving a Council Tax rebate (rebates based on low income only, excludes single person rebates).</p>
<p>Proxy 3) Householders vulnerable to living in a cold home as identified in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance. Only one from the list can be used, excludes the proxy 'low income'. *</p>
<p>Proxy 4) A householder receiving free school meals due to low-income.</p>
<p>Proxy 5) A householder supported by a LA run scheme, that has been named and described by the LA as supporting low income and vulnerable households for the purposes of NICE Guideline.</p>
<p>Proxy 6) A household referred to the LA for support by their energy supplier or Citizen's Advice or Citizen's Advice Scotland, because they have been identified as struggling to pay their electricity and gas bills.</p>

* Note proxies 1 and 3 cannot be used together.

Route 3: SAP bands D-G households that have been identified by their doctor or GP as low-income and vulnerable, with an occupant whose health conditions may be impacted further by living in a cold home. These health conditions may be cardiovascular, respiratory, immunosuppressed, or limited mobility related.

This is because the Council has identified a positive correlation between households who suffer from long-term health conditions and living off a low-income, with living in poorly insulated homes.

Route 4: SAP band D-G households that are referred under Route 4: Bespoke Targeting. Suppliers and LAs can submit an application to BEIS where they have identified a low income and vulnerable household, who are not already eligible under the exiting routes.

¹ [The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

² [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation \(full Index update with ranks\): 2019 | GOV.WALES](https://gov.wales)

³ [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

Declaration and evidence check confirmation

All potentially eligible households should apply through **Tamworth Borough** Council or one of their approved ECO installers to ensure that they can either benefit from the scheme or be assessed for eligibility under any other relevant programme.

The officer below will be responsible for checking and verifying declarations and associated evidence submitted on behalf of the local authority:

Name: Melanie Bramich

Job Title: Private Sector Housing Officer

Telephone: 01827 709709

Email: privatesectorhousing@tamworth.gov.uk

CEO or dedicated responsible person mandatory signature

The **Tamworth Borough** Council will administer the scheme according to BEIS' ECO4 Order and will identify eligible households via Ofgem's application process. The dedicated responsible person of the Council will oversee the process of identifying eligible households under ECO4 Flex.

The eligibility information will be stored securely in line with the Council's data protection policy, Information Commissioner's Office Data Sharing Code, and BEIS guidance.

Signature: REDACTED- Please contact Tamworth Borough Council to obtain a copy

Name: Joanne Sands

Job Title: Assistant Director Partnerships

Date of signature: 27/04/2023

For any general enquires relating to this SoI, please contact enquires@tamworth.gov.uk.

Thursday, 27 April 2023

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Voluntary sector, Town Centre, Evening economy & Community Safety

Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026

Exempt Information

None

Purpose

To endorse the 2023-26 Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan and progress update on the 2020-23 work plans

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet support the content of the report in terms of progress made on the Community Safety Plan 2020-23 (2022 Update)
2. Cabinet support endorsement of the 2023-2026 partnership plan for publication and return to the Staffordshire Commissioners Office

Executive Summary

A full comprehensive Community Safety Strategic Assessment is commissioned by the Staffordshire Commissioners Office for Police, Fire and Rescue and Crime for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent every three years, with an annual interim update in the remaining two years. This process is also undertaken for each district / borough Authority and the most recent informs an updated plan for the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership 2023-26.

The Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee endorsed the refreshed draft Tamworth Community Safety Plan 2023-26 on 28th March 2023 for presentation and endorsement by Cabinet.

The Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee also endorsed the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Plan 2020-2023 (2022 refresh) in March 2022. The final year of the current plan.

An update report against actions over the last year is provided on the priority areas identified for 2020-2023 at **Appendix 1**

2023-2026 Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan

The full 2022 Tamworth Community Strategic Assessment has provided a review and analysis of current crime and community safety issues across the Borough to enable the production of the Tamworth Community Safety plan 2023-2026. It is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The updated three-year rolling plan (updated annually) outlines how partners are going to collectively tackle community safety issues in the Tamworth borough and outlines priorities moving forward. All the priorities require a robust multi-agency response, but because they are important for residents and communities, achieving them will have a positive impact on people's quality of life.

The draft 2023-2026 plan is attached as **Appendix 3**.

Tamworth Borough Council is the lead partner, but the plan is agreed by all partners and Partnership continues to work together to reduce crime and ASB to improve public perception, wellbeing and community safety in Tamworth.

2023-2026 Priorities

Using partnership data and the updated full Tamworth Strategic Partnership Assessment 2022, the following key partner priorities have been identified:

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

ASB is defined as:

- conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,
- conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or
- conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.

Domestic Abuse (Including stalking and harassment)

Domestic abuse is defined as:

Behaviour of a person ("A") towards another person ("B") is "domestic abuse" if:

A and B are each aged 16 or over and are "personally connected" to each other **AND** the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is "abusive" if it consists of any of the following—

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse ¹
- psychological, emotional or other abuse
- and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

¹ "Economic abuse" means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on a victims ability to (a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or (b) obtain goods or services

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion describes the ability of all communities to function and grow in harmony together rather than conflict. It can therefore be used as a measure of how well different minority and majority communities develop and relate to each other.

This priority will include seeking to prevent radicalisation, extremism and hate crime.

Drugs Crime and Related Harm

To seek to prevent harm from the supply and sale of illegal substances, including the criminal exploitation of young people (County Lines) and other vulnerable people at risk

Serious and Public Place Violence

(to include Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG))

Vehicle Crime

The theft of and theft from vehicles

Vulnerable Persons

To seek to prevent harm to persons at risk of criminal exploitation or becoming victims due to mental health, social isolation, financial exclusion, homelessness or other external concerns and influences

Working together, the Partnership have produced a work plan (attached as **Appendix 4**) which will be reviewed on a quarterly basis with several underlying principles to ensure that we embed our approach to delivery of the plan:

- Prevention wherever possible
- Early intervention to prevent issues escalating, reducing harm to individuals and ensuring that they receive help and support as early as possible
- Targeting prolific offenders
- Targeting resources to hotspot areas
- Supporting victims
- Increasing public confidence

The workplan underpins the day-to-day activity and case management across all priorities including (but not restricted to):

- Weekly vulnerability meetings to address a multi-agency approach to complex cases.
- Weekly ASB meeting to manage and assess emerging issues, hotspots, enforcement, and reactive interventions.

- Daily update briefings of emerging issues
- Management of high risk domestic abuse cases through the MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process on a weekly basis
- Oversight of related Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)
- Monitoring of and allocation of Locality Deal Fund (LDF)
- Officer attendance and contribution to Staffordshire Commissioners Office strategic and tactical meetings around community safety priority
- Attendance at the Staffordshire Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) panel
- Attendance and engagement with the Staffordshire PREVENT board, Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board, Violence Reduction Alliance, Safer and Stronger Committee to ensure collaborative pan-Staffordshire approach to priorities
- Regular team and partnership meetings and forums
- Voluntary Sector engagement and signposting
- Engagement events and communications

The Community Safety Plan will be overseen by the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership board.

The annual refresh of the 2023-26 plan will be overseen by Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Committee in 2024 and 2025.

Options Considered

The Council has a statutory obligation in partnership with identified statutory partners to produce a Community Safety plan.

Resource Implications

Funding sources for specific projects are primarily through the Locality Deal Fund.

In 2021, the Staffordshire Commissioners Office committed £61,394 per year for CSP projects in 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 (the term of the Staffordshire Commissioner).

A further £10,000 was committed in 2022/23 for ASB Early Intervention. The spend and proposed spending plan is attached as **Appendix 5**. The spend is overseen by the Community Safety Partnership Group.

The CSP Plan will be delivered within existing Partnerships, Neighbourhoods and Environmental Health teams together with the statutory partners.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

All legal risks covered by legislation and agreed process.

Equalities Implications

All activities give due consideration to the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy – Making Equality Real in Tamworth (MERIT)

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

The 2023-2026 CSP plan will be reviewed on annual basis by the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee on annual interim refresh of the Community Safety Strategic assessment in 2024 and 2025.

The work plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis or as necessary on a reactive basis.

Background Information

All information contained within the report.

Report Author

Joanne Sands – Assistant Director Partnerships

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Report against 2020-23 Priorities (2022 refresh)
- Appendix 2 – Tamworth Community Strategic Assessment 2022
- Appendix 3 – Draft Community Safety Plan 2023-2026
- Appendix 4 – Draft workplan April – June 2023
- Appendix 5 – Locality Deal Fund Plan

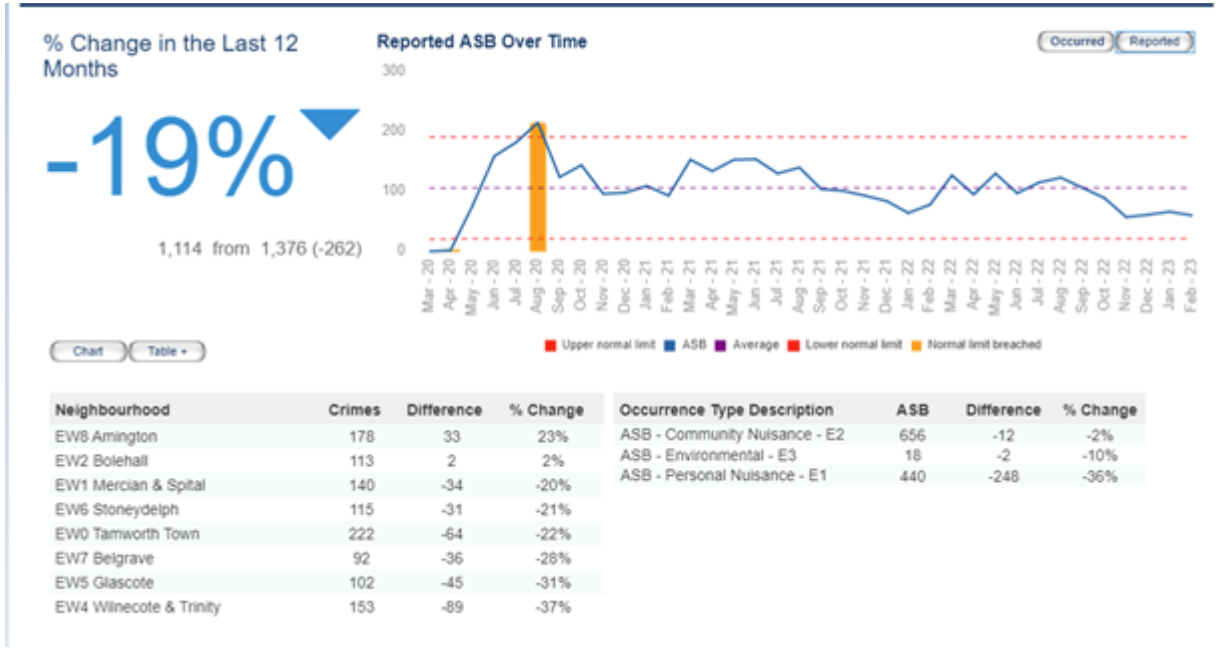
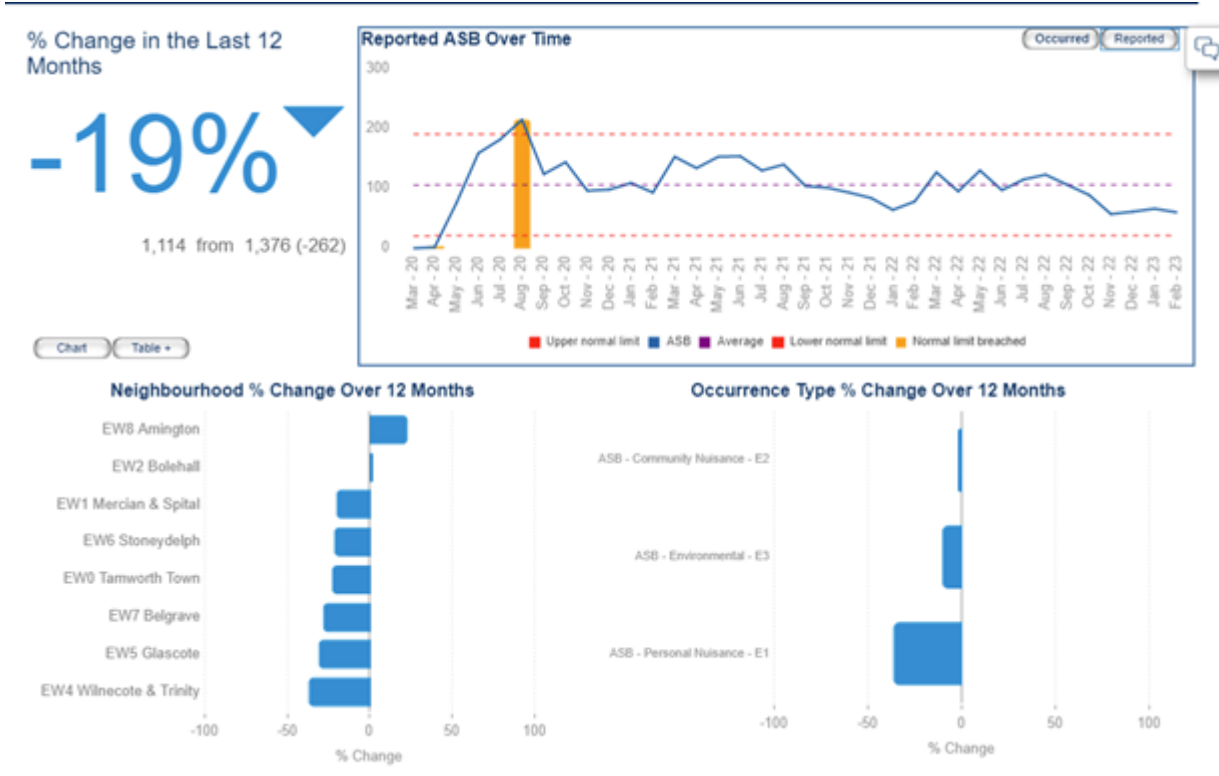
This page is intentionally left blank

Tamworth Community Safety Partnership

Community Safety Plan Progress Report (2022 Refresh)

Priority Theme 1: Anti-Social Behaviour

Background



Progress to Date

The powers within the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 are shared by Council and Police. Enforcement action is taken by a joint approach and recorded via the weekly ASB meeting. Community Protection Warnings and Notices are issued by PCSOs, Community Wardens, Neighbourhoods staff and Partnership Support and Enforcement officer.

Partnership ASB Interventions Year 2022

72 First stage Letters Issued
15 Community Protection Notice
39 Community Protection Warnings
6 Cannabis Letters
11 Good Neighbour Agreement
15 Multi-Agency Meetings (with parents)

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue recorded 112 Secondary Fires (small outdoor fires, not involving people or property) of which 91 were attended during the month of August due to the Hot weather and ASB.

Performance Issues

Access to relevant Services – diversionary services have been identified and individuals identified in ASB are being directed and signed up to activities such as boxing.

Recording standards around Stalking harassment and neighbour disputes has altered for Police reporting. This means that repeat calls from neighbours will no longer be recorded as ASB and will there for see a decline in these figures year on year.

Next Steps

Operation Cadence is a directed communications and engagement operation to promote the change in operating model to a local Policing Model throughout Staffordshire, this continues around community events across the Local Policing Team

Partners are working closely together to review previous incidents of Travelling encampments within the Tamworth Area and link this to Staffordshire as a whole. There will be an enhanced and focused plan and engagement strategy to inform all parties including local communities and the members of any encampment.

Staffordshire Fire and Rescue, in partnership with Staffordshire Police, have conducted School visits to talk about the dangers of Fires. This will continue prior to School holidays 2023 and using the new feature of Community News Flashes.

Recommendations

Review of Problem-solving recording and monitoring across the Local Policing Team, Tamworth Borough Council and wider Community Safety Partnership to show de-escalation of incidents and ensure best practice, this will include specific leads around problem solving and enhanced training.

Consideration of how to better overlay Tamworth Borough Council data across Local Policing data and other Community Safety Partnership members such as Harmony

Priority Theme 2:	Car Key Burglary & Vehicle Theft
--------------------------	---

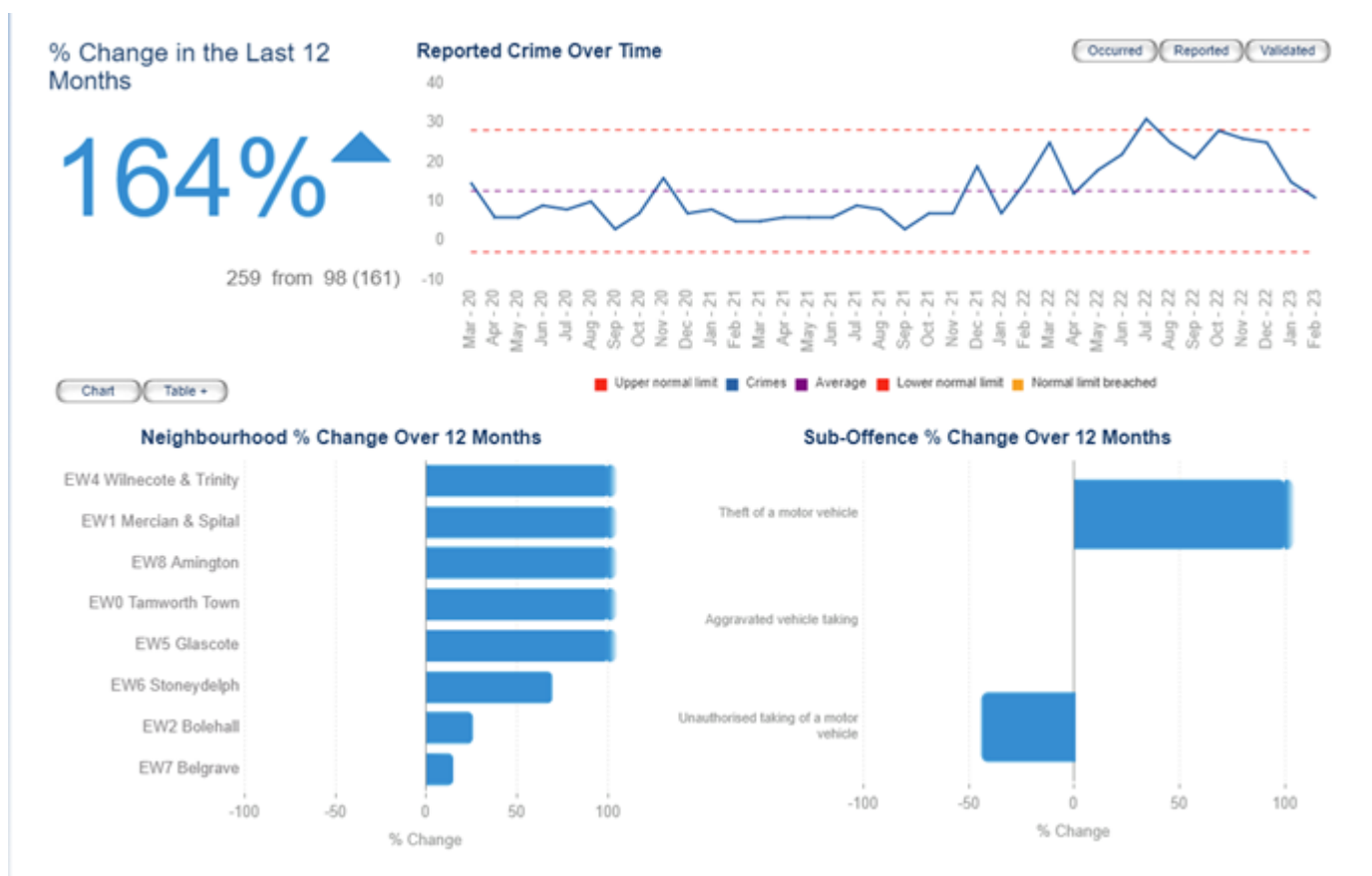
Background

Vehicle Crime (including Car Key Burglary and Keyless Thefts) has had some spikes that show a reoccurring theme in the Tamworth area. This theme is similar across the south of the county and neighbouring forces.

The majority of these thefts are keyless, otherwise known as relay theft, where criminals use two small boxes of electronics, typically working in pairs with one holding a relay amplifier by the property, and the other a relay transmitter next to the car; receiver picks up and replicates the amplified signal from the key, the car will be fooled into thinking the legitimate owner is there, allowing the vehicle to be unlocked and driven away. In Tamworth the cars that have been targeted seem to be mainly Fords and Range Rovers

Staffordshire Police have an overarching intelligence and evidence gathering process, under Operation Bormus, to target individuals believed responsible and this has seen some excellent arrests and disruption.

Progress to Date



Crime Dashboard

% Change in the Last 12 Months

164% ▲

259 from 98 (161)

Reported Crime Over Time

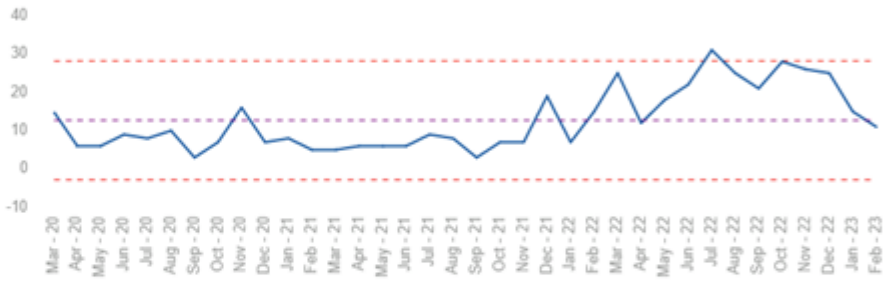


Chart Table

Neighbourhood	Crimes	Difference	% Change	Sub-Offence	Crimes	Difference	% Change
EW4 Wilnecote & Trinity	58	42	263%	Theft of a motor vehicle	246	168	215%
EW1 Mercian & Spital	56	39	229%	Aggravated vehicle taking	4	0	0%
EW8 Amington	32	22	220%	Unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle	9	-7	-44%
EW0 Tamworth Town	53	34	179%				
EW5 Glascote	21	12	133%				
EW6 Stoneydelph	22	9	69%				
EW2 Bolehall	10	2	25%				
EW7 Belgrave	8	1	14%				

Local Police have been working closely with the Staffordshire Police Priorities Team, the Roads Policing Team and CMPG (Central Motorway Police Group) to tackle these issues with Policing Operations in and around the area. These have involved conducting stopping of people/vehicles, as well as information gathering.

The operations have achieved positive results with vehicles seized and arrests made. Following intelligence gathering, cross force operations have also been conducted with some success, including the arrest of one of Tamworth’s top vehicle crime offenders. After he deliberately rammed into a police car, he was remanded in police custody and charged with 10 offences.

Funding Implications

The Partnership has funded, and officers are issuing faraday bags to victims and potential victims of crime to hopefully prevent further keyless thefts from taking place. Local engagement events/leaflet drops are being carried out offering residents security/ crime prevention advice.

Media campaigns have also been carried out across the whole of the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership.

Next Steps

To continue joint operations with Warwickshire and West Midlands Police. Continuing High visibility patrols for public reassurance and to swiftly act on opportunities to detain and prosecute offenders.

Priority Theme 3: Community Cohesion and Tackling Extremism

Background

Community Cohesion describes the ability of all communities to function and grow in harmony together rather than in conflict. It can therefore be used as a measure of how well different minority and majority communities develop and relate to each other.

The Local Government Association defines a cohesive community as one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities.

Overall measure proposed by the Community Cohesion Unit and Auditor Commission is the: % of people surveyed feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together.

Steps to build community cohesion:

Develop proactive communication strategies, including challenging negative stereotyping within and between communities. Support the organisation of shared events, outings, and welcome events, as part of wider strategies to promote community cohesion and community engagement.

Partnership Actions

Several significant community cohesion issues arose during the summer of 2022 with concerns about the impact of gypsy and traveller groups in Tamworth and the set-up of hotel for asylum seeker accommodation.

The Partnership has taken a proactive approach to manage community expectations, outline equality duties and form wider strategies moving forward within the 2023-26 CSP plan.

Progress to Date

- A minimum of 3 community engagement events have taken place at the Assembly Rooms promoting voluntary sector organisations with positive feedback
- Tamworth has retained Dementia Friendly Community Status with a number of activities arranged during Dementia Action Week
- Tamworth Borough Council has completed the PREVENT Self-Assessment Tool and all staff have training as part of the safeguarding awareness to
- Representation at the Staffordshire Prevent Board
- All front-line staff/police colleagues have information about Uniting Staffordshire Against Hate Crime (USAH) and have referred 20 residents to the service.
- USAH have supported 10 residents of Tamworth and attended Tamworth Pride
- A Community Cohesion Officer will be in post from 13th March 2023 working in the Partnership
- Fortnightly Partnership meetings with partners to discuss any community issues or wellbeing concerns around asylum seekers
- Positive work with Community Together CIC to provide diversionary activity and posting volunteering
- Proactive and positive communication on Tamworth Borough Council website allowing communities to ask questions around asylum seekers
- Creation of a Gypsy and Traveller working group to produce a partnership approach in line with the Staffordshire Commissioners Office Illegal Encampment Group
- Creation of a Community Safety Forum to include community groups giving opportunities to discuss concerns or training requirements arising from the CSP plan.
- Pilot area for a community impact assessment toolkit to understand wider asylum dispersal issues

- Proactive management of the Homes for Ukraine Scheme with Staffs County Council and anchor VCSE organisations in Tamworth
- Promotion of community and Councilor VCSE grants
- Tamworth Borough Council have given a grant to ensure sustainability of the Tamworth Pride Event
- Positive communication plans coordinated with partners

[The Safest Places for Over 60s | SunLife](#) has named Tamworth as ranked 4th in the top 20 safest towns in England and Wales for people over 60 with Staffordshire being the Safest County in England and Wales.

Funding Implications

Contribution to USAH Is top sliced from the Locality Deal Fund to ensure that Tamworth Communities can access the service.

Community events have been included in the Locality Deal Funding

Next Steps

- Further Community Safety Partnership events planned at the Assembly Rooms to ensure the community continues to be updated and informed on community groups and support in Tamworth.
- Tamworth Borough Council is an active member of the Staffordshire Strategic Migration Partnership working to understand the wider community cohesion issues in respect of Asylum Seeker Dispersed accommodation.

Priority Theme 4: County Lines (Criminal Exploitation of Young People)

Background:

Tamworth, due to numerous factors, continues to be especially vulnerable to ‘County Line’ drug dealers, predominantly from the West Midlands urban conurbations.

These lines often prey on the disadvantaged and take advantage of some of the most vulnerable residents in the town.

The targeting of these comes under the force umbrella of Operation Engaged, bringing together intelligence, local policing and specialist resources.

Tamworth Local Policing Team (TLPT), Tamworth Borough Council (TBC), and Staffordshire Social Services have a longstanding relationship which sees the facets of these coming together with a joint aim of disrupting, detecting, and protecting the public of Tamworth.

Progress to Date:

Staffordshire Community Safety Partnership have continued to target those involved and have built up a strong working relationship which has seen considerable success and safeguarding take place and a marked decrease in the ability and willingness of ‘out of town’ drug dealers to enter the Town (confirmed by recent intelligence reporting).

2022 has been a successful year in terms of arrests and convictions arrests specifically around class ‘A’ drug dealing, which is achieved with the support of force wide resources including a disruption team and intelligence officers.

Through multi-agency work of the Community Safety Partnership, we have successfully protected vulnerable people from organised crime groups taking advantage of them and using their properties (known as Cuckooing) through using eviction powers. Protecting children where parents have been involved in drug criminality.

Recent Court cases have seen considerable sentences handed out as those arrested in the previous quarter having now reached both trial and sentencing dates.

Performance Issues:

Successful results are being achieved with arrests, convictions and safeguarding, despite competing resource demands but ideally this would be a daily focus.

In this reporting period the lower level of County Lines activity has continued, with only a handful of non-Tamworth lines identified into the Borough^[1].

There have been eight arrests specifically around class 'A' drug dealing, which have been achieved with the support of the Disrupt Team South and Force Intelligence.

Within this reporting period the Secondary School drug prevention scheme continues, seeing officers and third sector organisations (Betterway), attending schools delivering inputs and support.

Multi agency work continues with all parties, in particular TBC, Tamworth Social Services and Stars ('Human Kind' Drink & Drug Service), around supporting those who have been previously targeted or involved in the use of Class A drugs.

Whilst this period has seen considerable successes against County Lines and those involved in Class A drug dealing, this continues to be against a backdrop of competing demands for specialist resources.

Funding Implications:

Whilst the targeting of those committing criminality will continue and funding remains the remit of Staffordshire Police, the specific and targeted disruption of younger children and the involvement of third sector organisations should be considered in more depth.

Next Steps

To continue creating avenues of communication to gain a better understanding and new ideas for pathways available to disrupt youths and the specific roles and opportunities (tactics) available within the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership.

Recommendations:

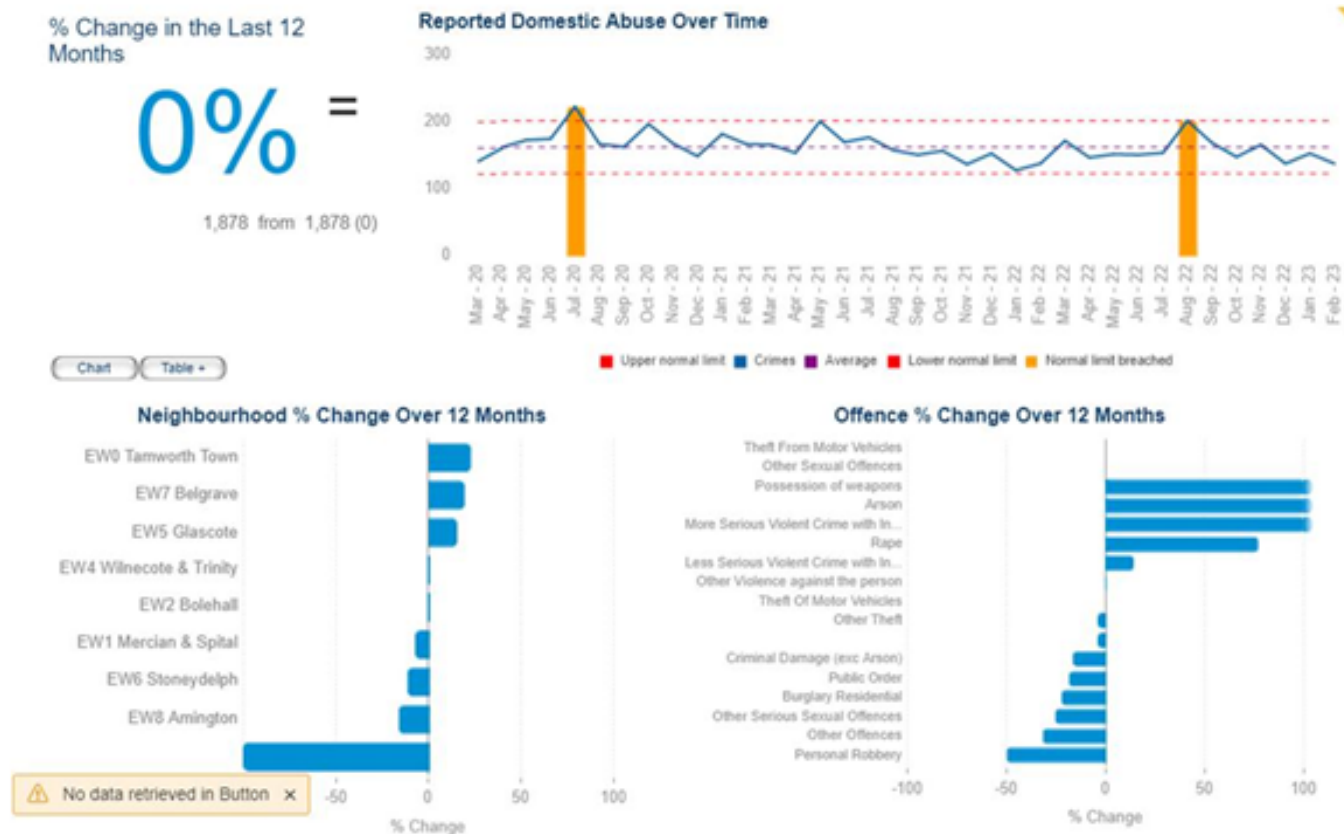
Opening the avenues for education around this area to other groups within the Community Safety Partnership and to find new agencies and groups to enhance this education.

Priority Theme 5:	Domestic Abuse Stalking & Harassment
--------------------------	---

Background

In this Domestic abuse priority theme, we have several members from the Community Safety Partnership engaged to support, support for refuge is from the Pathway project and base support is from New Era.

Progress to Date



MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

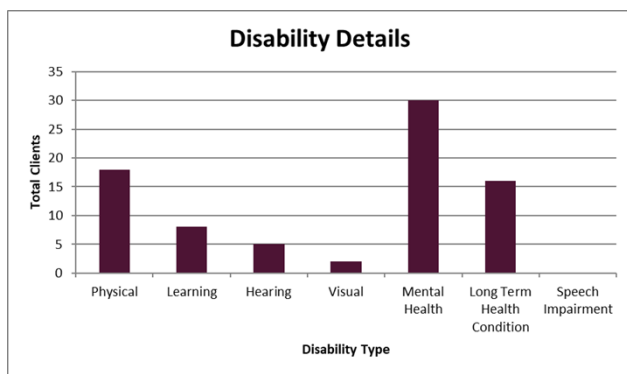
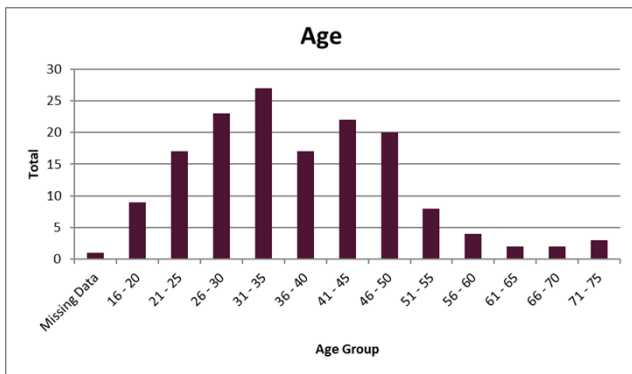
In the last year there have been 110 cases (17 were repeats) heard at the MARAC meetings that are now held on Teams ensure a good presence of the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership members.

There were 6 Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPNs) issued across the year followed by an application to the magistrates' court for a Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO).

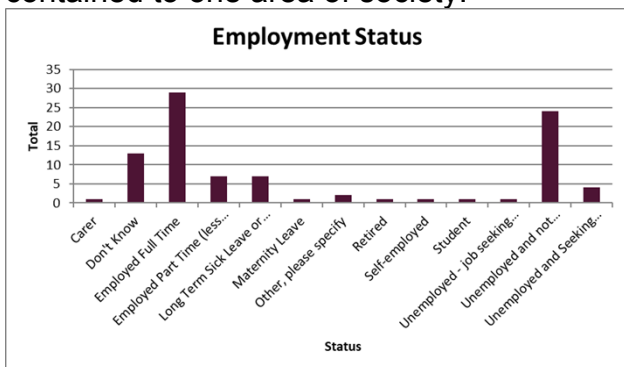
*A DVPN is an emergency non-molestation and eviction notice which can be issued by the police, when attending to a domestic abuse incident, to a perpetrator. Because the DVPN is a police-issued notice, it is effective from the time of issue, thereby giving the victim the immediate support, they require in such a situation. Within 48 hours of the DVPN being served on the perpetrator, an application by police to a magistrates' court for a DVPO must be heard. A DVPO can prevent the perpetrator from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days. This allows the victim a degree of breathing space to consider their options with the help of a support agency. Both the DVPN and DVPO contain a condition prohibiting the perpetrator from molesting the victim.

Refuge Accommodation

There has been a total of 155 adults who have used the refuge in Tamworth over the last year, most being in the age group of 21 – 50.



95% of these were women, 92% identified as British, 34% reported having a disability. The spectrum of backgrounds these adults come from is vast and identifies the issue is not contained to one area of society.



Over 66% reported vulnerabilities with 20% having more than one and 5% had a dual diagnosis ie mental health plus alcohol or drug abuse.

Of the service users through refuge 81 had children with them meaning 159 children passed through refuge too.

The average length of abuse was 109 months of those currently experiencing abuse:

- 90% experienced emotional abuse
- 34% financial
- 63% jealous/controlling behaviour
- 51% physical
- 21% sexual
- 33% surveillance/harassment/stalking

Of historical disclosures, 45% were sexual

49% felt depressed or had suicidal thoughts, 12% had received threats to kill, 11% had self-harmed to cope.

38% disclosed that this wasn't their first adult domestic abuse relationship and 17% disclosed that they had witnessed abuse as a child.

Sexual Abuse Support Statistics have been supplied by SARAC have shown a significant rise in the number of people seeking support from professionals regarding sexual abuse in the Tamworth area.

	Adults	YP's	Total
Jan-March 2020	10	6	16
April 2020 - March 2021	29	12	41
April 2021-March 2022	42	27	69

April 2022-December 2022 NOTE 8 MONTHS	31	15	46
Total Tamworth Referrals	112	60	172

New Era had 120 referrals from the Tamworth area between April- June 2022. All were offered support, 87 agreed the service.

Performance Issues

Both the baseline Domestic abuse support service and refuge are due for recommissioning this year, the tender is looking to provide a longer-term contract to provide some security to the providers and a dispel the postcode lottery attached to these services.

Sarac are finding locations in Tamworth difficult to find they pay for premises currently to support some young people one day a week. There is outreach work in schools, but a location elsewhere is essential especially during school holidays. Adult Clients attend the main base in Burton-Upon-Trent.

Recommendations

A need to secure suitable premises for both SARAC and New Era for workers to meet clients in the Tamworth area securely.

Tamworth Community Safety Partnership is made up of several organisations who campaign and educate the community independently of each other. Therefore, a review of domestic abuse messages and educational campaigning is underway to join resources to create more impactful messages for the community.

Priority Theme 6: Serious Violence / Knife Crime

Background

Within Tamworth there has been an increase in reports of knife related violence both in and out of school premises. The perception of reports around children / youths carrying knives has increased following engagement sessions with the community and reported incidents.

A structured plan has been put in place to attend all the high schools within the Tamworth area, to conduct interventions around county lines, knife crime and drugs.

This will be a 4-step approach consisting of the following actions:

1. Notifying parents – letter sent out to all parents (usually via the school) informing of the operation. This letter will provide dates of police attendance for educational sessions and provides links to key websites around session topics.
2. Engagement – presentations are conducted by Police around county lines, exploitation, knife crime and drugs. There is also an input by Peter Griffith CEO/Founder of Better Way Recovery which provides students with a hard-hitting, lived experience around these topics.
3. Further localised engagement within the school whereby officers will be present for two days to work with pupils that are believed, by the school, to be at risk.
4. Enforcement – 2 days of action within and around the school. This will include weapon sweeps, support from a drugs dog and officer activity at key locations / times.

Progress to Date

Serious violence

% Change in the Last 12 Months

35%

84 from 62 (22)

Reported Crime Over Time

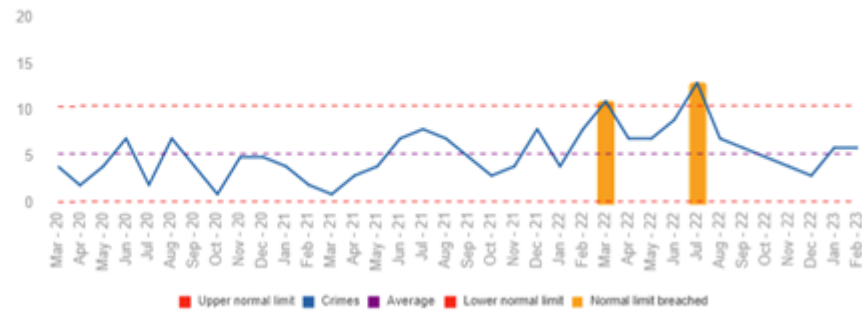


Chart Table

Neighbourhood	Crimes	Difference	% Change	Sub-Offence	Crimes	Difference	% Change
EW8 Amington	18	15	500%	Other Violence against the person offences	22	22	
EW0 Tamworth Town	23	8	53%	Endangering Life	2	1	100%
EW2 Bolehall	6	2	50%	Sec 20 Malicious wounding	29	14	93%
EW7 Belgrave	9	3	50%	Sec 18 GBH	31	-12	-28%
EW1 Mercian & Spital	9	1	13%	Attempt Murder		-2	-100%
EW4 Wilnecote & Trinity	10	-1	-9%				
EW5 Glascoate	5	-1	-17%				
EW6 Stoneydelph	6	-2	-25%				
		-1	-100%				

Knife related crime

% Change in the Last 12 Months

-31%

41 from 59 (-18)

Reported Crime Over Time



Chart Table

Neighbourhood	Crimes	Difference	% Change	Offence	Crimes	Difference	% Change
EW4 Wilnecote & Trinity	9	1	13%	Business Robbery	3	3	
EW0 Tamworth Town	12	1	9%	Other Violence against the person	3	0	0%
EW2 Bolehall	5	0	0%	Personal Robbery	13	-1	-7%
EW8 Amington	4	-2	-33%	More Serious Violent Crime with Injury	15	-8	-35%
EW1 Mercian & Spital	5	-3	-38%	Less Serious Violent Crime with Injury	7	-11	-61%
EW7 Belgrave	4	-3	-43%	Other Serious Sexual Offences		-1	-100%
EW5 Glascoate	1	-6	-86%				
EW6 Stoneydelph	1	-6	-86%				

Performance Issues

Resourcing and timing is an issue in relation to timings is an issue due to this operation having to be balanced with day-to-day policing and a full education criteria for schools.

Funding Implications

Applications are being made for funding to continue this project which includes a donation for the charity Better Way Recovery for Peter Griffith CEO/Founder of Better Way Recovery to provide students with a hard-hitting, lived experience to support the ongoing work within the schools and for a drugs dog / handler.

Next Steps

Continue to roll out the project across all Tamworth schools.
Knife bins have been purchased by the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership for allocation around the Tamworth area for public reassurance.

Recommendations

Education is key for this complex national issue. This element of work should be treated as a foundation for further work and not treated in isolation.

This programme should be repeated every 3 years to ensure that all students are provided with the inputs.

Priority Theme 7:	Vulnerable Persons and Contextual Safeguarding (including drugs, alcohol, and mental health)
--------------------------	---

Background

TVP Figures Jan- March 2023	57 cases referred to TVP in 2022
Youth ASB	3
Repeats	7
Community Triggers	1

Progress to Date

The daily briefings on Monday and Thursday mornings continue to take place with still a good response from agency involvement.

The Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership (TVP) continues to meet weekly with the role of chair being shared between Sergeant Lauren Buckle and the Community Partnerships Manager Karen Clancy.

We have seen an increase with professionals meeting being held due to the nature of concerns and needing to put more time into discussions and support to be offered.

Performance Issues

Further information required from referrers regarding what outcomes they want to achieve.
Information follow up sometimes needed.

Funding Implications

N/A

Next Steps

To continue the daily briefings on a Monday and Thursday as these provide to be useful for all agencies to seek information about vulnerabilities in the borough and offer the right support were needed. We also continue to welcome new professionals to this information sharing process such as other housing landlords and a mental health contact for housing support.

Recommendations

N/A

Additional Information:

In addition to TVP and Daily briefings the partnership team attends several meetings to support this priority some being:

- Mental Health Network Forum
- Tamworth Community Wellbeing Partnership
- Covid19 Partnership
- Ukraine Meetings
- Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking Meeting
- Domestic Abuse Safer Accommodation Meeting
- Anti-Social Behaviour Meeting
- Dementia Friendly Communities Meeting
- Corporate Social Responsibility meetings with the Councils Contracted Housing Repair providers (Waites and Engie)
- Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Panel Meetings
- Community Safety District Leads Meeting
- Housing Allocations Meetings
- Harassment and Threat (HAT) Meeting
- Safeguarding Children's Board Training Group Meeting

The Community Partnerships Officer has regular update Meetings with New Era, The Pathway Project, Harmony, and Victims Gateway.

The Partnerships Vulnerability Officer completes annual section 11 audits in line with working together and Annual Adult Safeguarding Audits.

Tamworth Borough Council have commissioned several organisations to offer support to vulnerable people:

the **Citizens Advice** to deliver the Tamworth Advice Centre Service for financial wellbeing, debt, and generalist advise.

Tamworth Samaritans provide Outreach services to reach some of our most vulnerable.

Better Way Recovery has been funded to offer support for drugs and alcohol addiction starting on 2 days per week from CTCIC Offices.

Fun Club who provides outreach work and group work for young people causing perceived Antisocial behaviour issues in the area

Tamworth Borough Council offers grants to support local voluntary and community groups to provide services. The following grants are available:

- Community Grants (Up to £1000)
- Councillor Grants (Each Councillor has £300 to spend in their ward, total £9000 allocation)
- Festive Grants (£3000 allocation for Festive Grants to support social isolation during the festive period)

The Community Partnerships Officer has developed a Campaigns Calendar to support and promote various campaigns throughout the year.

Community Safety Strategic Assessment Full Assessment Report

Tamworth

2022

Produced on behalf of



and



Working in partnership with



Title	Tamworth Community Safety Partnership: Community Safety Strategic Assessment Full Assessment Report (2022)
Description	This Community Safety Strategic Assessment provides evidence and intelligence to inform the strategic decision-making process - helping commissioners and partners to determine the priorities that require particular attention in their local area.
Date created	January 2023
Produced by	Strategy Team, Staffordshire County Council
Contact	Stuart Nicholls (Research Lead) Strategy Team, Staffordshire County Council Email: insight.team@staffordshire.gov.uk
Usage statement	If you wish to reproduce this document either in whole, or in part, please acknowledge the source and the author(s).
Copyright and disclaimer	Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Police, while believing the information in this publication to be correct, does not guarantee its accuracy nor does the County Council accept any liability for any direct or indirect loss or damage or other consequences, however arising from the use of such information supplied. Mapping (C) Crown Copyright and database rights 2022. Ordnance Survey 100019422.

Contents

Introduction and Context	5
Key findings and comparison to previous (2021) refresh	6
Staffordshire Commissioner’s Office Priorities	7
Summary of Local Community Safety Priorities	7
People and Communities at Greatest Risk	8
Overview of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	10
Community Safety Strategic Priorities	11
Anti-social Behaviour (ASB).....	11
Community Cohesion & Tackling Extremism	12
Domestic Abuse (DA)	14
Drugs & County Lines	16
Serious Violence (SV) & Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)	18
Vehicle Crime.....	20
Vulnerable Persons.....	21
Additional Challenges for Consideration	23
Repeat and Persistent Offending	23
Fraud.....	24
Fire and Rescue.....	25
Safer Roads	26
Modern Slavery.....	27
Quality of Life and Wider Determinants	28
Public Confidence & Feeling the Difference	29
Appendices	30
Appendix A: Overall recommendations.....	30
Appendix B: Specific recommendations for key priorities	31
Appendix C: Methodology.....	36
Appendix D: Data tables	37
Appendix E: Mosaic Groups - Source: Experian Mosaic 7 (2021).....	38

Introduction and Context

Under the Police and Justice Act 2006 (England & Wales) local authorities are duty-bound to ‘provide evidence-based data to support Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in their planning and duties’.

Evidence-based data is required to relate to crime and disorder taking place within the local area, which includes Recorded crime, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Alcohol, Drug and Substance misuse.

It is a statutory obligation for Community Safety Partnerships to produce or procure an annual localised Strategic Assessment (SA), providing a strategic evidence base that identifies future priorities for the partnership and evaluates year on year activity. The approach and format of these is not prescribed by legislation.

SAs should be used to underpin a local area Community Safety Plan which is made publicly available through the partnership’s and Commissioner’s Office websites by 1st April each year. In Staffordshire agreement has been reached that Community Safety Plans will be produced three yearly and refreshed annually in line with the SA.

This SA (2022) is being produced as a full assessment, with refresh reports to follow in 2023 and 2024. The previous full assessment was undertaken and published in 2019.

Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and the Cost of Living

Over the last two years the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has had an unprecedented global and local impact. While restrictions have been lifted for some time now, a vaccine has been deployed, and both transmission and severity of Covid have reduced, the country is in a stage of recovery and the impact of the pandemic is still being felt.

The pandemic and periods of lockdown also had a considerable impact on crime and disorder. With people instructed to stay at home and out of public spaces, levels of public space ASB (such as Rowdy & Inconsiderate behaviour) and Public Order offences fell, as did traditional crime such as Theft and Burglary. However, with more people spending time online and using online shopping and marketplaces, levels of Fraud (and particularly cyber-enabled Fraud) increased considerably. Additionally, there have been increases in reports of Domestic Abuse during the pandemic, with practitioners providing support stating that cases have become increasingly complex and high-risk.

Locally the pandemic has had a negative impact on mental health and well-being for many – with increases in GP diagnoses of depression and anxiety and increases in crimes where mental health was considered to be a factor.

With significant disruption to the global supply chain during the pandemic, and the impact of sanctions placed against Russia as a result of the war in Ukraine, many of the costs of living in the UK (particularly energy and gas, food, and vehicle fuel) have increased considerably over the past 12 months – with Consumer Price Index inflation peaking at 11% in October 2022¹ having increased sharply from June 2022 onwards. (ONS, 2022).

Similarly to the impact of the pandemic, while everyone has been effected by increases to the cost of living, the level of impact is unlikely to be felt equally across all communities, locally or nationally.

While there is speculation from the Bank of England that the UK is likely to enter a period of recession, at this time it is not possible to know how Government actions and intervention may affect the impact of cost of living challenges on individuals, families, and communities – therefore is it presently too difficult to make reliable predictions about how cost of living may impact Community Safety over the coming year.

Impact of the pandemic on Strategic Assessments

The accurate identification and assessment of Community Safety challenges and risks relies heavily on the analysis and interpretation of a considerable amount of data, which usually (as a minimum) covers the previous financial year.

In the 2020 refresh of CSSAs, the latest financial year (2019-20) included one week which was spent under full nationwide lockdown restrictions, affecting approximately 2% of all data for the year.

This was significantly different for the 2020-21 financial year; by comparison, around 75% of the financial year was spent with some degree of Covid-related measures in place. These measures had an easily observed impact on several types of crime and disorder, which saw drastic reductions in 2020-21.

In practice, this means that comparison of the current year (2021-22) to the previous year (2020-21) is not always reliable – due to the impact of Covid-related measures. As a result, where comparison is made within this report – it will attempt to look at the period pre-Covid (2019-20) as well as at the last financial year.

¹ONS – Consumer Price Inflation - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/bulletins/consumerpriceinflation/november2022>

Key findings and comparison to previous (2021) refresh

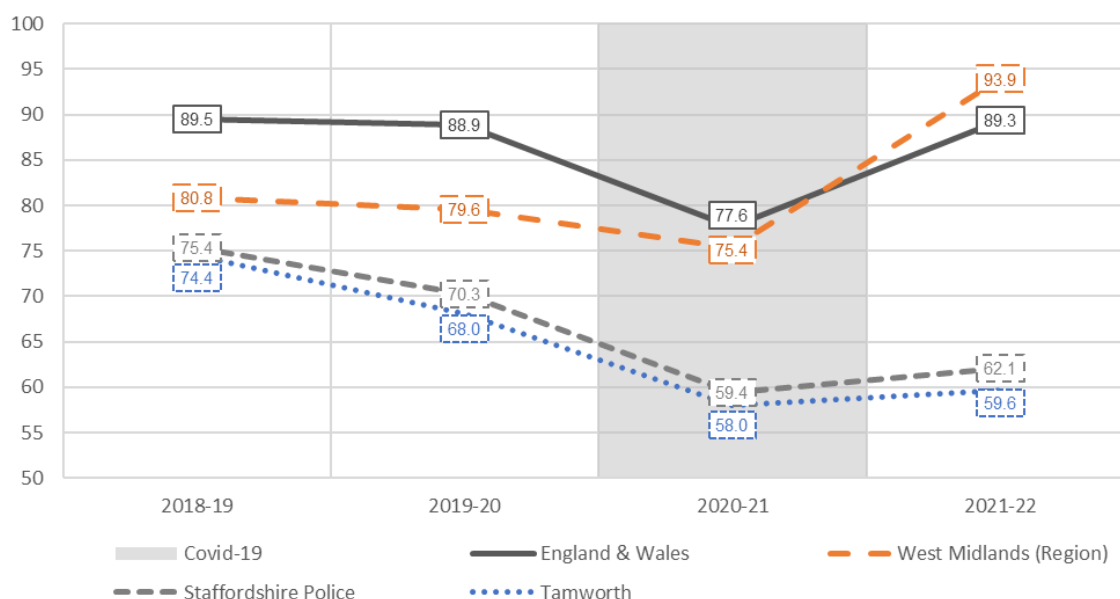
Significant overall changes and findings

Restrictions imposed as part of the government approach to controlling the Coronavirus pandemic resulted in significant reductions in recorded crime and disorder at the time of the first UK Lockdown in March 2020. Many reductions which were becoming initially evident in the previous (2020) refresh, continued during much of 2021-22.

While data for 2021-22 shows that as restrictions on society have been removed, recorded crime has increased compared to the period of the pandemic, the scale of increase has been quite different at different geographies. Nationally overall recorded crime had returned to pre-pandemic levels, while across the West Midlands region crime has increased considerably – and is now well above pre-pandemic rates.

In Tamworth and wider Staffordshire force area, slower-than-national increase in recorded crime, observed at the time of the previous (2021) assessment, continued throughout the remainder of the 2021-22 financial year; the result is that overall recorded crime for the area, while increasing slightly post-pandemic, sits well below pre-pandemic levels – with a considerable gap between rates of recorded crime in Tamworth and England & Wales.

Figure 1: Rates of Police Recorded Crime (excl. fraud) per 1,000 population (Home Office, 2022)



Similarly to the previous year, in 2021-22 all Safety Partnership areas in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent recorded overall levels of crime which were either statistically similar to, or lower than, the levels seen across England & Wales.

Although rates of recorded crime are significantly lower than national levels, rates of recorded Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) are high in Tamworth – with a rate of 35.0 per 1,000 residents, compared 21.2 at a national level and a rate of 22.7 per 1,000 population across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Year-to-date recorded crime

While the increases in crime in the 2021-22 financial year were slower than those seen at a national level, the following six months of local data (April 2022 to end of October 2022) shows that levels of reported crime have continued to steadily increase towards levels seen prior to the pandemic.

By the end of October 2022, monthly reported crime has risen in line with the upper limit of 'normal' monthly levels; showing a 16% increase on the previous 12 months in Tamworth.

It should be noted that this is the smallest increase amongst the Community Safety Partnership areas within the Staffordshire Police force area and is below the increase seen across the force (+22%) and the County (+25%).

Staffordshire Commissioner's Office Priorities

It is recommended Safety Partnerships consider their approach to community safety challenges in the context of the priorities identified in the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's 2021-24 Police and Crime Plan;

A Local and Responsive Service: Understand and deal with what matters to communities, respond promptly to incidents and work with partners to solve problems and prevent them from getting worse. This will mean that crime and ASB reduces, our roads are safer and confidence in Staffordshire Police increases.

Prevent Harm and Protect People: Prevent harm and protect people (particularly children and those that are vulnerable) by ensuring they are appropriately safeguarded and receive the help and support they need.

Support Victims and Witnesses: Ensure victims and witnesses are provided with exceptional specialist support services so they feel able to cope and recover from the impact of crime and ASB.

Reduce Offending and Re-offending: Ensure people are challenged and supported to make life choices that will prevent them from offending and perpetrators don't reoffend. Doing so will mean fewer victims of crime.

A More Effective Criminal Justice System: Ensure Staffordshire Police, the Crown Prosecution Service, Courts, the National Probation Service and HM Prison Service all work seamlessly so that effective justice is delivered quickly.

The Staffordshire Commissioner's Office recommends that the approach to tackling priorities should be; *Community Focussed*, consider *Prevention and Early Intervention*, use partnership to *Solve Problems Together*, provide *Value for Money* and be *Open and Transparent*.

Summary of Local Community Safety Priorities

A review of the priorities identified and confirmed in the three-yearly full CSA has taken place, in order to identify any changing or emerging key strategic priorities and risks for the local area. These have been cross referenced against known existing local priorities and findings for the locality. The identified priorities are as follows;

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)
- Domestic Abuse and Stalking & Harassment
- Community Cohesion & Tackling Extremism
- Drugs & County Lines
- Serious Violence & Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Vehicle Crime
- Vulnerable Persons

The following are not considered a main priority for Tamworth, but they are recommended for additional consideration due to their volume, impact on communities and level of public expectation;

- Repeat and Persistent Offending
- Fraud

In addition, there are some challenges which, while not necessarily overly present in the partnership area, require the work of the whole partnership to address. It is important for each partnership to consider how they can contribute to the force-wide approach and strategy. These challenges are highlighted as;

- Fire and Rescue
- Safer Roads
- Business Crime
- Modern Slavery

People and Communities at Greatest Risk

Vulnerability is cross-cutting; many of those considered vulnerable for a range of concerns (including general safeguarding, social isolation, economic stress, and health and mental health concerns) are also additionally vulnerable to criminal exploitation and victimisation through crime and ASB.

It is considered, based on existing UK research (IFS and ONS), that the wider impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will be an increase in the numbers of vulnerable persons in the UK, rather than a dramatic shift in reasons for vulnerability. However, anecdotally, it is considered that pressures as a result of the pandemic are already being observed by front-line services, and that the needs of those who are vulnerable are becoming increasingly complex.

Those considered to be particularly vulnerable to experiencing crime, safeguarding concerns or being criminally exploited tend to be consistent over time. There is no change to these groups from the 2019 Strategic Assessment, and in high-risk groups remain as;

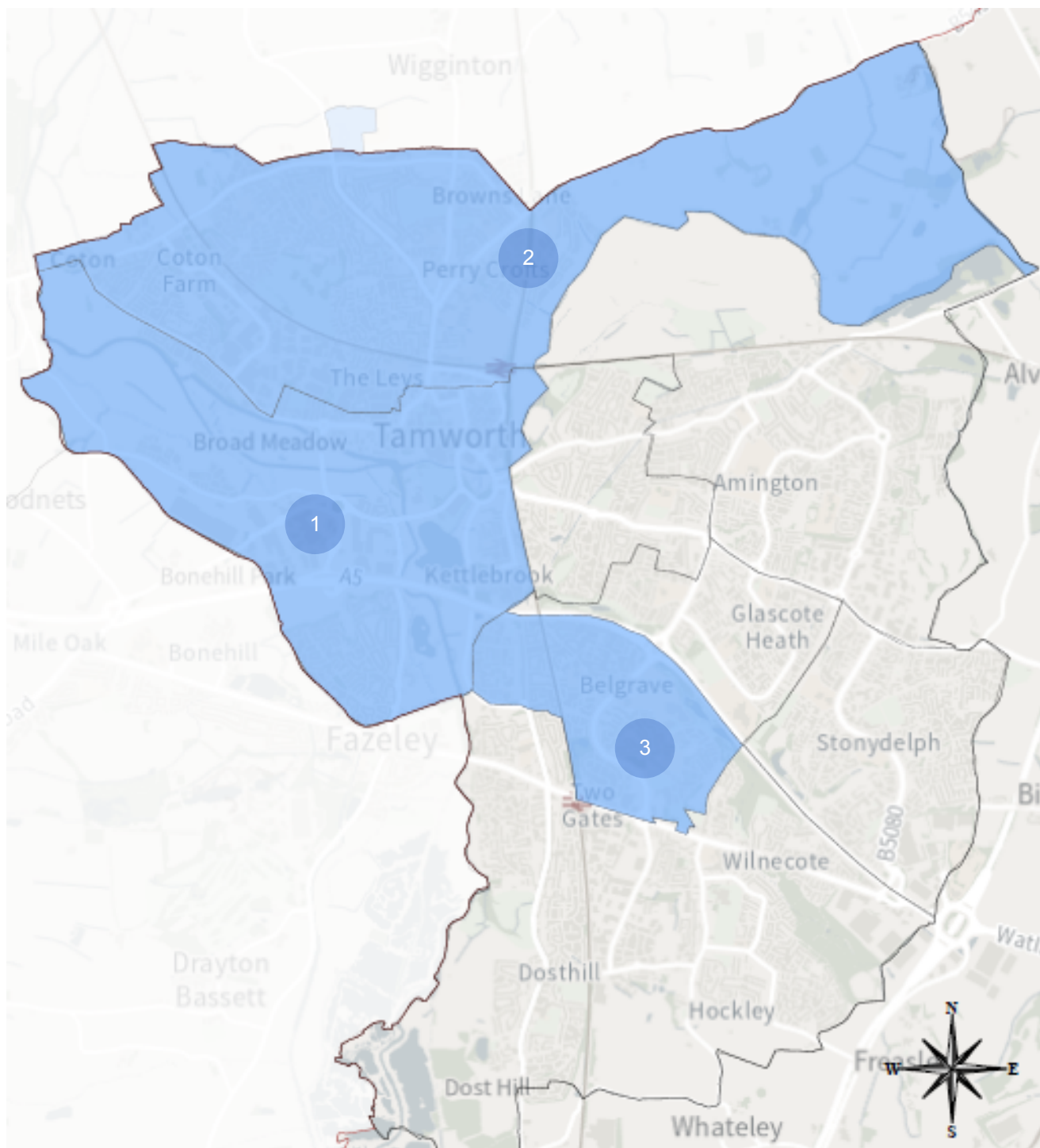
- Socially isolated individuals with mental health needs and learning difficulties
- Socially isolated adults with alcohol and/or drug dependencies
- Offenders with known drug dependencies or previous drug-related offending
- Children (under 10s) in areas with high levels of Domestic Abuse and/or drug-related offending
- Children and young people (aged 10-19) in areas of high deprivation

Those who belong to the 'Family Basics' demographic Mosaic group tend to be the most disproportionately affected by almost all aspects of crime and anti-social behaviour in Tamworth (17% of population, 30% of all victims).

These are primarily younger families (aged 25-40) with infant or primary school-aged children, living in lower-cost housing, in areas with higher levels of deprivation. Adults in these communities tend to have limited qualifications; many are employed in lower-paid and lower-skilled jobs resulting in limited financial resources and high levels of economic stress, with many requiring an element of state support, particularly through access to social housing and through universal credit.

Places at Greatest Risk

It should be noted that there has been no reassessment of high-risk localities and wards using data from the 2020-21 period, as reductions in recorded crime and disorder as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic may potentially distract from areas with long-standing challenges. Locality data will be fully re-assessed in the 2022 full Strategic Assessment.



1. Tamworth Town

High volumes of crime overall combined with a small local population means that rates per 1,000 residents are significantly high compared to the force-average.

2. Mercian & Spital

Overall vulnerability and risk are high compared to the rest of the partnership area – with the area also affected by cross-border acquisitive crime and vehicle thefts.

3. Belgrave

A smaller population combined with moderate volumes of crime results in rates which are above the partnership area average.

Overview of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Overall rates of recorded Crime and ASB in Tamworth are the second-highest in the force-area, but are in line with the overall force-wide rate, and below the rates for the West Midlands region and England & Wales.

Rates of Vehicle Offences in Tamworth have been a local concern but are not above rates for England & Wales or the West Midlands region. Theft offences in the CSP area have previously been above force-wide levels, but are now in line with these, as well as being well below regional and national comparators.

Levels of offending in all neighbourhoods in Tamworth are in line with force-wide averages, with the exception of Tamworth Town – where high volumes of crime (typical of town centres and public spaces) combined with a relatively small residential population, result in significantly high rates of offences per 1,000 residents. This is consistent across town centre areas across Staffordshire, and is not unique to Tamworth.

Rates of Recorded Crime – Staffordshire Police (April 2021- March 2022)

	Tamworth	Staffordshire (Force Area)	Most Similar Forces (Avg)	West Midlands Region	ENGLAND AND WALES
Total recorded crime (excl. fraud)	59.6	62.1	81.0	93.9	89.3
Criminal damage and arson	6.1	6.8	7.9	8.4	8.9
Robbery	0.9	0.6	0.7	1.6	1.1
Sexual offences	2.7	2.8	3.3	3.4	3.3
Theft offences	16.0	16.4	20.1	25.1	25.1
Burglary	1.8	2.9	3.5	5.0	4.5
Residential burglary	1.3	2.0	2.6	3.7	3.2
Non-residential burglary	0.5	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.2
Vehicle offences	3.9	3.5	4.8	7.5	6.0
Theft from the person	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.8	1.5
Bicycle theft	0.6	0.7	1.0	0.7	1.3
Shoplifting	4.1	3.9	4.4	4.5	4.6
All other theft offences	5.1	5.2	5.9	6.5	7.2
Violence against the person	27.6	28.5	34.6	41.6	35.2
Homicide ¹	...	0.008	0.010	0.016	0.012
Death or serious injury - unlawful driving ¹	...	0.001	0.008	0.012	0.012
Violence with injury	7.4	7.6	9.0	10.8	9.5
Violence without injury	9.6	9.3	13.5	15.4	13.6
Stalking and harassment	10.6	11.6	12.1	15.3	12.1
Drug offences	0.9	1.2	2.3	2.0	3.0
Possession of weapons offences	0.4	0.5	0.7	1.3	0.8
Public order offences	4.2	4.5	9.8	8.8	10.0
Misc. crimes against society	0.9	1.0	1.6	1.7	1.9
ASB Incidents (excl. Covid breaches)	35.0	22.7	19.6	17.4	21.2
Fraud offences (experimental)²	...	4.0	N/A	4.4	5.3

¹ Due to low volume no statistical comparison is given for 'Homicide' or 'Death or Serious Injury - Unlawful driving'

² Fraud offences reported to Action Fraud (October 2021 to September 2022)

Key

Statistically lower than national CPS average

Similar to national CSP average

Statistically higher than national CSP average

Community Safety Strategic Priorities

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

Volume and potential harm:

High volume / Substantial individual harm / Severe community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary:

From April 2020 onwards, instances where Covid-related legislation was breached were recorded locally and nationally as a category of ASB. As a result, rates of total ASB recorded in 2020-21 were considerably higher than those seen in other years. In data for 2021-22 these breaches have been removed. As a result, latest ASB data is more comparable with pre-pandemic.

In Tamworth in 2021-22 there were 1,280 incidents of traditional² ASB – which is just over 400 fewer incidents than in the previous year (1,685). This is equivalent to a rate of 16.7 incidents per 1,000 population, which is below the 21.0 seen across the Staffordshire Police force area.

ASB in Tamworth remains dominated by reports of incidents of 'Rowdy and Inconsiderate Behaviour' (69% of ASB) and to a lesser-extent 'Neighbour Disputes' (17% of ASB). Tamworth tends to experience slightly more ASB as a result of nuisance vehicles, compared to the force-area overall; accounting for 7% of local ASB (6% force-wide).

While it is not possible to say with certainty the factors behind the significant reduction in ASB compared to the previous year, it is possible and probable that this is in part due to changes home working habits and the lifting of lock down restrictions. Compared to the previous year (2020-21) the proportion of ASB which related to neighbour disputes has reduced from 21% down to 17% - with the proportion of total ASB which related to neighbour disputes falling below the average seen across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (20%).

Similarly to crime overall, ASB tends to disproportionately affect the most deprived and disadvantaged communities, and town and city centres. The highest rates seen across Tamworth fall into the Tamworth Town neighbourhood (largely comprising of Rowdy and Inconsiderate behaviour) and the Glascote area. This is consistent with assessments made in previous years.

Previous risk assessment concludes that repeat victims of ASB tend to experience the same levels of psychological harm as victims of less-serious violent crime.

Comparison to Force: Overall rate similar / Some neighbourhood rates high

Local rate (per 1,000 people): 16.7 (excl. Covid)

Force rate (per 1,000 people): 21.0 (excl. Covid)

Direction of travel: Some shift seen post-Covid; with a fall in neighbour disputes and increase in Rowdy and Inconsiderate behaviour (often in public places).

Public expectation: Substantial (previously moderate)

Local hotspot wards:

Tamworth Town: primarily Rowdy and Inconsiderate Behaviour in town centre spaces.

Glascote: average levels of ASB overall. High levels of Neighbour Disputes.

At risk groups: Deprived and disadvantaged communities – particularly those in high housing density areas and with high proportions of social housing. Town centre areas are also high risk, particularly from alcohol-related and drug-related ASB. Castle ward and Stonydelph see additional issues with ASB from Nuisance Vehicles.

² ASB of all types recorded pre-pandemic and excluding any recording of Covid-19 legislation breaches.

Community Cohesion³ & Tackling Extremism

Community Cohesion (including Hate Crime)

Volume and harm: Moderate volume / Substantial individual harm / Moderate community harm

CSPs with priority: (Cannock Chase), East Staffordshire, (Lichfield), Newcastle-under-Lyme, (South Staffordshire), (Stafford), (Staffordshire Moorlands), Stoke-on-Trent, (Tamworth)

Summary:

Nationally, levels of Hate Crime have been increasing steadily since the year of the EU referendum/Brexit (2016-17) and this has also been observed to some extent locally.

In 2021-22 there were 117 incidents of Hate Crime which took place in Tamworth, equivalent to a rate of 1.5 per 1,000 population – which is in line with the rate seen across the force area (1.6).

A little over 2% of recorded crime in Tamworth is flagged for Hate being a factor, which is equivalent to around 1-in-50 crimes being hate-related. This is similar to the proportion seen across the force area and is around the average seen across other local CSP areas.

Local Hate Crime remains dominated by offences relating to race (58% of all Hate Crime) although this proportion is lower than that seen across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (67%). Local LGBTQ+ Hate offences accounted for 22% of Hate Crime in 2021-22 which is similar to the force area. However, offences on the grounds of disability accounted for a significantly greater proportion in Tamworth than in other local CSP areas – making up 18% of Hate Crime locally, compared 9% of Hate offences across the force area.

Hate offences on the grounds of disability, offences based on sexual orientation, and those against transgender persons have continued to steadily increase – although it is not possible to state whether this is the result of an increase in the volume of incidents, through increased levels of reporting to police when incidents occur – or a combination of the two.

In Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent, the areas which tend to experience the highest levels of Hate Crime tend to be those with the highest levels of diversity within communities (notably Stoke-on-Trent and East Staffordshire). However, all local Safety Partnership areas experienced over 100 incidents of Hate Crime each in 2021-22.

The Covid-19 pandemic also had an effect on Community Cohesion; while the pandemic strengthened many communities within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with people providing support to those in their local area, it has also exacerbated and highlighted issues within a small number of more fragmented communities – with local outbreaks and compliance with government guidance proving to be a source of friction for some.

The cost of Covid-19 to society and state has been significant. Opportunities for social mixing, one of the most powerful forms of reducing prejudice and promoting empathy, were severely limited throughout 2020 and 2021.

As the full impact of the pandemic has continued to unfold, and the current 'Cost of Living' and inflation challenges have emerged, government decision-making has the potential to affect social and political trust, which can be exploited by extremist groups.

Direction of travel: Ongoing concern

Public interest: Very high

At risk groups: Hate Crime offenders are predominantly young men and more likely to be under 18 than offenders overall. Female Hate Crimes offenders tend to be in the 30-39 age group. Victims are predominantly males aged over 18, and particularly those aged 30-39. Although most victims are male, there are more female victims than female offenders. Those with Asian or Black ethnicity are disproportionately likely to be victims of Hate Crime.

³ As per the Local Government Association (LGA) definition of cohesive community as one where; There is common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and, Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.

Community Cohesion & Tackling Extremism

Extremism and Radicalisation

Volume and harm: Very small volume / Catastrophic individual harm / Catastrophic community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary:

The current (November 2022) threat to the UK from terrorism is **Substantial**, which means that Counter Terrorism and Security Services consider that an attack in the UK is **likely**.

While the current threat level is lower than that reported at the same time last year (Severe, November 2021), threat levels can change at any time as different information becomes available.

There have been several Terror Acts carried out in the UK in recent years, including the attack at Fishmonger's Hall / London Bridge in 2019, and in 2021 the murder of MP Sir David Amess, as well as the bombing at Liverpool Women's Hospital. Additionally, there have been a considerable number of high-risk terror plots which have been foiled by Security Services and Police; including planned attacks on LGBTQ+ parades and an attempt to kill (then Prime Minister) Theresa May.

While many high-profile terror incidents, arrests, and cases have been linked to Islamist Extremism, there have also been notable incidents linked with Right Wing Extremism and Extreme Right-Wing Terrorism; including an attack on worshippers outside Finsbury Park Mosque in 2017 and multiple individuals being sentenced between 2017 and 2021 for membership of proscribed terrorist neo-Nazi groups – including a number residing in the West Midlands.

Both Islamist Extremism and Right-Wing Extremism are a risk in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and as a result, although very low in number, there are genuine risks around individuals becoming radicalised to these ideologies.

However, there are also protective factors which can reduce divert persons vulnerable to radicalisation away from extremist groups and terrorist activity, most notably:

- Understanding and realising the negative connotations of being part of certain groups.
- Good and effective networks of support.
- Effective support and treatment for mental and physical health needs.
- Good and effective support and interest from parents/guardians.

Notably, these potential protective factors frequently apply to anyone who is vulnerable to radicalisations, regardless of the specific ideologies they may be radicalised towards.

Comparison to previous assessment:

- Increasing evidence of Extreme Right-Wing radicalisation.
- Risk and concerns around Al-Qaeda/Islamic State (ISIL) inspired extremism remain high.
- Some increases in overt presence of white nationalist groups locally and regionally (via graffiti and stickering).
- Some increases in community tensions in the wider West Midlands region.

Local hotspots: (Further information available as appropriate via Staffordshire Police and West Midlands CTU)

Direction of travel: Long-term concern

Public expectation: Critical / National expectations

At risk groups: Based on recent Prevent referrals, those at greatest risk of being radicalised remain younger males (aged under 18 years) although a growing number are slightly older age groups, including those aged 30 and over. Around 3 in 50 of those referred through Prevent in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent were female.

Online radicalisation of younger people (particularly young men) remains a credible risk, with groups both inside and outside the UK able to place extremist materials and propaganda online, and able to make contact with and connect vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of being radicalised – however once radicalised, many individuals display extremist behaviour in physical spaces, and not solely online.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

Volume and potential harm: Moderate volume / Severe individual harm / Substantial community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary:

DA is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

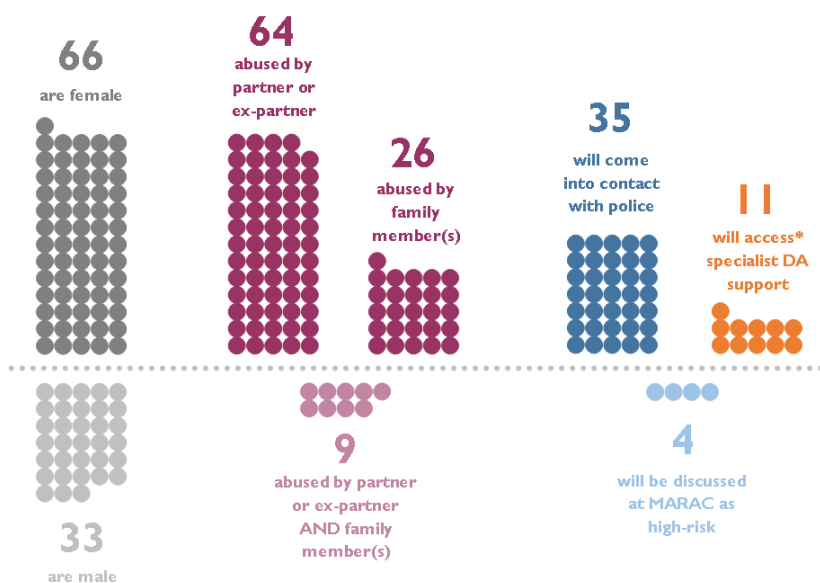
Domestic Abuse affects all communities to some extent and is not unique to any one part of Staffordshire or Stoke-on-Trent. DA presents a significant risk to victims, but also has a wider impact where children are present. With the passing of the DA Act (2021) there is now a clear legal definition of DA and the recognition of children who witness or experience such abuse as victims of DA in their own right.

In 2021-22 there were 1,300 DA-related crimes in Tamworth; equivalent to a rate of 16.9 per 1,000 population and accounting for 25% of recorded crime in the CSP area. This represents a fall of 70 incidents compared to the previous year (2020-21) and has seen the rate of DA in Tamworth fall in line with the force average, having previously been the second highest amongst local CSP areas.

Domestic offences in Tamworth are consistently dominated by Violent offences (80% of local DA); comprising of a large proportion of violence without injury offences (62% of local DA) which includes offences such as Common Assault, Stalking & Harassment offences, Malicious Communications, and Coercive Control. Around 16% of all DA offences are less-serious violence with injury, and around 1% more serious violence with injury.

Not all DA offences are violent crime; around 6% are incidents of Criminal Damage, 2% are Acquisitive crimes (such as Theft) and around 2% are Sexual Offences (half of which are incidents of Rape).

Of every 100 domestic abuse victims in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (as at 2021)



Comparison to Force: Overall rate similar / One ward above average

Local rate (per 1,000 people): 16.9

Force rate (per 1,000 people): 17.4

Direction of travel: Long-term challenge despite some reductions.

Public expectation: Moderate to Very High

Local hotspot wards: Rates in Amington (21.7) are significantly above the rate for the County (although in line with the force average). Rates in Stoneydelph (19.5) and Glascote (17.3) are consistently high.

At risk groups: Disproportionately younger women (aged under 30), and those who live in already disadvantaged communities. However, anyone can become a victim of DA, and there are male victims in the area, and victims who are older adults. Households where there are high levels of economic stress and alcohol/drug use and dependency are at particularly high risk. Offenders are also disproportionately younger (aged under 40) and male, although there are also female offenders.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

Stalking & Harassment

Volume and potential harm:

Moderate volume / Substantial psychological harm

CSPs with priority: Cannock Chase, Stoke-on-Trent, Tamworth

Summary:

In 2021-22 there were a total of 243 incidents of Domestic Stalking & Harassment which took place in Tamworth; equivalent to a rate of 3.2 per 1,000 population – which is slightly below the rate seen force-wide (3.6 per 1,000).

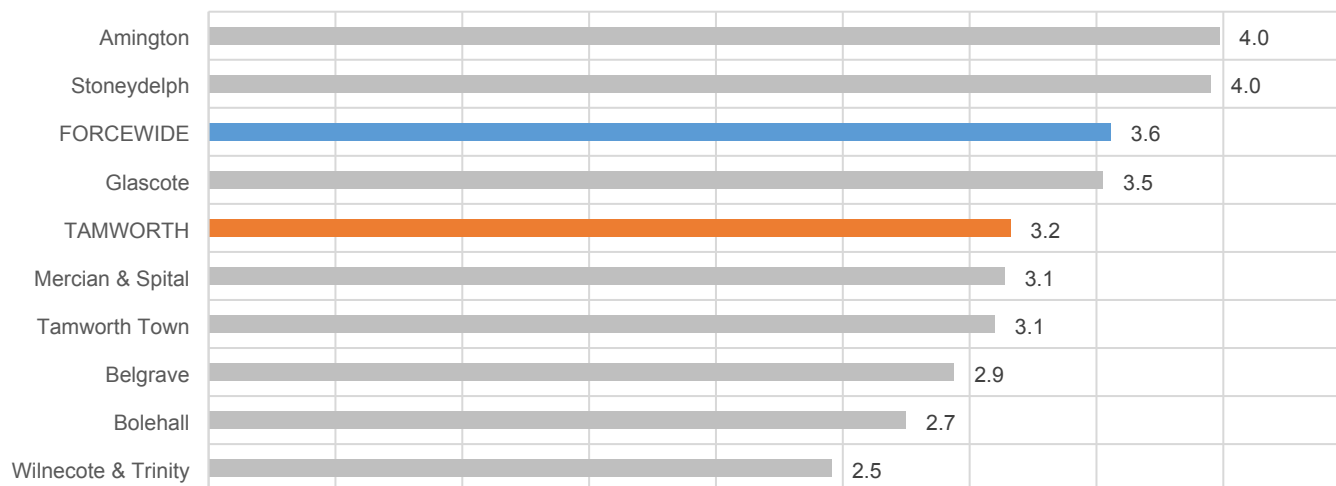
There are genuine concerns around risks attached to Stalking and fixated behaviours in particular as an element of wider DA. Research conducted on behalf of the Suzy Lamplugh Trust (Exploring the Relationship Between Stalking and Homicide, 2017) which reviewed three years of domestic homicides found that:

- Stalking behaviours were present in 94% of the reviewed homicides.
- Stalking is a key indicator of potential future serious harm.
- Stalking should be identified through intentions, as well as actions.
- More actions should be recognised as part of stalking behaviour (e.g. vexatious or baseless allegations or court action.)

While the proportion of all Harassment offences which are DA-related is a little lower than crime overall (22% DA-related, compared to 25% of all crime in Tamworth) there are strong links between Domestic Abuse and Malicious Communications (37% DA-related) and most notably Stalking (96% DA-related).

Since the time of the last assessment, the most notable change has been in the proportion of Harassment which is linked to DA – with 50% of Harassment offences in 2020-21 being DA-related, compared to 22% in 2021-22. This is largely, however, due to an increase in the overall volume of Harassment offences being recorded – including many which are not DA, rather than a decrease in levels of DA-related Harassment offences.

Domestic-related Stalking & Harassment, 2021-22, Tamworth Policing Neighbourhoods



Comparison to Force: Overall rate similar / Two neighbourhoods high (but not statistically above average)

Local rate (per 1,000 people): 3.2

Force rate (per 1,000 people): 3.6

Direction of travel: Considerable increases in visibility of Stalking offences

Public expectation: Increasing

Local hotspot wards: None significantly above force average (*threshold for significantly above=5.4 per 1,000*). Areas with the highest rates of DA Stalking & Harassment are also flagged for high rates of overall DA.

At risk groups: Victims are disproportionately younger women (aged 20-34) who account for 34% of S&H victims, and particularly those within the 'Family Basics' Mosaic group – living in less-advantaged areas with younger children. Around 70% of S&H victims are female, and 30% male, however, victims do span all age ranges from 10 years up to 75+ and there is some disproportionality of victims amongst males aged 25-30 (7% of all S&H victims).

Drugs & County Lines

County Lines

Volume and potential harm: Small volume / Substantial individual harm / Severe community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary:

The use of County Lines to traffic drugs from urban areas into rural areas, causes significant issues for communities; particularly through the degradation of local areas through use of properties for drug use, drug supply and other criminal activity, and as a result of violent disorder and disputes between Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) and Urban Street Gangs (USGs) over control of particular County Lines and Drug Supply in specific areas.

The use of County Lines by OCGs is not limited to the supply and movement of drugs; the same criminal infrastructure is linked to Modern Slavery and People Trafficking, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), Serious Violence, Money Laundering, and the supply of illegal weapons.

County Lines activity often relies heavily on the Criminal Exploitation of vulnerable persons. The practice of 'cuckooing' is commonplace; where criminals take over a vulnerable person's home (while the vulnerable person remains living there) and use that property for criminality. Victims are often people who misuse substances such as drugs or alcohol, but there are cases of victims with learning difficulties, mental health challenges, physical disabilities or who are socially isolated. Criminals who choose to exploit will often target the most vulnerable in society and will establish a relationship with the vulnerable person to gain access to their home. Cuckooed addresses are commonly used to store or distribute drugs - but can also be used in people trafficking and modern slavery, supply or storage of illegal weapons, sex work, or as 'safe houses' for criminals themselves who are trying to avoid detection by the Police.

In addition to cuckooing, OCGs involved in County Lines also exploit vulnerable young people (frequently young men and boys) by "recruiting" them into County Lines activity, often with promises of fraternity and protection from others (including locally active USGs) as well as offering opportunities to make money. These exploited individuals are often used by criminals for very high-risk activity: such as street dealing of drugs, forceful recovery of debts from drug users, and disrupting the activity of competing OCGs and USGs.

Those involved in drug supply offences in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are disproportionately young and male compared to offenders overall; 9-out-of-10 of those suspected or charged with drugs supply offences are men; 6-out-of-10 are 20 to 40 years old, and 2-in-10 are male and under 20 years old. Females are statistically less likely to be involved in drug supply offences than in crime overall.

While policing operations have closed many County Lines within Staffordshire in recent years, a level of County Lines risk continues to exist in all Safety Partnership areas in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent. There are known on going risks around organised drug supply through County Lines as well as people trafficking and modern slavery offences, in addition to the wider threats around Criminal Exploitation of vulnerable persons.

At this point in time (October 2022) while there has been an impact on drugs offending locally, as the result of significant long-term targeted operations conducted by Staffordshire Police in partnership with neighbouring police forces, it is still considered that County Lines pose a substantial risk to individuals and a severe risk to communities.

Direction of travel: Long-term challenge with some increase **Public expectation:** Critical / National expectations

Local hotspots: (To be discussed with relevant Policing leads as required for Community Safety Planning)

At risk groups:

Criminal exploitation:

Young males (aged 10-19) in disadvantaged communities are at particularly high risk of being criminally exploited through organised crime and gang membership, and account for 2 in every 10 individuals suspected of or charged with drug supply offences. These young men are disproportionately likely to be linked to supply offences relating to Class B drugs (such as cannabis) and less likely to be linked to importation and cultivation offences.

'Cuckooing' risk:

Adults with existing drug or alcohol dependency, and adults and young adults with learning difficulties and/or mental health needs – particularly those who are living independently but who are socially isolated. There are significant levels of repeat drug possession offences in a number of wards across the force-area, and it is likely that many of the vulnerable individuals known to services in these areas for Class A drug use are at increased risk of cuckooing.

Drugs & County Lines

Drug-related crime and harm

Volume and potential harm: Small volume / Substantial individual harm / Severe community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary: In addition to specific County Lines concerns, there are concerns about the wider impact of drugs and drug use in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent. This is an issue which particularly affects the largest metropolitan/urban parts of the force-area; such as the city of Stoke-on-Trent, as well as Burton-upon-Trent in East Staffordshire, but is a challenge which is by no means limited to just these two areas – with a footprint in all local Safety Partnership areas.

In recent years issues have emerged around the use of synthetic Class B drugs (previously commonly known as 'Legal Highs' – although now controlled drugs) and in particular 'Monkey Dust' - which is having some impact on Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and to a lesser extent Stafford – but does not appear to be an issue in Tamworth or the south of the County.

The current (2021-22) local rate of all drugs-specific offences (possession and trafficking; 0.9 per 1,000 population) in Tamworth has fallen over the last two years and is significantly below national rates (3.0). Rates of Drugs Possession (excl. supply) in Tamworth (0.6 per 1,000 population) are in line with the rate for Staffordshire County (0.7) and slightly below the force-wide rate (0.8).

The case is similar amongst supply offences, where the rate locally (0.3) is the same as that seen across the County, and slightly below the force area rate (0.4) as well as being significantly below the national rate (0.7).

There are well evidenced links between drug use and offending. As at 2021 around 38% of offenders within the probation service in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent had needs relating to drug use – increasing to 65% of those who had committed acquisitive offences (such as Burglary and Theft) and 85% of those convicted of Robbery offences.

In local police recording, around 1-in-50 crimes in Tamworth (2% of all) are flagged as being drug-related. This is lower than the force-wide proportion (3%) and the third-lowest proportion amongst local CSP areas.

Recent research⁴ including interviews with those in prison custody in Staffordshire, saw individuals commenting on how adverse experiences in childhood and adolescence had often lead to use of drugs and alcohol, which in turn resulted in criminality (often Theft), followed by contact with the criminal justice system, and later, periods of custody.

Although slightly dated (2016-17) latest data suggests that while cannabis is the most prevalent drug in the force-area, there are just over 6,200 opiate and crack cocaine users in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent – with the highest concentration in the more densely populated area of Stoke-on-Trent.

As at 2021-22 there were over 5,300 adults in drug and alcohol treatment programmes locally, with around half (2,600) receiving treatment for opiate use. Around half of those in treatment programmes engage with treatment and leave in a planned way.

In Tamworth levels of drug related mortality (deaths from drug misuse or poisoning) are particularly low compared to the rest of the force area – with numbers of deaths being so low that the ONS are unable to make statistical comparison between Tamworth and other local areas.

Direction of travel: Long-term challenge

Public expectation: Critical / National expectations

Local hotspots: (To be discussed with relevant Policing leads as required for Community Safety Planning)

At risk groups:

Research with some of the prison population in Staffordshire suggests that young people who have experienced particularly traumatic experiences in childhood or adolescence, but received limited or no support from agencies or known trusted adults, are vulnerable to using drugs and alcohol to attempt to address their mental health needs.

⁴ Offending and Offender Needs 2021 – Office of the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire & Rescue, Crime

Serious Violence (SV) & Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Violence Against Women and Girls

Volume and potential harm: Large volume / Severe individual harm / Substantial community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary:

Evidence shows that many women in the UK do not feel safe in public or online: recent (2021) government research evidenced that girls do not feel safe at school or in other educational establishments, and many women and girls in the UK have experienced verbal abuse, intimidation, and sexual harassment in public spaces.

In late 2020 a call for evidence was made by the UK Government, to inform a revised VAWG strategy, which was published in July 2021. The new VAWG strategy sets out some key objectives for the Government, primarily to:

- Increase support for victims and survivors.
- Increase in reporting to the police, in addition to;
- Increased victim engagement with police, leading to;
- Increases in the number of perpetrators brought to justice, and;
- Reduce the prevalence of Violence Against Women and Girls overall.

The intent of the VAWG Strategy (2021) is to achieve these through improved earlier intervention and prevention and improving and strengthening existing systems – rather than introduction new systems or extensive duties.

While nationally domestic-related crime and incidents are often included within VAWG, in this needs assessment, as DA is covered in its own right, the focus on Violence Against Women and Girls looks in particular at offences which are not believed to be related to DA. This means that the focus in this section is largely on VAWG which is not part of a pattern of abusive behaviour and does not focus on offences which are committed by current or former intimate partners or family members of the victim.

In 2021-22 in Tamworth crime which was flagged by Staffordshire Police as being a VAWG incident accounted for around 1-in-8 (12.5% of) non-domestic related crimes. Amongst violent offences (which were not DA-related) approaching a quarter (23%) were instances of Violence Against Women and Girls. These proportions were the same across the force area overall.

Overall in 2021-22 in Tamworth, excluding domestic-related offences, there were a total of 539 recorded crimes which were flagged by police as being incidents of VAWG.

While the majority of offences flagged as being VAWG incidents are offences which are classified as violent crime, VAWG offences do fall into a wider range of offence types. Of the 539 instances of non-DA-related Violence Against Women and Girls recorded in Tamworth in 2021-22:

- **69% were violent crimes, comprising of;**
 - Malicious Communications (22% of all non-domestic VAWG)
 - Harassment (20% of all non-domestic VAWG)
 - Assault occasioning Actual Bodily Harm (ABH; 19% of all non-domestic VAWG)
 - Stalking (2% of all non-domestic VAWG) and;
 - More serious violence with injury (1% of all non-domestic VAWG)
- **20% were sexual offences, comprising of;**
 - Serious sexual offences (excl. Rape) (11% of all non-domestic VAWG)
 - Rape (6% of all non-domestic VAWG)
 - Other sexual offences (2% of all non-domestic VAWG)
- **12% were Public Order offences**
 - Primarily offences of causing Public Fear, Alarm, or Distress (10% of all non-domestic VAWG)

These proportions are entirely reflective of what is seen across the wider force area, with the types of offences recorded in Tamworth being in line with what is seen elsewhere across Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent, with no major outliers or significant differences.

There is a clear focus locally on improving the reporting and recording of VAWG offences. While flags have only recently been added to Police record management systems, these will start to allow comparisons over time.

Direction of travel: Increases in recording and visibility

Public expectation: Critical

Serious Violence (SV) & Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

Public Place and Serious Violence

Volume and potential harm:

Moderate volume / Moderate to substantial individual harm / Moderate to severe community harm

CSPs with priority:

Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Newcastle-under-Lyme, (Stafford), Stoke-on-Trent, Tamworth

Summary:

While levels of Public Place violence fell during the pandemic, while social and public space restrictions were in place, volumes have started to return towards pre-pandemic levels.

In 2021-22 there were 582 incidents of Public Place violence (PPV) which took place in Tamworth – equivalent to a rate of 7.6 per 1,000 population. This is the second highest rate in the force area, behind Stoke-on-Trent (10.3) but above the next highest (Cannock Chase, 5.3) and above the force-wide rate (5.5).

The current level of PPV represents a 55% increase locally, compared to the previous year (2020-21, 375 incidents) although remains slightly lower than the volume seen in the year pre-pandemic (2019-20, 650 incidents). However, by comparison, while locally PPV sits around a tenth (-10%) below pre-pandemic levels, for the force area overall, levels of PPV sit over a third (-37%) below pre-pandemic volumes.

There are evidenced links between alcohol and violent offences, and particularly those in public spaces; while around 8% of all crime in Tamworth in 2021-22 was alcohol-related, this increases to 15% amongst PPV offences. However pre-pandemic (2019-20) closer to a fifth (19%) of all PPV featured alcohol as a factor.

In several parts of the force-area concerns remain with regards to links between Urban Street Gang (USG) activity, Organised Crime Group (OCG) activity, Drug Supply/County Lines and Serious Violence. Particular issues centre on feuds between rival USGs and rival OCGs and an increased use of violence to 'recover' drug debts from users. Over recent years, levels of serious violence locally have increased - with much of this linked to USGs, OCGs and drugs.

Although a smaller proportion of total violent crime, the level of Serious Violence in Tamworth also shows a notable increase from the previous year, with 156 incidents in 2021-22, equivalent to a rate of 2.0 per 1,000 population (compared to 1.7 across the force area). Similarly to PPV this is the second highest rate amongst local CSP areas.

While force-wide, alcohol is less prevalent in Serious Violence incidents (factor in around 10%) in Tamworth, it is just as present as it is in PPV, with around 15% of Serious Violence incidents being flagged as alcohol related.

Additionally, while drugs are a factor in a small proportion of violent offences (1.6%) in Tamworth, this increases amongst Serious Violence (2.5%) – although this indicates that drugs are very rarely a factor.

Nationally and regionally Knife Crime has been of growing concern, particularly in urban areas. Although Knife Crimes are low in volume in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (768 incidents in 2021-22, a rate of 0.7 per 1,000 population) there has been some increase in 2021-22. Similarly to PPV, Tamworth sees the second highest rate of Knife Crime in the force area (0.8) behind Stoke-on-Trent (1.3) and above Newcastle-under-Lyme (0.7). In the last year (2021-22) there were 61 recorded Knife Crimes in the local area.

While generally low in number, overall there was little impact on Knife Crime as a result of the pandemic. Across the force-area there were only ten fewer incidents in 2020-21 compared to pre-pandemic – and in Tamworth, volumes of Knife Crime have remained fairly consistent over the past few years.

Comparison to Force: Rates high compared to the force. Issues polarised towards the town centre.

Direction of travel: Consistent and now similar to pre-pandemic

Public expectation: High

At risk groups:

Public Place Violence offenders are predominantly young men (aged 18-29), although there are some female offenders, mainly aged under 40 years. Knife Crime offenders are also mainly young men (aged under 30 years) with a particularly high proportion of Under 18s (mostly aged 14+).

With both PPV and Knife Crimes – both offender and victim are mainly young men, in particular those aged under 30 years. In many instances, the offender and the victim are of the same age group.

Public place violence is polarised towards town centres and commercial areas, and poses the greatest risk to the public between 21:00-04:00hrs, particularly where alcohol is a factor.

Vehicle Crime

Volume and potential harm: Low volume / Moderate individual harm / Low community harm

CSPs with priority: Cannock Chase, Lichfield, South Staffordshire, Tamworth

Summary:

In Tamworth in 2021-22 there were 338 Vehicle Offences recorded – equivalent to a rate of 4.4 per 1,000 population. This is slightly above the force-wide rate (3.8) but lower than pre-pandemic. Just over a third (37%) of all Vehicle Crime in Tamworth related to Thefts of Vehicles and just under half (48%) to Thefts from Vehicles.

There were 124 Vehicle Thefts in the same period – comprising of 100 Thefts, 19 Taking without the owner's consent, and 5 aggravated vehicle taking offences. The rate of Vehicle Theft for Tamworth (1.6) is considerably lower than the rate seen pre-pandemic (2.4) but also a slight increase on the rate seen mid-pandemic (1.3 in 2020-21). This averages out to around two vehicle thefts per week in Tamworth.

As anti-theft technology in vehicles has improved, approaches to vehicle theft have changed. With many modern vehicles unable to be driven without their keys, criminals are increasingly using burglary to facilitate vehicle theft; entering properties purely to steal vehicle keys and key fobs - driving the stolen vehicle away from the scene. These offences are often referred to as 'Car Key Burglaries' (CKB).

Where in the past there have been issues with keyless thefts or 'relay attacks' (where criminals use a device to amplify the signal from a car key inside someone's home in order open and start a vehicle without needing the key in hand) these types of thefts have fallen. It is likely that this is the result of both greater awareness of this type of theft amongst the public (and vehicle owners taking relevant measures) and criminals moving away from this approach.

Although less common, and lower volume, changes in anti-theft technology have also resulted in some national and regional increases in aggravated vehicle-taking or 'car-jacking' – where a vehicle is stolen whilst in use, usually on the road, and sometimes while the victim is still on their own property. While very low volumes (five local incidents in 2021-22) these can be highly traumatic offences for victims and communities.

Historically, Tamworth has experienced particularly high proportions of burglaries which have resulted in vehicle theft. These offences have typically been focussed in the south-east of the force-area, with Tamworth and Lichfield particularly affected compared to other CSP areas, although recently these have started to impact Cannock Chase.

During the pandemic there has been a considerable local reduction in Vehicle Thefts. While Vehicle Theft across the force area reduced by a reasonable amount (-8%) in 2021-22 compared to before the pandemic (2019-20) the reduction in Tamworth has been far more significant (-33%).

However, while levels of Vehicle Theft remain well below rates seen in 2019-20 they have been slowly increasing since Coronavirus restrictions ended, even though they have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Equally, while Vehicle Thefts have fallen, the number of Thefts from Motor Vehicles have remained largely consistent.

Offences appear to be particularly targeted and have often affected areas and communities across the force area which typically do not experience high levels of overall crime. However, while some Vehicle Theft in the force area (particularly Lichfield and South Staffordshire) appears to be mostly targeted towards higher value vehicles, those seen in Tamworth often target mid-value vehicles which can be stripped down for parts or used in other criminality.

Comparison to Force:

Pre-pandemic highest rate in the force area. As at 2021-22 in line with force average

Rate of Vehicle Thefts

Local rate: 1.6 per 1,000 pop.

Force rate: 1.6 per 1,000 pop.

Direction of travel: Persistent challenge

Public expectation: Moderate

At risk groups: Communities in higher-value suburban areas with detached homes and lower-levels of overall housing density. Analysis across the force-area suggests that households in the most affluent parts of affected CSP areas have been disproportionately affected by car key burglaries.

However in some CSP areas such as Tamworth and Cannock Chase, vehicles targeted are frequently more common mid-value vehicles rather than luxury manufacturers. It should be considered that there is a degree of risk to car owners in general within priority localities.

Vulnerable Persons

Mental Health

Volume and potential harm: Small volume / Moderate to severe individual harm / Low community harm

CSPs with priority: All Safety Partnership Areas

Summary: Mental Health (MH) is a cross-cutting theme, with links to a range of other vulnerabilities. Many with MH needs appear in other high-risk cohorts; including those with drug and/or alcohol challenges, those socially isolated and living in poor quality housing, as well as young people and adults who are at risk of criminal exploitation.

Vulnerable people, including those experiencing MH challenges, are often at greater risk of being a victim of crime - targeted by criminals who exploit vulnerabilities and take advantage through financial or criminal exploitation.

Around 3% of all crime in Tamworth was flagged as featuring Mental Health as a factor, comparable to the 4% observed force-wide. While the rate of MH related crime increased from being one of the lowest in the force-area pre-pandemic (2.5 per 1,000 population in 2019-20) to the highest (4.6) in 2020-21 these have reduced considerably to a rate of 1.8 MH flagged crimes in 2021-22 (below the force-wide rate, 2.5).

There is reliable evidence that economic recessions and factors such as unemployment, income decline, and unmanageable debts are connected with poor mental wellbeing, increased rates of common mental disorders, substance-related disorders, and suicidal behaviours. It should be anticipated that, should the Bank of England's recession predictions be correct, such challenges are highly likely to increase locally over the coming 12-24 months.

In Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent (the smallest geography with available data) the rate of detentions under the Mental Health Act⁵ (MHA) had increased in 2020-21 from 81.3 (pre-pandemic) to 88.0 per 100,000 population; an increase of around 8%. While the rate has fallen slightly in 2021-22 (to 85.5) this is still above pre-pandemic rates. Those detained under the MHA tend to be disproportionately from deprived communities and of Black and Other Ethnicities, as well as often being middle aged (35-49) or younger adults (18-34). There is no disproportionality by gender.

Local⁶ and national⁷ COVID surveys have highlighted that more than two-thirds of people felt that the pandemic had a negative impact on their life, with many feeling stressed and anxious. Further analysis⁸ found that, taking account of pre-pandemic trajectories, mental health has worsened substantially (by 8.1% on average) as a result of the pandemic. Young adults and women – groups with worse mental health pre-pandemic – have been hit hardest.

Levels of GP depression diagnoses in 2020-21 for Tamworth residents were higher than national levels, with 14.6% of the adult population having a diagnosis of depression, compared to 12.3% across England.

Public Health England (PHE) estimates for Tamworth suggest that around 9.8% of children aged 5 to 16 years (approximately 1,100 children) in the area are likely to have a mental health disorder. This is the 2nd highest proportion in the force area and falls within the top 20% of highest rates in Local Authorities in England.

Estimated prevalence of common mental disorders (Public Health England):

		% of population
Children (age 5-16)	England	9.2
	Force-wide	9.5
	Tamworth	9.8
Adults (age 16+)	England	16.9
	Force-wide	16.4
	Tamworth	16.6
Older adults (age 65+)	England	10.2
	Force-wide	10.2
	Tamworth	10.5

Comparison to Force: Rates of recorded crime where Mental Health is considered to be a factor have increased significantly in 2020-21 and are currently the highest in force. However, rates of Mental Health diagnoses are largely similar to force-wide and national levels.

⁵ NHS Digital - Recorded uses of the Mental Health Act: crude rates per 100,000 population

⁶ Staffordshire County Council – Residents Survey

⁷ Office of National Statistics (ONS) - Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain

⁸ Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) - The mental health effects of the [first] lockdown and social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK

Vulnerable Persons

Contextual Safeguarding

Volume and potential harm: Moderate volumes / Moderate to Severe individual and community harm

CSPs with priority: Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, (South Staffordshire), (Staffordshire Moorlands), (Stafford), Stoke-on-Trent, Tamworth

Summary:

The 'toxic trio' of risks that are most likely to result in home or family safeguarding concerns – parental mental ill-health, drug and alcohol misuse, and domestic abuse are particularly present in parts of Tamworth, resulting in an elevated level of need for safeguarding of young children (under 11 years of age).

The large majority (63%) of children in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent who are subject to a Child Protection Plan are primarily being safeguarded as a result of neglect, followed by just under a third (31%) who have experienced emotional abuse. Compared to England, the force-area sees a greater proportion of children subject to a plan as a result of neglect, with lower proportions experiencing emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

While it is important to consider the safeguarding of young children and risk of harm within the family environment, as young people move from childhood and into adolescence, they spend increasing amounts of time socialising independently of their families. During this time the nature of young people's schools and neighbourhoods, and the relationships that they form in these settings, inform the extent to which they encounter safeguarding risks in settings outside their families.

In the past 12 months (to October 2022) across Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent there were over 3,080 missing person episodes involving under 18 year olds. This was an increase of a fifth (+21%) over the previous 12 months with 3-in-5 (60%) flagged as high risk. Missing person episodes have seen an increase in almost all Safety Partnership areas, although increases in Tamworth have been similar to the force average.

There are some concerns in Tamworth relating to the safeguarding of young people outside of their family contexts – particularly the risk of criminal exploitation by Urban Street Gangs (USGs) and organised criminals of vulnerable young people, who can be lured into criminality with the promise of financial gain, and perhaps the appeal of fraternity.

Young people who are Looked After Children (LAC) and who have been placed in care, or who attend pupil referral units (PRUs) are at particularly increased risk due to their level of vulnerability and often unstable social networks and networks of support. Once groomed, these young people are then often used for high-risk activities, increasingly linked to County Lines drug supply activity, such as street dealing and transporting drugs and recovering drug debts.

Rates of Children's Safeguarding referrals and Looked After Children in Tamworth have been a historical concern, and have been a particular issue in Glascote ward.

Although the topic of safeguarding is often raised in relation to vulnerable children and young people, it is important to remember that there are vulnerable adults who are also in need of safeguarding and support.

There are criminal exploitation risks amongst vulnerable adults, particularly relating to the practice of cuckooing. Adults who are vulnerable as a result of alcohol and substance misuse challenges, social isolation, disability and learning difficulties, should be considered to be particularly vulnerable.

Direction of travel: Ongoing concern

Local hotspots: Glascote (Rates of Child Protection and Looked After Children)

At risk groups:

Criminal exploitation:

Males aged 10 to 19 in disadvantaged communities (particularly including LAC and those in PRUs)

Children's safeguarding:

Children (birth to 17) living in communities with high levels of deprivation, domestic abuse, drug and alcohol use.

Additional Challenges for Consideration

Repeat and Persistent Offending

Volume and potential harm: High volume / Moderate individual harm / Substantial community harm

CSPs with consideration: All Partnership Areas

Summary:

Repeat and persistent offenders are consistently disproportionately responsible for crime in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, with the minority of offenders responsible for the majority of offences.

Previous local research has shown that 45% of the 22,490 offenders living in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent were considered repeat or persistent – and were responsible for 71% of all recorded crime where an offender was identified. Young offenders (those under the age of 18) were not more likely to be repeat offenders and did not commit significantly more offences than known offenders who were aged 18 and over.

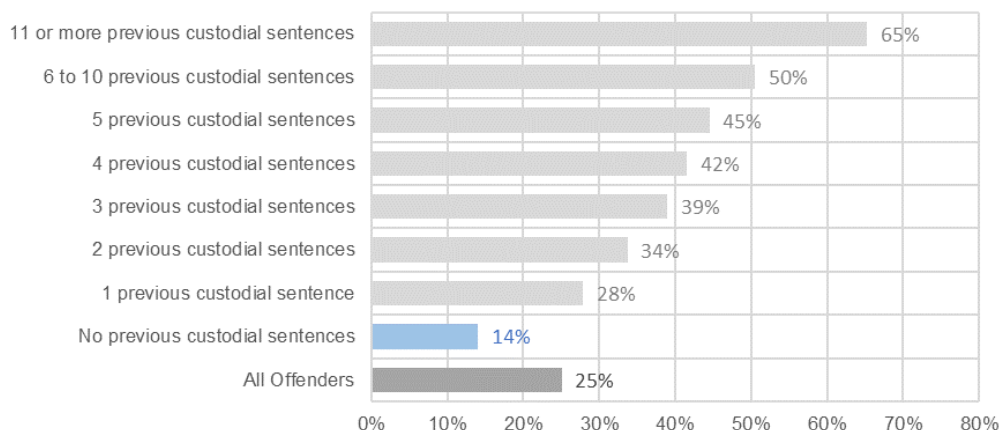
Prior to the pandemic, all major types of crime saw 50% of incidents or more committed by repeat and persistent offenders – and six⁹ out of eleven major crime types saw three-quarters (75%) or more committed by repeat offenders – including Weapons Offences. Sexual offences, however, were significantly less likely to be committed by repeat or persistent offenders compared to other major types of crime.

Offenders with known drug offences or offences where drugs were considered a factor in their recent offending history, are substantially more likely to be repeat and persistent offenders. Around 2-out-of-3 (66%) of those flagged for drug-related offending in the area were repeat and persistent offenders, compared to 43% of those with no recent drug-related offending.

Local assessment of Offender Needs (2022) found that many of those with repeat periods in custody have drug and alcohol challenges. Many of these had histories of adverse childhood experiences and trauma but no networks of support when these occurred – and later found themselves using drugs or alcohol to attempt to address mental health needs – which later resulted in acquisitive crime (and custodies) in order to sustain addiction and dependency.

Research has found that offenders with unmet rehabilitation needs and unmet needs around accommodation on release from custody are highly likely to reoffend.

Reoffending by previous custodial sentences (Ministry of Justice, 2019-20)



Offenders who have served two or more custodial sentences are also highly likely to repeatedly reoffend and re-enter custody. Generally, the more often an offender enters and leaves custody, the more likely they are to reoffend and receive further custodial sentences – and with each further custody, the risk of reoffending increases.

Force proportion: 45% of repeat offenders commit 71% of recorded crime

Public expectation: Substantial

At risk groups: Offenders with previous drug-related offending are particularly likely to repeatedly offend – primarily committing acquisitive offences such as Shoplifting and Burglary.

⁹ Arson & Criminal Damage, Burglary, Possession of a Weapon, Robbery, Theft, Vehicle Offences.

Fraud

Volume and potential harm: Moderate volume / Severe individual financial harm / Moderate community harm

CSPs with priority: (Cannock Chase), (East Staffordshire), Lichfield, (Newcastle-under-Lyme), South Staffordshire, Stafford, Staffordshire Moorlands, (Tamworth), (Stoke-on-Trent)

Summary: In the 12 months to September 2022 the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau (NFIB) recorded 4,946 Fraud instances against individuals and businesses in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent – with total losses of £17million.

While this represents a decrease in volume on the previous year (1,000 less incidents) it represents an *increase* in losses – with around £0.7million more lost to Fraud than in the previous year. This suggests that while incidents have fallen, the level of loss per Fraud instance has increased. The split between businesses and individuals remains consistent with previous years, with 92% of incidents committed against individuals and 8% against businesses.

The rate of NFIB recorded *personal* fraud in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is 4.0 incidents per 1,000 population, which is slightly lower than the rate seen across England & Wales (5.3) and similar to that for the West Midlands region (4.4). Both locally and nationally Fraud remains more prevalent than residential Burglary.

NFIB reporting¹⁰ shows that average monthly Fraud reports have fallen below pre-pandemic levels, after seeing a spike during periods of lockdown – with an average of 378 reports per month (Oct '21 to Sept '22) compared to around 460 per month during the pandemic. There is concern that due to the present cost of living challenges and high levels of inflation, criminals will continue to target individuals using promises of rebates and refunds to encourage victims to part with personal and financial information, and Fraud levels will begin to increase further.

Fraud is often sophisticated, organised and technologically advanced. In Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, figures show that year-on-year around 70% of personal fraud has an online element. Fraud scams using internet banking and remote computer access, mean that criminals can defraud individuals and businesses of large sums of money very rapidly and from anywhere in the world with an internet connection. This is often also the case in incidents of 'Romance Fraud' – with criminals using chat functions in online games and social media to groom their victims online.

Consumer Fraud (including online shopping/auctions and dating/romance scams) is the most prevalent, accounting for 39% of all fraud offences with average losses of around £1,620 per incident – the greatest proportion of which are online shopping/auction fraud. However, within Consumer Fraud, locally dating scams and 'romance fraud' continue to present a significant risk; while volumes remain low (around 1-in-50 fraud cases) average levels of losses are amongst the highest of any type of fraud at around £10,100 per incident.

Those vulnerable to Fraud are also often vulnerable to 'door-step' crime, which may involve intimidating and aggressive behaviour or an element of befriending or grooming of the victim to facilitate offending or repeat victimisation. The average victim of doorstep crime is over 80 years old and lives alone. Locally, over the past 12 months, on average, one doorstep crime per week (including bogus traders) has been reported to Action Fraud.

NFIB: Demography and losses through personal fraud (12 months to Sept 2022)

	Count	Losses		Proportion	
		Total	Per case	of cohort	of all losses
Cyber-enabled	3,171	£ 8,500,000	£ 2,681	70%	59%
Non-cyber	1,372	£ 5,900,000	£ 4,300	30%	41%
Male	1,890	£ 7,000,000	£ 3,704	42%	49%
Female	2,101	£ 6,600,000	£ 3,141	46%	46%
Over 60s	1,224	£ 6,433,600	£ 5,256	27%	45%
Under 60s	3,256	£ 7,777,800	£ 2,389	73%	54%

Direction of travel: Reduction in volume. Increase in loss per incident.

Public expectation: Critical

At risk groups:

While older adults and those who are less skilled with technology are particularly vulnerable to Fraud and doorstep crime, Fraud can affect anyone. Increasingly young people are being targeted through social media for investment scams – usually relating to Cryptocurrencies.

¹⁰ NFIB – Fraud dashboard - <https://colp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/0334150e430449cf8ac917e347897d46>

Fire and Rescue

Volume and potential harm: High volume / Varied levels of individual and community harm

CSPs with consideration: All Partnership Areas

Summary:

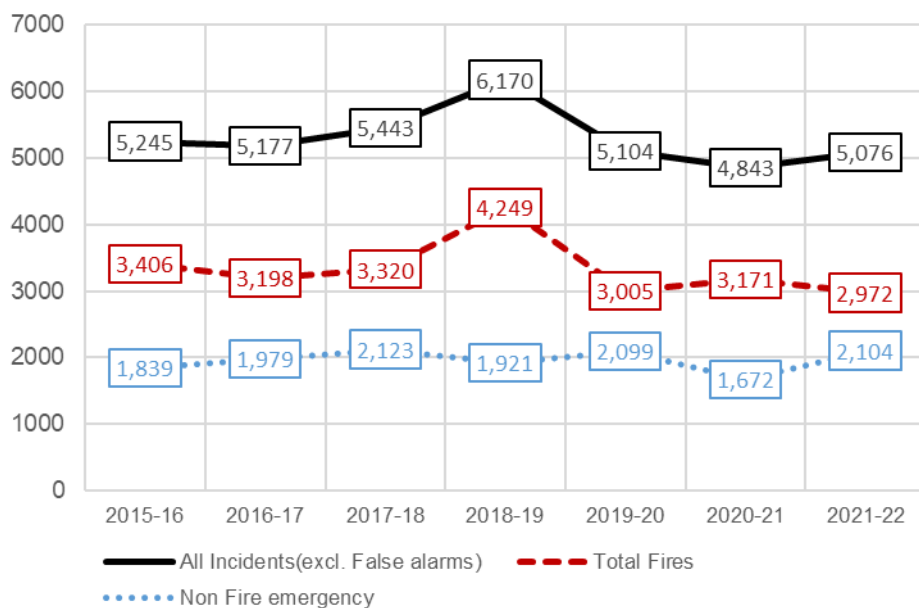
Nationally, Fire and Rescue Service's (FARS) incidents in 2021-22 (577,104) have increased from 2020-21 (518,270) as well as being the highest since 2011-12 (606,941).

This increase can be attributed to non-fire emergencies, with more requests to assist other agencies. Incident numbers during 2020-21, effected by lockdowns during the pandemic, showed a decrease, particularly in the level of false alarms and non-fire emergencies of which road traffic collisions had a significant decrease.

The national increase in 2021-22 compared to 2011-12, is mainly due increase in Non-fire emergencies, such as assisting other agencies, although, incident numbers are much lower than 20 years ago (2001-02; 990,793). While incident demand has decreased over time, Fire and Rescue Service's continued focus on prevention work has been sustained. During 2021-22, 698,648 home fire safety visits were conducted across England.

In 2020-21, Staffordshire had followed the national trend with a lower-level demand again effected by fewer non-fire emergencies. Overall demand in 2021-22 has remained consistent with previous years, with no significant increase in non-emergency incidents as seen nationally. Both nationally and locally, climate change continues to be a significant risk, with likely increases in wildfire and flood-related incidents.

Fire and Rescue Incidents (Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent, 2015-16 to 2021-22)



To reduce the risk of fire, the service has continued to target older persons and people living alone through its prevention activities. Both groups are more likely to be injured or killed in a fire if it were to occur. Other significant causes of fire continue to be cooking and faulty electrical appliances which drive are large proportion of incidents, however smoking materials cause fewer fires, but have disproportionally higher numbers of casualties. Mental and physical health also have an impact on an individual's ability to escape from a fire.

With the impacts of the Cost-of-Living Crisis, the risk of fire to individuals and households is likely to increase, particularly in areas with higher deprivation. National research and modelling, through the National Fire Chief's Council (NFCC), has identified which factors are most closely linked to the likelihood and consequence of a fire. Factors include, poor health, unemployment, overcrowded households, social renters, households with poor energy ratings, and English, not the first language.

The service continues to have a strong focus on the safety and operational response to tall buildings following the Grenfell Tower fire. As well as the service's continued emphasis on fire safety audits, building safety compliance and the promotion and fitting of sprinkler systems, from January 2023, new regulations make it a requirement in law for responsible persons of high-rise blocks of flats to provide information to Fire and Rescue Services to assist them to plan and, if needed, provide an effective operational response.

Safer Roads

Volume and potential harm: Moderate volume / Moderate to substantial individual harm / Moderate community harm

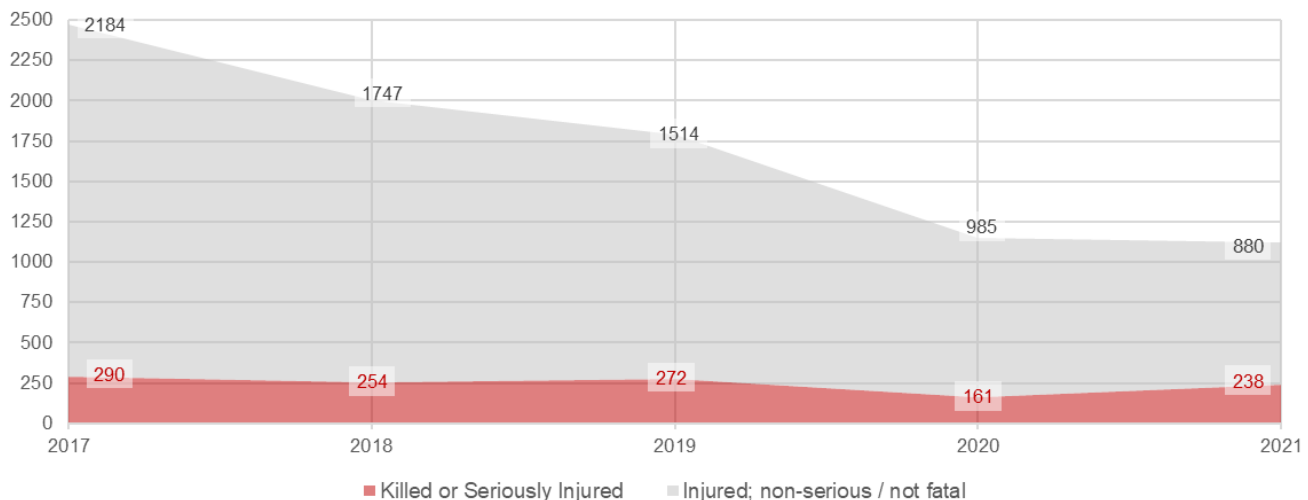
CSPs with consideration: All Partnership Areas

Summary: There have been reductions in overall casualties on roads in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent over the past five years. While there were a total of 2,474 casualties on local roads in 2017 - these have fallen consistently year on year (including pre-Covid) with 1,118 casualties recorded in 2021 – equivalent to a 55% reduction.

However, while casualties have reduced overall – the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) has remained fairly constant and has seen more modest reductions (-18%). The result is that while the overall number of casualties have reduced, the proportion which are KSI has increased – from 13% of casualties in 2017 to 21% in 2021.

Over the past five years, on average, five people per week were killed or seriously injured on local roads.

Figure 2: Number of road user casualties, Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent (2017 to 2021)



While most casualties on local roads are not serious or fatal (79%) there are some road users which are at far greater risk than others of being KSI in a collision than others.

Between 2017 and 2021, for every 10 people who were KSI on roads in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent:

- 4 were in cars (including taxis and minibuses)
- 2 were on motorcycles
- 2 were pedestrians
- 1 was on a pedal cycle
- 1 was in a van / HGV / bus or other vehicle

Motorcyclists are by far the highest risk road user group in terms of the proportion of injuries which are serious or fatal, followed by pedestrians. Between 2017 and 2021 on average one motorcyclist and one pedestrian per week were killed or serious injured in the local area. Although this rate (1 per week) is the same for both road users, while 35% of pedestrians who are injured in collisions are KSI - this increases to 48% amongst motorcyclists.

Road Safety also remains a considerable public concern. While evidence is only anecdotal at this time, there are many comments nationally and from local communities that since the periods of limited road use during lockdowns, post-lockdown driving has become more dangerous, as a result of speeding and more erratic driving habits.

Direction of travel: Reduction in overall casualties. Limited change in KSI (with exception of lockdown periods).

Public expectation: Substantial

At risk groups: Motorcyclists, pedestrians, and those on pedal cycles are particularly vulnerable road users and the most likely to be seriously injured or killed when road collisions take place.

While in the past rural roads have seen a greater proportion of road casualties result in persons being killed or serious injured, in recent data the proportion of casualties KSI on rural roads (21%) has been consistent with the proportion seen on urban roads (also 21%) and the overall rate for the area (21%).

Modern Slavery

Volume and potential harm:

Small volume / Severe individual harm / Substantial community harm

CSPs with priority:

East Staffordshire, (Newcastle-under-Lyme), Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent

CSPs with consideration: All remaining CSP areas

Summary:

Modern Slavery refers to the offences of human trafficking, slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can then be considered as five sub-threats: sexual exploitation of adults; trafficking of adults into conditions of labour exploitation; trafficking of adults into conditions of criminal exploitation; trafficking of minors into conditions of sexual, criminal or labour exploitation; and other forms of exploitation¹¹.

The scale and visibility of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has continued to increase in recent years. In the last year (2021-22) there were just over 100 recorded Modern Slavery offences in the local area – compared to an average of 78 per year in the years pre-pandemic. Offences have been recorded in every local Safety Partnership area. As Modern Slavery offences are largely hidden, it is still considered that recorded increases represent improved detection of offences, rather than an increase in the number of offences taking place.

Local Modern Slavery concerns continue to comprise of offences relating to Forced or Compulsory Labour and Holding Persons in Slavery or Servitude, and to a lesser extent Human Trafficking and Facilitation of Travel with a view to Exploitation. In addition to recorded and prosecuted criminal offences, there have been a number of incidents which have been flagged for potential Modern Slavery concerns and remain under further investigation.

Known victims and perpetrators of Modern Slavery offences in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are predominantly White British, although there have been increases in cases with victims who are Albanian. There remain small numbers of Romanian, Slovakian and Vietnamese victims and perpetrators. Perpetrators often target those with the same geographic origin – and as such the ethnicity of both victim and perpetrator are usually the same.

British victims tend to be those who have fallen on difficult times, often with alcohol or substance misuse challenges, making them vulnerable to promises of well-paid work complete with accommodation. Non-British victims are often brought into the UK from areas of conflict and/or economic hardship, with the promise of a new life, usually paying significant sums of money for transportation.

Frequently traffickers will add debt on to the money already paid and expect those being illegally trafficked to either pay additional money or work for the traffickers until the additional 'debt' has been paid off – in some instances this is linked to County Lines drug supply, with victims expected to manage cannabis farms/cultivations.

While the number of offences recorded in Tamworth recently does not make Modern Slavery a key priority for the local area, it is a challenge which is present locally, and still requires a degree of consideration.

Although numbers are low, the level of OCG activity related to Human Trafficking (related to Modern Slavery and Exploitation) and Organised Immigration Offending is of some concern in limited parts of the force-area – with criminals involved in these offences also often involved in the smuggling of other commodities and money laundering.

Direction of travel: Visibility and detection of offences improving

Public expectation: Substantial

Local hotspots and at risk groups:

To be discussed with relevant leads at Staffordshire Police as required for Community Safety Planning

¹¹ NCA – National Strategic Assessment of Serious and Organised Crime 2018

Quality of Life and Wider Determinants

Across Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent, not everyone experiences the same quality of life; there are several communities which face considerable disadvantage and deprivation, as well as pockets of affluence and advantage. There are a range of factors which affect individual quality of life, future life chances, and overall vulnerability.

Factors of most concern are deprivation, economic inactivity and financial stress, crime and ill-health related to alcohol and substance dependence/misuse, social isolation, as well as children and young people and vulnerable adults in need of safeguarding against abuse and criminal exploitation.

It is clear that the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic (including its impact on global supply chains) and the growing impact of the war in Ukraine are creating challenges in the UK – both in terms of inflation in the cost of everyday essentials (such as food, energy, and fuel) and pressures on government finances and fiscal decision-making.

At the time of this report (November 2022) analysts at the Bank of England consider the UK to be at the start of a long period of economic recession. Experience from the deep period of global recession from 2007 to 2009 suggests that many more people are likely to become vulnerable during the coming 12-24 months, and many of those already considered vulnerable are likely to become even more so.

Tamworth, and particularly the Glascoate area of the CSP area, has historically experienced challenges around children's safeguarding demand – particularly relating to high rates of children and young people subject to Children's Social Care interventions such as Child Protection Plans and levels of children in care (Looked After Children).

While rates of conceptions amongst under 16 year olds in Tamworth have previously been significantly higher than national levels they have showed very little significant change over the last two years (2019 and 2020) and are statistically similar to national levels at present.

School attainment at KeyStage 4 (previously GCSE now Attainment 8) is below the national level, and has been for a period of time, which may have links to slightly higher local levels of universal credit claims amongst younger people. Latest attainment data (2020-21) shows that average Attainment 8 scores in Tamworth (47.1) have not improved significantly since 2019-20 (46.1) are well below national levels (50.9) and amongst the lowest five scoring Local Authority areas in the West Midlands.

Missing the national standard for KS4 can be particularly problematic, as it can act as a barrier to accessing college and sixth form learning and as a barrier to securing apprenticeships. There are risks that this might result in limited employment opportunities and make some young people more vulnerable to being criminally exploited.

The pandemic and lockdowns have had a considerable impact on Universal Credit claims both nationally and locally. In Tamworth, during the first lockdown the Claimant Count (percentage of working age adults claiming universal credit) doubled within two months between February 2020 (3.2%) and May 2020 (6.4%). This is in line with rates seen nationally. As at the end of September 2021 this rate had reduced (4.8%) but remains higher than pre-pandemic.

A good proportion of adults are in work in Tamworth – with a claimant count of 3.5% of working adults – which is similar to the national level and a notable reduction from the 6.2% seen at the peak of the pandemic (March 2021).

Earnings in Tamworth have managed to catch up with the national average (an increase of 14% locally). However with considerable inflation levels observed in 2021 and 2022 there are still many who are likely to be in full time work, but still experiencing economic hardship. Affordability of housing is a considerable challenge, although in line with the national and regional pictures, with the average home in Tamworth costing 7.9 times the average local salary.

Healthy lifestyles are a significant concern for Tamworth; particularly healthy weights for adults. Latest data (2020-21) shows that 75% of adults in Tamworth have a BMI score which sits in the Overweight or Obese range. This is significantly higher than the national level (64%) and shows a local increase from the previous year (71%, 2019-20).

While alcohol-dependency and related concerns have reduced in Tamworth in recent years, latest Public Health data (2020-21) shows that hospital admissions for alcohol related conditions have not increased since the previous Strategic Assessment, but still remain significantly above the national level. While hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions are high, alcohol-specific deaths in Tamworth are in line with national levels.

There are some concerns around older adults in Tamworth; in previous years, rates of hospital admissions due to falls in both over 65s and over 80s were significantly above national levels. Although these rates are now (2020-21) in line with levels seen across England, fall-related admissions amongst the over 80s in Tamworth are still very close to being significantly above the national level.

Public Confidence & Feeling the Difference

It should be noted, that in 2019, the decision was made to redevelop the approach to a Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent public confidence residents' survey. As such the Feeling the Difference survey ceased.

The final wave of the Feeling the Difference surveys were completed in late 2018 with a new approach to surveys in development. However, at this present time a longitudinal replacement for Feeling the Difference has not been implemented.

The previous survey was conducted on a 'doorstep' basis and face-to-face, something which was not possible during the pandemic. This is not solely a local challenge; surveys nationally were affected by the pandemic, including those conducted by the Office for National Statistics such as the Crime Survey for England & Wales.

Findings from relevant public perception surveys will be added into future refreshes as relevant.

Appendices

Appendix A: Overall recommendations

Ensure that partnerships maintain links with Staffordshire Police, through the Knowledge Hub and local Policing Commanders, in order to identify emerging risks and priorities in 'real time' as they occur throughout the year – including making use of available Business Intelligence resources such as the Staffordshire Police Knowledge Hub BRAIN Gateway – as well as making use of relevant emerging risk assessment and strategic documents.

Partnerships should engage with Police Thematic Leads for each of their identified areas of priority in order to engage with and influence the Police response to priority challenges.

Ensure that partnerships remain engaged with relevant Needs and Risk Assessments developed through the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office, through Local Authorities, and in other Safety Partnership areas, so that emerging learning and recommendations can be reflected in ongoing partnership strategy and delivery.

Where services have been commissioned centrally, Safety Partnership areas and services should engage with one-another in order to share knowledge and expertise, to ensure that delivery is appropriately meeting local demand, and compliments any existing delivery and services.

Safety Partnerships should continue to share best practice with one another and explore and develop opportunities for joint working – particularly where challenges exist in multiple partnership areas or cross borders.

The full partnership should explore approaches which will allow young people to anonymously report concerns around crime, radicalisation or extremist behaviour, and criminal exploitation - which can then be escalated through mechanisms such as Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) or similar. In particular, but not limited to, giving young people an opportunity to communicate concerns that they may have about;

- Potential criminal exploitation of themselves or others (incl. gang-related activity/recruitment)
- Knowledge of weapons possession or 'stashing'¹² amongst their peers
- Drug or alcohol misuse (their own, or that of others)
- Potential radicalisation or extremism, or other concerning hate-related behaviour
- Knowledge of other criminal behaviour in the community which is a cause for concern

Following the discontinuation of the 'Feeling the Difference' survey which measured public confidence and perceptions, there is a need for partnerships, and possibly the wider pan-Staffordshire partnership to explore the most effective way that this can be replaced – so that Safety Partnerships have a consistent method of gauging what is most important to their communities and individual's perceptions and experiences of community safety in their area.

While budget constraints have made the commissioning and delivery of primary research within communities more challenging, there remains a need to be able to hear and consider the public voice in a broad sense.

¹² Stashing refers to the practice of hiding knives and other weapons in public places, such as parks or undergrowth, so that they are available for individuals to use in violent offences – without the additional risk of being in possession of the weapon.

Appendix B: Specific recommendations for key priorities

While the analysis behind report has considered all potential priorities from a 'blank page' perspective – where priorities have remained from the previous full assessment, there has been consideration for whether recommendations have needed to change or remain consistent with those already in place.

As a result, many recommendations will be a continuation of those deemed relevant and pertinent from the previous assessment.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

There should be consideration for how partnerships can support and develop a coordinated response to ASB across agencies. This should include work to develop the understanding and use of available tools and powers as part of a joint response to ASB.

Work is needed to better understand where Hate is a factor in ASB and identify if there are communities where Hate-related ASB is of particular concern. Where there are concerns that ASB is hate-related, Partnerships should consider whether circumstances are such at the perpetrator may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and require referral into Prevent.

The pan-Staffordshire ASB Strategy group should continue to engage with Safety Partnerships and vice versa to help improve our knowledge and understanding of ASB in the force-area There is a need to continue to develop understanding around risk and protective factors affecting young people and their involvement in ASB.

Partnerships should continue to share information on perpetrators and particularly repeat and younger perpetrators (of both public place ASB and Neighbour Disputes) to ensure that individuals receive multi-agency support where appropriate in order to reduce re-offending. [Cross-cutting to Repeat & Persistent Offending recommendations]

As much ASB is public-place Rowdy & Inconsiderate Behaviour, Partnership areas should continue to consider options to limit ASB in hot-spot areas, including the use of provisions such as Public Space Protection Orders.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

Safety Partnerships should consider the implications of the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) which notably has defined children who witness or experience DA as victims in their own right.

The Act further adds statutory duties around the provision of support within DA-related Safe Accommodation and a requirement for responsible authorities to form DA Local Partnership Boards, which include oversight over support delivered within Safe Accommodation: CSPs should ensure that they engage with these accordingly.

It is essential that Safety Partnerships remain engaged with relevant pan-Staffordshire DA boards and commissioners, in order to shape how the changes introduced within the act will support local residents and their children.

There is a continued need for collaborative working across the whole force-area to support the DA agenda, led by established pan-Staffordshire governance arrangements and delivered through the DA Strategy and Action Plan.

There is a continuing need for partners in front-line service to have a strong awareness and understanding of signs of non-physical types of domestic abuse, (e.g. coercive control, financial abuse, psychological abuse including stalking). There is a need to continue to raise public awareness around these types of domestic abuse.

Reaching out to hard to engage cohorts; including men, BME, LGBTQ+, those with Learning Difficulties, Mental Health needs, those in rural areas, as well as those from isolated or marginalised communities is vital in order to give individuals the confidence to come forward and seek support. This should remain linked to other services such as mental health, drug and alcohol misuse and homelessness, as well as education providers from age 14 and up.

Safety Partnerships should engage with partners to develop and improve understanding of Stalking and Harassment offences, and continue to improve awareness and understanding of the Stalking Protection Act (2019) and how the Police can apply for Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs) to address offending and protect victims.

Community Cohesion & Tackling Extremism

Safety Partnerships should engage with the development of Community Cohesion partnership work through the Safer & Stronger Communities Strategic Group, which will link in to existing strategic Hate Crime work and the Prevent board. Partnerships should also strongly consider whether there is a need to work with local partners and stakeholders (such as voluntary sector partners) to develop local Community Cohesion strategy for their local area.

As people spend more time online it should be considered that there is increased risk around online radicalisation. Partnerships should continue to raise awareness of extremism and potential signs of radicalisation within communities, and particularly in those communities at risk of emerging extreme right-wing and far-right extremism. Young people, parents/guardians and community members should have an awareness of prevalent extremist groups and those on the periphery of extremist views.

There should be additional consideration for children who receive home education, including those who started to be home educated during the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure that they are receiving a well-rounded education in order to prevent any extremist teachings.

All Safety Partnership areas must continue with Prevent activity and the work of the Prevent Board; maintaining and building further positive engagement between communities, police and partners; to enable identification of key individuals who may be radicalising others, and to safeguard any vulnerable persons.

There should be central consideration about whether there may be a need for enhanced mechanisms to allow young people to raise concerns if they feel they or their peers are becoming radicalised or showing extremist behaviour.

There remains a need for the Prevent Board and Safety Partnership areas to support partner agencies with low Prevent referral rates, including supporting their understanding of the referral mechanism to improve referral quality.

Safety Partnerships and Prevent partners should continue raising partner and community awareness of existing and emerging far-right and extreme right-wing groups – as well as right-wing nationalist groups which operate on the periphery of extremism. Partnerships should encourage reporting of any associated concerns through usual channels such as Prevent.

Safety Partnerships should engage with other partners to improve knowledge and understanding of hate crime amongst groups who are less present in recorded incidents, in particular; the LGBTQ+ community, those with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, and those with mental health needs.

Drugs and County Lines

Given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on physical health, mental health and well-being, employment, and education – in addition to the emerging Cost of Living Crisis and recession – it should be considered that there are likely to be sharp increases in numbers of people and families considered to be vulnerable over the coming 12-24 months. Partnerships must consider that this will not only increase demand on support services and partners, but also increase numbers of individuals who may be at increased risk of criminal exploitation. It is important that mechanisms to document, share, and escalate concerns around exploitation and vulnerability can cope with increased pressure. [Duplicated within Vulnerable Persons recommendations]

Safety Partnerships should continue to develop and enhance partner and community awareness and sharing of concerns linked to County Lines; primarily the signs of criminal exploitation of young people through organised crime and gang activity, and the signs of criminal exploitation of vulnerable adults through cuckooing activity. Partnerships should continue to promote and encourage community use of Crime Stoppers to allow anonymous reporting.

Safety Partnerships should continue to develop and embed an approach which primarily treats vulnerable individuals who have been criminally exploited as victims in need of support, and ensure that there are targeted early intervention and prevention opportunities in place for individuals who are being or who have been criminally exploited.

There is an ongoing need to continue education in secondary schools and pupil referral units (PRUs) around risks attached to gang membership and organised crime, including ensuring that the mechanisms exist to allow young people to appropriately and anonymously raise concerns about the criminal exploitation of themselves or their peers. Centrally there is a need to ensure that those working with children in care (LAC) such as Care Homes and Foster Carers are aware of signs of criminal exploitation and feel confident in reporting concerns as appropriate.

Serious Violence (including Public Place Violence)

While activity in public places (including activity linked to the night-time economy) has increased post-pandemic, this has not to the extent which was initially anticipated. Although levels are not quite at pre-pandemic levels, it is highly recommended that Safety Partnerships continue to anticipate that violent incidents in public places and attached to the night-time economy will increase in line with increases in footfall.

All Safety Partnerships should remain engaged with the development and delivery of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Serious Violence Reduction Strategy.

Partnerships should continue work with licensing authorities to identify and tackle heavy drinking in areas with high levels of alcohol-related disorder and public place violence. Authorities should work with licenced premises to support staff in recognising signs of potential violence amongst individuals/groups and take appropriate preventative action.

There remains a need for pubs, clubs and bars to have mechanisms whereby those who feel at risk of harm for any reason, can covertly raise concerns and be supported to safely leave the premises to a place of safety. It is important that mechanisms are well-publicised and available to anyone who feels concerned for their safety for any reason.

There are a number of areas which see repeat instances of public place violence, there may be value in exploring options for expanding the 'Safer Places' scheme to allow younger people who feel at risk of violence or harm to use the scheme to find a place of safety while Police are contacted.

To reduce re-offending, joined-up multi-agency support should exist for first-time violent offenders (including those who do not progress through the criminal justice system) in order to support and address relevant behavioural needs, any needs relating to mental health, and any relevant needs relating to alcohol or substance misuse.

Partnerships should continue to focus on early intervention for young people at risk of gang involvement and should continue to engage in the delivery and development of gang prevention and disruption strategy as appropriate.

There is ongoing need to work with education settings, pupil referral units, care homes, prisons, youth groups, other youth services, and housing associations to raise awareness of the dangers, risks and legal repercussions associated with carrying knives and other weapons. Local evidence suggests a need to focus on those aged 11-18 years.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Recently published strategies from both the UK Government and Staffordshire Police have a renewed focus on tackling and ending Violence Against Women and Girls. Given the role of the wider partnership in achieving this, Safety Partnerships should remain engaged with developments in VAWG strategy, and where appropriate and relevant, should contribute to the development of any related delivery plans.

Vehicle Crime

There is a need to raise awareness of measures that individuals can take to reduce the risk of becoming victims of such types of crime, particularly in high risk and hot-spot areas, and amongst high-risk groups. This is equally the case for business and small business owners who rely on vehicles as a business asset.

Safety Partnerships should continue to engage with Staffordshire Police to identify emerging hot-spot areas and vehicle makes/models which are at particular risk, in order to direct relevant preventative activity as appropriate.

Vulnerable Persons (incl. Safeguarding and Mental Health)

Given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on physical health, mental health and well-being, employment, and education – in addition to the emerging Cost of Living Crisis and recession – it should be considered that there are likely to be sharp increases in numbers of people and families considered to be vulnerable over the coming 12-24 months. Partnerships must consider that this will not only increase demand on support services and partners, but also increase numbers of individuals who may be at increased risk of criminal exploitation. It is important that mechanisms to document, share, and escalate concerns around exploitation and vulnerability can cope with increased pressure. [Duplicated within Drug Supply and County Lines recommendations]

Alcohol is a cross-cutting theme across a range of priorities – partners should continue to consider where alcohol may be a factor in offending behaviour or in levels of vulnerability, ensuring support and intervention includes alcohol-related support. Support should be particularly intensive for young people with identified emerging alcohol concerns.

Being under the influence of alcohol remains a factor that disproportionately leads to casualties in dwelling fires, it is vital that those delivering support to individuals around alcohol also assess their residences for fire-related risks.

Centrally there is a need to continue to promote activity to raise awareness of the significant risks attached to drug and substance misuse, including the significant health and psychological risks attached to psychoactive substances previously referred to as 'legal highs'. There is a need to ensure that there is appropriate multi-agency support for young people with drug-related and suspected drug-related offending, in order to deter drug use and provide early treatment where addiction or dependency may be a concern. This should include work with schools, education providers, children's homes and foster carers where appropriate, to ensure that there is a sound understanding of the early signs of substance misuse, so that young people can be supported at the earliest possible opportunity.

There is a need to continue work with appropriate partners, so that workers are able to identify those with drug and substance misuse needs who are at risk of, or may be the victims of, criminal exploitation through activities such as cuckooing or through gang or organised crime activity, and appropriately document, share and escalate concerns.

Stronger knowledge of contextual safeguarding is essential in protecting vulnerable people. Partnerships should help lead the way in moving thinking around safeguarding forwards to address extra-familial risk; including supporting businesses in developing awareness of risks to young people and developing confidence in reporting any concerns.

It is essential that young people are aware of signs of potential criminal exploitation, and that mechanisms exist to allow young people to safely communicate concerns about criminal exploitation of themselves or their peers.

There is an ongoing need to keep prevention and early intervention work at the heart of community safety strategy, particularly focussing on young people who are at risk of either offending or becoming victims of crime. This must include work with looked-after-children (LAC) who are a particularly at-risk group and children in Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) who are greater risk of coming into contact with the criminal justice system and increased risk of exploitation.

Mental health is a cross-cutting area of need, with many of the most vulnerable victims and offenders (including those under 18) experiencing mental health challenges. It is recommended that partners continue to consider the impact of mental health on individual's levels of vulnerability and on their behaviour, ensuring that there are packages of appropriate multi-agency support for those with appropriate levels of need.

Repeat and Persistent Offending:

Continue to engage with partners and Offender Management (as appropriate) to ensure that are appropriate packages of multi-agency support for offenders, particularly those with drug and substance misuse and dependency. Support should be particularly intensive for younger offenders (under 21) who have drug dependencies or drug and substance misuse challenges.

Partnerships should consider that those who commit repeat acquisitive offences in order to sustain drug or alcohol misuse or dependency are at high risk of criminal exploitation and may need additional support and consideration at multi-agency risk assessment meetings.

Partnerships should continue to share information on perpetrators and particularly repeat perpetrators (of both public place ASB and Neighbour Disputes) to ensure that individuals receive multi-agency support where appropriate. It is particularly important that young people who are repeat perpetrators of ASB are identified and supported appropriately to prevent further patterns of offending. [Duplicated within ASB recommendations]

Continue activity with domestic abuse perpetrator programme providers. Approaches should consider additional support needs for offenders around alcohol and drug/substance misuse, mental health, and behavioural and emotional needs and challenges. Support should be particularly intensive for those who are first-time domestic offenders, and domestic offenders who are under 21 years old.

Fraud

In addition to door-step crime and bogus traders, telephone and courier fraud still present a risk to particularly vulnerable and socially isolated groups. As victims are often not connected digitally, it is essential that awareness raising activity includes a focussed element for identified high-risk groups who might be missed by online and digital campaigns.

With growth in online auction/marketplace fraud and crypto-currency/investment scams carried out through social media, those who are connected digitally are also at increasing risk – awareness raising should consider younger age groups who carry out much of their non-essential shopping online, as well as older age groups who are new to using online services for essential shopping, and younger people active on social media.

Safety Partnerships should support local services and communities in recognising signs of potential fraud and raising awareness of different types of fraud tactics. It is critical that carers, relatives, friends or neighbours of someone who is vulnerable know how to spot signs of fraud.

It remains beneficial to centrally develop and implement a pan-Staffordshire Fraud strategy; to provide knowledge and tools directed towards residents and businesses, and to create a force-wide structured approach to fraud prevention.

Preventative activity remains essential; it is important to raise awareness of types of fraud, and the action that individuals can take in order to verify legitimacy if they are unsure of whether activity is fraudulent or not.

Awareness raising activity must involve mechanisms for reaching those who live in isolation, those with additional needs and especially those who are not digitally, socially or geographically well-connected.

There is a need to develop a co-ordinated approach to doorstep crime across the range of agencies. There remains a need to raise awareness of the signs of doorstep crime, as well as provide advice and support to carers, relatives, friends or neighbours of those identified as vulnerable. At a central level there is a need to consider how doorstep crime can be addressed with existing and emerging strategy, with CSPs contributing towards ongoing development.

Businesses should be kept aware of links between cyber-security and Fraud risks attached to 'ransom-ware' cyber-attacks, and how to protect themselves.

Fire and Rescue

Safety Partnerships need to remain closely engaged with Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) and consider where the Partnership's activity and planning can support and compliment the Staffordshire Fire & Rescue Safety Plan, and draw on knowledge and insight held by SFRS.

There is a need for Safety Partnerships to consider how information is shared with SFRS in order to share key information, in order to help build a more detailed understanding of risks to communities, and to identify those who may be at greatest risk.

There is a need for partnerships to consider how they can support engagement and awareness-raising and activity and campaigns led by SFRS. There is considerable evidence held by the Fire Service around risk-factors associated with serious harm through fire; it is important that Safety Partnerships access this and factor this knowledge into their own local planning where relevant.

Safer Roads

The proportion of road user casualties which result in serious or fatal injury has risen in the past 12 months. Continuation of proactive preventative work remains key – particularly with identified vulnerable road users; Safety Partnerships should continue to engage with the Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) around community engagement and prevention/education activity and ongoing risk assessment activity.

Partnership areas with rural road networks should consider whether there are specific communities which may benefit from being supported to engage with and volunteer as part of the Community Speed Watch scheme.

Where Safety Partnerships have concerns about road use in specific locations within their partnership area, they should engage with the SSRP to discuss whether there is a need and opportunity for targeted enforcement activity.

Business Crime

Findings from Staffordshire Commissioner's Office report on Business Crime suggests that there may be a need for greater engagement with smaller businesses in partnership areas, in order to better understand their needs and how they are impacted by crime and disorder.

Although instances of Fraud committed against businesses in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent have reduced slightly there are concerns that (similarly to individuals) businesses do not always report Fraud and Cybercrime offences (such as ransomware attacks). There may be a need to ensure that local businesses are connected with appropriate expertise in order to mitigate the risk of such offences.

Continue to engage with Business Crime Advisors at the Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce as appropriate. Engage with the development and delivery of pan-Staffordshire Business Crime strategy.

Modern Slavery

Safety Partnerships should continue with co-ordinated partnership activity to tackle modern slavery, including the implementation of consistent training packages to improve awareness and knowledge of the factors which may highlight victims and perpetrators and to increase our understanding of the scale and scope of this threat.

Safety Partnerships should contribute to the multi-agency Anti-Slavery Partnership Tactical Group; to assist with early intervention for victims, disruption of offender networks and support a co-ordinated approach to enforcement activity. It is important for partners to remain engaged and in tune with national discussion around Modern Slavery, and developments to make the National Referral Mechanism better tailored for victimised children and young people.

It is important for partners and front-line services to have strong awareness of the range of offending included under Modern Slavery including that many victims and perpetrators of Domestic Servitude and Forced Labour offences in Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent are British. Safety Partnerships should remain engaged with Staffordshire Police and the Police Knowledge Hub in order to become aware of any shifts or emerging changes in Modern Slavery.

Appendix C: Methodology

This current Strategic Assessment is the first (main) assessment in a new three-year cycle; with refresh reports due in 2023 and 2024. As such, the risk assessment process this year has largely been completed from the ground up – rather than refreshing the position against existing priorities.

Although restrictions relating to the Coronavirus pandemic have been removed for some time at the time of this report (November 2022) there is still evidence that locally, not all types of crime and risks to community safety have returned to pre-pandemic levels. However, equally, there have been some community safety risks which were either unchanged or exacerbated because of the pandemic, periods of lockdown, and social restrictions.

The prioritisation setting process for 2021-22 has included a refreshed assessment of risk, volume, frequency, and harm associated with a broad range of types of crime and community safety challenges. This has been completed using the Management of Risk in Law Enforcement (MoRiLE) approach - with harm scoring and intelligence work led by the Staffordshire Police Knowledge Hub.

To identify potential priorities, analysis has looked at each potential priority, considering:

- Levels of physical / psychological / financial harm caused to individuals.
- Levels of harm caused to communities.
- Levels of harm caused to the environment.
- Frequency and volume at which each potential priority occurs.
- Direction of travel in frequency and volume (current trend and forecast).
- Levels of public expectation.

Priority identification and setting has also taken account of existing priorities, analysis, reporting and intelligence, as well as strategic priorities identified by key stakeholders. It has also considered nationally emerging challenges, including those which are likely to be considered a high priority to members of the public. Final priorities set in this report have been validated through discussion with individual CSP leads and relevant stakeholders.

Appendix D: Data tables

Local areas (small geography) recommended for priority focus:

NB: Areas have been identified through a combination of different elements of local area data (including crime data and police intelligence and insight) covering multiple years, including pre-pandemic. Assessment of areas has considered levels of crime and disorder over time and the overall levels of vulnerability and risk in each area.

Due to levels of crime, disorder, vulnerability, and risk some areas are considered a high priority at a force-wide level, while some areas experience challenges which are a priority for their local Safety Partnership area, but which are not likely to require the same intensity of resource as those which are a force-wide priority.

Identified as a force-wide priority (presented in alphabetical order of Safety Partnership)			
Neighbourhood	Partnership Area	Current Crime (2021-22) Per 1,000 population	Current ASB (2021-22) Per 1,000 population
Cannock South & West	Cannock Chase	112.5	24.3
Cannock East & North	Cannock Chase	60.6	16.8
Burton Urban	East Staffordshire	63.5	17.0
Burton Town & Uxbridge	East Staffordshire	143.4	41.2
Winshill & Stapenhill	East Staffordshire	56.9	21.7
Newcastle Town	Newcastle-under-Lyme	159.0	55.1
Stafford Town	Stafford	132.3	41.8
Stafford South	Stafford	63.5	25.3
Etruria & Hanley	Stoke-on-Trent	307.8	85.1
Hanley Park & Shelton	Stoke-on-Trent	306.8	93.9
Blurton & Longton West	Stoke-on-Trent	106.5	33.7
Fenton West & Mount Pleasant	Stoke-on-Trent	130.5	38.8
Bentilee & Ubberley	Stoke-on-Trent	123.1	41.7
Identified as a local priority (presented in alphabetical order of Safety Partnership)			
Neighbourhood	Partnership Area	Current Crime (2021-22) Per 1,000 population	Current ASB (2021-22) Per 1,000 population
Brereton, Ravenhill & Hagley	Cannock Chase	58.4	16.9
Hednesford	Cannock Chase	59.5	17.5
North Lichfield	Lichfield	81.3	26.6
Burntwood	Lichfield	46.3	11.7
Chasetown	Lichfield	99.9	45.3
Kidsgrove Parish	Newcastle-under-Lyme	54.7	16.0
Newcastle West	Newcastle-under-Lyme	73.7	29.7
Newcastle North	Newcastle-under-Lyme	57.0	21.1
Wombourne	South Staffordshire	48.6	10.7
Cheslyn Hay & Saredon	South Staffordshire	38.8	10.6
Trysull & Seisdon	South Staffordshire	55.4	9.8
Leek Town	Staffordshire Moorlands	70.4	19.7
Cheadle Town	Staffordshire Moorlands	65.7	20.8
Tamworth Town	Tamworth	196.6	36.1
Mercian & Spital	Tamworth	54.4	11.3
Belgrave	Tamworth	65.9	17.8

Appendix E: Mosaic Groups - Source: Experian Mosaic 7 (2022)

Group/Type	Group/Type Name	One-Line Description
A	Country Living	Well-off owners in rural locations enjoying the benefits of country life
B	Prestige Positions	Established families in large detached homes living upmarket lifestyles
C	City Prosperity	High status city dwellers in central locations pursuing careers with high rewards
D	Domestic Success	Thriving families who are busy bringing up children and following careers
E	Suburban Stability	Mature suburban owners living settled lives in mid-range housing
F	Senior Security	Elderly people with assets who are enjoying a comfortable retirement
G	Rural Reality	Householders living in less expensive homes in village communities
H	Aspiring Homemakers	Younger households settling down in housing priced within their means
I	Urban Cohesion	Residents of settled urban communities with a strong sense of identity
J	Rental Hubs	Educated young people privately renting in urban neighbourhoods
K	Modest Traditions	Mature homeowners of value homes enjoying stable lifestyles
L	Transient Renters	Single people renting low cost homes for the short term
M	Family Basics	Families with limited resources who budget to make ends meet
N	Vintage Value	Elderly people with limited pension income, mostly living alone
O	Municipal Tenants	Urban residents renting high density housing from social landlords

This page is intentionally left blank

TAMWORTH COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2023-2026



Introduction by Chair of the Community Safety Partnership

By working together to reduce crime and ASB, our vision is to improve public perception, wellbeing and community safety in Tamworth.

All partners are very much aware of the stark links between the impact of criminal activity and a whole range of socio-economic factors. We are wholeheartedly committed to doing everything we can to tackle these issues to ensure that all people living in, working in or visiting Tamworth live good lives and meet their aspirations.

The Partnership will take a strategic approach to ensuring that our crime reduction and community safety work supports our priorities.

We will connect our approach with other areas of work to tackle the causes of crime and the factors which enable crime to flourish.

This includes:

- Prevention of crime wherever possible
- Early intervention and supporting those most vulnerable
- Targeting prolific offenders
- Targeting resources to hotspot areas
- Supporting victims
- Increasing public confidence and perception

Andrew Barratt, Chief Executive, Tamworth Borough Council

What is Tamworth Community Safety Partnership?

Tamworth Community Safety Partnership is a collection of statutory agencies working together to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour across the town.

The partnership goes further than this and includes a wide range of committed organisations, local charities, businesses, residents and community groups who work independently and together to make Tamworth a safer and stronger place.

This partnership is overseen by the Community Safety Partnership Board which is made up of the statutory partners:

- Tamworth Borough Council
- Tamworth Local Policing Team
- Staffordshire Fire & Rescue,
- Staffordshire County Council
- Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board
- Midland's Partnership Foundation Trust
- National Probation Service.

The Partnership is also supported through the collaborative work with commissioned and voluntary services including:

- Support Staffordshire
- Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS)
- New Era Domestic Abuse service
- Harmony ASB
- Uniting Staffordshire Against Crimes of Hate (USAH)
- Community Together CIC
- Heart of Tamworth
- Better Way Recovery
- Fun Club
- Beat the Cold
- Citizens Advice Mid Mercia
- Tamworth Street Angels
- Pathway

The wider role that the community and voluntary sector groups in Tamworth play in the delivery community safety outcomes is extremely important.

The main role of the partnership is to actively lead on the development and delivery of strategic approaches to a range of priority crime and community safety issues. The priorities for 2023-2026 are set out on the next page of this plan.

Delivery

The Community Safety Partnership Board will appoint theme leads from the partnership who will oversee delivery of work within that work area. Real-time data will be used to re-assess the proposed actions and report on the measures of success and ensure we can set achievable targets that make the required impact.

Theme leads will lead the collaboration and delivery of work in these areas and will report back to the Board on outcomes and performance.

An annual review and refresh will take place by the Tamworth Borough Council Infrastructure Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee who will independently scrutinise the work of the partnership.

The Partnership continues to be funded through the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (Police, Fire and Rescue, Crime) Locality Deal Fund. Commitment for 2023/24 and 2024/25 is £61, 394 per year.

OUR PRIORITIES 2023-2026

The 2022 Tamworth Community Safety Strategic Assessment has identified the following areas as priority work areas for 2023-2026

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Community Cohesion¹
(including preventing radicalisation, exploitation and hate crime)

Domestic Abuse
(Including stalking and harassment)

Drug Related Crime and Harm
(including the prevention of exploitation of young people – County Lines)

Public Place and Serious Violence
(including Violence, Abuse and Intimidation Of Women and Girls – VAIWG)

Vehicle Crime

Vulnerable Persons
(the prevention of harm to persons at risk of criminal exploitation or becoming victims of crime)

Our priorities are linked to:

[Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024](#)

[Fire and Rescue Plan 2021-2024](#)

[Staffordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2024](#)

[Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Serious Violence Strategy](#)

[Staffordshire Safeguarding Board](#)

[Staffordshire Police Violence Abuse and Intimidation Against Women and Girls Strategy](#)

¹ There is common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities; The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued; Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and, Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods

OUR KEY TARGETS

- More positive outcomes for victims
- Increased positive promotion of actions and communications across all areas
- Reduction of repeat callers across all agencies
- Improvement of identification, monitoring and resolution of problems
- Increased use of proportionate intervention powers
- Improved perception and feelings of safety

ACHIEVEMENTS 2020-23

ASB Community Safety Partnership

Working Group established

- 72 First stage Letters Issued
- 15 Community Protection Notice
- 39 Community Protection Warnings
- 6 Cannabis Letters
- 11 Good Neighbour Agreement contracts
- 15 Multi-Agency Meetings (with parents)

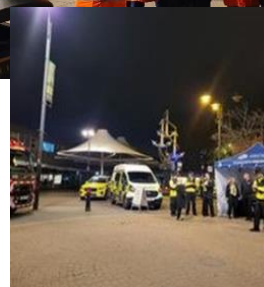
Delivery of positive diversionary activity



PCC Ben Adams trying out the equipment for the SPACE Scheme

Tamworth Nightlife

Safer Nights Operation



Community Safety Partnership Campaigns

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

209 Local people offered a room in their home.



Integration of asylum seekers



We're dementia friendly in Tamworth

The Alzheimer's Society has once again congratulated Tamworth for maintaining its Dementia Friendly Community status for the fourth year running



Water Safety Campaign



White Ribbon Campaign &

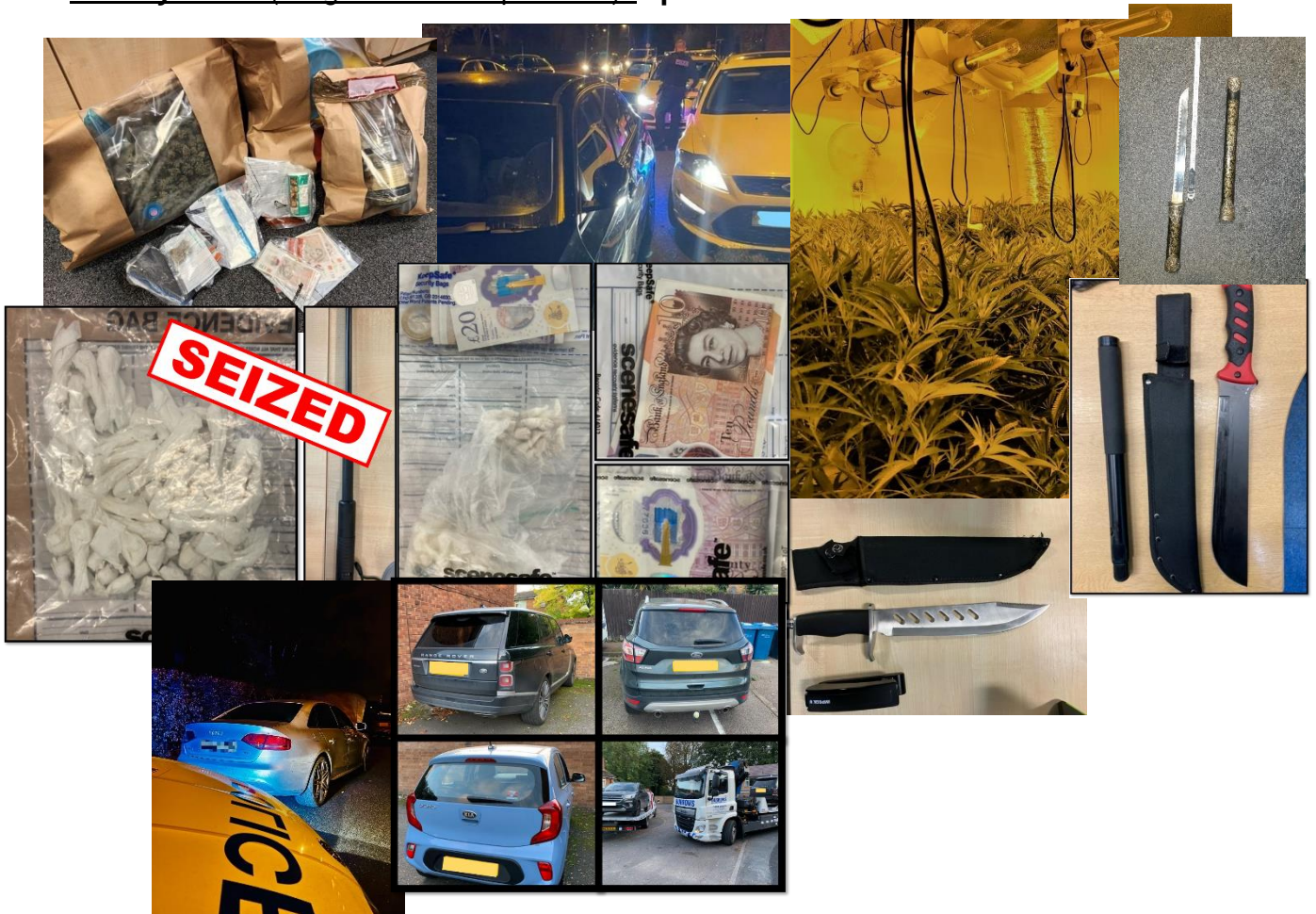
United Nations Orange The World



County Lines / Criminal Exploitation / Drug Education



County Lines (Drugs/Criminal Exploitation)/ Operation Bormus





Cleaner Tamworth
Litter pickers



Winter Relief project
(Homelessness at Heart of Tamworth)



HOW TO REPORT

Tamworth Borough Council 01827 709709 (Homelessness Option 9)

999 Emergency

101

Report on line [Staffordshire Police](http://www.staffordshire.police.uk) www.staffordshire.police.uk

[Hate Crime](#) – Uniting Staffordshire Against Crimes of Hate (USAH) – 0330 0881 339

[Harmony](#) ASB Support Service – 0808 1689 111

[Domestic Abuse](#) – New Era 0300 303 3778

[Community Together CIC](#) Befriending Line – 0808 175 4041

Mental Health Crisis Line 0808 196 3002

Tamworth Advice Centre 0808 278 7972

Home Energy Advice Tamworth (HEAT) 0800 043 2815

[Staffordshire Connects](#) (a directory of all the Help and support in your community)

[Safeguarding](#): report it - Don't wait until you are certain. Concerns of immediate harm must be reported to the police on 999 or 101.

Once you have reported to the police contact Staffordshire County Council's First Response Service. Tel: 0300 111 8007 opt 1.

Child; If you have welfare concerns about a child or young person but believe them not to be at immediate harm, contact Staffordshire County Council's First Response Service. Tel: 0300 111 8007 opt 1 or complete the Report a concern online form - Staffordshire County Council. Staffordshire Police. Tel: 101. Ask for M.A.S.H. (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Adult; If you have concerns for an adult. Tel 0345 604 2719. Email: VAStaffordshire@staffordshire.gov.uk

A trained member of staff will be available to help you between 8:30am - 5:00pm, Monday-Thursday (excluding Bank Holidays) and 8:30am - 4:30pm Fridays.

To report a concern outside of these hours, please contact the Emergency Duty Service. Tel: 0845 6042886. Text: 0845 6042886

TAMWORTH COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2023-2026					OUTLINE WORKPLAN APRIL – JUNE 2023	
	Key Actions/Projects	Priority	Leads	Linked documents	Actions and Progress	RAG
1	Review of ASB Strategic position and policies	ASB	Staffs Police/TBC	TBC ASB Policy Staffs Police ASB	TBC ASB policy due for review and linked to Service Review of Neighbourhoods Staffs Police to update ASB policy to be discussed through SCO ASB Group	
2	Re-commission of County Domestic Abuse Services and Safe Accommodation	DA	Staffs Commissioner/Domestic Abuse Commissioning Board	County Domestic Abuse Strategy	Ensure New Era are represented at local groups Representation at County meetings and actions reflected in operational work Education for front line staff	
3	Implementation of Serious Violence Duty as responsible authorities	SV	Asst Director Partnerships	Serious Violence Strategy	Attendance at Serious Violence Forum and Delivery groups and plan to be produce in line with County plan Updates to Scrutiny Summer 2023 and inclusion in workplan	
4	Deliver a range of local campaigns and seminars around Community Safety priorities	ALL	Partnership team		Campaign calendar in place Consider World café approach to problem solving hotspot and emerging issues in localities	
	Ensure Tamworth BC, relevant businesses/licenced premises have relevant processes and policies for the introduction of the PROTECT duty (Martyns Law and PALS (publicly accessible locations))	SV/TE	Asst Director Partnerships	PROTECT Duty	Working group in place – initial meeting March 2023 Attendance at County Protect and Prepare Board Development of training plans for events/venue staff	
6	Develop the Environmental Crime working group	ASB	Safer Homes and Communities Manager/Partnership Support		Successful award of grant for £25,000 for deployable cameras, trial of Littercam and environmental improvements where identified Planning under review List of fly tip hotspots to be produced	
7	Ensure a programme of Safer Nights events and operations are in place	SV	Senior Licencing Officer/Partnerships Officer	Serious Violence Strategy	Monthly licence premise inspections in place with EH and Police Quarterly Super Safer Nights in diary - all relevant partner engaged including FARS and Street Angels	

8	Develop robust partnership response to illegal encampments	CC/A SB	Asst Director Partnerships/C hief Inspector		Attendance at SCO meeting Member seminar completed County protocol and TBC process in place Work with Warwickshire Police ongoing Local communications at planning stage	
9	Review PREVENT duty and actions	V/TE	Partnerships Vulnerability Officer	CONTEST	Member of SCC group Prevent toolkit to be reviewed and actions reported	
10	Deliver diversionary activities and communications plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPACE • Fun Club 	ASB/ V	Staffordshire Commissioners Office/Partnershi ps Officer/Sports Development		Space planning in place for Summer 2022 Fun Club Commissioned for 2 years to deliver youth activities in town centre and engagement around the Borough	
11	Renew Dog Control PSPO by 31 October 2023	ASB	Safer Homes & Communities Manager/Partner ship Support and Enforcement Officer		Plans in development for work at Wigginton Cemetery Develop survey for dog walkers Consider current legislations and report to Scrutiny in September 2023	
12	Identify ASB hotspot areas through intelligence led reporting	ASB	Police/Partnershi p Support		ASB weekly meeting in place - Process to be reviewed and intelligence led	
13	Appointment of ASB Youth Engagement Worker	ASB	Safer Homes and Communities Manager/Inspect or		Worker in place by April 2023 Development of plans for targeted hotspot engagement with young people	
14	Develop approach to Asylum Seeker dispersed accommodation	CC	Asst Director Partnerships/Com munity Cohesion Officer		Attendance at West Midlands and Staffs Strategic Migration Partnership meetings CIA toolkit to be piloted to understand impact	
15	Develop Town Centre VAIWG charter and understanding of VAIWG	SV	Partnerships Officer/Police/Se nior Licencing Officer	Serious Violence Strategy	Attendance at Serious Violence Reduction Alliance meetings Develop plan with Responsible Bodies Group and with PABCIS to promote to licenced businesses Coordination with Tamworth Street Angels School Assembly visits	
16	Branding and introduction of world café engagement events	ASB	Police		School based café meetings for community resolutions and engagement on identified community issues	

17	Develop robust partnership approach to Council ASB reporting processes and actions	ASB	Safer Communities and Homes Manager		Recovery and Reset project actions	
18	Vehicle crime operations	VC	Police		Operation BORMUS - County wide operation for vehicle crime and outcomes – targeted approach to offending and disruption	
19	Drugs and young people	D	Police		Drug dogs in school programme development Concentration on intelligence led approach to County Lines exploitation	
20	Ensure joined up approach with MPFT services	V	MPFT		MH tenancy sustainment officer in place Develop Crisis café and accommodation (to be determined)	
21	Obtain White Ribbon campaign accreditation	DA	Partnerships Officer		Develop a working group and baseline information	
22	Develop baseline information and report for Purple Flag town centre status	SV	AD Growth & Regen/AD Partnerships		Report on baseline data and ability to apply for Purple Flag Status for town centre Consultants to be appointed	

This page is intentionally left blank

Staffordshire Commissioner's Funding Streams

Interim Tamworth CSP Report on spending plans

Locality Deal Fund 2022-2025 (please mark 'c' by any providers who are commissioned).

Formal spend commitments made for 2022/23		CSP Grant Award pa £61,394	
Priority	£ Commitment	Provider	
1 Anti-Social Behaviour	£30000	Youth Offending Service	
2 Public Place and Serious Violence (including Knife Crime)	£8500	Black Country Ironworks Street Angels Target Hardening	
	£5000	Contribution to Senior Licencing Officer - VAIWG	
3 Vulnerable Persons and Contextual Safeguarding (including Drugs, Alcohol and Mental Health)	£10000	Better way recovery	
4 All Priorities – community safety	£7000		
5 Community Cohesion	£550.00	Jake Bowers	
TOTAL Committed	£61,050		
		Uncommitted funds £344	

Formal spend commitments made for 2023/24		CSP Grant Award pa £61,394	
Priority	£ Commitment	Provider	
1 Anti-Social Behaviour	£30000 £10000	Youth Offending Service Fun Club	
2 Public Place and Serious Violence (including Knife Crime)	£1000	Street Angels	
	£1500	Target Hardening	
	£1000	VAIWG	
	£5000	Contribution to Senior Licencing Officer - VAIWG	
3 Vulnerable Persons and Contextual Safeguarding (including Drugs, Alcohol and Mental Health)	£10000	Better way recovery	
4 All Priorities – community safety	£1800		
5 Community Cohesion – development of awareness session	£1000.00		
TOTAL Committed	£61,300		
		Uncommitted funds £94	

Formal spend commitments made for 2024/25		CSP Grant Award pa £61,394	
Priority	£ Commitment	Provider	
1 Anti-Social Behaviour	£30000 £10000	Youth Offending Service Fun Club	
2 Public Place and Serious Violence (including Knife Crime)	£1000	Street Angels	
	£1500	Target Hardening	

