

Council

XXX 2022

Report of the Chair

Annual Report of the Infrastructure Safety & Growth Scrutiny Committee

Exempt Information

None.

Purpose

To provide full Council with an overview of the work and activities undertaken by the Infrastructure Safety & Growth (IS&G) Scrutiny Committee during the year 2021/22. The draft Annual Report was received by the Committee at its final meeting in the last municipal year and any updates agreed by the Chair following that meeting.

Executive Summary

This report covers the following:

- Chair's Overview
- Working Groups
- Recommendations made in the year to Cabinet and /or Council
- Committee Terms of Reference
- Membership and Attendance
- Training & Effectiveness
- Work Plan
- Resource implications

Recommendations

Council is requested to:

- Note the Annual Report of the Committee;

Chair's Overview

The Committee met nine times in the 2021/22 municipal year. Two further meetings beyond those initially scheduled for the year were held; on 27th September 2021, to consider a decision which was called-in and on 16th February 2022 to consider at the appropriate time an item on the Forward Plan.

These meetings have all been in person for councillors, officers and guests, as the regulations in place during the 2020/21 municipal year were not extended. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Committee for their contributions and commitment, as well as all officers and portfolio holders who attended and supported through the year. Particular thanks go to our scrutiny officer Jo Hutchison for her hard work.

Scrutiny is often a hard concept for members to conquer and I have been impressed with how the newer members to the Committee have developed. I hope to be able to carry this forward next year should the opportunity arise.

In terms of the work of the Committee during 2021/22 municipal year, this has included:

1. Policy Development and /or Review

This is where the Committee has contributed to the Council's policy development processes and / or where the Committee has considered the implementation of policies and feeding back scrutiny views to Cabinet.

The Committee has reviewed, and (in some cases) made Policy Development recommendations in the following areas:

- (a) State of Tamworth Debate. Following the full Council debate, the Committee considered whether any of the discussion points raised at the State of Tamworth Debate held on 9th March 2021 should be developed into further work plan items. The Committee considered that the following main areas from that Debate would be considered throughout the municipal year as the work plan developed:
- The importance of green and open spaces and access to those;
 - The Green agenda, and in particular electric vehicle charging points. One area for further consideration could be how the Garage Sites project could support the delivery further charging points;
 - Crime, including modern slavery and human trafficking.
- (b) Electric Vehicle Charging Points
This item had also been considered in the previous municipal year and recommendations at that time had been made to Cabinet. The Committee was updated on progress made in this area which included:
- Each Cabinet member's portfolio including a responsibility for climate change, with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Leisure having specific responsibility for proposals for electric vehicle charging points on Borough owned assets such as car parks and garage sites
 - Following the adoption of operating model 2 (as set out in the Cabinet Report of 17th December 2020) a further marketing exercise had been pursued, which had resulted in detailed negotiations with an operating company which could lead to 2 fast charging points in each of Riverside and Bolebridge car parks.
 - the garage clearance project which was underway which was designed to provide additional parking for residents, would additionally where possible, look to include electric charging points for residents.

This item remains on the Committee work plan for further review when required.

(c) Dry Recycling Contract Renewal

Following on from consideration by this Committee of the proposals for this service which were considered towards the end of the 2020/21 municipal year, the Committee called in the Cabinet Decision of 9th September 2021 in order to consider further the practicalities of the collection method proposed under the new arrangements.

The Committee received an overview from the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Waste, covering the changes to the recycling market, the results of the tender process undertaken, the relative merits and costs of the options, and the urgency to the process. Following detailed consideration by the Committee requested regular (quarterly) updates on progress, which were then received by the Committee on:

23 November 2021

24 March 2022.

At the 23 November 2021 meeting the Committee received a detailed presentation from the General Manager of the Waste Management Service, which covered some more operational details of how the proposed methodology would work in light of the experience of other Local Authorities who had implemented this arrangement. Following consideration of this item, the Committee made one recommendation to Cabinet, as follows:

RESOLVED that the following be recommended to Cabinet:

that Cabinet take note of the need for all areas of Council activity to be looking for opportunities to be more green, noting this as an example of an area.

[At the 24 March 2022 meeting...]

2. Monitoring (scrutiny)

This is where the Committee has undertaken monitoring of the Council's performance and progress.

In particular the Terms of Reference for this Committee set out the specific areas for scrutiny which include:

To provide effective scrutiny of the achievement of the Council's strategic priorities and external providers in securing the primary outcome of creating a safe and sustaining thriving local economy and making Tamworth a more aspirational and competitive place to do business, with a focus on:

- Infrastructure
- Education

- Employment/Inward Investment
- Town Centre
- Open Space and Play
- Public Space Protection Orders

Statutory Crime and Disorder obligation; the Committee shall act as the Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and may co-opt additional members subject to the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009.

To undertake such other scrutiny activities, relevant to the committee's scope, as may be required in relation to the performance of the Council, governance, financial management and discharge of statutory functions.

At each meeting the Committee received and considered the Forward Plan to assist in its identification of whether there are any forthcoming key decisions which the Committee determined that it would scrutinise, either pre decision or post decision.

Examples of areas which were identified for the Committee's scrutiny as a result of regular Forward Plan consideration were; Dry Recycling Contract renewal, Council Housing Repairs Policy, Castle Curtain Wall, and Economic Development Service Workplan,

Over the year 2021/22, areas scrutinised included:

(a) Community Safety.

At the first meeting of the municipal year the Committee reviewed its work plan and considered that a broader item on community safety which could look to consider various issues in depth and receive updates from key stakeholders such as the Tamworth Police Commander and the new Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner and cover a broad range of topics would be valuable.

The remit for this was worked on through the year and led to an informal half day session being held in February to which all Councillors were invited which covered:

- Presentation and introduction from Ben Adams, Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Rescue and Crime
- Introduction to the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership
- Update from Tamworth Policing Commander covering various areas including Tamworth crime trends
- Update from Tamworth Business Crime Reduction Partnership

It was the first time in several years that the Council had held an inquiry session which was designed to provide Councillors with a forum to discuss with Officers and external partners in more depth the work to support community safety in Staffordshire and locally in Tamworth.

This forum facilitated a more informal environment for Councillors, Officers and external partners to discuss matters raised by constituents with

Councillors, the work and the priorities of the Staffordshire Commissioner and Tamworth Police and the Local Business Crime Partnership. In summary discussion touched on the following areas:

- Methods of communicating with the police and reporting crimes, including through social media and the 101 telephone number
- The challenges facing the criminal justice system in terms of the length of time to trials and the impacts of COVID particularly on the County Court system
- Reducing re-offending, in terms of both anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour
- The work to support victims, and the work to identify where criminal exploitation is occurring
- New operating model for local policing, and the increased numbers of Police Officers across Staffordshire
- The importance of police forces co-ordinating across county borders, to address certain activities including car crimes and County Lines
- The importance of the funding, including grant funding, for community safety partnership activities and the need for this to be able to address specific district and borough local needs.
- Concerns over police presence in areas of the borough and the perceptions this sometimes leaves with residents
- Tackling cyber crime and need to ensure this is reported
- The role of education and the wider society supporting and to help reduce re-offending.
- E-scouters where the law currently only permits these to be used on private land and the need for there to be further education /awareness in this area as well as for other vehicle users, eg bikes, motorbikes
- The importance of prioritising resources whilst delivering a good quality of service
- The value of all partners involvement in community engagement events locally.
- How locally businesses work together to reduce harm in Tamworth
- The funding opportunities available to support work for safer streets and to enable the provision of schemes such as SPACE in school holidays.
- Work at a Staffordshire level which was ongoing in terms of illegal trespass and the aim to work towards delivering a consistent approach across the county.
- Where Councillors could support in the delivery of community safety locally, including as a voice for constituent concerns to be raised with partners, and in encouraging constituents to contact and report to the Police to enhance the intelligence provided to the Police.

At the March 2022 IS&G Scrutiny Committee meeting the updated Community Safety Partnership Plan was received and [XXXXX]

The Committee agreed that whilst the intention had been to receive an overview of those Tamworth Borough Council services which related to

community safety as part of the Focus Half day session, due to time constraints on that day, this overview would be brought to the first meeting of the new municipal year. It is expected that this will include an overview of CCTV, Anti-Social Behaviour corporate services, Partnership ASB services, Environmental crime, parking enforcement, open spaces and safeguarding.

(b) Fire safety / Inspection Update.

The Assistant Director, Assets updated the Committee on the position and activities undertaken in terms of building surveys and preparations made by the Council ahead of the implementation of the Building Safety Bill. This area remains on the Committee's work plan for a further update in the 2022/23 municipal year.

(c) Local Plan Development Scheme and Local Plan Timetable

The Portfolio Holder, the Assistant Director, Assets and the Planning policy and Delivery Team Leader updated the Committee on the Local Development Scheme and Local Plan Timetable which was then considered by Cabinet.

(d) Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO)

Under the Council's PSPO process, the Committee is required to consider consultation evidence received as part of any proposal to introduce or renew a PSPO, and if appropriate endorse the order prior to the Portfolio Holder using his delegated powers to approve it. During the year 2021/2022 this Committee considered and endorsed for adoption the renewal of two PSPOs; Kettlebrook and Bolehall (Warwickshire Moor).

[At the 24th March meeting a Renewal of Nuisance Vehicle PSPO was received...]

(e) Infrastructure Funding Statement 2020/21

The Portfolio Holder and Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader attended the 23 November 2021 meeting to provide the Committee with an overview of the Infrastructure Funding Statement report before its consideration at Cabinet in December 2021.

The report set out a summary of how the funds were collected, allocated and spent in respect of infrastructure projects, and further it recommended that the priorities for the strategic spend of CIL be retained as agreed in April 2021.

Following consideration of the report, the Committee made two recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

RESOLVED that the following be recommended to Cabinet that:

1. Cabinet regularly review how to spend the funds accumulated; and
2. the process for member involvement and the spend of CIL is clarified by the relevant Portfolio Holder.

(f) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Scrutiny Panel – air quality / pollution
The Committee was updated on the work undertaken by the WMCA to model air quality in the West Midlands to support the development of an air quality plan. It was reported that the modelling undertaken had not covered Tamworth, and support was requested by the Tamworth representative on the Panel to extend the modelling to do so.

(g) Recovery & Reset

At the 19 January 2022, the Committee received an update on the Recovery & Reset programme aims and the proposed oversight by the three scrutiny committees and the Audit & Governance Committee of the programme and feedback was sought on the arrangements which would be fed into the overall Programme Board. This was attended by the Recovery & Reset Director who explained the focus of the proposed presentations to each scrutiny committee, which were designed to cover:

1. The structure of each workstreams highlight reports and whether these were at the right level of detail for the Committee;
2. Highlighting key milestones and triggers in their workstreams to help inform the Committee's work plan.
3. Inviting questions and feedback to inform the programme.

The meeting was also attended by the Assistant Director, Growth & Regeneration who provided an overview of the Economic Development workstream, and the Assistant Director, Assets, who provided an overview of the Building Utilisation workstream.

The Committee noted that it would like to see reports on a quarterly basis.

The Committee requested that a further update, focussing on Marmion House regeneration plans be provided to its 24 March meeting, prior to consideration by Cabinet of a Recovery & Reset Report on 7th April 2022.

[At the Committee's 24 March meeting....]

(h) Castle Curtain Wall Tender

The Committee received an update on the Castle Curtain Wall tender from the Assistant Director, Growth & Regeneration and the Castle, Museum and Archive Manager at its meeting on 19th January 2022, prior to a decision being made by Cabinet.

The Committee sought clarifications on the expected costs and contingencies in the budget for this work as well as the project management and quality assurance process which would be followed.

The Committee made two recommendations to Cabinet, as follows:

RESOLVED that the Committee recommend to Cabinet that:

1. Cabinet instruct that the contracted castle architects act as external quality assurance for the works;

2. previous contractors performance be taken into account in the tender appraisal.

(i) Update on Council Housing Repairs Policy

The Assistant Director, assets provided the Committee with an overview of the position regarding the Council Housing Repairs Policy which had been considered by Cabinet in December 2021. The committee was updated on the next steps and supported the plan to engage more broadly and with different means with our tenants.

It was agreed that this item would be considered further in the next municipal year.

(j) Matters referred from Cabinet or Council (Fireworks Motion)

Following receipt of a motion from members, full Council referred two recommendations to the Committee for their consideration, and the Committee agreed to form a working group to progress this item. The working group presented its recommendations to the 19 January 2022 Committee meeting and made recommendations for full Council's consideration.

Full Council received these recommendations at its meeting on 22 February 2022 and Council agreed:

1. To look at all options with regards to visual aerial displays; and
2. the Leader of the Council write to the Minister with regard to:
 - online sales of fireworks and that this reflects the same legislation as shop sales of fireworks are guided by; and
 - that the decibel level of fireworks available for the public's purchase be reviewed with a view to the decibel level being reduced.

(k) Economic Development Service Workplan

The Portfolio Holder, Assistant Director, Growth & Regeneration and Head of Economic Development & Regeneration attended the Committee on 16th February 2022 to update on the proposals which would be brought to Cabinet in March 2022 to define and agree a 3-year work plan, with associated resources that addressed key council priorities, by delivering tourism and economic development focused activity, primarily in the town centre.

In summary the key points were to invest in the Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership, as well as a bespoke Borough wide tourism action plan, a package of economic measures focussed on the town centre and a change in the focus of the grants available.

The Committee considered the recommendations in the report and recommended that the investment in the Staffordshire Destination

Management Partnership be reviewed after the first year, and added a further recommendation in respect of the proposed Town Centre business Grants. Details are set out below:

RESOLVED that the Committee noted and recommended to Cabinet that:

1. A financial contribution be made to support Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership (DMP) for financial year 2022/2023 with delegated authority given to the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder(s) to make a decision on extending the contribution into financial years 2023/2025.
2. The package of economic measures detailed in the report focusing on Town Centre businesses and the wider tourism based economy be agreed.
3. The change of focus was noted from the current Start-Up Business grant to the Town Centre Business Grant.
4. Organisations which remained at this time subject to investigation by HMRC in respect of any applications for COVID related claims would be ineligible for Town Centre Business Grants

(l) Future High Street Fund

During this municipal year, the Committee received quarterly updates on the Future High Street Fund project and considered reports prior to their presentation to Cabinet. These quarterly updates were provided by the Leader of the Council and the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration and relevant members of the project team. Updates were provided to the following meetings:

- 15th June 2021 – focussed on the governance arrangements in place for the project;
- 15th September 2021 – focussed on the procurement to appoint a Lead Consultant and engagement and communications;
- 23rd November 2021 – focussed on the interactions with the South Staffordshire College project
- 24th March 2022

3. **Call-in**

This is where a decision of the Executive has been called in to be considered by a scrutiny committee, after a Cabinet decision has been made but ahead of it implementation, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution.

During this municipal year the Committee called in one executive decision – Dry Recycling Contract Renewal and held an additional meeting on 27th September 2021 to consider the matter. Following consideration the Committee resolved that it

- (i) receive a quarterly update from the Portfolio Holder and Officers on the progress with the dual streaming service, including the detail which was still to be looked at, at the decisions that had been made and the decisions still to be made as well an update on the implementation experience of one of the two Staffordshire councils who had implemented this

- methodology of service. The first such report to be prior to 31 December 2021; and
- (ii) recommend that there be improved communication and advertisement of the assisted service available to residents..

Working Groups

Several working groups had been formed during the year, and some could continue into the next calendar year. The Groups formed were:

Topic	Target IS&G Com meeting date
Fireworks	Reported to the January 2022 Committee meeting, and recommendations from that meeting were taken to Full council on 22 February 2022.
Review of policy / engagement relating to Travellers	
Facilities for HGV Drivers in Tamworth	

Recommendations made to and Responses received from Cabinet

Recommendations were made to Cabinet on the following Reports and Cabinet's response is highlighted:

Scrutiny meeting item	Cabinet Response
<p>Update on Dry Recycling Contract – 23 November 2021</p> <p>RESOLVED that the following be recommended to Cabinet:</p> <p>that Cabinet take note of the need for all areas of Council activity to be looking for opportunities to be more green, noting this as an example of an area.</p>	<p>At the Cabinet Meeting on 2 December 2021 Cabinet moved the following motion:</p> <p>That Cabinet acknowledged the feelings of the Scrutiny Committee and commits to considering the green agenda in all decision making in all areas going forward.</p>
<p>Infrastructure Funding Statement 2020/21 – 23 November 2021</p> <p>RESOLVED that the following be recommended to Cabinet that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet regularly review how to spend the funds accumulated; and 	<p>At the Cabinet meeting on 2 December 2021, when the full report was considered, in addition to the recommendations set out in the report, the following 2 recommendations from Infrastructure & Growth were agreed by Cabinet</p>

<p>2. the process for member involvement and the spend of CIL is clarified by the relevant Portfolio Holder.</p>	<p>1. Agreed that Cabinet regularly review how to spend the funds accumulated.</p> <p>2. Agreed that the process for member involvement and the spend of CIL is clarified by the relevant Portfolio Holder and a process is created where members under the right criteria can apply for funding.</p>
<p>Castle Curtain wall tender – 19th January 2022</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Committee recommend to Cabinet that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cabinet instruct that the contracted castle architects act as external quality assurance for the works; 2. previous contractors performance be taken into account in the tender appraisal. 	<p>At the Cabinet meeting on 20th January 2022, when the Report was considered, in addition to the recommendations set out in the Report, Cabinet agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. to instruct that the contracted castle architects act as external quality assurance for the works. 2. That previous contractors performance be taken into account in the tender appraisal
<p>Economic Development Service workplan – 16th February 2022</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Committee noted and recommended to Cabinet that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A financial contribution be made to support Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership (DMP) for financial year 2022/2023 with delegated authority given to the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder(s) to make a decision on extending the contribution into financial years 2023/2025. 2. The package of economic measures detailed in the report focusing on Town Centre businesses and the wider tourism based economy be agreed. 3. The change of focus was noted from the current Start-Up 	<p>[At the Cabinet meeting on 17th March 2022...]</p>

<p>Business grant to the Town Centre Business Grant.</p> <p>4. Organisations which remained at this time subject to investigation by HMRC in respect of any applications for COVID related claims would be ineligible for Town Centre Business Grants.</p>	
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Committee Terms of Reference

The Committee Terms of Reference are set out in Article 6 in the Constitution which can be accessed [here](#).

The Primary Scope, the General Role and the Specific functions detailed in the Constitution have been largely achieved through the Committee's work this year.

Members and Members Attendance

The following sets out the membership and attendance of members at the 9 Committee meetings during 2021/22.

Please note Councillor Daniel Maycock retired from the Committee on 28th February 2022 and Councillor Martin Summers retired from the Committee in February 2022 and Councillors Chris Cooke and John Harper joined the Committee on 28 February 2022 and therefore their attendances are recorded out of the number of meetings they were eligible to attend.

Member	Number of meetings attended
Simon Goodall (Chair)	
Tina Clements (Vice-Chair)	
John Chesworth	
Rosey Claymore	
Chris Cooke	
Andrew Cooper	
John Harper	
Daniel Maycock	
Simon People	
Ben Price	
Martin Summers	

Training and Effectiveness

The Committee members received details on training modules on Scrutiny and Events offered by the Local Government Association.

MembersZone contains links to external training courses available. MembersZone also provides details of the in-house induction and training events run and organised by council officers throughout the year which include overviews from each Executive Director of their directorates and key projects.

No specific in-house scrutiny training was delivered this year as an all Councillor scrutiny training event had been delivered in November 2020.

Work Plan - Items identified for next municipal year

The existing Committee Work Plan is appended as Appendix 1.

Resource Implications

None identified.

Report Author

Councillor S Goodall
Chair of the IS&G Scrutiny Committee

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Committee's Work Plan

Appendix 1 – Committee’s Work Plan

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