

Annual Report of the Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Committee

Membership

Chair – Councillor Simon Goodall

Vice-Chair – Councillor Paul Turner



Members (2022/23)	Appointed for 2022/23 municipal year	Within year retirements
Simon Goodall (Chair)	May 2022	
Paul Turner (Vice-Chair)	May 2022	
Michelle Cook	May 2022	
Andrew Cooper	May 2022	September 2022
Sarah Daniels	May 2022	September 2022
Richard Ford	May 2022	December 2022
John Harper	May 2022	
Daniel Maycock	September 2022	
Sheree Peale	May 2022	
Ben Price	May 2022	
Roy Rogers	September 2022	
Paul Thompson	March 2023	

Chair's Overview

The Committee met nine times in the 2022/2023 municipal year.

During this year there have been some changes to the Committee's membership, including the retirement of Richard Ford, who was the Vice Chair of the Committee from May 2022 until December 2022. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Richard for all his work as a member and Vice-Chair of this Committee, as well as to

thank the other members of the Committee who also retired from this Committee during the year; Andrew Cooper and Sarah Daniels.

During the past year, the Committee's main areas of focus have included receipt and scrutiny of regular reports on the Future High Street Fund project, as well as regular review of the newly implemented dual stream recycling service. Additional areas relating to the Council's Net Zero Carbon target and the Council's steps to encourage electric vehicle charging points in the Borough and broader sustainability measures have also been considered.

Cabinet members and officers were invited to attend meetings of the Committee to provide information and to answer questions on these areas.

The Committee has used the Council's Forward Plan to focus its work and to help identify areas which would either require pre decision scrutiny and /or post implementation scrutiny.

I would like to thank all members of the Committee, officers and other stakeholders who took part in these meetings for their valuable contributions during the year, with particular thanks to Jo Hutchison for her hard work and support.

Councillor S Goodall

Chair

Committee's remit and function (Terms of Reference)

The Constitution sets out the Committee's remit which can be summarised as 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

The Committee acts as the Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and in this regard received the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan and considered Public Safety Protection Orders.

Forward Plan consideration; Over the year 2022/2023, there has been regular review of the Forward Plan at all meetings to identify areas which could either

require pre decision scrutiny and /or post implementation scrutiny, and which were not otherwise included on the Committee's Work plan.

Future High Street Fund

In late 2018 Tamworth was awarded a share of the £830 million pound Future High Street Fund in 2018 to transform the town centre in to a busy, thriving heart of the community.

The Future High Street fund is currently a quarterly item for the Committee monitoring the progress of the project.

Following receipt of the quarterly report in June from the Leader of the Council, the Assistant Director, Growth and Regeneration and the Project Officer, scrutiny focussed on the expected duration of works as well as the importance of the project acting as a catalyst for further investment in the town and the funding and delivery of value for money.

At the next quarterly update in September 2022, the Committee sought clarification on how the team was seeking to continue to deliver the project within budget which included the project carefully scrutinising designs and through iterative design processes managing costs whilst not impacting the overall scheme deliverables. The role of the Programme Board was discussed which met monthly and had oversight of the project and received detailed dashboards through which all designs and cost decisions were considered. Clarification was sought on meeting funding deadlines, as well as a timeline on Middle Entry demolition and how the impact on businesses would be minimised as well as how heritage parts would be retained. The report was then endorsed.

A further quarterly report was presented in January 2023. The Leader emphasized that the project had started in late 2018 and that significant work had been done. Progress since the last report was highlighted including demolitions, and that tendering processes were underway. In addition the report highlighted; liaison with Council Arts and Events team to understand the potential impact on events; monitoring of budgets including the monthly meeting of the Programme Board to look at key milestones and the identification of a preferred contractor for the works on the Enterprise Centre and Flex Space.

The Committee sought more detailed timescales for works for the Peel Café, the Flex Space and Castle Bridge which were agreed to be provided at the next update in June 2023. The Committee requested where possible works be scheduled to avoid clashes with key events and sought clarification on whether forecasted costs had increased.

Each time the report was considered, it was endorsed by the Committee.

This item remains on the Committee's work plan for the next municipal year.

Spotlight Item - Waste Management

In March 2022 the Council adopted a Dual-stream recycling process, which sees paper and card recycled in blue bags, separately to other recyclable items, utilising the blue bins. The aim, to increase the quality of recycling collected, meaning more waste can be recycled. The implementation was completed in May 2022 with the full dual stream collections commencing from 30th May 2022.

At the July 2022 Committee meeting a dry recycling contract update was received following the implementation of the dual stream service, and it was reported that during the first 5 weeks of the service, there had been no appreciable increase in residual waste, missed bins or rejected bins and contaminated waste all appeared to be reducing. It was reported that regular reviews would be made at 3 and 6 months so improvements could be made.

The Committee sought clarification on a number of areas around data, requests for additional bags, specification and durability of the bags, the assisted service available to residents and the plans for the Christmas period and asked for these items to be taken into consideration for the next report in 3 months' time.

A further update was provided at the October 2022 meeting where it was reported that the service reliability remained good and the plans for Christmas were discussed.

The Committee sought clarity on several areas including requesting data to be shown graphically and with a comparison to previous years. Information on durability of the blue bags was sought, as well as further data on contaminated bins which it was agreed would be provided in future reports.

At the January 2023 meeting the Chief Executive provided an update on the Implementation Review report and the key learnings from the implementation phase.

The General Manager of the Joint Waste Service provided an overview of the quarterly performance report which included the additional data requested by the Committee.

The improved and graphical data was welcomed, further data was also requested so comparisons could be made to pre-COVID figures. Data on a route basis was requested and it was agreed that at the next meeting suggestions for further data breakdown options could be provided for the Committee to consider. The Committee requested data to show the climate change impacts of the service, where it was explained that this was an area where the national picture for waste metrics was developing and that it could be possible to look at the potential decarbonisation of trucks at future meetings.

Communication around additional blue bags was explored and the importance of holding sufficient stock reinforced as well as the take up of blue bags.

The report was endorsed the item remains a quarterly feature of the Committee's workplan.

The Committee also considered in further depth the following items:

1. Overview of Borough Council Service relating to Community Safety

The Committee received the report of the Assistant Director, Partnerships at its June meeting where the Committee were provided with an overview of the Council's activities relating to community safety including in relation to homelessness, parking enforcement, travellers and the Prevent strategy. Following scrutiny there were no recommendations but it was requested that the Committee be update with the parking toolkit and circulation of Staffordshire parking report.

2. Public Space Protection Orders

The Committee received the reports of the Assistant Director Partnerships following consultation on the implementation of a Public Space Protection order at Mercia Close, as well as the renewal of a Public Space Protection Order on the access road to Dosthill Hall. Both Orders were supported by the Committee.

3. Electric vehicle charging

After initial deferral in June 2022 the Committee was updated in July by the Head of Economic Development and Regeneration confirming that a contract had been signed for the installation and maintenance of electric vehicle points at 2 Council owned car parks. Clarification was sought on monitoring of the points, installation timescales and limitations of the infrastructure, it was clarified that further work was being done in this area. No recommendations were made at this stage.

4. Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy – recommendations

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning Economy and Waste on the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was received with proposals for a process for Neighbourhood CIL spending. The Committee proposed recommendations that where there was no majority support for one project within a single ward that all projects would be put forward to Cabinet for the decision to be made on their behalf. The recommendation was added to the report that was submitted to Cabinet for approval on the 20th June 2022.

5. Infrastructure Funding Statement 2021/22

The Planning Policy and Development Team Leader presented this item at the November 2022 meeting for endorsement of the recommendations prior to

being put to Cabinet in December 2022. Prior to which it was to be updated to include the CIL Neighbourhood proportion spending, following the process previously considered by the Committee. The report was endorsed with recommendations.

6. Petition To stop the netting of hedges in Tamworth

Following a Petition which was considered by full Council the Committee had been requested by full Council to review the relevant legislation and any other relevant material before reporting back to full Council. The Assistant Director, Regeneration and Growth had been requested to provide a report covering the relevant legislation and other relevant material which the Committee considered at the July 2022 meeting.

The Committee requested that the Assistant Director take legal advice on whether planning conditions could be put in place on timing/period of netting of hedging and the Chair would await the feedback to report back to the Committee.

At the subsequent meeting the Chair updated the Committee following information received from the Assistant Director confirming that any pre development conditions would need to be agreed by the developer and that there was concern that this would not be agreed. An alternative was suggested in terms of enhancing validation criteria used in the planning application process. The Committee considered that any wording included in any updated validation criteria should consider guidance from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Website (RSPB) and in consultation with the County ecologist. The Committee made recommendations to full Council on this basis.

7. Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme

The Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning, Economy and Waste attended to introduce the Report in relation to the adoption and publication of a new Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme for the Committee's consideration prior to the report being put before Cabinet. Following scrutiny, clarification was sought on how maximum engagement would be achieved and whether changes could be made to the Planning Committee process to allow more speakers to increase engagement. The Committee further highlighted that there was no reference to joint working with relevant Highways Agencies and it was agreed that these would be specifically named. Recommendations were made to Cabinet.

8. Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation

The Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning, Economy, and Waste introduced the Report to seek the Committee's endorsement of the proposals and recommendations to be made to Cabinet in respect of the launch of an Issues and Options consultation as part of the development of the new Local Plan for Tamworth.

The Committee emphasized the importance of community engagement and suggested means of engaging the community, as well as the importance of the public understanding the need for involvement.

9. Net Zero Carbon – Baseline Reporting

At the September 2022 meeting the Leader of the Council and the Assistant Director, Regeneration and Growth introduced the Net Zero Carbon-baseline report which had been commissioned. The Consultants attended to provide an overview of the findings of the report including the process followed to compile the evidence base, to collect the data and the areas within scope. It identified the two key areas for the largest sources of emissions for 2019/2020 as (i) building related and (ii) related to waste collection service. The report suggested recommendations to consider when the Council develops its Action Plan, which was reported to be the next step, which included (i) to improve data collection processes, (ii) developing a pipeline of projects, (iii) to develop systems to embed the delivery of net zero carbon into decision making processes and (iv) exploring joint opportunities with neighbouring councils.

Through scrutiny the Committee questioned a number of items including; how the council compared to other authorities and how they could look at better data collection, and the additional data this would require from contractors and suppliers, as well as the importance of the waste disposal process in terms of the Council's carbon footprint and the need to consider climate aspects in terms of waste disposal.

The Baseline report was endorsed by the Committee with a recommendation that an Action Plan be prepared by December 31st 2024.

Exempt items

1. Reset and Recovery

Under the Reset and Recovery project the Committee was identified as the appropriate scrutiny committee to review the Building Requirement and Utilisation workstream of and an exempt item was considered at the October 2022 meeting in respect of Marmion House Disposal options.

2. Transport Integration Update

This was discussed as an exempt item at the October and November 2022 meeting and recommendations were made to Cabinet.

3. Amington Local Centre

The Committee received an update at the October 2022 meeting prior to Cabinet considering and agreeing future actions.

Working Groups

During the year several working groups were formed including to consider Transport Integration, Facilities for HGV Drivers and to consider policy related to the migrant travelling community (which it was agreed was a broader topic and would be considered together with the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee).

Facilities for HGV Drivers in Tamworth

This working group had been established and provided an interim update to the Committee at the November 2022 meeting setting out its areas of focus:

- Service station provision
 - Provision of toilets/shower facilities to mitigate litter.
 - Research with local business to ascertain what local provision was in place
- The working group was expected to continue into the next municipal year.

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 recommendations	Cabinet Response
<p>Neighbourhood Infrastructure levy</p> <p>Community</p> <p>It was resolved by the Committee to agree the approach set out in the report for the distribution for neighbourhood CIL money with the addition of a process where the three ward members could not agree on a single project. In such a case the Committee proposed that were the ward members unable to agree on which project to put forward to Cabinet, firstly there should be a vote between the three ward members, if there was majority support for one project, that project would go forward to Cabinet, if there was no majority support for a single project, then Cabinet would make the decision on their behalf.</p>	<p>The recommendation put forward by the committee was incorporated in to the report that was submitted to Cabinet on the 30th June.</p> <p>At the meeting it was Resolved that Cabinet –</p> <p>agreed the approach to the distribution of neighbourhood CIL money.</p>
<p>Statement of community involvement and local development scheme</p>	<p>At the Cabinet meeting on September 8th it was resolved that Cabinet -</p>

<p>It was resolved by the comment to make the following recommendations -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. that authority be delegated to the Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader to make any minor typographical amendments to the documents before or after publication; and 2. that Cabinet investigates the opportunity of increasing the time and number of speakers at Planning Committee. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed to increasing the number of speakers, and the time limit for each speaker, at Planning Committee meetings in line with the recommendations of the Infrastructure, Safety, and Growth Scrutiny Committee 2. delegated authority to the Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader to make any minor typographical amendments to the documents before or after publication
<p>Petition To stop the netting of hedges in Tamworth.</p> <p>It was resolved that the Committee recommend to Council that the Planning Validation Criteria is reviewed, and reference is made to include the RSPB Guidance on hedges and netting in consultation with the County ecologist.</p>	<p>The Committees recommendations were incorporated in to the report to Council on the 27th September 2022 were it was resolved that Council:</p> <p>Agreed that within the Planning Validation Criteria an additional criteria relating to the netting of hedges/trees is included and reference is made to include the RSPB Guidance on hedges and netting in consultation with the County ecologist</p>
<p>Net Zero Carbon Base-line reporting</p> <p>The Committee resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The baseline assessment was endorsed. 2. It recommended to Cabinet that an Action Plan be prepared by 31 December 2024. 	<p>At Cabinet meeting on the 20th October It was resolved that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Endorsed the baseline assessment 2. Agreed that an action plan is prepared subject to the timeline suggested by I S & G Scrutiny Committee by 31 December 2024
<p>Transport Integration Update</p> <p>The Committee resolved to recommend that Cabinet task relevant Officers to liaise with the partner organisations to identify any funding sources for the development of additional public transport links within the Borough.</p>	<p>At Cabinet meeting on the 15th December it was resolved that Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed to task relevant Officers to liaise with the partner organisations to identify any funding sources for the development of additional public transport links within the Borough; <p><i>Cabinet agreed a further recommendation in respect of which the Leader of the Council confirmed he would liaise with the relevant County Councillors to progress.</i></p>

Members Attendance to be updated

Member	Number of meetings attended
Simon Goodall (Chair)	

Paul Turner (Vice-Chair)	
Michelle Cook	
Andrew Cooper	
Sarah Daniels	
Richard Ford	
John Harper	
Daniel Maycock	
Sheree People	
Ben Price	
Roy Rogers	
Paul Thompson	

Work Plan – the end of 2022/23 Work plan will be inserted