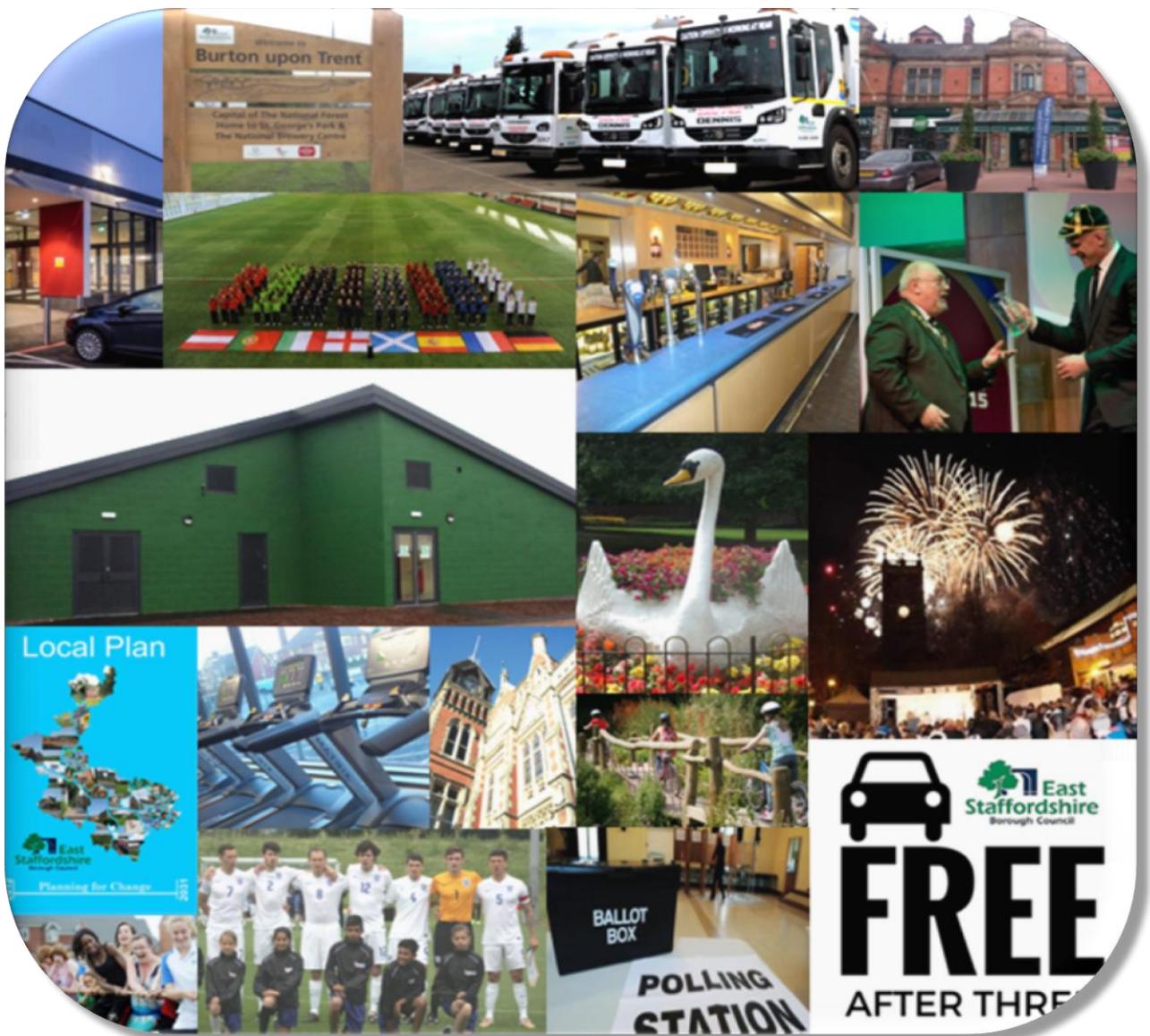


# Leader of the Council's Statement 2016/17



## **INTRODUCTION**

East Staffordshire Borough Council has three Corporate Priorities:

- **Value For Money Council Services:**  
*Protecting your money*
- **Promoting Local Economic Growth:**  
*To benefit local people by turning aspiration into reality*
- **Protecting and Strengthening Communities:**  
*Love where you live*

The following statement sets out how the Leader of the Council and officers within this portfolio area will contribute to achieving these priorities.

However throughout the statement there may be examples of joint delivery with other Executive Members as well as managers from other sections. The activities outlined in the statement are often cross-cutting themes with overlaps into other areas.

The statement also highlights past successes by highlighting the Council's key achievements in 2015/16.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2015/16**

Over the past 12 months, the Council has been working hard to improve its services and is currently on track to achieve 100% of this portfolio's milestones set for 2015/16 by the end of the financial year.

Some of these achievements are highlighted in the following section.

### ***Elections Team***

The Elections Team has concluded the introduction of Individual Electoral registration.

At the same time it has successfully managed the UK Parliamentary, Local and Parish council elections as well as conducting five Neighbourhood Planning referendums throughout the year.

### ***Committee Services and Resilience Planning***

The Committee Services Team helped with the induction of 39 Councillors following the May 2015 Borough Election, and continues to provide administrative support to all of the Council's Committees and meetings.

During the year, the team has also been implementing a new minutes and agendas system to replace the existing CMIS software. The replacement system, utilising the Council's website, will save the authority approximately £7,000 per annum.

The Committee Services Team also took part in several resilience planning exercises alongside partner organisations.

### ***Legal & Asset Management Team***

The Legal & Asset Management Team undertook a condition survey of Anderstaff Industrial Estate to identify maintenance work required.

Our legal services team continued to provide support to client departments across the Council. This included corporate projects such as the Dove Way and Pennycroft regeneration schemes, and securing significant capital receipts for settling disputes. Customer focus was strong, with 100% of our client departments satisfied with the legal service provided (against quality standards).

### ***Changes to the Council's Constitution***

The new Monitoring Officer undertook a timely review of changes to the Constitution by the close of 2015. This included the position regarding indemnities to councillors and officers in respect of legal costs.

### ***Councillor Led Induction Programme Including Evaluation***

19 induction sessions were delivered between 11<sup>th</sup> May and 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015 following the Borough Council elections. These sessions were delivered by Council officers, accredited trainers and people from external organisations. Training for members of committees was also held. The average attendance for councillors was 22.3 per session from a possible 39.

After each session, councillors rated 99% of the induction sessions 'good' or 'excellent' overall. Following an end of programme evaluation, reported to Council in December 2015, 82% of councillors said they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the induction. 100% of respondents stated they thought the induction was relevant or very relevant to their work as councillors.

### ***Human Resource and Payments Team***

The Council is on course to reduce short term sickness days to an average of 3 days.

The Council aims to pay suppliers as promptly as possible, and it is on course to have achieved its target of the average time to pay being within 15 days, and 90% of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days.

## **OBJECTIVES FOR 2016/17**

2015/16 has been another successful period for the Council, but it is determined to build on this platform as it moves forward into the new financial year. It will continue to further improve service delivery, performance and value for money. This will be achieved through delivery of the Council's three Corporate Priorities, which will be supported by the following objectives and targets.

### ***Human Resource (Targets L01; L02)***

The Council will continue to monitor staffing availability through ongoing and detailed analysis of short term sickness absence, to ensure staffing resource is optimised.

In addition, officers will seek to complete nearly 100% of appraisals before the end of May.

### ***Payments (Targets L03; L04)***

The Council will continue to support businesses by promptly paying its Creditors, aiming to pay within an average of 13 days from receipt of invoice date. This is a stretch target, aiming for a two day improvement based on performance in 2015/16.

The Council will continue to improve its ways of working and be compliant with changing HMRC rules. This includes the processing of Members' allowances, including the consolidation of new electronic process to improve efficiency and accuracy.

### ***Legal and Asset Management (Targets L05; L06)***

The Council will set up a Member and Officer Steering group to consider the Council's future corporate accommodation needs, beyond the mid 2018 Maltsters' office lease 'break point'. The target (January 2017) to set a steering group up, will be 18 months before the 'break point'.

The Legal and Asset Management Team will also continue to monitor and maintain its high levels of client satisfaction against quality standards

***Market Square Development (Targets L07; L08)***

With the ambition of improving the viability of the Town Centre and the Market Hall, the Council will look to work with Staffordshire County Council in order to develop options to both improve the traffic flow into the Market Square and improve car parking opportunities. This should help to increase the footfall in and around the Market Hall and may also potentially provide an opportunity for the High Street to become pedestrianised. The Council will also look to pursue options for improving the street furniture in this area to make this aspect of the town centre more attractive.

***Town Hall Car Parking (Target L09)***

In order to alleviate traffic and car parking issues in and around Shobnall, the Council will again look to work with Staffordshire County Council in order to investigate options for the development of car parking in King Edward square and surrounding areas.

***Elections Team (Targets L10; L11; L12; L13)***

The Elections Team is currently preparing for the Police and Crime Commissioners Election to be held in May as well as ensuring that the Council is ready to undertake preparation for the European Union referendum. There are also further Neighbourhood Planning Referendums due to be held throughout the year. The annual canvass of electors will be also be completed and submitted by December 2016.

***Committee Services and Resilience Planning (Targets L14; L15)***

The Committee Services Team will undertake another annual review of the Council's Major Incident Plan and also deliver a new approach to Business Continuity Planning arrangements, both of which will ensure the Council is resilient to any threats or major incidents.

## **MEASURES AND TARGETS FOR 2016/17**

The Leader of the Council's portfolio has identified a number of measures and targets for 2016/17 which will contribute to the delivery of the objectives detailed above. These are set out in the following tables.

### **Value For Money Council Services**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Target 2016/17</b>
L01	Increasing staffing availability through reduced sickness	Short term sickness days average under 3 days
L02	Staff appraisals completed by end of May	At least 98%
L03	Improve on the average time to pay Creditors	13 days
L04	Implementation of new HMRC rules for Members allowances; consolidation of new electronic process (improved efficiency and accuracy).	95% claim forms received electronically
L05	Set up Member and Officer Steering group to consider the Council's future corporate accommodation needs, beyond the mid 2018 Maltsters lease 'break point'	January 2017

## Promoting Local Economic Growth

Ref	Measures	Target 2016/17
L06	Percentage of clients satisfied with the Legal Service provided (against quality standards)	99%
L07	Developing the Market Square	In conjunction with Staffordshire CC, consider options for the improvement and development of the market square area (January 2017)
L08	Developing the Market Square	Consider options for improving street furniture on Station Street (December 2016)
L09	Improving Town Hall car parking	In conjunction Staffordshire CC, investigate the options for improving car parking around the Town Hall (March 2017)
L10	Deliver Neighbourhood Planning Referenda	Complete in accordance with statutory requirements

## Protecting and Strengthening Communities

Ref	Measures	Target 2016/17
L11	Deliver the Police and Crime Commissioner Election	Complete in accordance with statutory requirements
L12	Prepare for the European Union referendum	Prepare in accordance with statutory requirements
L13	Complete the Annual Canvass of Electors	Complete and submit Canvass by December 2016
L14	An effective Business Continuity arrangement	Agree new approach to Business Continuity Planning (June 2016)
L15	Be resilient to major incidents and threats	Undertake review of Major Incident Plan (June 2016)