

# ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

May 2023 – May 2024

A 12-month lookback at  
what has been achieved





# FOREWORD

Cllr Jane Ashworth, Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council

When we were voted in to take over the administration at Stoke-on-Trent City Council, back in May 2023, we knew we were facing an uphill climb. We didn't waste a moment and began by tackling some of the big issues we know affect many families across the city. We know that everyone wants to live in a decent home, free from rancid mould and damp conditions which can affect health. Our DAMP campaign was launched and we are now dealing with hundreds of enquiries every month to assist families and help them to live in good conditions in their council homes. Not only were council homes in need of urgent attention, but our streets were suffering too. We cleaned up our city in 100 days and doubled down on the dirty streets, alleys, roads and wasteland, by getting tough on illegal dumping. We won't stand for it and anyone who gets caught will receive a hefty fine. Those who fly-tip don't care about their community. We won't let them off the hook and our zero-tolerance policy continues to work well as a deterrent. No excuses!

Crime, and the fear of crime, has stopped some of our communities from living a good quality of life and we take this really seriously. We share intelligence with the police to see where crimes are being reported and what causes these crimes in the first place. Our joint campaign with Staffordshire Police, Making Great Places, aims to 'reclaim our streets' from those who terrorise the innocent. Don't be surprised if you see council officers teaming up with police officers and going about the community to find out what worries people. The door knocking will give us the intelligence we need to drive out disgusting criminal gangs. It's a territory war they will not win.

We want family life to be the cornerstone of our city, where children can play and grow up proud of the place they call home. Our family hubs have been launched to give everyone access to the best advice and support to help family life thrive, whether it's education, finances, creative classes or adult skills. Stoke-on-Trent is a kind and caring city at its heart, and we want to keep it that way and support our people to do well. Our older folk have told us they want to live independently for longer and we are working hard to bring together a portfolio of support that will help achieve this. We want those who are able to stay at home, to live longer with their family and friends around them with the right help and support available to do this. We know we can achieve this together and help deliver a good quality of life for our senior citizens.

Finally, the cost of living is bearing down hard on all of us as we try to keep our books balanced in an increasingly challenging environment. Not only has the Council been met with some incredible financial challenges over this past year, our residents are feeling the full force of price rises too. It's for this reason we are re-launching our Help is at Hand campaign again next month to help everyone with the cost of living crisis. We know that working families are struggling to meet some of the basic demands, such as bills and food. We know the stresses and strains can cause family breakdown and we now have the highest number of children in care in the country. At the time of launching this strategy it is Fostering Fortnight and we would urge anyone, who meets the criteria, to step forward and help look after a child and give them a chance to live a good life, surrounded by love and security.

As we set forth on a new direction as set out in our corporate strategy, we remain person centred. The health and wellbeing of our people is our primary aim. And so, we will continue on this path to enable our Stoke-on-Trent residents to enjoy a good quality of life and benefit from the prosperity that we are committed to bringing in to the City of Stoke-on-Trent.

# WHAT WE'VE ACHIEVED

## MAY

Councillor Jane Ashworth became the new council leader.

## NOVEMBER

Residents were urged to have their say on the development of a **city-wide inventory** which will help to protect some of the city's most treasured public works of art.

We were awarded **£500,000** to **invest** in a new pilot scheme that will see six transport safety officers recruited to travel on the city's bus network in a bid to **keep travellers safe**.

A **crackdown on damp and mould** was launched to make sure all residents can live in safe, dry and warm homes.



Six community-led projects were awarded a share of £90,000 to **encourage residents to fall in love with the city again** and unite communities across Stoke-on-Trent.

## JUNE

We pledged to clear **1000 cases of illegal dumped rubbish** across the city in **100 days**.

**I.D.I.O.T**

## OCTOBER

Construction of Capital & Centric's Goods Yard reached its highest point.

We approved **Foster carers** in Stoke-on-Trent getting **higher payments** for helping children in the city.

We secured more than £3 million through the Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund to install up to **500 electric vehicle charging points across the city**.

## DECEMBER

Our new **Community Safety strategy** was approved.



## JULY

We distributed **£9,477,820 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)** to deliver projects which **support local businesses**, improve local spaces and **assist residents** with employment.

**Discounted bus fares** were introduced across Stoke-on-Trent with a new Affordable Fares scheme.

## SEPTEMBER

**#LoveSOT** fortnight took place where local businesses, residents and community groups were called upon to pledge their support in helping keep Stoke-on-Trent clean.

**Help is at Hand** launched to support residents across the city through the **cost of living** crisis and winter months.

## AUGUST

Our 100-day **target** to clear 1,000 cases of illegal dumped rubbish was **smashed in less than half the time**.

A new multi-million-pound investment programme was announced to ensure all **council tenants live in warm and comfortable homes**.



Our **Adult and Community Learning** (post 16) service was **rated 'Good'** in an **Ofsted** inspection.

Works began to start on **transforming** Station Road and College Road, in **Stoke** to create a safe and attractive travel route between Stoke-on-Trent station and the city centre.

A specialist team were appointed to bring top design expertise to the proposed wrap-around extension and re-imagined spaces at the **Potteries Museum & Art Gallery (PMAG)**.

We pledged to address fuel poverty in the city as part of its ongoing commitment to **ensuring all residents can live in safe and warm homes**.

More than **950 properties** which were suffering from damp, mould or condensation were visited and **assessed in just 39 days**.

# JANUARY

Our **new Gymnastics Arena** opened at Dimensions Leisure Centre.



**Fines for illegal dumping increased.**

We were **awarded £209,140** as part of the Move on and prevention fund to **support homelessness.**

# FEBRUARY

Plans to replace five former sheltered housing schemes with **new homes for the city's residents** were revealed.

A new **Digital Family Hub** launched to support families in Stoke-on-Trent.



# APRIL

**Two council services** were shortlisted for prestigious accolades at the **MJ Awards.**

**Extra** journeys were introduced on a number of **bus routes** so that residents can enjoy improved access to work, healthcare, retail and much more.



**7,542 children** have taken part in our **HAF programme** since Summer 2023.

Our **JET team** has supported **592 people into employment** under the Restart Scheme which we will continue to deliver until 2028.

# MARCH

**Budget for new financial year was agreed.**

We secured **vital funds** from Government to balance the council budget.

**Making Great Places** launched with Staffordshire Police to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in Fenton.



Ex-England footballers the late **Freddie Steele** and **Kerry Davis** joined Stoke-on-Trent's **Sporting Hall of Fame.**

The city's first free school got planning approval. **Co-operative Academy Florence MacWilliams** will open to its first pupils in **September 2024.**

# Our City, Our Wellbeing

Creating shared wealth, reducing inequality

**Our Vision** Developing an environment in which people and institutions can work together to improve the wellbeing of all residents.

## 1. Healthier

Creating a healthier standard of living for all our citizens

## 2. Wealthier

Reducing hardship and enabling greater shared prosperity

## 3. Safer

Building empowered communities, safe from the threat of harm

## 4. Greener

Conserving our environment and living more sustainably

## 5. Cleaner

Working together to clean up our city and our communities

## 6. Fairer

Tackling inequality and improving life chances for everyone

## 7. Skilled

Providing opportunities for people to improve their skills and education



## Our Approach

- Working with partners to address the major challenges facing our city.
- Investing in accessible, timely and effective prevention and early intervention services.
- Giving power away to communities to which want to develop better solutions for themselves and others.
- Creating improved opportunities and life chances and enabling our residents to take advantage of them.

## Our Values

- **Empowerment:** Enabling communities to help improve their own lives and places.
- **Openness:** Sharing the ideas and information needed to solve key challenges.
- **Empathy:** Caring about our residents and how we can best serve them.
- **Partnership:** Pooling energy and expertise to tackle important challenges.
- **Stewardship:** Taking ownership of our responsibilities to residents and businesses.
- **Representation:** Championing our city and fostering civic pride.

## Critical Issues

- **Supporting family life:** ensuring families are helping to give their children the best start in life.
- **Reclaiming our streets:** enabling residents to take back ownership of our streets and public spaces.
- **Addressing hardship and poverty:** helping to maximise income and improve residents' quality of life.
- **Ensuring decent homes for all:** using our influence to help eradicate problems such as fuel poverty, damp and mould.
- **Supporting people to live independently:** working with partners to improve support and accommodation.

