

Staffordshire Chambers' of Commerce – Rural Business forum

'This forum is a strategic group to promote the interests of the rural business sector in Staffordshire. It champions and lobbies for specific strategies and policies that will benefit members and ensure the rural sector has a stronger voice in our community.

Date of meeting	Tuesday 8th July 2025
Venue	Staffordshire Chambers' of Commerce – Commerce House
Number of attendees	4
Agenda topics	<p>Presentation by Tess Howe of The Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture (TIAH) on the Agri Tech Feasibility Report.</p> <p>Agriculture underpins the food and drink sector, which is the UK's largest manufacturing sector. A report was commissioned by the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).</p> <p>According to 2024 figures, there were 3,276 commercial farms in Staffordshire, with a split of 1/3 arable and 2/3 livestock. The county makes up 1% of agricultural land in England.</p> <p>Challenges include digital connectivity issues in rural areas, power grid limitations for advanced Agri tech, limitations in existing advisory services and a need for stronger communities of practice and support networks.</p> <p>Presentation slides available to view on forum webpage.</p> <p>Discussion on future speakers and topics to cover in future meetings.</p> <p>Discussion on United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG).</p>