

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET DECISIONS

TUESDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2022

PRESENT: Councillor S E Ralphs MBE (Chair)

Councillors M Bowen, M Deaville, T Hall, A Hart and J Porter

IN ATTENDANCE: J Aberley, G Bentley, B Cawley, B Emery, N Hawkins, T Holmes, K Hoptroff, P Roberts, R Ward and P Wilkinson

APOLOGIES: Councillor S Scalise

42 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED)**

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

43 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY**

The following declaration of interest was made:

Agenda Item	Member Declaring Interest	Nature of Interest
Agenda Item 10.2 Rural Sports Villages	Cllr. J Porter	Other Interest – project in Cllr Porter’s ward proposed to receive funding allocation.

44 **MATTERS REFERRED BY AN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL, IF ANY**

No specific matters had been raised, however, the minutes of the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting of 26 January 2022 had been included in the agenda pack for information. These included discussion that related to the Car Park Strategy (item 11.1 of the Cabinet agenda).

45 **FORWARD PLAN**

DECISION:

That the Forward Plan be approved for publication.

46 **THIRD QUARTER FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2021/22**

The purpose of the report is to inform members of the Council’s overall performance and financial position for the period ended 31st December (“Third Quarter 2021/22”). The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 2 February 2022. The position was summarised as follows:

Subject	Headline	Reference
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Finance	<p>The Finance headlines for the Third Quarter</p> <p><i>Performance against Budget</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Third Quarter stage the General Fund projected outturn for 2021/22 was an underspend of £1,749,210 including £0.906m in Section31 grants, which would need to be placed into reserves at year-end for distribution via the Collection Fund in future years. <p><i>Efficiency Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Quarter Three £633,000 in savings had been taken against the 2021/22 general fund efficiency target of £830,430. It was anticipated that there will be a £160,000 shortfall in the year. <p><i>Capital Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revised Capital Programme budget for 2021/22 was £4.83 million including the carry forward of capital underspends from 2020/21. The projected outturn for the year at Quarter Three was £13.96 million; an overspend of £9.13 million. This reflected a £10m loan to Your Housing Group in relation to the provision of affordable housing in the District. <p><i>Treasury Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash investments held at 31 December 2021 totalled £18.7 million. The Ascent loan and debenture stood at £17.15 million. Council borrowing at 31 December 2021 totalled £8 million (relating to the Ascent loan) The Council's net interest income receipts for the year was forecast to exceed the budget by £2,130 at the Quarter Three stage. <p><i>Revenue Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 83.07% of Council Tax was collected by 31 December 2021 compared to 83.03% for the same period last year (43.92% in 2019/20) 76.34% of Business Rates was collected by 31 December 2021 compared to 80.61% for the same period last year (80.45% in 2019/20) At the end of the Third Quarter debt that was over 60 days old was £46,727 which compares with £71,620 at 31 December 2020. 	Appendix A
Procurement	<p>The Procurement headlines for the Third Quarter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 procurement activities were completed The Procurement forward plan included 41 procurement activities for completion in 2021/22 (either SMDC only or joint) At the 31 December 2021, 50% of procurement activity undertaken was on the forward plan. 	Appendix B
Performance	<p>The Performance headlines for the Third Quarter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74% of the key performance indicators on track The Council received 47 complaints, 142 comments and 35 compliments 	Appendix C

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| | • Priority Actions - 13 green, 2 amber, 1 completed, 16 grey | |
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Options considered:

Detailed Analysis is contained within the main body of the Report.

DECISION:

That the Third Quarter 2021/22 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report be noted.

47 **2022/23 BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2022/23 TO 2025/26**

The purpose of the report is to present the proposed Budget for 2022/23, updated Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022/23 – 2025/26, Capital Strategy 2022/23, proposed Fees and Charges for 2022/23 and Procurement Forward Plan 2022/23. The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 2 February 2022.

Options considered:

This report recommended a Council Tax level and associated budget, Medium Term Financial Plan, Capital Strategy (and future capital programme) and Fees & Charges for 2022/23 designed to best deliver the Council's corporate priorities within a balanced budget. Other options were feasible, but any alternatives would need to robustly identify the service and financial implications, in order to satisfy the Council's Section 151 Officer (under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, section 114) of the need to deliver a balanced budget.

RECOMMENDED:

That Cabinet supported the following **recommendations** to Council:

- Approves the General Fund Budget for 2022/23 as detailed in **Appendix A (section 9)**
- Approves the revised Medium-Term Financial Plan (2022/23 to 2025/26) as detailed in **Appendix A**, including the revised Capital Programme (attached at Annex A)
- Approves the Capital Strategy 2022/23 as set out in **Appendix B**
- Approves the proposed Fees and Charges for 2022/23 as detailed in **Appendix C**
- Approves the proposed Procurement Forward Plan for 2022/23, providing the authority to procure based on procurement activity detailed in **Appendix D**
- Approves a Band D Council Tax of £163.14 for 2022/23 (an increase of 2.99% from 2021/22)

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- Approves a Band D Council Tax of £52.92 for Leek and £10.64 for Biddulph for 2022/23 (no increase from 2021/22) in respect of Special District Expenses
- Notes the Chief Finance Officer's view that the level of reserves are adequate for the Council based on this budget and the circumstances in place at the time of preparing it (**Appendix A Annex E**)

48 **STAFFORDSHIRE LEADERS BOARD / COUNTY DEAL**

The purpose of the report was to consider the establishment of, and the Council's participation in, a Joint Committee of the local authorities in Staffordshire to explore opportunities for improved joint working and to develop and implement plans for devolution from Government through a County Deal.

Options considered:

There were no options to consider at this stage.

DECISION:

1. That the establishment of, and the Council's participation in, the Staffordshire Leaders Board on the basis of the Terms of Reference set out in Appendix A to the report be agreed.
2. That the Leader be appointed as the District Council's representative on the Leaders Board.
3. That the Deputy Leader be appointed as the substitute for the Leader on the Leaders Board.

49 **THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE GRANT FUND**

The report presented proposals for the Council to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Options considered:

- That the Council creates a £20,000 Queen's Platinum Jubilee grant fund as proposed in this report. (Recommended)
- That the Council creates a fund of a different amount and/or creates a different mechanism for allocating the grant. (Not recommended)
- That the Council does not create a Queen's Platinum Jubilee grant fund. (Not recommended)

DECISION:

1. That a Queen's Platinum Jubilee grant fund of £20,000 be established. Grants to be available to parish and town councils in the Staffordshire Moorlands based on the size of the council (as detailed in the report).
2. That the Council uses a range of tools to promote the occasion including the use of the Council website and social media channels.

50 **ACCESS TO SERVICES, DIGITAL AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES**

The purpose of the report is to consider new Access to Services, Digital and Organisational Development Strategies. The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 2 February 2022.

Options considered:

There were no options to consider at this stage

DECISION:

1. That the Access to Services Strategy as attached at Appendix A to the report be approved.
2. That the Digital Strategy as attached at Appendix B to the report be approved.
3. That the Organisational Development Strategy as attached at Appendix C to the report be approved.
4. That a combined action plan for delivery of the strategies at its April meeting be considered.
5. That the consideration and approval of arrangements for external expertise to support the delivery of the strategies be delegated to the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Customer Services following the completion of the procurement exercise as outlined in section 12 of the report.

51 **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

Following the death of Councillor Richard Alcock it was necessary to make a number of re-appointments to outside bodies. The nominations below were made in consultation with the Leader of the Independents Group. The re-appointment to the Freehay and District Liaison Committee would be considered following any election to the vacant Cheadle South East seat.

Options considered:

In accordance with the Council's procedure rules ad-hoc in-year appointments to outside bodies are determined by Cabinet.

DECISION:

That the following appointments to outside bodies be made:

- Community Council of Staffordshire – Cllr. Ian Plant
- Croxden Quarry Liaison Committee – Cllr. Gary Bentley
- Cheadle Arts Forum – Cllr. Kate Martin

52 **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SPD ISSUES AND OPTIONS**

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The report notified Councillors of the preparation of a Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and sought approval for consultation on the Issues and Options identified. Feedback on issues and options and plans for consultation was also sought. A presentation on the matter was considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 26 January 2022.

Options considered:

That Cabinet approve consultation on Issues and Options. (recommended).

That Cabinet do not approve consultation on Issues and Options. This would mean that the requirement in the Council's SCI would not have been met and feedback on Issues and Options would not be considered in the preparation of the SPD. (not recommended).

DECISION:

That the purpose of the SPD be noted and that consultation on the Issues and Options identified be approved.

53 SPORTS GRANTS SCHEME

The Cabinet considered changes made by the Staffordshire Moorlands Sports Council to the sports grant criteria.

Options considered:

There were two options available to the council:

1. To return to the previous criteria. Prior to this criteria change, a large percentage of the grants available were allocated to individual athletes, rather than being allocated more equally between clubs or coaches who arguably had a greater reach and impact on the community. Not permitting the return to activity criteria would have a negative impact on those clubs, coaches and athletes (Not recommended).
2. To accept the changed funding criteria enabling the Return to Activity criteria to continue to be acceptable in the awards of sports grants until the end of the covid pandemic or a time when it is deemed to no longer be required. This would ensure that our sporting communities are able to address additional pressures and costs in re-establishing activity (Recommended).

DECISION:

That the Cabinet approves the changes made by the Staffordshire Moorlands Sports Council to the sports grant criteria.

54 RURAL SPORTS VILLAGES

The report updated the Cabinet on the progress of the work undertaken to identify and support projects with a view to allocating outdoor sports capital funding towards these.

Options considered:

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There are two options available:

1. Recommend that Cabinet approve the allocation £10,700 towards the two projects in Endon and Leek from the outdoor sports capital budget as detailed in the report (Recommended).
2. Funding to the proposed projects is not allocated, meaning that funding would need to be secured via alternative other sources which may prevent the projects from progressing (Not recommended).

DECISION:

1. That the progress made in supporting projects that were previously allocated capital funding and the work undertaken to develop new projects be noted.
2. That the allocation of £10,700 towards two projects in Endon and Leek from the outdoor sports capital budget as detailed within the report be approved.
3. That future reports requesting funding be approved via delegated decision reports by the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Sports.

55

CAR PARKING STRATEGY

The report presented a newly drafted Staffordshire Moorlands Car Parking Strategy to members of the Cabinet. The Strategy was considered in detail by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 26 January 2022. The Strategy and associated investment plans were generally supported by the Panel. Members did however recommend that the Cabinet should review the Strategy 12 months after implementation to evaluate its impact and that consideration be given to defer the changes relating to the revised charging period in Cheadle (the draft minutes of the meeting were included at agenda item 5 of the Cabinet report pack).

Options considered:

Option 1: To approve the strategy and publish the summary strategy as set out in appendix 1. Recommended.

Option 2: Not to approve the strategy would prevent the investment required to improve the car parking service. Tariffs were set to rise as part of the medium term financial plan (MTFP) for the new financial year. If the tariffs were not implemented, other measures would be required to ensure the budget pressures of the MTFP were achieved, such as inflationary rises. Not Recommended.

DECISION:

1. That the adoption of the Car Parking Strategy be approved, subject to:
 - 1.1 The Strategy being reviewed 12 months after implementation to evaluate its impact.
 - 1.2 That the proposed charge period (8:00 am to 6:00 pm) and the associated free half an hour / one hour concessions be deferred in Cheadle. The present charge period to be retained (9:30 am to 3:30 pm) subject to a

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further review later in the year when the outcomes from the High Streets Task Force / Masterplan Development are known.

2. That the key findings, recommendations and action plan within the Strategy be noted and that the following actions be approved:
 - 2.1 That the tariffs set out in section 8.13 of the report for the new financial year be implemented.
 - 2.2 That a tourist parking pass be created and permits be reviewed to ensure more flexibility for customers.
 - 2.3 That Pay by Phone across SMDC car parks to facilitate cashless and contactless payments be implemented as soon as possible.
 - 2.4 That the current ticket machines be replaced on a phased base, reducing where possible, to include contactless and card payment options.
 - 2.5 That a bespoke SMDC EV strategy be progressed and developed working collaboratively with Staffordshire County Council and their consultants.
 - 2.6 That short stay and long stay areas on Cheadle Tape Street car park and tariff changes be created, updating the SMDC parking order accordingly.
 - 2.7 That the creation of a new officer position within the Assets Service to strategically manage car parking across the Alliance and implement the action plan and strategy over the course of the next 5 years be noted.
 - 2.8 That appropriate funds be allocated to improve signage and wayfinding on the car parks.

56 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to Section 100A(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 100 I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the Paragraphs indicated.

57 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT JOINT VENTURE

The Cabinet approved a report with regards to the delivery of facilities management services to the Council.

The meeting closed at 3.49 pm

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_____Chairman