

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET DECISIONS

TUESDAY, 29 MARCH 2022

PRESENT: Councillor S E Ralphs MBE (Chair)

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors K Flunder, T Holmes, B Johnson, P Roberts and L Swindlehurst

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

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 8 February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

59 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY**

The following declaration of interest was made:

Agenda Item	Member Declaring Interest	Nature of Interest
Agenda Item 13 - Proposal to transfer the management of the SMDC Countryside Sites	Cllr. A Hart	Other Interest – member of Friends of Biddulph Valley Way

60 **ITEMS REQUESTED BY CABINET AND/OR NON-CABINET MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CABINET PROCEDURE RULES 8.5(B) AND (E), IF ANY**

60.1 **CAR PARK STRATEGY UPDATE**

Further to the announcement at Council on 23 February 2022 it was confirmed that the charging period for both Leek and Cheadle car parks would remain at 9.30 am to 3.30 pm.

61 **FORWARD PLAN**

DECISION:

That the Forward Plan be approved for publication.

62 **OUTSIDE - THE STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS PROJECT FUNDED BY ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND'S CREATIVE PEOPLE AND PLACES PROGRAMME**

The report informed the Cabinet about the Arts Council England's award of a grant of up to £943,000 for a 3 year project to increase participation in arts and culture across the district. The report was considered by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 7 March 2022.

Options considered:

None identified.

DECISION:

1. That the contents of the report be noted.
2. That the financial commitments as set out within the report be approved.

63 **CHEADLE – DELIVERY OF TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS**

The report thanked the members of the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel for their valuable work and sought approval for the conclusion of the Panel's role. The report also provided the Cabinet with feedback from the Cheadle household surveys and an update on regeneration project priorities to be progressed by the Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board.

Options considered:

The work of the Stakeholder Panel in engaging with the communities for Cheadle had considered all viable regeneration alternatives and the report provided an update on that work.

DECISION:

1. That the successful conclusion of the work undertaken by the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel be noted.
2. That the progress made by the Stakeholder Panel to identify local opinion on options and plans to regenerate Cheadle Town Centre be noted. This included the review of car parking strategy and the Leisure Transformation Plan, in addition to the work to identify deliverable options for identified town centre sites.
3. That the work of the Cheadle Town Centre Task Force and proposals for the transformation of Cheadle High Street via delivery of an agreed action plan be noted.
4. That the text and proposed distribution arrangements for the second Cheadle community newsletter be noted.
5. That the Cheadle Town Centre Projects Delivery Board commence work to deliver three emergent priorities: the new Cheadle Leisure Centre, the purchase

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and refurbishment of Cheadle Market and the implementation of the agreed car parking strategy for Cheadle.

64 **EMPTY PROPERTIES LEVY**

The purpose of the report was to update the Council Tax Levies Policy to include a new charge on properties empty for at least ten years and to clarify circumstances where the empty property premium levy may be waived.

Options considered:

There was an option to do nothing and not amend the current policy on properties empty for over ten years. However, where Government allows local authorities to make discretionary decisions in respect of council tax due, Members need to consider the proposals.

DECISION:

That amendments to the current Council Tax Reductions and Levies Policy be approved to cover:

- a levy of 300% of Council Tax for properties empty for at least ten years, from 1 April 2022
- clarification on circumstances where the levy may be waived (outlined in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of the report)

65 **LEEK MARKET HALL REFURBISHMENT**

The purpose of the report was to present the full business case for the delivery of capital investment into Leek Market Hall. The improved facilities would support the establishment of permanent units for retail, food and beverage uses.

The Cabinet at its meeting on the 29th June 2021 resolved to prepare a full business case for capital investment within the Market Hall following: feedback from the public consultation exercise undertaken with stakeholders and the community; consideration of preferred options for future investment; and require a further report to Cabinet on the business case and the proposals for capital investment.

Options considered:

Both the Do Nothing and the Do Minimum scenarios are affordable options but do not provide the wider public benefits or provide opportunity for the Market Hall offer to be enhanced.

The most ambitious option to provide nine permanent mixed use units does not provide sufficient value for money to be justifiable at this time but could be implemented in the future on the back of the improvements proposed in the preferred option of creating up to 3 food and beverage units.

DECISION:

1. That the allocation of £435,000 for investment in Leek Market Hall be approved for the purposes of improving facilities to support the establishment of permanent

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units for retail, food and beverage uses as set out in the Business Case (Appendix A of the report) and to replace the asbestos roof.

2. That the responsibility for the procurement of necessary goods and services and the implementation of the capital works be delegated to the Executive Director (Place).
3. That authority be delegated to the Leader to agree to a variation in capital costs if necessary following completion of the open market procurement exercises, up to and not exceeding 30% of the original budget allocation.
4. In circumstances where tender returns rise beyond 30% of the budget allocation approval will be sought via an Cabinet Delegated Decision.
5. That a further Cabinet report be required to detail the future Markets Operation that will be necessary to provide support for market traders and market customers.

66 NEW PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The purpose of the report was to provide members with an opportunity to scrutinise the draft Performance Framework and associated targets for 2022/23 to 2024/25. The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 23 March 2022.

Options considered:

Members had been asked to consider the proposed targets and to suggest amendments if they considered that they are necessary.

DECISION:

That the Performance Framework be approved.

67 HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME

The report updated councillors on progress of the Accelerated Housing Delivery Programme and presented a refocused programme of work following the adoption of the Local Plan. The report sought approval for an uplift in the Regeneration Service budget for the next financial year to enable the commission of a comprehensive package of interventions to tackle low levels of development activity, maintain the five-year housing land supply, and deliver the Local Plan.

Options considered:

Option 1: To decline to approve the re-focused Housing Delivery Programme, and /or decline to provide additional resources to help deliver the programme. This was not considered the preferred option.

The government was imposing sanctions on local authorities which were unable to demonstrate delivery of their housing target. In January 2021, the Council recorded a Housing Delivery test result achieving 97% of the required housing over the past three years. However, the recently published five year housing land supply results

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(as of April 2021) concluded that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply. Option 1 was not recommended

Option 2: To approve the revised Housing Delivery Programme and approve the additional resources required.

Having an implementation plan in place would demonstrate the Council's commitment to deliver the adopted Local Plan and help to maintain a five year housing land supply. The government, through the Housing Delivery Test, is encouraging local authorities to take a more proactive approach to securing the delivery of new homes. The housing delivery programme is designed to coordinate the Council's efforts to access funding and attract investment to the area. Option 2 was recommended

DECISION:

1. That the revised Housing Delivery Programme as outlined in paragraphs 8.1 - 8.8 of the report be approved.
2. That the 2022/23 budget uplift request as outlined in paragraph 6.4 of the report be approved.

68 **REVISED PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL ASSISTANCE POLICY 2021-26**

The report presented the revised Private Sector Housing Renewal Assistance Policy for Staffordshire Moorlands District Council following public consultation. The report was considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 23 March 2022.

Options considered:

As detailed in the main body of the report.

DECISION:

That the revised Staffordshire Moorlands Private Sector Housing Renewal Assistance Policy for 2021-26 be approved.

69 **REVIEW OF EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the report was to propose revised Equality Objectives for the Council. The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 23 March 2022.

Options considered:

- That the recommendations contained in section 2 of the report be approved (recommended).
- That the recommendations contained in section 2 of the report are not approved (not recommended).

DECISION:

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That the revised Equality Objectives be adopted.

70 BIRCHALL SPORTS VILLAGE

The report sought approval from the Cabinet for capital funds to deliver phase one of a new 'Birchall Sports Village' project in Leek.

Options considered:

There were two options available to the Council:

1. To approve for the creation of a new 'Birchall Sports Village' as detailed in the report and approve the request for £250,000 to complete phase one of the project as detailed in the report (Recommended).
2. To not approve plans to develop the Birchall Sports Village as proposed in the report (Not Recommended).

DECISION:

1. That the proposal to create a new 'Birchall Sports Village', encompassing two phases as detailed in the report be approved.
2. That the request for £250,000 to complete phase one of the project be approved.

71 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.

72 PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SMDC COUNTRYSIDE SITES

The Cabinet approved a report that presented proposals to secure the future management arrangements of the Moorlands countryside sites.

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm

Chairman