

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Minutes

WEDNESDAY, 24 MARCH 2021

PRESENT: Councillor A Hart (Chair)

Councillors C J S Atkins, M Bowen, J Davies, E Fallows, M Gledhill, T Hall, N Hawkins, I Herdman, T Holmes, K Hoptroff, B A Hughes, K J Jackson, J T Jones, L Page, I Plant, T Riley, P Routledge, L Swindlehurst, P Wilkinson and N Yates

IN ATTENDANCE:	S Hampton	Member and Community Services Officer
	P Trafford	Member & Community Services Officer
	CHazeldene	Acting Executive Director (Finance and Customer Services)
	A Stokes	Chief Executive
	T Cooper	Head of Organisational Development and Transformation
	H Core	Head of Housing Services
	B Haywood	Head of Development Services

12 **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS, IF ANY**

There were no substitute members.

13 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources overview & Scrutiny Panel held on 3 February 2021 be **APPROVED** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

14 **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS, IF ANY (24 HOURS NOTICE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE CHAIRMAN)**

There were no urgent items.

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15 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:**

The following declarations were made at this point, unless stated otherwise:-

Agenda Item	Member Declaring Interest	Nature of Interest
Agenda Item 7 – Millbrook Healthcare – Disabled Facilities Grants	Cllr. C Atkins	“Other” – Trustee of an organisation currently in discussions with Millbrook Healthcare
Agenda Item 9 – Performance Framework	Cllr. K Jackson	“Other” – Member of ‘Biddulph Youth & Community Zone’ who have an application for a grant currently being considered.

16 **QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDERS, IF ANY**

There were no questions.

17 **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.

18 **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

The Panel received a report on the proposed revised management structure for the Alliance.

19 **MILLBROOK HEALTHCARE - DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS**

Mike Towers (MT - Senior Officer – Housing, Public Health & Licensing) introduced Diane Bradshaw (DB - Service Centre Manager, Millbrook Healthcare) and Gavin Kelly (GK - Regional Director, Millbrook Healthcare) who had presented their ‘Quarter 3 summary’ at the previous meeting of the Panel and had been invited to attend again. The Chair asked that members should not mention any specific names or addresses in the meeting.

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DB confirmed that Millbrook were starting the 4th year of a 5 year contract, with a further 2 year possible extension. The contract was with 6 Staffordshire authorities and they had 22 staff to provide the service.

GK advised that Millbrook had worked throughout the COVID-19 period and approvals had increased through the roof.

Members raised various questions regarding the management of contractors, monitoring of projects, delays experienced in service provision, cross-county boundary difficulties and changes in procedures.

Occupational Health was a specific area of interest, with different systems to deal with child and adult cases. Millbrook had recruited their own Occupational Therapist (OT) but the person in question had since left the company. The intention was to use private OT's from 1 April 2021 onwards.

The Chair thanked the 2 Millbrook Healthcare representatives for their attendance.

20 **ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2019/20**

David Owen – Corporate Health & Safety Advisor – presented the 2019/20 report which was in 13 sections. The Alliance had an electronic Health & Safety Portfolio and were seen throughout Staffordshire and Derbyshire as 'exemplars' in the field.

There had been a total of 1,833 training opportunities for staff during the year, ranging from 'Tool-box talks' to more involved training sessions.

There had been 12 accidents involving staff, 3 of which involved staff being off work for 7 days or more as a result. There were 15 near miss or verbal threat incidents. 4 accidents had occurred involving members of the public. The figures showed a reduction from those of the previous year.

Responding to queries raised by members of the Panel, David confirmed that:-

- reception areas had been modified ready for re-opening after COVID-19, with partitions in place to encourage correct social distancing;
- future reports would indicate whether accidents had occurred in the Moorlands;
- Heads of Service had been trained on Mental Health awareness and that there would be 'Mental Health 1st Aiders' in place among the workforce to 'Triage' any potential cases;
- Radon Gas – all council-owned buildings were tested for this, but none was detected in Staffs Moorlands buildings.

RESOLVED – That the report be **NOTED**.

21 **PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK**

Vanessa Higgins (Information Business Partner) presented the report which confirmed how the council measured the delivery of its Corporate Plan.

The main changes to the framework had been brought about by corporate targets that had been affected by COVID-19. Some positive outcomes had become evident, such as a reduction in sickness levels and an increase in the council's use of social media.

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Several Heads of Service attended the meeting to respond to member queries, which included:-

- Why had only 3 landlords signed up to the Landlord Accreditation Scheme? *(When considering accreditations, there needed to be a value to it and the council had to ensure all aspects were correct. Most Landlords had left the previous Stoke-on-Trent scheme. The council retained the capability to enforce where necessary and this was our main responsibility. This action had no effect on the tenancies.)*
- What was being done about the level of empty properties? It had previously been agreed that an 'Empty Property Working Group' should be set up with member involvement. *(Efforts were made to act whenever possible but some properties were exempted from action. Compulsory purchase was an area being investigated. The agenda for the working group was being compiled. A list of empty properties would be provided to members before the Working Group met.)*
- Some CCTV cameras had been de-commissioned. Was there a bid to re-instate them? *(A response would be provided.)*
- What was being done to assist new and existing businesses after COVID-19, given the level of empty shops? *(The council's Regeneration section was involved in the 'Covid Recovery Group'. Additional Business Grants were available to support businesses. The County Council were administering Restart Grants and Start-up Grants.)*
- The Outside Markets were shown at a cost of £4,000. Was this a direct cost to the council and what return did the council received? *(A response would be provided.)*

RESOLVED – That the Panel recommend that Cabinet **APPROVE** the Performance Framework 2021/2024.

22 WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Yates requested that 'Market Subsidy Strategy' be added to the Work Programme.

RESOLVED – That the Work Programme going into 2021/22 be **AGREED**, subject to the addition of the above for a future meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.55 am

_____ Chairman _____ Date