

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET DECISIONS

TUESDAY, 3 AUGUST 2021

PRESENT: Councillor S E Ralphs MBE (Chair)

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

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor L Swindlehurst

APOLOGIES: Councillor M Deaville

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

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29 June 2021 be approved as a correct record.

13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY**

There were no declarations made.

14 **FORWARD PLAN**

Two reports had been withdrawn from the agenda for the meeting these being Levelling Up – Acceptance of Capacity Support Funding and Accelerated Housing Delivery Programme Update.

DECISION:

That, subject to the amendments shown above, the Forward Plan be approved for publication.

15 **FOURTH QUARTER FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2020/21**

The purpose of the report was to inform members of the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 31 March 2021 (4th Quarter 2020/21). The report was considered by the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 28 July 2021. The position was summarised as follows:-

| Subject | Headline | Reference |
|---------|---|------------|
| Finance | <p>The Finance headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:-</p> <p><i>Performance against budget</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">At the Fourth Quarter stage the General Fund provisional outturn for 2020/21 was an underspend of £7,315,520 (including £4,521,710 of s31 grants in respect of Business Rates Reliefs received in advance to be applied in 2021/22). <p><i>Efficiency Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">At Quarter 4 £137,000 in savings had been achieved against the 2020/21 revised efficiency target of £519,000 (General Fund). | Appendix A |

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| | <p><i>Capital Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revised Capital Programme budget for 2020/21 was £3.08 million. The outturn for the year was £3.1 million; a variance of £0.02 million. <p><i>Treasury Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash investments held at 31 March 2021 totalled £18.4 million. The Ascent loan stood at £14 million and the debenture at £5 million; Council borrowing at 31 March 2021 totalled £15 million (£14 million related to the Ascent loan); The Council's net income receipts were £53,457 surplus above budget. <p><i>Revenue Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 98.17% of Council Tax was collected by 31 March 2021 compared to 98.55% for the same period last year; 97.35% of Business Rates was collected by 31 March 2021 compared with 99.3% for the same period last year; At the end of the Fourth Quarter debt that was over 60 days old was £65,090 which compared with £70,729 at 31 March 2020. | |
| Procurement | <p>The Procurement headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 procurement activities were completed; The Procurement Forward Plan included 74 procurement activities for completion in 2021/22 (either SMDC only or joint); At 31 March 2021 62% of procurement activity undertaken was on the forward plan and the Council had paid 95% of its invoices within 30 days during the year. | Appendix B |
| Performance | <p>The Performance headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 70% of the key performance indicators met target (43% of which were better than the previous year); The Council received 52 complaints and 100 compliments in the Fourth Quarter; 12 projects were rated Green, 19 Grey, 1 Red, 0 Amber and 3 Blue. | Appendix C |

Options considered:

Detailed analysis was contained within the main body of the report.

DECISION:

1. That the Fourth Quarter 2020/21 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report be noted.
2. That the allocation of the surplus on the General Fund Revenue Account to reserves as explained in Appendix A (paragraph 2.10) be approved.
3. That the proposal to carry forward unspent revenue budget as described in Appendix A (paragraph 2.12) be approved.
4. That the proposals to carry forward unspent capital budget as set out in Appendix A (paragraph 5.6) be approved.

17 **ACCELERATED HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME UPDATE - WITHDRAWN**

18 **UPDATE ON THE LEVELS OF POLLUTION AND THE AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN**

The report advised members on the latest Air Quality data across Staffordshire Moorlands and the measures being proposed or undertaken in relation to the declared Air Quality Management Areas in Leek and Cellarhead as part of the Air Quality Action Plan for the areas.

Options considered:

There were no alternative options to consider.

DECISION:

That the contents of the report be noted.

19 **RURAL SPORTS VILLAGES**

The Leader presented the report in the absence of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Sports, confirming the progress of the work undertaken to date to identify and support projects with a view to allocating outdoor sports capital funding towards local projects.

The benefits on the physical and mental health were clear and the work of local organisations to facilitate this were evident. Some responses had already been received and more were welcomed.

Options considered:

- Recommend Cabinet approve the allocation of £6,500 to Waterhouses Parish Council and £5,000 to Kingsley Parish Council from the outdoor sports capital fund as detailed in the report. (recommended)
- Recommend Cabinet do not award funding to the projects as proposed, meaning that funding will need to be secured by the two Parish Councils from other sources. (not recommended)

DECISION:

1. That the progress made towards identifying and supporting the development of outdoor sport and recreation capital projects across the District be noted.
2. That the allocation of £6,500 to Waterhouses Parish Council and £5,000 to Kingsley Parish Council from the Outdoor Sports Capital Fund as detailed in the report be approved.

20 **CONSULTATION ON CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISALS AND ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS**

The report confirmed proposals to publish Conservation Area Appraisals and a boundary review for Caverswall, Cheddleton, Stanley and Upper Tean. The documents required Cabinet approval in order to engage in public consultation. It was also proposed to consult on the introduction of an Article 4 Direction to dwellings within these proposed Conservation Areas to control certain categories of permitted development which were harming the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Options considered:

- a) To adopt the character appraisals and introduce an Article 4 Direction. This option would offer the greatest protection to the character and appearance of these historic settlements and was in line with best conservation practice;
- b) To adopt the accompanying character appraisals (but leave the planning controls as they were). This would allow the significance of the settlements' heritage to be recognised and for planning applications to have regard to the character and appearance of the areas but it would leave the Council limited as to what it could protect. It would also allow the inconsistent planning controls to continue.

DECISION:

1. That the publication of the draft Conservation Area Character Appraisals and boundary review for Caverswall, Cheddleton, Stanley and Upper Tean for the purposes of consultation with the public be approved.
2. That a consultation exercise be authorised on the introduction of an Article 4 Direction affecting dwellings in Caverswall, Cheddleton, Stanley and Upper Tean so as to remove the classes of permitted development as set out in Appendix 5 of the covering report.
3. That authority be delegated to the Head of Development Services to make minor amendments to the draft Character Appraisals ahead of public consultation to update some images.

21 **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.

22 **APPLICATION FOR WRITE OFF OF NON- RECOVERABLE DEBTS**

Cabinet approved a schedule of write-offs of Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Debts.

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The meeting closed at 2.50 pm

_____Chairman