

## DECISION NOTICE

### Cabinet Meeting - 15 April 2020

Present: Philip Atkins, OBE (Chairman), Mark Deaville, Helen Fisher, Gill Heath, Mark Sutton, Mike Sutherland, Alan White, Philip White and Mark Winnington.

Cabinet Support Members in attendance - Gill Burnett, Bryan Jones, Jonathan Price and Conor Wileman.

Also in attendance - Charlotte Atkins.

#### PART ONE

#### 119. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

The following Members declared an interest in accordance with Standing Order 16.5:-

Member	Minute No.	Interest	Reason
Mark Deaville	124 and 133	Personal	Director of NEXUS
Mark Winnington	124 and 133	Personal	Director of NEXUS

#### 120. Decision notice of the meeting held on 18 March 2020

**Decision** – That the notes of the meeting held on 18 March 2020 be approved.

#### 121. Leader's Update

**Decision** – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including how the county council was working with partners to keep people safe, protect the most vulnerable and ease the pressure on the NHS and on social care during the current Covid-19 pandemic; acts of generosity and courage, in particular the dedication of NHS staff and the social care workforce in caring for the sick and vulnerable; how volunteers, communities, neighbours and businesses, were stepping up and doing their bit to keep people safe, fed, and healthy in these unprecedented times; and the recent passing of Mick Harrison, the Council's Assistant Director in the Families and Communities Directorate; be noted.

#### 122. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 1 April 2020

**Decision** – That the minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 4 April 2020 be received.

## 123. The County Council's Response to COVID-19



“Underpinning all we do at the Council is the basic responsibility to ensure all Staffordshire people are safe and well. Working with partner organisations and communities, we are pulling together like never before to win the war against coronavirus and Covid-19, and by easing the pressure, support our incredible NHS.

Every day I'm continually hearing about the amazing work of our staff, carers, volunteers, friends and neighbours who are stepping up and doing their bit.

This report details our leadership role and rapid action to protect the most vulnerable, support the county's care sector, promote public health and help deliver the Government's Covid-19 action plan. Our staff are working tirelessly round the clock with partners and volunteers to meet this once-in-a-generation challenge and I thank each and every one of them. We are also thinking ahead to the long term impact the pandemic will have on the county and our people, with work already underway to ensure Staffordshire, our people and the economy make a swift recovery.”

Philip Atkins OBE, Leader of the Council



“Two months ago this Council approved a balanced budget for the year ahead and noted the progress being made to reduce our costs by £62m and balance our books over the next five years.

Today, as our world has changed, we now rightly focus all of our energy as a Council on fighting Covid-19 and keeping Staffordshire people safe and well; our financial outlook from two months ago has and is changing significantly and rapidly.

While it is far too early to predict the full cost of the pandemic on the Council's finances, we are working hard to understand the short, medium- and long-term impacts.

We are already lobbying government to ensure we receive the full financial support we need to meet the enormous costs to this Council in order to win the fight against coronavirus and emerge from this period with the financial stability and funding we need to help the people of this county, and for our Staffordshire economy to recover.”

	Mike Sutherland, Cabinet Member for Finance
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider the progress made to date on assessing the current Coronavirus pandemic’s impact on the Council services and finances.

**Decision** – (a) That the progress made to date in responding to the current Coronavirus pandemic be noted.

(b) That the additional government funding of £22.296m be allocated to the 2020/21 revenue budget with authority given to individual members of the Senior Leadership Team (in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader where practicable) to incur expenditure (up to a maximum of £2m per item of expenditure) against this budget where it is considered necessary by the Council’s Incident Management Team or the Senior Leadership Team (sitting as Gold Command) to address the implications arising from the Covid-19 emergency. Any items of expenditure in excess of £2m will continue to require authorisation by Cabinet in the usual way.

**124. Staffordshire County Council’s iCare Campaign**

	<p>“Adult social care staff provide personal care to thousands of vulnerable people across Staffordshire. This demand has only increased as the Covid-19 pandemic continues across the country, at the same time as many existing carers need to self-isolate.</p> <p>People are still receiving care, but we need more carers to help providers of these services care for our vulnerable people and residents and help ease the current pressures on the NHS.</p> <p>Our iCare campaign encourages local people to sign up to help, but we need to make sure we have all of the relevant safeguards in place. This way, we can ensure that vulnerable residents across the county will still receive care throughout the peak of the virus.”</p> <p>Alan White, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider proposals to bolster social care provision in the event that the market starts to fail, through a Rapid Response Workforce, known as the iCare Campaign.

**Decision** – (a) That, in order to ensure Staffordshire County Council’s approach is aligned with normal CQC guidance as much as possible in these exceptional circumstances, the decision of the Director for Health and Care to use a “self-reference”, known as a Self-Declaration Form, alongside a request for a current/last employer reference (where relevant) and failing that a character reference, when checking suitability of volunteers and new employees sought via the iCare process, be noted.

That it also be noted that if there is an urgent need it may be the case that individuals are deployed before external references have been received at Staffordshire County Council's own risk. A Self-Declaration Form will be used alongside a Self-Disclosure Form detailing any Criminal Convictions as is required when working with vulnerable adults.

(b) That the decision of the Director for Health and Care to pay all iCare volunteers for travel (flat rate 45p per mile) and subsistence (flat rate £5 per day) until the rates for travelling and subsistence to be paid by the Secretary of State under the National Emergency Volunteer Scheme are published, at which time Staffordshire County Council will encourage all volunteers to take this route, be noted.

(c) That the decision of the Director for Health and Care that if Nexxus does not have the capacity to support the rapid onboarding and deployment of large numbers of new employees (50+ per week) then Staffordshire County Council will provide the appropriate support by way of bolstering capacity and resource to enable this to happen, be noted.

(d) That the allocation of a proportion of the additional grant funding received from government, up to a maximum of £6.75m, be approved and be allocated to the budget for the Director for Health and Care to deploy volunteers and new employees as set out in paragraphs 9 & 10 of the report.

(e) That responsibility be delegated to the Director for Health and Care, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing and the Director for Corporate Services to develop and implement an additional financial incentive to retain and attract people into the care market (for personal care and in care homes), if elements of the provider market were still to fail despite iCare interventions.

(f) That the earmarking of a proportion of the additional grant funding received from government, up to a maximum of £5m, be approved and be allocated to the budget for the Director of Health and Care to be used as a financial incentive to retain and attract people into the care market (for personal care and care homes), if elements of the provider market were still to fail despite iCare interventions, subject to the requirements of resolution "e" above.

(g) That the Director of Health and Care be requested to provide weekly update reports to the Leader, Cabinet Member for Health and Care and the wider Cabinet.

**Note by Clerk:** Mr Deaville and Mr Winnington abstained from voting on the above recommendations due to their roles as Directors of NEXUS.

## 125. Integrated Performance Report 2019/20 - Quarter 4



“I’m sure that most people will be closely following the story around coronavirus COVID-19 and the Government’s response. It’s an unprecedented situation that we all find ourselves in and one that is changing rapidly. Our own internal Incident Management Team is working closely with Public Health England continue to manage the situation to plan and mitigate against the outbreak.

Our priority as a county council is to protect the most vulnerable, that is the elderly, the disabled and children in our care which we continue to do. Many of our nonessential services like libraries, the school crossing patrol service and day centres have had to be temporarily suspended. Staff from these services are now being asked to provide support to adult social care and children’s services.

As part of our response we have also launched a Coronavirus Kindness campaign to support those staying at home – particularly the high-risk groups such as the over-70s, those with underlying health conditions and pregnant women.

In other news, our economic growth programme continues to create and protect more jobs and it’s encouraging to see that we continue to have near full employment. Completed and current projects within the programme have created and safeguarded a total of 9,099 jobs and delivered 2,390 houses up to Q4 in 2020. Our work to secure better skilled, better paid jobs for our residents continues which means we remain a leading location to live, work and invest in.

Following a successful visit from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, a further £1.7m has been secured for the Building Resilient Families and Communities programme for an additional 12 months. This means we can continue to work with vulnerable families with complex needs. The need for children’s social care continues but our focus on preventative measures has resulted in a slight reduction in the number of children in care.

Public engagement around children with special educational needs is also underway with families being asked to help shape the new approach.

The Urgent care of elderly people still remains a

	<p>challenging picture, with too many frail older people still being admitted to hospital and staying there for too long. The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee is now planning wider scrutiny of urgent care as part of its work programme later this year.”</p> <p>Philip Atkins OBE, Leader of the Council</p> <p>“We continue to ensure that all county council finances are managed carefully and effectively. Alongside this, our drive for further efficiency savings continue across all county council operations whilst ensuring ongoing support for our more vulnerable residents.</p> <p>The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast overspend of £1.728m (0.3%), compared to the forecast overspend of £4.360m (0.9%) at Quarter 3. We continue to carefully monitor expenditure across the whole council, but rising costs pressures within Adult Social Care and Children’s and Families services continue, and which remain particular areas of risk.</p> <p>Be assured, wherever Staffordshire county council spending is necessary, we will always try and get the best value for money for taxpayers and our residents.”</p> <p>Mike Sutherland, Cabinet Member for Finance</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To provide an overview of the Council’s progress, performance and financial position in delivering against its Strategic Plan.

**Decision** – That the report be received.

**126. Schools Capital Programme 2020-21**

	<p>“It is essential that children and young people in the county have access to a good, local school. It is widely recognised that the quality of school buildings can help or hinder learning and teaching, so our comprehensive build and maintenance programme will ensure our children can learn in the best environments to help them succeed.</p> <p>We have been working for several years now to ensure we have enough capacity in Staffordshire to meet demand, either by expanding existing schools, or by building new ones, and we continue to plan for the future.”</p> <p>Philip White, Cabinet Member for Learning and Employability</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider the Schools Capital Programme for 2020/21.

**Decision** – (a) That the Schools Capital Programme 2020/21 investment proposals, as set out in the report, be approved.

(b) That the Head of Commercial and Assets be authorised to monitor progress of the programme and make any necessary in-year alterations in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Learning and Employability.

### 127. Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2020/21

	<p>“It is vital that we have a well-maintained road network and good transport infrastructure to support a well-connected and prosperous county. It helps to ensure that people are healthy and safe and that we continue to attract inward investment to Staffordshire. We’re pleased to set out our £42.7 million investment plans over the current financial year. This will enable us to deliver a comprehensive package of schemes that will bring long-term value for money improvements.”</p> <p>Helen Fisher, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider the 2020/21 Highways and Transport Capital (maintenance and improvements) work programme.

**Decision** – (a) That the Highways and Transport capital investment proposals, as set out in the report and supporting appendices, be approved.

(b) That the Project Team monitors progress of the programme and any significant in-year alterations be approved by the Assistant Director for Highways and the Built County in agreement with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.

### 128. Executive Responses to All Party Working Groups Recommendations on Isolation and Aspiration

	<p>“The county council has an ambitious agenda to deliver benefits for our residents through driving economic growth and transforming public services to help deliver better lives for Staffordshire people. In view of the scale and complexity of our strategy, frontline members have a key role to play in driving forward our thinking.</p> <p>This includes All Party Working Groups, as a forum to take an overview, help us inform both national and regional bodies through an informed debate on long term issues that affect all the communities of Staffordshire.”</p> <p>Philip Atkins OBE, Leader of the Council</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider the initial Executive Responses from the portfolio holders with regards to the recommendations from the two All Party Working Group investigations focusing on Aspiration and Isolation.

**Decision** – That the initial executive responses of portfolio holders to the All Party Working Group recommendations be noted and supported.

### 129. Decisions taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers

**Decision** – That the following decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated powers be noted:

Cabinet Member	Decision
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Approval to extend contracts, with each of the five Staffordshire residential special schools, to provide residential education provision for children and young people with SEND, at current funding levels.

### 130. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 20 May to 20 September 2020, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

Subject Matter	Contact
Staffordshire County Council's Adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism	Name: John Tradewell Tel: (01785) 276102
Mitigation Plans for Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation	Name: Janene Cox Tel: (01785) 278368
Final Financial Outturn Report for 2019/20	Name: Rachel Spain Tel: (01785) 854455
South Staffordshire Growth Agreement - Project Update	Name: Anthony Hodge Tel: (01785) 277204
Recommissioning of Home Care Services	Name: Helen Trousdale Tel: (01785) 277008
Treasury Management report for the year ended 31 March 2020	Name: Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
North Staffordshire Ministerial Direction for Nitrogen Dioxide - Project Update	Name: Clive Thomson Tel: (01785) 276522
Refurbishment of Council Owned Older People Nursing Home	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Children's and Families (including SEND) System Transformation	Name: Janene Cox Tel: (01785) 278368
Waste Disposal Arrangements in the North of Staffordshire from 2025	Name: Clive Thomson Tel: (01785) 276522
Nexus Trading Services Limited - Annual Report 2019/2020	Name: Dr Richard Harling Tel: (01785) 278700

### **131. Exclusion of the Public**

**Decision** – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

## **PART TWO**

### **132. Construction Contract Award: i54 Western Extension - Phase 2** (Exemption paragraph 3)

**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider the construction contract award for the i54 Western Extension Phase 2 in South Staffordshire.

**Decision** – That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

### **133. Care Provider Fee Uplift and Financial Stability Measures 2020/21** (Exemption paragraph 3)

**(Note by Clerk:** The Chairman agreed that this item be added to the agenda as an urgent item as the taking of the decision could not reasonably be deferred. The Chairman of the Corporate Review Committee also agreed to the decision below being exempt from call-in as any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests or the interests of any persons to whom the decision relates.)

**Reasons for the Decision** – There is considerable concern nationally about the risk of care providers failing; this would have a catastrophic impact on people and the NHS. In view of this, approval is sought to offer care providers a fee uplift for 2020/21 and additional non-recurrent financial sustainability funding to reflect the cost pressures from COVID-19.

**Decision** – That the recommendations contained in the report be agreed.

**Philip Atkins OBE**  
**Leader of the County Council**