

My Ref:

Your Ref:

Date:

Dear Sir/Madam,

County Council - Thursday, 26th July, 2018

I have recently forwarded to you a copy of the agenda for the next meeting of the County Council.

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Thursday, 26th July, 2018 meeting of the County Council, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

- a) Question 1 from Susan Woodward (Pages 1 - 2)
- b) Question 2 from Kyle Robinson (Pages 3 - 4)
- c) Question 3 from Kyle Robinson (Pages 5 - 6)

John Henderson
Chief Executive

Enc

QUESTION 1

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26 JULY 2018

**Question to Philip Atkins OBE
Leader of the Council**

By Susan Woodward

Question

“Will the Leader join me, politicians across political Parties and many Staffordshire residents in condemning the behaviour of the Member of Parliament for Burton?”

Reply

Those of us who have read the reports in the Sunday paper will be disgusted by the stories about the Member of Parliament for Burton & Uttoxeter. He has suspended himself from the Whip while an independent investigation is conducted by QCs and his Association are meeting to discuss his position. I encourage all of us in public life at whatever level to adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life established by Lord Nolan and the Committee on Standards in Public Life:

1. Selflessness – Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. Integrity – Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. Objectivity – Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness – Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty – Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. Leadership – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour.

This Code is publicly available on the Conservative Party website and I would hope all Political Parties adhere to these seven principles.

QUESTION 2

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26 JULY 2018

**Question to Philip Atkins OBE
Leader of the Council**

By Kyle Robinson

Question

A letter dated 22nd June 2018 from the Minister for Local Government, Rishi Sunak MP to Staffordshire MPs clearly states that over the next three years there is to be an increase in spending power of almost £19 million for Staffordshire County Council. Does the Leader agree with the Governments' response to MPs and will the Leader of the council now commit funding to help support the Kidsgrove community in their bid to re-open Kidsgrove Leisure Centre?

Reply

The government includes all funding streams and makes assumptions about an authority's council tax levels and business rates income when it calculates the 'core spending power' of an authority.

The government calculated Staffordshire's core spending power as increasing by £18.9 million from 2017/18 to 2019/20, however this increase is reliant upon increases in council tax and business rates income whilst funding from government reduces. The amounts included in the core spending power calculation are also included in the budget gap of £35.4 million in 2019/20.

The provision of leisure services is the remit of district and borough councils and in Kidsgrove, the Community Interest Organisation is working with Newcastle Borough Council, the county council and other partners to see whether the re-provision of some leisure facilities is feasible. Any commitments around the site will not be made until the full business case and costings are finalised.

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 26 JULY 2018

**Question to Philip Atkins OBE
Leader of the Council**

By Kyle Robinson

Question

A recent National Audit Offices report has highlighted that due to the poor implementation and associated negative impact of the £1.9bn Universal Credit programme, additional costs have been created for other local services such as food banks, advisory and advocacy services. Has Staffordshire County Council attempted to collect any local data from such services to establish the impact of Universal Credit being rolled out on our Staffordshire residents?

Reply

The roll out of Universal Credit in Staffordshire has so far been limited to Lichfield District and Tamworth Borough, with the rest of the county seeing the implementation of Universal Credit later on this year. In view of this, it is too early for us to fully understand the implications of the introduction of Universal Credit and the wider impact that it may have upon local services provided by other public and third sector organisations across Staffordshire or upon Staffordshire's residents.

However, Universal Credit is adapting the welfare system to changing patterns of work and, through the latest technology, intended to create an agile service offering support. The Department of Work and Pensions should therefore listen carefully to claimants, campaigners and frontline workers when they report problems and complaints.

In a county with low unemployment levels it will be of importance for us all to better understand what impact Universal Credit may be having upon residents and services as Universal Credit is rolled out across the county.

