

Date: 07 December 2022

County Council - Thursday 8th December 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

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 8th December 2022 meeting of the County Council, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed:

- Questions

John Henderson
Chief Executive

Enc



Question No. 1

County Council Meeting – 8 December 2022

**Question to Councillor Tagg
Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure
and Climate Change**

By Councillor Pritchard

Question

According to the most recent Air Quality Annual Status Report, at 5.3% Tamworth has the highest percentage of deaths attributable to airborne particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5µm or less (PM2.5) within Staffordshire for adults over 30.

Obviously, a transition to EV vehicles would greatly benefit residents living next to busy roads. Could the Leader of the Council outline to me what the authority is doing to reduce PM2.5 rates in the air, as well as drive the rollout of on-street EV charging points in Tamworth?

Reply

Promotion of active travel and undertaking work to tackle air pollution are fundamental roles of the Council's Connectivity Team. I am aware that a third bid for [Air Aware](#) funding to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs has been submitted. If successful, the Council will continue the fantastic work of this initiative and collaboratively work with colleagues at Tamworth BC to promote campaigns to reduce the number of single person journeys and to support people to walk and cycle more.

I am also pleased to hear that through an Active Travel Fund, £343,000 has been allocated this financial year to deliver improvements for walking and cycling in Amington. In line with Staffordshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, proposals to deliver a School Street, wider footways and traffic management measures are proposed.

A public EV charging infrastructure strategy for Staffordshire is due to be presented to Cabinet in January for adoption. The Strategy offers a great opportunity to develop a network of charge points and encourage the uptake of EVs across the county. I recognise that for residents without the ability to charge EVs off-street, a number of alternative options to home charging will be important in enabling a transition to EV use. The Council has a key role to play, and through working together with Tamworth BC

and local businesses, facilities at the rate and scale of delivery that the market requires will be rolled out. All these measures will contribute to the Council achieving carbon net zero by 2050 and improving the quality of life for residents through a reduction of noise and air quality impacts.

County Council Meeting – 8 December 2022**Question to Councillor Wilson
Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture****By Councillor Northcott**

Question

Could the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture update this council please. What are Staffordshire County Council doing to support our Ukrainian sponsors and is there any direct funding available now or in the near future to assist them?

Reply

Hosts receive a nationally agreed thank you payment of £350 per host sponsor per month for the first year.

Further support is also provided to the Ukrainian guests for access to English, health support, enabling access to employment, ensuring that those needed help from Children's and Adults Social Care receive this.

A cabinet paper is making its way through in December. This paper seeks to secure a staffing team to ensure that Ukrainians arriving under the Homes for Ukraine scheme are supported to be happy, healthy, safe and being able to contribute to the place in which they live through work and being a part of their community.

The cabinet paper sets out how the local authority would like to use additional funding over the three years to provide:

- a. A staff team to provide outreach support to arrivals ensuring that their needs are met,
- b. Support for their mental health,
- c. A grant scheme for organisations to apply for to assist Ukrainian arrivals to become part of their community,
- d. Support to access online English classes and
- e. Access to a personalised budget to assist with urgent needs so that they can remain independent and resilient

These areas for investment have been developed from the discussions we have been having with guests arriving in Staffordshire based on the most commonly identified needs and supporting the ambitions of the programme.

County Council Meeting – 8 December 2022**Question to Councillor Wilson
Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture****By Councillor Charlotte Atkins**

Question

What support does Staffordshire County Council give to designated Community Help Points to deliver the services listed on the County Council website?

Reply

There are 24 Community Help Points across Staffordshire including County Council managed libraries and other community sector organisations. We joined up with existing, trusted community settings to provide a non-digital alternative to accessing information and helping people to feel connected to their communities.

The Help Points signpost people to local activities and provide support in a variety of different ways. The scheme was launched in October 2020 and since then has received over 370 referrals, with the numbers of people seeking support, continuously growing.

As part of the County Council's Supportive Communities Programme, we offer the Help Points with access to training programmes, grant opportunities, promotional materials, and networking.

All Help Points will soon receive a bag of daily living equipment otherwise known as a 'Bag of Trix' enabling them to showcase what's available and invite people to 'try before they buy'.

County Council Meeting – 8 December 2022**Question to Councillor Jessel
Cabinet Member for Health and Care****By Councillor Pardesi**

Question

Care staff and care packages prevent hospital admissions, minimise stays in hospital, free up beds and reduce ambulance waiting times.

In order to recruit and retain care staff, one of the easiest solutions is to offer staff better pay. Why is this not happening?

Reply

Adult social care is about so much more than reducing pressure on hospitals: it helps thousands of people with care and support needs in Staffordshire achieve a decent quality of life.

The sector employs around 22,000 staff in the county and like everywhere in England has been struggling with recruitment and retention. Most staff are satisfied with their jobs but have stressed the importance of ensuring adequate pay and benefits, training and progression, and recognition of their roles.

The vast majority of care staff are employed by independent companies who determine their own rates of pay. The Council increased fees in 2022/23: for home care by 12% and for care homes by an average of 6.24%. The Government has promised additional funding for adult social care in 2023/24 and we will review fees again when this is confirmed in order to recognise the rising cost of providing services.

The Council is also developing a strategy for a future care workforce in Staffordshire that describes how we will work with the sector and partners to sustain and grow the workforce.

County Council Meeting – 8 December 2022**Question to Councillor Philip White
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills****By Cllr Afsar**

Question

How much S106 funding has the East Staffordshire district generated for the county pot in the last five years? How much funding is still available for East Staffordshire from that pot, and what kind of programme or projects can be considered?

Reply

Thank you for your question about S106 contributions which come from planning gain right across the County Council working with our Planning Authority Partners.

I can confirm that the County Council has a very good track recorded in securing S106 monies for numerous needs including highway, education and environmental improvements.

This includes the Waterloo Street Local Highway Safety Scheme in your own division, which was completed in April this year, to address a pattern of personal injury accidents and was funded principally from s106 contributions.

The securing and allocation of section 106 monies is complex and involves many different areas of responsibility as well as all 8 of our Districts and Boroughs. Contributions received from specific developments sometimes address needs wider than individual planning authority boundaries.

Clearly local members have a role to ensure that relevant officers are informed of local needs in their respective divisions to ensure that opportunities are taken to seek developer contributions when appropriate.
