

DECISION NOTICE

Cabinet Meeting - 16 December 2020

Present: Mark Deaville, Julia Jessel, Johnny McMahon, Jonathan Price, Mike Sutherland, Mark Sutton, David Williams, Alan White (Chairman), Philip White and Victoria Wilson.

Cabinet Support Member in attendance - Gill Burnett

Also in attendance – Bernard Williams (Local Member)

PART ONE

53. Decision notice of the meeting held on 18 November 2020

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

54. Leader's Update

Decision – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including paying tribute to county council staff for their incredible work throughout the year supporting vulnerable people of ages, supporting communities, and supporting businesses and jobs across Staffordshire; the support the council is providing to Staffordshire businesses; council leaders across Staffordshire, writing to the Prime Minister about the damage Tier 3 restrictions are having on our hospitality and tourism sector in particular and about the need to move Staffordshire into Tier 2 as rapidly as possible; the huge debt of gratitude owed to staff in the NHS, our partner organisations, key workers, and the outstanding community and voluntary sector for all they have done throughout the pandemic; the commencement of covid-19 vaccinations in Staffordshire; the Council's £2m investment this autumn and winter in highways repairs, grass cutting and drainage improvements; the availability of funding from the Government's Covid-19 winter grant scheme, the current consultation on proposals to improve education for children with special needs; and the Council's on-going Superfast Staffordshire programme which has enabled more than 96 per cent of county properties to connect to superfast broadband; be noted.

55. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 2 December 2020

Decision – That the minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 2 December 2020 be received.

56. Update from COVID-19 Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board

Reasons for the Decision – To consider an update from the COVID-19 Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board including Staffordshire remaining in Very High Alert tier following the end of the second national 'lockdown'; the Council's continued efforts to prevent and control the spread of the virus; and discussions with the Government to

persuade them to move us down a tier as soon as possible and reduce the restrictions on residents and businesses.

The Cabinet were also informed that the number of cases of Covid-19 in Staffordshire had reduced significantly since a peak in mid-November; the pressure on the NHS had partially abated although the it continued to face a significant challenge from the number of Covid-19 patients compounded by staff shortages through sickness and/or self-isolation.

The Cabinet noted that the Council was continuing to manage Incidents in a range of settings, including care providers, schools and workplaces and was implementing asymptomatic community testing using the new rapid lateral flow tests in schools, businesses and 'hotspots' across the county. The Council had also applied to the Government for funding to support the rollout of its community testing programme.

With regard to the news that the first vaccine had been approved by the regulator and that vaccination had started in the county, it was noted that the supply chain and cold chain requirements would limit the speed of this initially but it was anticipated that, as greater volumes of this and other vaccines became available, the vaccination programme would gather pace in New Year.

Decision – That the report be received.

57. Staffordshire Means Back to Business

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|  | <p>“The pandemic has had a huge impact on national and regional economies and as a county council it has been imperative for us to act decisively to support our communities and businesses as quickly as possible. We have done this from the beginning of the crisis, both by helping deliver national schemes and developing our own initiatives to meet local needs not fully covered by other schemes.</p> <p>The Staffordshire economy has proved resilient and remains one of the best places in the UK to start or grow a business, with excellent connectivity boosted by major infrastructure projects and home to international industry leaders.</p> <p>Our Staffordshire Means Back to Business strategy sets out our short, medium and long-term approach to strengthening our economy through renewal and transformation with a focus on the green economy, the transformative effects of 5G, digital and online working and our commitment to supporting the renewal of our town centres.”</p> <p>Philip White, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills</p> |
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Council’s Staffordshire Means Back to Business strategy which sets out the Authority’s short, medium and long-term approach to strengthening the economy through renewal and transformation with a focus on the green economy, the transformative effects of 5G, digital and online working and our commitment to supporting the renewal of our town centres.

Decision – (a) That the impact of Covid-19 on the economy to date be noted.

(b) That the various programmes available to residents and businesses across the County be noted and supported.

(c) That the Council commits to develop further interventions for approval, that champion the recovery of the Staffordshire economy post Covid19, ensuring public sector support, both local and national, and helping the private sector to create and drive forward opportunities.

58. Communities Principle - Update and Delivery Plan

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|  | <p>“Communities and their residents are at the very heart of what makes Staffordshire a strong and caring county and that was seldom more evident than during the first months of the pandemic. At the same time residents have been clear in recent years that they want more involvement in influencing the delivery of services in their communities.</p> <p>There’s no doubt that the effects of Covid-19 have affected some volunteers and charities this year, but we intend to develop and support capacity in the voluntary sector so residents can help improve their communities to make them healthier, more independent and more resilient”.</p> <p>Victoria Wilson, Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture</p> |
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider an update on the Communities principle including (i) context for the Communities principle, including work undertaken to date and previous discussions with Cabinet; (ii) why the Communities principle is important, what has been achieved so far, and what the Council wants to do moving forward; (iii) the lessons learned during 2020, including the response to Covid-19; and (iv) a proposed delivery plan for the Communities principle.

Decision – (a) That the ‘lessons learned’ for the Communities principle in 2020 be noted.

(b) That the proposed plan for the Communities principle (Communities Delivery Plan) be approved.

(c) That it be agreed that a further review of funding for the Communities be brought back to Cabinet for discussion in early 2021.

59. North Staffordshire Local Air Quality Plan (NSLAQP) - Outline Business Case

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|  | <p>“This action is in response to a legal order from Government to reduce excessive vehicle pollution in one part of Newcastle-under-Lyme to legally acceptable levels.</p> <p>Vehicle pollution is the largest environmental risk to public health in this country and has a disproportionate impact on the young and old, the sick and the poor.</p> <p>We are working closely with Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council to bring about this necessary improvement to public health in the shortest possible time.”</p> <p>David Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p> |
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider the proposed response to a legal order from Government to reduce excessive vehicle pollution in one part of Newcastle-under-Lyme to legally acceptable levels.

Decision – (a) That the comments received from the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee, held on 12 November 2020, in relation to the North Staffordshire Local Air Quality Plan be noted.

(b) That the Outline Business Case for the North Staffordshire Local Air Quality Plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide exceedances, including technical addenda, as contained in Appendices 3 and 4 to the report, be approved and formally submitted to Central Government, in line with the requirements of the 2018 Direction and subsequent amendments by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

(c) That the preferred option (as described in Appendix 2 to the report) which, subject to Government approval of the Final Business Case, will be wholly funded by Central Government and implemented in late 2021 and 2022, in order to achieve compliance in 2023 with statutory limits for roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations, be approved.

(d) That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport be requested to submit a further report in June 2021, setting out the Final Business Case (FBC), including the detailed costs and proposed funding bid to Central Government.


(e) That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills to authorise entering into a legal agreement with NULBC and SOTCC to jointly deliver the preferred option in line with the requirements of the 2018 Direction and subsequent amendments by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

(f) That the preferred option be approved for implementation by the end of 2022 within Staffordshire, subject to its final approval at Cabinet in June 2021 ahead of submission of the FBC to Central Government and receipt of full funding from Central Government by autumn 2021

(g) That the Assistant Director for Connectivity and Sustainability be authorised to continue partnership working with NULBC and SOTCC to conclude the work on the FBC, recovering any monies expended by the County Council on staff time and consultancy fees as appropriate from NULBC who are the responsible authority for the disbursement of Central Government Grants for this project.

(h) The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills and the Assistant Director for Connectivity and Sustainability, work closely with partners to monitor progress, and the impact of, the Stoke-on-Trent variant option(s) and report back to Cabinet if this leads to a different solution being progressed through to Full Business Case.

60. West Midlands Rail Ltd (WMRL) - Governance Evolution

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|  | <p>“West Midlands Rail Ltd has a key role to play in delivering better, unified services across the region far into the future.</p> <p>Working collectively with other local authorities and The Mayor of the West Midlands we can bring greater power to bear working with operators to deliver better, safer, more reliable services to local stations.”</p> <p>Philip White, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills</p> |
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider proposed amendments to the governance arrangements of West Midlands Rail Ltd to strengthen its relationship with the Mayor of the West Midlands in order to help to increase its ability to achieve its policy aims, namely continue to deliver local leadership for local rail services by working with the rail industry to deliver a step change in rail services across the West Midlands Rail Ltd geography.

Decision – (a) That the changes to the governance arrangements (as set out in the report) which, in summary, permit the Mayor of the West Midlands to become a non-Director, non-voting Chair, and also for the creation of two new Vice Chair roles, be approved.

(b) That it be agreed that the powers described in 3.1(i) of the West Midlands Rail Ltd Articles of Association be delegated to the Chair. (This is a wide power to represent and publicise West Midlands Rail Ltd through lobbying and related activities and survey to advance West Midlands Rail Ltd’s purpose).

(c) That it be agreed that Staffordshire County Council casts its vote in favour of the special resolution that is necessary under the West Midlands Rail Ltd Articles of Association to authorise the proposed changes to their governance.

61. 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 |
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| Cabinet Member for Commercial | In approving an extension to the deadline set by the Property Sub-Committee for the disposal of Kidsgrove Sport Centre to Newcastle Borough Council from 5th October 2020 to up to 30th November 2020 together with a minor amendment to the terms of the disposal. |
| Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture | In approving the making of an allocation of £50,000 and becoming a project partner working with Forestry England to deliver the legacy project building on from the Commonwealth Games 2022. |

62. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 20 January to 19 May 2021, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

| Subject Matter | Contact |
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| Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021 - 2026 | Name: Rachel Spain Tel: (01785) 854455 |
| Contract for the Supply of Gas and Associated Services | Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228 |
| Protecting Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation for Future Generations | Name: Janene Cox Tel: (01785) 278368 |
| Waste Disposal Arrangements in the North of Staffordshire from 2025 | Name: Clive Thomson Tel: (01785) 276522 |
| SEND Strategy | Name: Julie Day Tel: (01785) 895372 |
| Digital Strategy and Programme | Name: Andrew Donaldson Tel: (01785) 278399 |
| Supportive Communities | Name: Andrew Donaldson Tel: (01785) 278399 |
| Integrated Performance Report 2020-21 - Quarter 3 | Name: Andrew Donaldson/ Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 278399/ 276354 |
| Implementation of the updated Staffordshire County Council Education Infrastructure Contributions Policy (SEICP) | Name: Tim Moss Tel: (01785) 277963 |
| Climate Change Action Plan Update | Name: Tim Cooper Tel: (01785) 276204 |
| Provision of 25 FTE Places at The Haven Independent Special School, Staffordshire | Name: Tim Moss Tel: (01785) 277963 |

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| Capital Programme for Schools 2021/2022 | Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228 |
| Re-Procurement of the Household Waste Recycling Centre Contract | Name: Clive Thomson Tel: (01785) 276522 |
| Integrated Performance Report 2020-21 - Quarter 4 | Name: Andrew Donaldson/ Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 278399/ 276354 |

63. 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

64. Sale of Former Great Wyrley Day Centre (Exemption paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the proposed sale of the former Great Wyrley Day Centre and Community Support Unit at 156 Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Staffordshire.

Decision – That Cabinet delegates authority to make a decision on the Sale of the former Great Wyrley Day Centre to the Property Sub-Committee.

65. The Hollies Pupil Referral Unit Academy Lease - Bailey Street, Stafford (Exemption paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To consider entering into Agreement for Lease in respect of works that Staffordshire County Council are undertaking and paying for on the former depot on Bailey Street, Stafford and the completion of a 125-year Academy Lease of the Site.

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

Note by Clerk: The Chairman of the Corporate Review Committee has agreed that this matter be exempt from call-in as any delay could result in the Council missing the DFE deadline of Thursday, 17th December 2020.

Alan White
Leader of the County Council