

## Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 19 January 2022

Present: Alan White (Chairman)

### Attendance

Mark Deaville	Simon Tagg
Julia Jessel	Philip White
Ian Parry	David Williams
Jonathan Price	Victoria Wilson
Mark Sutton	

**Cabinet Support Member in attendance:** Johnny McMahon

### PART ONE

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

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

Member	Minute Nos.	Interest	Reason
Mark Deaville	101	Personal	Director of Nexxus

#### 99. Decision notice of the meeting held on 15 December 2021

**Decision** – That the notes of the meeting held on 15 December 2021 be approved.

#### 100. Leader's Update

**Decision** – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including the rapid spread of the Omicron variant placing huge demands on the local NHS, on schools and on businesses across Staffordshire; everyone was being urged to get their Covid vaccination as soon as they could; the Council's thanks to its staff, and those in the NHS, emergency services and voluntary sector who were working tirelessly in the fight against Covid-19, including customer service manager Emily Doorbar who received a British Empire Medal in the Queen's New Year's Honours; the Council's health app finder, an online tools for everything from weight loss to mindfulness, to boost health and wellbeing; the Council's gritting crews who were working round the clock to keep the county safely on the move; the Council's commitment to capture more carbon and help tackle climate change by working with partners including planting thousands of trees as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project;

and how the Council was working with partners to create the right conditions for Staffordshire's economy to grow and create more better paid jobs be noted.

### **101. 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:

- With the Omicron variant spreading fast, Covid infections in Staffordshire were at very high levels, with cases in all age groups. This was causing substantial pressure on health and care services due to Covid related hospitalisations on top of usual seasonal illness, as well as staff absences on top of long-term recruitment and retention difficulties.
- Vaccination remained the best way to reduce complications and deaths from Covid and was even more important in the face of the Omicron variant. The intention nationally was to offer all adults a booster as well as children over 12 two doses by the end of January 2022. The Council would continue to support the NHS to accelerate the vaccination programme.
- HM Government had announced a 3-month extension of Targeted Community Testing (TCT) until 31 March 2022 to support the holistic test, trace, isolate and vaccinate approach required for Winter Plan B and Omicron response. In Staffordshire, TCT had been provided by Nexxus Trading Services Ltd (Nexxus) who had the experience, skills, and infrastructure to be able to continue to provide TCT effectively. It was therefore recommended that the contract with Nexxus be extended until 31st March 2022.
- Care providers had been particularly hard hit by the pandemic and had faced challenges to maintain enhanced standards of infection prevention and control, test clients and staff, and in recent months to recruit and retain their workforce. Government had provided a series of one-off grants to support care providers, which had been distributed via local authorities. On 17 and 29 December, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) announced two further grants and had asked local authorities to use both grants as quickly as possible. Funding could be given to providers to support their own initiatives or spent by local authorities on schemes to help all providers. Both grants must be used by 31/03/22, with any unused funds returned to DHSC.
- Under the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund Round 2, the Council was to receive a total of £4,427,456 in two instalments in

January 2022 and February 2022. The funding was contingent on submitting an assurance statement to DHSC by 21 January 2022. The purpose of the grant was to recruit and retain sufficient staff over winter, and support growth and sustain existing workforce capacity.

- Details of the Infection and Prevention Control Fund further round had not yet been published by DHSC. Funding totals £60m in England with Staffordshire's allocation expected to be c£900k. Grant conditions were expected to be similar to previous rounds of funding. Proposals for the expenditure of these grants were consistent with grant conditions and were a combination of funding to providers and schemes delivered by the Council. The proposals were largely an extension of allocations under the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund Round 1 and Infection and Prevention Control Fund previous rounds.

**Decision** – (a) That the update from the Covid Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board be noted.

(b) That the extension of the contract with Nexxus Trading Services Ltd (Nexxus) until 31 March 2022 to provide Targeted Community Testing (TCT) in line with the Government's requirement to sustain and extend this programme, be approved.

(c) That the proposals for expenditure of the Workforce Recruitment & Retention Round 2 and Infection Control Fund further round grants to care providers, be approved.

## **102. Staffordshire Means Back to Business - Oral Update**

**Decision** – That the oral report of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills giving an update on "Staffordshire Means Back to Business" activity including the following matters be noted:

- The challenges faced by businesses due to Covid, compounded by the emergence of the Omicron variant, and the help available to them via the Growth Hub and the Council's own Back to Business web pages.
- The rise in the overall number of job vacancies and new employment generating developments in the County, such as ASOS in Lichfield (2,000 jobs) and Pets at Home in Stafford (800 jobs).
- The on-going negotiations to deliver investment deals at the i54 Extension, and the commencement of work at Chatterley Valley, which could provide in excess of a further 3,000 jobs.
- The groups who had been disproportionately impacted by Covid 19, namely young people, women, the lower paid; with the proportion of

young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 that were claiming work-related Universal Credit currently standing at 4.9% compared to 3.7% in March 2020 and still well above the rate for the working age population.

- The most recent data available for overall government support packages following the ending of the 'furlough' scheme showed that 2% less of Staffordshire's residents were on a Government supported scheme than nationally.
- The Staffordshire Means Back to Business programme was continuing to support local businesses and those who wished to start their own. This programme had only been in operation for 12 months and to date had secured:
  - 290 Apprenticeships supported
  - 250 Companies supported with free training to help them with Covid restrictions
  - 297 students registered on the online Ignite Learning Platform to become business entrepreneurs in their own right
  - 7,000 students received Ignite lesson plan
  - 14 Business start-up loans made
  - 320 people through the Business Start Up Programme

The Council's Skills and Employability team were leading on the delivery of 4 skills projects funded by the SSLEP's Getting Building Fund at Cannock, Tamworth, JCB Academy in Rocester and Stoke-on-Trent.

### **103. Economic Recovery & Growth: Enhancing Delivery**



"It is a county council priority to support the Staffordshire economy, so our communities have increased opportunities through better paid, better skilled jobs. Our role is to attract major investment – ensuring we have the right infrastructure in place for new and existing business, as well as a skilled workforce and an ideal environment to start and nourish new enterprise.

Additional investment will enhance the successful work we have already carried out, particularly as our economy recovers from the pandemic. We remain committed to ensuring there is the right balance between our rural and urban areas and crucially to work in close partnership with our

	<p>district and borough councils”.</p> <p>Cllr Philip White, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider how the additional £1m per annum budget to support local business has been used over the last 12 months; and, for future years, how it will support economic growth, in particular, the areas where this money will help expedite the delivery of the Council’s economic priorities, as set out in the strategic plan.

**Decision** – (a) That the key priorities for delivery be confirmed as:

- (i) Supporting the regeneration and transformation of our town centres.
- (ii) Enabling infrastructure for economic growth through ready to fund projects.
- (iii) Developing and implementing programmes which will make Staffordshire one of the best places to start-up or step up in business.
- (iv) Having a high skilled, better paid workforce.
- (v) A50/A500 Strategic Investment Corridor, realising opportunities it presents through innovative and sustainable growth.
- (vi) Activities to be underpinned by the drive for Net Zero Carbon.

(b) That the use of the £1M p.a., as set out in Table 1 in paragraph 13 of the report, be supported.

(c) That authority be delegated to the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills, to move resources between activities as required to meet changing requirements (within the budget envelope).

**104. Establishment of the Staffordshire Leaders Board**

	<p>“The County Council and Staffordshire’s eight district and borough authorities already work together in so many ways to benefit residents, whether it is collaborating to provide support during the pandemic, or by preparing business parks to bring new jobs to an area.</p> <p>Formally coming together now to create the Staffordshire Leaders Board will allow us to build on these strengths by focusing on joint approaches to the big issues that affect us,</p>
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	<p>including the economy, public health and reducing carbon emissions.</p> <p>It also creates an official structure by which Staffordshire’s democratic organisations can speak jointly to central Government on how we can deliver better health and prosperity to the county”.</p> <p>Cllr Alan White, Leader of the Council</p>
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider proposals for the establishment of, and the County Council’s participation in, the Staffordshire Leaders Board, the purpose of which will be to continue to improve joint working between the County, District and Borough Councils in Staffordshire, and to develop and negotiate a County Deal with Government.

**Decision** – (a) That the establishment of, and the County Council’s participation in, the Staffordshire Leaders Board, on the basis of the Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed.

(b) That the Leader of the Council be appointed as the County Council’s representative on the Leaders Board.

(c) That a named Cabinet Member be appointed as the substitute for the Leader on the Leaders Board.

**105. Future Commissioning Arrangements for Supported Living Services in Staffordshire**

	<p>“Supported living services give people with physical and learning disabilities, mental health issues the care and support they need, while also ensuring they can be as independent as they wish. It is important that the services provided offer good quality care, promote independence, and offer the best value for money.</p> <p>When looking at our future arrangements for the commissioning of supported living services in the county, we must talk to our service users, providers and other stakeholders to discuss the options available. That way, we can ensure our service users are getting the best quality of care that builds on their strengths and allows them to achieve the outcomes they want.”</p>
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	Julia Jessel, Cabinet Member for Health and Care
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To consider options and proposals for future commissioning arrangements for Supported Living services in Staffordshire including to extend current Supported Living contracts for one year to allow sufficient time to discuss the options with stakeholders, develop recommendations and return to Cabinet for approval of a preferred option.

**Decision** – (a) That the outcome of the options appraisal for future commissioning arrangements for Supported Living services in Staffordshire, be endorsed.

(b) That engagement with stakeholders to discuss the options and proposals, be approved.

(c) That the feedback from stakeholders be used to refine the options appraisal and develop recommendations for future commissioning arrangements for Supported Living services in Staffordshire, with these recommendations to be brought to a future Cabinet meeting for approval.

(d) That the additional one-year contract extension available in the current Supported Living contracts be used to extend these contracts until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## 106. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 16 February to 15 June 2022, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Potential Joint Coroners Service, Business Case	Name: Janene Cox MBE Tel: (01785) 278368
Business Case for Care Home Developments	Name: Helen Trousdale Tel: (01785) 277008
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3 2021/22	Name: Kerry Dove/ Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
Entrust Service Delivery Agreement	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
High Needs Capital Funding Recommendations	Name: Carolyn Knight Tel: 07989386540
2022/23 Schools Capital Programme	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Economic Strategy	Name: Anthony Hodge Tel: (01785) 277204
Bus Service Improvement Plan - Enhanced	Name: Clive Thomson

Partnership Plan and Scheme	Tel: (01785) 276522
Children's Homes Block Contract	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976191079
Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2022/23	Name: James Bailey Tel: (01785) 276591
Staffordshire Rural Economic Strategy	Name: Anthony Hodge Tel: (01785) 277204
Framework Agreement for Demolition Services	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 4 2021/22	Name: Kerry Dove/ Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354

**Alan White**  
**Leader of the Council**