

## **COUNCIL AGENDA**

### **To:- The Members of the Staffordshire County Council**

Notice is given that the meeting of the Staffordshire County Council will be held in the Council Chamber - County Buildings at 10:00 on Thursday 19 May 2022 to deal with the matters set out on the agenda.

John Henderson  
Chief Executive  
11 May 2022

## **AGENDA**

(**Note:** The meeting will begin with prayers)

### **PART ONE**

#### **General Housekeeping and Declaring an Interest**

1. **Election of the Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year**
2. **Apologies for absence (if any)**
3. **Declarations of Interest under Standing Order 16**
4. **Confirmation of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 March 2022 (Pages 5 - 24)**
5. **Election of the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year**
6. **Chairman's Correspondence**

The Chairman will mention a range of recent items of news which may be of interest to Members

7. **Petition - 20 MPH Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre (Pages 25 - 26)**

In accordance with the County Councils' petitions scheme, to consider the petition seeking a 20MPH Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre

8. **Statement of the Leader of the Council (Pages 27 - 34)**

The Leader will inform the Council about his work and his plans for the Council, and will give an overview of decisions taken by the Cabinet (and Portfolio Holders) since the previous meeting of the Council

9. **Recommendation to the Council (Pages 35 - 36)**
10. **Access to Information Rules - Special Urgency Notices (Pages 37 - 38)**

Report of the Leader of the Council

11. **Report of the Chairman of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel (Pages 39 - 44)**
12. **Committee Membership (to be circulated at the meeting)**

To consider the appointment of the members to Committees on the nomination of Group Leaders.

13. **Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees and Panels (to be circulated at the meeting)**
14. **Appointment of members to Outside Bodies 2022/23 (to be circulated at the meeting)**

## 15. Questions

Questions to be asked by Members of the County Council of the Leader of the Council, a Cabinet Member, or a Chairman of a Committee. The question will be answered by the relevant Member and the Member asking the question may then ask a follow up question which will also be answered

## 16. Petitions

An opportunity for Members to present and speak on petitions submitted by their constituents

## 17. Exclusion of the Public

The Chairman of the Council will move the following motion so that the County Council can consider confidential business in private:-

“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 the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

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### **PART TWO**

(All reports in this section are on pink paper)

Nil

## **Note for Members of the Press and Public**

### **Filming of Meetings**

The Open (public) section of this meeting may be filmed for live or later broadcasting or other use, and, if you are at the meeting, you may be filmed, and are deemed to have agreed to being filmed and to the use of the recording for broadcast and/or other purposes.

### **Recording by Press and Public**

Recording (including by the use of social media) by the Press and Public is permitted from the public seating area provided it does not, in the opinion of the chairman, disrupt the meeting.



## NOTICES FOR COUNCILLORS

### 1. Questions

- 1.1. Questions must be addressed to the Chairman, or to the Leader of the Council or to a Portfolio Holder or to the Chairman of a Committee. Notice in writing of any question must be emailed to the office of the Director of Corporate Services ([michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk)) by no later than 1:00 pm on the third working day preceding the Council Meeting i.e. **by not later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 16 May 2022**. All questions and answers will be circulated around the Chamber before the commencement of the meeting.
- 1.2. Questions may be addressed to the Chairman of the Council, the Leader of the Council, any Cabinet Member or a Committee Chairman. The Leader of the Council may refer questions asked of them to the relevant Cabinet Member if they consider it appropriate.
- 1.3. Each Member may submit a maximum of one question each, however only the first 15 questions received by the Director of Corporate Services before the deadline will be dealt with at the meeting. All other questions will receive a written answer.
- 1.4. Questions and written responses will be circulated to all members at the start of each meeting and will be made available online to accompany the webcast but will not be read out at the meeting.
- 1.5. Each questioner will be entitled to ask one supplementary question on their question/answer and the time limit for supplementary questions and answers will be at the sole discretion of the Chairman.

### 2. Notices of Motion

- 2.1. A Notice of Motion must reach, by email, the Director for Corporate Services ([michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:michael.bradbury@staffordshire.gov.uk)) nine clear days before the relevant Meeting of the Council, i.e. **by not later than midnight on Monday, 9 May 2022**. Further information on Notices of Motion can be found in Paragraph 11 of Section 12 of the Constitution.  
**NB. Notices of Motion for the County Council meeting on 21 July 2022 must reach the Chief Executive by not later than midnight on Monday, 11 July 2022.**

## RULES OF DEBATE

### 3. Speaking at Council Meetings

- 3.1. Councillors shall conduct debate politely and with due respect for others.
- 3.2. Councillors shall not use foul or offensive language.

3.3. As far as is possible, Members should use notes for reference where necessary but should avoid reading directly from a script. This will assist with engagement in debate and the ability of the microphones to pick up the sound.

#### **4. Content and Length of Speeches**

4.1. Subject to Paragraph 4.2 below, no Member may speak for more than five minutes during debates by the Council unless the Chairman gives an extension.

4.2. When the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members nominated by the Leader or Committee Chairmen propose reports to the Council they may speak for up to ten minutes. Members who have been nominated by the Leaders of minority political groups as spokesmen on a report discussed by the Council may also speak for up to ten minutes.

4.3. Members will confine their speeches to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or a point of order. No Member may question another Member's motives or use offensive expressions to any Member of the Council or Officer.

4.4. The Chairman may call the attention of the Council to continued irrelevancy and tedious repetition or any breach of order by a Member and may direct them to discontinue their speech. If the Member continues to disregard the authority of the Chairman, the Chairman may ask them to retire for the remainder of the sitting. Should a Member refuse to retire the Chairman may order their removal from the meeting.

4.5. The Council operates a 'traffic light' system for speeches. During any speech, the amber light will come on notifying the speaker that they have 60 seconds left.

4.6. Where a Local Member is presenting a petition, they may speak for a maximum of two minutes. The amber light will come on for the final 30 seconds.

4.7. If there is serious disorder or persistent disregard of the authority of the Chairman, the Chairman may, without prejudice to any other powers which they have, direct that the Meeting be suspended for such period as they consider desirable.

## GUIDANCE ON DECLARING DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AT MEETINGS - WHAT SHOULD YOU SAY

### DEFINITION OF WHAT IS A DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

A 'Disclosable Pecuniary Interest' is an interest of yourself or interest known to the Member or relatives and close associates within the following descriptions:

SUBJECT	DESCRIPTION
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Staffordshire County Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you or your partner in connection with you carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract which is made between you or your partner (or a body in which you or your partner has a beneficial interest) and Staffordshire County Council- (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and (b) which has not been fully discharged.
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Staffordshire County Council
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Staffordshire County Council for a month or longer
Corporate Tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) (a) the landlord is Staffordshire County Council and (b) the tenant is a body in which you or your partner has a beneficial interest
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where- (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Staffordshire County Council; and (b) either-  (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you or your partner has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class

You are also required to declare a pecuniary interest if an issue being considered at a meeting where you're present affects your or your partner's personal well being or financial position to a greater extent than it affects that of a member of the general public.

### **WHAT SHOULD YOU SAY?**

If you also have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest you must notify the Chairman of that interest and withdraw from the room when the matter is being discussed.

An example of what you should say

*"I have a disclosable pecuniary interest in item number..... on the agenda. The interest is ..... I shall leave the room when that matter is being discussed"*

### **DECLARING INTERESTS AT FULL COUNCIL**

The Code of Conduct only requires that disclosable pecuniary interests are declared where the matter to which the interest relates is being considered. Some items will be mentioned in the papers for Full Council but are not actually being considered by Full Council. In particular, some items are mentioned in the Leader's Statement as having been dealt with in Cabinet but are not actually mentioned or discussed at full Council. In such circumstances the Monitoring Officer's advice to members is that there is no need to declare an interest unless the particular matter is mentioned or discussed. As a general rule, members only need to declare an interest at full Council in the following circumstances:

- Where a matter is before the Council for a decision and/or
- Where the matter in which the member has an interest is specifically mentioned or discussed at the Council meeting.



**Minutes of the County Council Meeting held on 17 March 2022**

**Attendance**

Jak Abrahams	Derrick Huckfield	Robert Pritchard
Arshad Afsar	Philip Hudson	Janice Silvester-Hall
Charlotte Atkins	Syed Hussain	David Smith
Philip Atkins, OBE	Graham Hutton	Paul Snape (Chair)
Tina Clements	Thomas Jay	Mike Sutherland
Richard Cox	Julia Jessel	Mark Sutton
Mike Davies	Jason Jones	Stephen Sweeney
Mark Deaville	Peter Kruskonjic	Simon Tagg
Janet Eagland	Tom Loughbrough-Rudd	Samantha Thompson
Ann Edgeller	Johnny McMahon	Carolyn Trowbridge
Keith Flunder	Paul Northcott	Jill Waring
Richard Ford	Jeremy Oates	Alan White
John Francis	Gillian Pardesi	Philip White
Colin Greatorex	Ian Parry	Mike Wilcox
Philippa Haden	Kath Perry, MBE	Bernard Williams
Gill Heath	Jeremy Pert	Victoria Wilson
Phil Hewitt	Bernard Peters	Mark Winnington
Jill Hood	Jonathan Price	Mike Worthington

Apologies for absence: Gill Burnett, Ian Lawson, James Salisbury, Ross Ward, Conor Wileman and David Williams

**PART ONE**

**56. Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 - County Councillor Ian Lawson**

The Chairman informed Members of Cllr Lawson's continuing absence from Council meetings due to ill health.

**RESOLVED** – That, in light of Cllr Ian Lawson's continuing ill health, and for the purposes of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, his continuing absence from Council meetings be authorised until 17 September 2022.

**57. Declarations of Interest under Standing Order 16**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

## **58. Confirmation of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 February 2022**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 10 February 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **59. Chairman's Correspondence**

There were no items of Chairman's Correspondence on this occasion.

## **60. Statement of the Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council presented a Statement outlining his recent work since the previous meeting of the Council.

### **Ukraine**

(Paragraph 7 of the Statement)

Cllr Alan White referred to Putin's invasion of Ukraine and indicated that Staffordshire stood ready, with open arms, to welcome those fleeing the conflict. He also referred to a letter sent to the Prime Minister recently jointly from the leaders of the County Council and the eight Borough and District Councils showing the strength of the Councils' support and combined efforts to assist those fleeing Ukraine. He added that many residents of the County had already offered to open their homes to the refugees.

Cllr Charlotte Atkins added that she welcomed the joint letter from the leaders of the County Council and the eight Borough and District Councils and added that she was sure that the tremendous generosity of the British people would be shown towards the Ukrainian people. She also indicated that there was a need to ensure that those fleeing the trauma of war were not exploited by the few who sought to make a financial gain from trafficking and enquired as to whether the County Council had sufficient staff to carry out the necessary checks to ensure the safety of both those fleeing Ukraine and those residents opening-up their homes to the refugees. Cllr Atkins also referred to the existing Ukrainian communities in Staffordshire and to the vital role they would play in supporting the refugees.

Cllr Smith and Cllr Deaville spoke about the people of Ukraine living in fear, and particularly the impact of the conflict on young children. Cllr Smith called on the Council, and the residents of Staffordshire, to do everything they could to provide the necessary support to those fleeing the conflict and, once the war had ended, to enable them to return to Ukraine if they so wished.

Cllr Hood referred to the need for the Council to lobby the Government to ensure the availability of the necessary resources to provide counselling and therapy to those fleeing the conflict. She also referred to the impact on the mental health of young people in this County who had been following the war in the Ukraine on the news and on social media, and the need for counselling to be available in all Staffordshire schools.

Cllr Winnington spoke about all those who were suffering under Putin's regime, not just those from the Ukraine. He, together with Cllr Phillip Atkins, also referred to the impact of the war on food production and how the sanctions imposed on Russia would have an impact on the price of many commodities in the UK.

Cllr Tagg indicated that, in times of crisis like this, it was fantastic to see the good in society and how communities came together to support those in need. He, together with Cllr Wilson, Cllr Sutherland, Cllr Oates and Cllr Phillip Atkins, referred to many examples, across the county, where individuals and groups had come together to appeal for donations of provisions and other goods to support those still living in Ukraine and also those fleeing the country.

Cllr Hussain referred to the community of 400 Ukrainians residing in East Staffordshire, and he commended the work of local charities and groups who were sending essential supplies to those living in Ukraine. He also paid tribute to those Ukrainians fighting to defend their country from the Russian invasion.

Cllr Loughborough-Rudd expressed his thanks to the leaders of the County Council and the eight Borough and District Councils for their joint letter to the Prime Minister showing the strength of support and combined efforts to assist those fleeing Ukraine. He also indicated that the West needed to maintain its readiness to defend Europe.

Cllr Alan White thanked Members for their comments. In response to the point raised by Cllr Charlotte Atkins regarding the costs associated with finding homes for Ukrainian refugees, Cllr White indicated that local authorities were to be allocated around £10,500 per refugee. He added that safeguarding services in Staffordshire were commencing the planning of the support they would need to provide to the refugees, and that the Resilience Forum was also gearing up.

The Chairman then led the Council in a minute of reflection.

## **COVID-19**

(Paragraph 1 of the Statement)

Cllr Charlotte Atkins expressed her thanks to Dr Richard Harling for so effectively leading the County Council's response to the Covid pandemic. She added that Public Health played a vital role but did not get the recognition it deserved. In response, Cllr McMahon indicated that the Council would do all it could with the funding made available to Public Health. He also updated the Council on Covid rates in the County, including the positive impact of the vaccination programme. He added that the Council remained ready to deal with any outbreaks which occurred. Mr McMahon also expressed his thanks to those scientists who had developed the vaccine and to residents of the County who had supported each other during the pandemic.

Cllr Alan White referred to the need for people to take personal responsibility and to lead healthy lives. He also highlighted the impact of the pandemic on people's mental health.

## **Staffordshire Means Back to Business – Oral Update**

(Paragraph 2 of the Statement)

In response to a question from Cllr Hussain relating to insolvency rates in the County, Cllr Philip White indicated that company insolvencies were a normal part of commercial activity as some businesses ceased to be viable. He added that, in November 2021, in Staffordshire, there were approximately 15 – 20 insolvencies.

Cllr Hussain also referred to the number of people on housing waiting lists and the need to press for Government action on the provision of more affordable housing in the County.

Cllr Sutherland indicated that he welcomed the report and he spoke about the positive impact of the various regeneration initiatives. Cllr Hudson also spoke about the regeneration proposals in Uttoxeter and Burton Town Centres.

In response to a question from Cllr Charlotte Atkins concerning the tangible benefits of the County Council's attendance at the four-day MIPIM Real Estate Conference in Cannes, Cllr Philip White indicated that he would respond to Cllr Atkins in writing. Cllr Winnington added that MIPIM played a valuable role in marketing investment sites, such as i54, on an international stage.

Cllr Philip White also informed the Council of the launch of the consultation of the County Wide Economic Strategy and invited Members to submit their

views. He added that this would be followed by a Rural Economic Strategy to be launched in about a month's time.

### **Potential Joint Coroners Service, Business Case**

(Paragraph 5 of the Statement)

Cllr Greatorex indicated that the business case for the potential Joint Coroners Service had been examined by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee who were supportive of the proposals and the benefits they would bring. He enquired as to whether the restructuring of the service would bring about cost savings. In response, Cllr Wilson indicated that she did not have the relevant information to hand and would therefore respond to Cllr Greatorex in writing following the meeting.

Cllr Hussain spoke about the need for the service to be mindful of the needs of all sectors of the community. In response, Cllr Wilson requested Cllr Hussain to write to her regarding his concerns.

### **Major Improvements to A50/A500 Corridor**

(Paragraph 6 of the Statement)

Cllr Philip Atkins, Cllr Flunder and Cllr Hudson expressed their support for the proposed improvements to the A50/A500 corridor and highlighted the benefits the proposals would bring. Cllr Flunder and Cllr Hudson also referred to the need for a full consultation on the proposals at an early stage. In response, Cllr Philip White indicated that this was a nationally significant project which, it was estimated, would create around 12,000 new jobs. Cllr Alan White added that the local authorities along the corridor would be involved in delivering the project and that the County Council would continue to push hard to bring the project to fruition.

### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

(Paragraph 8 of the Statement)

Cllr Tagg outlined some of the events taking place in Newcastle-under-Lyme, and also across Staffordshire, as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Cllr Smith enquired as to whether the Members' Community Fund could be brought forward so as to enable Members to support events associated with the Jubilee celebrations. In response, Cllr Wilson indicated that the Fund would be launched in early/mid-April.

**RESOLVED** – That the Statement of the Leader of the Council be received.

## **61. Recommendations to the Council**

### **(a) Members' Allowances Scheme - Independent Remuneration Panel Report**

Members were informed that the County Council was required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to provide advice and recommendations to the Council on its Members' Allowances Scheme. Any decision on the nature and level of allowances were a matter for the full Council, but the Council must have regard to any recommendations submitted by the Independent Remuneration Panel before establishing or amending the Members' Allowances Scheme. The Panel met each year to consider the recommendations to be made to the Council in respect of the level and nature of the forthcoming year's allowances.

Members received the Independent Remuneration Panel's report of March 2022, including recommendations on the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2022/23. As part of their deliberations and in response to feedback from Members of the Council, the Panel proposed that the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Pensions Committee and Audit and Standards Committee receive the same remuneration as the Planning Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively. The Panel also proposed, for consistency, that the Chairman of the Pensions Committee must also Chair the Pensions Panel.

It was also noted that the Panel had indicated their intentions for next year which included a review of the allowances paid to the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the County Council, the difference in allowances paid to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the allowance paid to the opposition.

Cllr Trowbridge expressed her thanks to the Panel for their work and also spoke about the need for an appropriate level of remuneration to Members as the allowances paid in Staffordshire were lower than those paid by comparable authorities. Cllr Smith added that, with the current level of remuneration, it was difficult to attract young people to stand for election. He also referred to the need for the cost of the stationery which Members used to be covered in the Scheme.

Cllr Philip Atkins referred to the proposals for the Chairman of the Pensions Committee also being responsible, going forward, for Chairing the Pensions Panel. He expressed the view that he could not support the proposal as the roles of the Pensions Committee and Pensions Panel chairs were distinct and required different knowledge and, therefore, required different Chairs.

Following a vote it was:

**RESOLVED** – That (a) the Independent Remuneration Panel report be received.

(b) That the following recommendations of the Panel be agreed:

- (i) the Members' Allowance Scheme within the Council's Constitution be amended to increase the allowance paid to the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Pensions Committee and Audit and Standards Committee.
- (ii) The Council's Constitution be amended to reflect that the Pensions Committee Chairmen must also Chair the Pensions Panel.
- (iii) As a general rule, Committee Vice-Chairmen should receive 35% of the respective Committee Chairman allowance.

(c) In their report for 2023, the Independent Remuneration Panel be requested to review the allowances paid to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the County Council.

#### **(b) Pay Policy Statement 2022/23**

The Council were informed that it was a legal requirement of the Localism Act 2011 for the County Council to have a Pay Policy statement which must be published annually before 31 March. Amongst other matters, the Statement must set out the authority's policies for the financial year relating to:

- (a) The remuneration of its chief officers,
- (b) The remuneration of its lowest-paid employees, and
- (c) The relationship between –
  - (i) the remuneration of its chief officers, and
  - (ii) the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.

The Council received the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

**RESOLVED** – That the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 (as set out in Annex A to the report) be approved.

### **(c) Review of the Constitution**

The Council were informed that, at the meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee on 14 December 2021, it was agreed that a working group be formed to consider possible areas for changes to the Council's Constitution. Not included within this work were the sections on Financial Procedure Rules and Procurement Regulations, because these sections had already been updated and brought through the governance process separately. Whilst not proposed initially to do so through this work, the Officers section of the Constitution was reviewed and the Director for Corporate Services made minor updates in accordance with his delegated powers.

The working group met on the 18 January 2022 to shape a review of the county council's Constitution. The working group discussion was wide-ranging, and some of the points raised would become opportunities for working with Members on improvements to the existing arrangements (these are not proposals for changes to the constitution but were included within table 3 in the appendix to the report for noting).

In addition to the working group, discussion was had with the Leader and Cabinet and an opportunity given to all elected members to offer their suggestions.

A report was then taken to the February 2022 meeting of the Audit and Standards Committee, where the recommended amendments were agreed.

Members considered the three tables contained in the appendix to the report:

- Table 1: Areas of the Constitution where a change is recommended, and where Full Council is asked to approve.
- Table 2: Areas of the Constitution where a change is recommended that the Monitoring Officer is able to approve under his delegated powers.
- Table 3: Areas of the Constitution where items have been raised by Members for further investigation.

Cllr Trowbridge extended her thanks to her fellow members of the working group and to the officers who supported them and suggested that a review of the Council's Constitution should take place on an annual basis. Cllr Alan White also extended his thanks to the working group. He added that the Constitution was a living document, with changes made as and when required.

Cllr Smith referred to Table 3 within the report which included a suggestion for the review of the Council's Scrutiny arrangements and expressed the



wish that this should take place as soon as possible. In response, Cllr Alan White asked Cllr Greatorex to convene a meeting of his fellow Overview and Scrutiny Chairs to ensure that the current Overview and Scrutiny arrangements were fit for purpose.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the changes detailed in Table 1 within the appendix to the report be approved; and

(b) That the changes described in Table 2 within the appendix, and as approved by the Director for Corporate Services under his delegated powers, be approved; and

(c) That the further opportunities for supporting elected members, as detailed in Table 3 within the appendix, be explored by the Member and Democratic Services team.

## **62. Report of the Chairman of the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel**

In response to questions from Cllr Pardesi and Cllr Edgeller concerning the future of Stafford Police Station, Cllr Peters indicated that this matter was to be considered at the next meeting of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel.

Cllr Charlotte Atkins enquired as to whether any progress had been made with regard to her question at the February Council meeting regarding when the Community Rooms at Fire Stations would be re-opening. Cllr Hood also raised the same issue regarding Stone Fire Station. In response, Cllr Peters indicated that he would raise this matter with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

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

## **63. Questions**

Cllr Pritchard asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Communities and Culture whose reply is set out below the question:-

### **Question**

Staffordshire will be hosting part of the Commonwealth Games, as well as most likely seeing the baton relay and other Commonwealth Games celebrations take place in the county. What will Staffordshire County Council be doing to ensure that there is a lasting health and sports participation legacy from the Commonwealth Games in Staffordshire?

## **Reply**

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) are committed to ensuring there is a lasting health and sports participation legacy for the Commonwealth Games. The following information are examples of where this work has already begun and how further work is underway to fulfil this commitment.

### **Building the Legacy Forestry England Project for Commonwealth Games 2022**

SCC made an allocation of £50,000 and became a project partner working with Forestry England to deliver the legacy project building on from the Commonwealth Games. This involved the development, at Cannock Chase, of a Blue Trail Cycle track (aimed at intermediate level), a play centre for learning to ride and a full legacy programme to ensure the facilities have continued use and access by Staffordshire residents. Funding was allocated equally from Families and Communities and Health and Care budgets. Cannock Chase District Council also contributed financially to this project.

### **Public Health**

For the past few months, we have been engaged with emergency planning, resilience, and response processes to ensure preparations are in place to consider potential threats from infectious disease (including, but not limited to, Covid) as well as environmental and other hazards. This includes proactive action, communication, and strategy to ensure a resilient and robust plan is in place to prevent and respond to any issues which may impact on public health. This work includes messages and distribution of condoms to promote safe/good sexual health.

SCC public health officers have recently engaged in a group led by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) which is focused on how to capitalise on promotion of physical activity/health and wellbeing as part of the Games legacy. Colleagues from Cannock District Council are also involved in this group, as well as Together Active, to review and consider physical activity and leisure opportunities related to the events being held in Staffordshire.

### **Together Active-Projects and Funding Opportunities**

**Commonwealth Games Small Grants Fund** (Administered by Together Active)

- £100,000 has been made available in Staffordshire & Stoke
- Grants of between £100 - £2,500
- Aims to use Sport And Physical activity to:
  - A. Bring people together
  - B. Improve health and wellbeing
  - C. Help the region to grow and succeed

### **Generation 2022 – Volunteering programme for the Commonwealth Games** (Brokered by Together Active)

- Targeting young people who may not consider volunteering (those with Care experience, in pupil referral units or known to Youth Offending teams)
- Aged 16-24
- 30 hours of quality volunteering opportunities – incentivize by tickets to CWG &
- Sourcing placements that can provide formal qualifications and potential employment opportunities

### **School Games Legacy Funding** (Administered by Together Active)

- Engage inactive young people through 'hook' of CWG
- £3,000 per School Games Organizer (SGO) area

### **Places & Spaces funding** – Sport England

- Facility-based funding for sport and physical activity-based community organizations
- Up to £10,000 matched funding available

### **Communications**

A comms plan is being developed to ensure SCC work in partnership with the Organising Committee for the Commonwealth Games, OHID, and partners to promote the health benefits including mental and physical health attributed to the Games and Sports, therefore the overall legacy.

Cllr Pardesi asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change whose reply is set out below the question:-

## Question

In light of current concerns over energy supplies, can this Council reassure residents that it will not support fracking being reconsidered under any circumstances?

## Reply

There is currently a moratorium on fracking in England. On 2 November 2019, the UK Government announced that it would “take a presumption against issuing any further Hydraulic Fracturing Consents” in England.

Details here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-ends-support-for-fracking>

The government is due to publish an energy security strategy imminently (possibly before this Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 meeting), and a review of gas fracking could be among potential initiatives to help reduce reliance on imported hydrocarbons. However, there was no policy commitment to fracking by Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Monday as part of a roundtable of leaders in the UK’s offshore oil and gas industry.

Details here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/readout-of-prime-ministers-roundtable-of-uk-oil-and-gas-industry-leaders-14-march-2022>

In terms of where shale gas can be found in the UK, the British Geological Survey indicate that four areas have been identified as potentially viable for the commercial extraction of shale gas, and this includes the Carboniferous Bowland–Hodder area in north-west England (Lancashire and the Midlands).

Details here:

<https://www.bgs.ac.uk/geology-projects/shale-gas/shale-gas-in-the-uk/>

The extraction of shale gas in Staffordshire is unlikely to be commercial and/or considered a priority for shale gas exploration and our officers will keep both myself and the Planning Committee and members abreast of any change in national policy.

The Council has FAQ information relating to fracking published on our website, and this will be updated after Central Government publish their energy security strategy.

Details here:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/aZ/Fracking-in-Staffordshire-frequently-asked-questions.aspx>

### **Supplementary Question**

In light of paragraph two of your reply, can we be assured that fracking will not be amongst the potential initiatives to reduce reliance on imported hydrocarbons?

### **Reply**

I haven't been made aware of any Government Statement yet and we await Government advice on the issue. When it is received, I will ensure that every Member of the Council is notified accordingly.

Cllr Charlotte Atkins asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care whose reply is set out below the question:-

### **Question**

What data does the County Council collect in respect of the provision of extra care and is that data publicly available? Does the County Council identify priority areas for extra care? If so, which criteria are used to determine these areas as a priority for extra care and why is that of importance to the County Council? What impact, if any, does a County Council designation as a priority area have on the future provision of extra care?

### **Reply**

Extra care provides housing with support, predominantly for older people. Support ranges from assistance with household tasks to regulated care.

In Staffordshire there are 23 extra care schemes providing regulated care that are known to the Council. We contract for care in ten of these for people who are eligible for Council funding. For contracted schemes a range of data is collected including the number of units available, the number of people receiving Council funded care, and the number of hours of care provided.

The Council has nomination rights to some of these schemes, which means that we have a first option when a unit becomes vacant. However, it is not always possible to find a Council funded individual who wants to move into extra care housing at the point the vacancy arises.

We are currently reviewing demand and supply of extra care, working with District and Borough Council housing colleagues and some of the larger

extra care providers. This will help us to understand the areas where there is the greatest need for additional capacity. The findings will be included in the Care in the Home Market Position Statement, due to be published this summer, which should help extra care developers make decisions about new schemes. We will also consider a business case for the Council to support new developments in some areas.

### **Supplementary Question**

May I see the relevant data as soon as possible as I understand that Leek is not a priority for extra care?

### **Reply**

Any data will be shared with Members and the Scrutiny process in due course.

Cllr Oates asked the following question of the Leader of the Council whose reply is set out below the question:-

### **Question**

Can the leader confirm that both he and Staffordshire County Council will be supporting Tamworth's bold and ambition application to become the home of GB Rail Headquarters? Given Tamworth's location in the country and at the crossing of two significant rail lines Tamworth's historic involvement in the railways makes it the perfect place to once again play a key role in the shaping of our nation.

### **Reply**

Thank you for your question. I can confirm that both myself and the County Council support Tamworth Borough Council's application to become the home of Great British Railways (GBRs) national headquarters. Tamworth's location on the national rail network provides excellent connectivity to other parts of the UK and makes it the ideal location for GBRs national headquarters. If successful, this bid will build upon the investment already secured from the Government's Future High Streets Fund to regenerate the town centre, bringing with it new highly skilled jobs and further investment for Tamworth helping to support our ambitions for Staffordshire's economy and the Government's levelling up agenda.

### **Supplementary Question**

Will the Leader make a commitment to ensure that Staffordshire County Council is dynamic and flexible enough to assist Tamworth Borough

Council in this particular bid and also in delivering the Borough Council's vision?

### **Reply**

This Authority has a long track record of cooperation with Borough and District Council colleagues, and we intend to continue to do so. I will ask the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills to ensure that this Authority is dynamic and flexible enough to assist the Borough Council in relation to the matters to which you have referred.

Cllr Hussain asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change whose reply is set out below the question:-

### **Question**

To store carbon, trees are the best of all possible options. What more can the Council do to ensure that tree planting on the county's own land in Burton and the county as a whole is as simple and efficient as possible?

### **Reply**

In our day-to-day services, the County Council actively manages or tenants nearly 8,000 hectares of land throughout Staffordshire, comprised of diverse habitats including woodland, heathland, country parks, county farms, regeneration sites, corporate estate and schools.

Notwithstanding the 3,800 miles of highway that we manage and its resource of an estimated 475,000 trees.

In the past few months, we have planted 17,500 trees over a couple of regeneration sites, making a valued contribution to reducing our carbon impact.

Staffordshire County Council has the expertise and opportunity to objectively identify areas within our portfolio, where we can have a positive effect with tree/woodland establishment.

Whether that be for carbon sequestration, nature recovery, air quality improvement, recreation, wellbeing or biodiversity, any strategy we undertake should realise as many benefits as possible, for any identified change in land use. Whilst maintaining the contribution that our rural portfolio adds to the communities and economy throughout our County.

With tree planting in mind, we should carefully consider the "right tree, for the right place"

All natural habitats can play a role in catching and storing carbon.

Woodlands achieve the highest rates of sequestration, but other habitats can store carbon that we need of offset, such as peat bogs, their improved condition can contribute to a vibrant and enhanced Countryside estate, as well as sequestering carbon.

For this reason, we are commissioning a study of county council land to understand its current carbon baseline (occupied or tenanted) to establish where, and how, we could increase carbon capture and storage. This might be by planting trees, but equally could be by restoring other habitats or other land management techniques.

The study will also look at additional benefits that such habitat enhancement could offer, such as natural flood management, wider biodiversity benefits, landscape enhancement, air quality and access improvements.

Through this we will be able to prioritise where we can achieve the greatest impact for both climate change mitigation, adaptation and nature recovery.

### **Supplementary Question**

Can you give a timeframe for the study to which you refer in your reply and how Members can engage as community leaders?

### **Reply**

Our Action Plan 2 sets out our proposals for our environmental proposals and I will ensure that a copy is forwarded to you and all other Members of the Council.

Cllr Afsar asked the following question of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills whose reply is set out below the question:-

### **Question**

Our County's Covid has had a disproportionate impact on certain communities. What more can the Council do to draw attention to long standing socioeconomic issues such as housing, male nutrition, low paying occupations, and child poverty especially during the current climate?



## **Reply**

It is important to the County Council that all Staffordshire residents have the opportunity to prosper.

Even before the pandemic we endeavoured to ensure that all those living in Staffordshire were able to have access to more good jobs and share in the benefits of economic growth. The County Council has worked hard to enable everyone to live in thriving and sustainable communities, and, in direct reference to your broad question; working with our partners – we strive to help our residents to live healthier, independent lives for longer.

The pandemic, together, with the wider challenges that we are all facing, have brought many of the issues that you have raised into sharper focus. The County Council is already addressing many of these matters in practical ways.

We are working with our partners, such as the CCG, on several initiatives aimed at reducing health inequalities. This includes further development of our community champions programme and launching a programme of citizens enquiry to understand the views, behaviours and issues impacting on local people.

The existing healthy lifestyles service has been adapted throughout the pandemic to ensure continued support for local people around important issues such as smoking, weight management, NHS health checks, and workplace health. Part of this support has included expanding some of the eligibility criteria, as well as creating more flexible delivery models for services. As a sign of our ongoing commitment to this, we are in the process of preparing to retender for this service - from Spring 2023, and the framework will allow for further focus and targeting of resources at those with the greatest health and care needs.

We are growing and developing our workplace health programme, linking it into networks such as the LEP and Chambers of Commerce, to better engage large and small employers; focusing on those settings with employees who tend to have poorer health outcomes and lower socio-economic groups for example - the unskilled, those in low paid jobs, manual workforces, and in specific reference to your question - male members of the wider workforce.

In terms of the socio and economic impacts of Covid-19, again there is a growing body of evidence that highlights that certain communities have been more adversely impacted by the socio-economic implications of Covid-19 than others.

The County Council has worked proactively to support all those in need of further assistance during these uncertain times. We are helping families through our Education Support Fund Scheme which provides nearly 27,000 eligible children with a £15.00 supermarket eVoucher per week out of term time. This scheme has been delivered every half term since October 2020 and will continue until Easter 2022. Alongside this there is support for families through the Household Support Grant for food and essential supplies for those facing substantial financial hardship.

The recent Staffordshire Covid-19 Survey, highlighted that younger residents, those unemployed or unable to work, and those with a disability, were most likely to have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. The County Council's efforts to transform the Staffordshire economy and reduce our reliance on low-wage, low-value industries over the last decade ensured, however, that we were well placed to remain resilient through the pandemic and rebound strongly afterwards.

Whilst challenges clearly remain, the delivery of local and national economic support measures since the start of the pandemic, alongside the vaccine rollout, have been hugely successful in averting the economic disaster that was predicted by many commentators, with GDP now already above pre-pandemic levels.

Through our Economic Recovery, Renewal & Transformation Strategy, the County Council delivered numerous projects and programmes to support those businesses and residents most adversely affected by the public health measures implemented over the last two years. These included an emergency grants scheme, the provision of PPE, support to start a business, and delayed rent payments at our Enterprise Centres to name just a few.

Through our Countywide Employment and Skills Task Group, the County Council continues to work with Government departments and local partners to support communities hardest hit by COVID and support those unfortunate to lose their jobs back into work. This includes enabling residents to reskill and upskill, thereby improving their career outcomes, pay and productivity to aid economic growth, increased prosperity, and better wellbeing. This work has contributed to the reduction in work-related Universal Credit claimants across all wards in Staffordshire during the last year.

Our hugely successful Staffordshire Means Back to Business programme, delivered in collaboration with all our District / Borough Council partners, is also continuing to deliver funding and support for businesses to recover and grow following the pandemic, to enable people to start their own business, to develop apprenticeship opportunities, and upskill employees. Many of these schemes were proactively targeted and promoted within

areas where they were most needed and be of greatest benefit, including by local councillors.

Recognising that we are now in a far different and better place to what we might have been, it is the right time to set out our vision and ambitions for the Staffordshire economy in the coming years through our Strategic Plan and emerging Economic Strategy. This will require tackling a number of key challenges that remain, including that some parts of the county continue to lag behind.

All of our priorities will benefit communities across the county, such as our ambitions to transform our town centres and enable our residents to benefit from highly paid, high skilled jobs. We will continue to work with all our partners in delivering for communities across Staffordshire in the coming months and years, including with Government in achieving the ambitions set out within the Levelling Up White Paper.

This is supported by our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This identifies those wards with higher levels of need – for example with lower educational achievement, poorer health, and/or higher levels of crime.

We target our resources where possible to support those residents who most need our help, for example the Warmer Greener home programme which has funded heating and insulation for more than 500 of our poorest households.

We will continue to do our best to 'level up' the county, working with partners and communities and recognising that this is a long-term endeavour that requires action by national government, local agencies and the public.

### **Supplementary Question**

Can the Cabinet Member consider extending the voucher scheme beyond Easter 2022?

### **Reply**

This is a matter for the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and I will therefore raise this issue with him, but I suspect that any extension would be dependent on the Government providing the necessary funding.

**64. Petitions - Request for 20 mph Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre**

Cllr Charlotte Atkins presented a further petition from local residents requesting a 20 mph Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre.

**Chairman**

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 19 MAY 2022**

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**Consideration of the Petition: 20 MPH Speed Limit  
in Leek Town Centre**

**Recommendations**

That, given the number of signatures has triggered the Council's Petition Scheme, the Council acknowledges and debates the Petition "20 MPH Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre".

**Background**

The County Council has received a petition entitled: "20 MPH Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre". The petition consists of a paper petition with a total number of valid signatures of 6,640.

Under the Council's Petition Scheme any petition that exceeds 5,000 valid signatures automatically triggers a debate at the next available Council meeting. To be a valid petition it must clearly state the issue and set out individual signatures and addresses. To ensure the debate is prompted by those that are directly affected by the service or pay Council Tax in Staffordshire then only those people who live, work or are in education within Staffordshire are counted as part of the total for the purposes of the scheme.

**Structure of the Debate**

The structure of the debate is set out in the Council's Procedural Standing Orders. A lead petitioner will be entitled to speak at the start of the debate setting out the background to the petition and what those signing the petition ask of the Council in terms of action in response to the issue. The petitioner will have five minutes to present the petition.

After this, Council will have the opportunity to debate the issue. 15 minutes is set aside for the debate although this may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman. At the conclusion of the debate Council should agree what action it wishes to take in response to the petition.

**Background Documents:**

Petition: "20 MPH Speed Limit in Leek Town Centre".



## **Statement of the Leader of the Council**

### **1. Highways and Transport Capital Programme 2022/23**

The Cabinet have approved the Highways and Transport capital investment proposals for 2022/23.

Whilst day to day operational costs such as emergency repairs, street lighting, grass cutting and winter maintenance, are funded through an annual revenue allocation (£12.8m indicative for 22/23), the Highway Maintenance block capital grant helps fund the replacement of life expired highway assets. The confirmed grant for 2022/23 is £25.067M (including the pothole fund), i.e. the same as 2021/22, but £8.735m less than the amount received in 2020/21. The grant for Integrated Transport improvements during 2022/23 is confirmed as £3.449m, again in line with 2021/22.

Additional capital funding for Highways and Transport comes from the County Council's own investment decisions, contributions from developers through S106 agreements, other stakeholders and other bid applications. Over the last 12 years the County Council has provided more than £80M of additional investment to support highway maintenance activities, including £5M per year in the six years 2017/18 to 2021/22 and additional revenue funding of £929,000 in 2020/21 from Reserves.

*(Cabinet – 16 March 2022)*

### **2. Economic Strategy**

The Cabinet have approved arrangements to conduct a 4-week public consultation, seeking views from stakeholders, businesses, and residents on the Council's draft Economic Strategy. The Strategy underpins how the county council will help to steer Staffordshire's continued growth post pandemic, building on our strengths and successes and supporting our ambitions over the next eight years.

It is a priority to us to ensure our communities have more opportunities through higher paid, higher skilled jobs. For us to achieve that goal we will lead on attracting major investment to the county – something we have demonstrated through delivery of projects like i54 South Staffordshire and the Stafford Western Access Route.

*(Cabinet – 16 March 2022)*

### **3. Agreement for Mental Health Act (Section 117) Aftercare needs**

Section 117 of the Mental Health Act 1983 places a joint duty on the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to provide aftercare for people discharged from hospitals after being sectioned for treatment under the Mental Health Act 1983. The Cabinet have approved that the Council enters into an agreement with Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups under Section 256 of the Health and Care Act 2006 related to a new funding arrangement for provision of aftercare services. Under the proposed new arrangements, the funding of Section 117 aftercare services will be a 50:50 split between the Council and Staffordshire CCGs. This will reduce bureaucracy, free up staff time, reduce delays in the provision of aftercare. The services received by individuals would be unaffected.

The proposed new funding arrangements would create an annual saving for the Council of £4m compared to the current overall share of funding, and a cost pressure to the CCGs to the same value. The Cabinet have therefore also agreed that a transitional funding agreement be negotiated for the period 2022-24 in order to ensure that this new funding arrangement is affordable for the Clinical Commissioning Groups.

*(Cabinet – 16 March 2022)*

### **4. Capital Programme for Schools 2022/23**

The Cabinet have approved the Capital Programme for Schools for 2022/23 which will see a proposed investment of £35.5 million into ensuring the County's 400+ schools are fit for the future.

Condition surveys of schools are conducted on a 3-year rolling programme to assess the condition of the buildings. This information is held in a database which identifies the most urgent categories of need. Every school has been provided with an Asset Management Plan (AMP) on which local decisions on capital projects can be made. Staffordshire's Schools Asset Management Plan (AMP) and Statement of Priorities (StOP) ensure that capital spending is clearly aligned to corporate priorities and delivers value for money.

*(Cabinet – 16 March 2022)*

### **5. Children's Homes Block Contract**

Sir Martin Narey's report of residential care highlighted the need for local authorities to work collaborate regionally with other authorities where possible and to consider block contracts to help manage the market by using the Local Authority's collective buying power.



The Cabinet have approved proposals for a children's home block contract for 13 beds with an option to extend for a further 26 beds as part of a joint contract led by Dudley. Entering a joint agreement with other councils and providers enables us to guarantee regular good-quality provision of care at a known price and remove some of the uncertainty caused when demand, on occasion, exceeds supply.

*(Cabinet – 16 March 2022)*

## **6. Local Bus Concessionary Payment - Final Covid 19 Support Package**

The bus industry has still not recovered from the effects of the pandemic and central Government subsidy is essential for services to be maintained in Staffordshire at the moment. The Cabinet have therefore approved proposals for concessionary travel reimbursement to local bus operators to be maintained beyond March 2022 for a period of 6 months in line with the extension of government funding, to help stabilise the network and allow for patronage levels to be rebuilt.

Transport Operations and Future Connectivity Team are also being asked to develop a transition plan for concessionary reimbursement from October 2022 onwards.

*(Cabinet – 16 March 2022)*

## **7. Staffordshire Means Back to Business**

The Cabinet have received an 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:

- The challenges our businesses and citizens are currently facing due to Global pressures on commodity prices and, the County Council's responsibility to focus on the things we can do either alone or with partners that will make a positive difference for jobs, incomes and the vitality of our businesses.
- The recent launch of the Staffordshire Investment Prospectus, as part of our We Are Staffordshire brand activity, which, for the first time, brings all the priority investment opportunities across the county, into a single document. This document clearly articulates many opportunities and reinforces what a great place our County is. Highlights include:

- i. Through the Future High Streets and Town Deal Programmes, we have over £130Million of planned investment for our towns
  - ii. We have 96.4% coverage of superfast broadband and have an ambition to be a county with access to 100% Gigabit connectivity by 2030
  - iii. We have unrivalled connectivity being at the heart of the country which will only get better with the arrival of HS2
  - iv. We are home to the UKs biggest theme park, the brewing capital of the world and the national football team.
  - v. Since 2011 we have seen a 50% rise in adults with Level 4+ qualifications
- The major employment sites at Chatterley Valley and the West Midlands Interchange in South Staffordshire
  - The proportion of young people in Staffordshire aged 18-24 that are claiming work-related Universal Credit has increased slightly and now stands at 4.3%, or 35 people.
  - Staffordshire saw vacancies increase by 28% between February and March equivalent to over 4,200 more job vacancies.
  - Despite this slight rise in young people claimants, our overall claimant rate remains static at 3.1% of the working age population in January compared to 5.4% regionally and 4.4% nationally
  - The enormous scale and quality of our tourism and visitor economy in Staffordshire, which contributes over £1.8bn to our economy and includes some of the UK's biggest attractions such as Alton Towers, Drayton Manor, The National Memorial Arboretum and a large part of the Peak District to name but a few.

*(Cabinet – 20 April 2022)*

## **8. Rural Economic Strategy - Draft for Consultation**

The Cabinet have agreed to conduct a 4-week public consultation, seeking views from stakeholders, businesses, and residents, on the Council's draft Rural Economic Strategy (RES).

The Strategy is central to the county council's Strategic Plan and is a priority for our new Economic Strategy, which was approved by Cabinet in March 2022. The Economic Strategy outlines the county council's vision, ambitions, and priorities for the Staffordshire economy over the coming years and its focus are the overarching priorities agreed through the development of our Strategic Plan, namely town centres, start-ups & step-ups, higher skilled & higher paid workforce, the development of investment ready projects and strategic corridors.

The RES's priorities closely reflect the aims and objectives of the Economic Strategy and will provide a specific rural focus for Staffordshire's economy, the challenges it faces and the opportunities it presents for growth and prosperity. It also links with other county-wide strategies including the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan; the Stoke and Staffordshire Skills Strategy, the county council's Climate Change Strategy, and other thematic strategies and improvement plans such as transportation and connectivity.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy & Skills and Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills have been authorised to agree changes and finalise the Rural Economic Strategy based on feedback received from the public consultation, Prosperous Overview & Scrutiny Committee and in response to Government policy announcements including the Levelling Up White Paper.

*(Cabinet – 20 April 2022)*

## **9. Staffordshire Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan**

The Cabinet have approved the new Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) for Staffordshire. The Plan is a forward-looking document covering the next three years and sets out:

- How highways asset management, as a key enabling service, contributes to achieving strategic outcomes and delivering Staffordshire Council's strategic plan.
- Describes how we go about asset management and risk-based decision-making.
- Explains what we know about the condition of our assets both now and going forward based on various investment levels.
- Sets out our service levels in terms of what we do and what we do not, alongside an assessment of associated risks.
- Outlines our progress in implementing the recommendations contained in Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Code of Practice which provides guidance to councils regarding the management and maintenance of local roads.

*(Cabinet – 20 April 2022)*

## **10. Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 4, 2021/22**

The Cabinet have received an update on Quarter 4 activities for each service area: Health and Care; Families and Communities; Economy, Infrastructure and Skills; and Corporate Services.

They noted that significant progress has been made across the organisation during Quarter 4, however challenges remain in relation to capacity and demand, particularly within Health and Care and Families and Communities. There also continues to be areas of financial risk in Adult Social Care and Families and Communities.

The latest revenue forecast outturn shows a forecast saving of £4.417m (0.8%). There are a number of potential carry forward requests to be made in the Final Outturn report, if all these requests are approved this will reduce the saving to £2.503m (0.4%). This is compared to the previous forecast of a saving of £3.963m (0.7%) at Quarter 3.

*(Cabinet – 20 April 2022)*

## **11. Formal Report by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

The Cabinet have considered a Formal Report from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) in relation to the Council's failure to fully consider a complaint about Children's social care. Due to the complaint being late the Council's decision was not to investigate the complaint but a full response to the questions raised was provided to the Complainant. The complainant escalated their complaint to the LGSCO who recommended that the Council re-considered their decision to investigate. The Council disagreed with the recommendation as it was felt that there was nothing more to add due to the age of the complaint. The LGSCO disagreed and this has resulted in the Formal Report with a recommendation to reconsider the complainant's request for the complaint to be considered under the statutory children's complaints regulations. The Ombudsman's recommendation has been accepted.

*(Cabinet – 20 April 2022)*

## **12. Framework Agreement for Demolition Services**

The Council has a large property portfolio of varying age, condition and suitability. As the Council continues to innovate and develop its services in line with the Strategic Plan it needs to be able to manage its property assets effectively. Part of that management process occasionally requires the demolition of buildings to allow for the construction of new facilities for

ourselves and partners. Also, demolition of buildings on land surplus to Council requirements can increase the value when the land is disposed of ensuring the most amount of money is obtained for reinvestment in priorities.

The Cabinet have authorised officers to undertake a procurement exercise to procure a framework agreement for demolition services and have delegated authority to the Director for Corporate services to enter into the necessary arrangements once the procurement exercise is complete.

*(Cabinet – 20 April 2022)*

### **13. Summer Events**

As we move towards summer, we have a number of major events to look forward to.

This will start with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee during the next Bank Holiday, closely followed by Ironman in June and then the Commonwealth Games in July.

Staffordshire is actively involved in all three with a host of events taking place to mark the jubilee, routes announced for Ironman and further details of the baton relay and cycling event for the games being finalised.

This will be a great opportunity for people to meet up with friends and family and will be an opportunity to really showcase what Staffordshire has to offer.

### **14. Supporting People In Their Local Communities**

Partnership working is one area which continues to go from strength to strength in Staffordshire and, in particular, with our NHS colleagues.

This is key in supporting our more vulnerable and more elderly residents in their homes, rather than in hospitals or in care homes.

This year an extra £19 million has been allocated to health and social care services to help us do just that. This is on top of the £123 million Better Care Fund spent in Staffordshire.

This will help support the county's Home First Service, which helps people returning home from hospital to get back on their feet and maintain their independence.

This is not only more affordable for the county, but allows people to remain in their own homes, which is where the vast majority want to be.

## **15. Thousands Benefit From Extra Support**

Around £5.5 million will be spent in Staffordshire this summer supporting thousands of people with their domestic bills.

With rising food and fuel costs, the Housing Support Fund will make a real difference to many people who need our help the most.

At least one third of the money will be spent on eligible families with children and at least another third is allocated to pensioners.

All care leavers will also receive a £50 e-voucher to help with food costs.

## **16. Helen Riley**

Finally, as some of you will know, Helen Riley, our Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities is to leave the county council at the end of June.

Helen has been with the county council for 18 years and a member of our Senior Leadership Team for several of those. During this time Helen has helped reshape services in a number of areas for the benefit of Staffordshire people and will be sorely missed.

While we all fully understand Helen's reasons for retiring due to her own family care commitments, I am sure you will join me in thanking her for the huge contribution she has made to this council and wish her all the best for the future.

## **Recommendations to the Council**

**19 May 2022**

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### **Independent Remuneration Panel - Appointment**

1. The County Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) of between three and five members to provide advice and recommendations to the Council on its Members' Allowances Scheme. The Panel meets each year to consider the recommendations to be made to the Council in respect of the level and nature of the forthcoming year's allowances.
2. At the County Council meeting held on 22 July 2021, it was agreed "That, if required, the Audit and Standards Committee be requested to carry out a recruitment exercise for IRP members in 2022". As of 1 April 2022 there are two members on the panel and therefore a recruitment exercise was necessary.
3. This process has recently been completed and the Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee recommend to the Council that Ms Christina Robotham, Mr Eddie Barnett and Mr Adrian Bowen be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of four years ending 31 March 2026.

### **Appointment of Standards Independent Persons (IPs) under Localism Act 2011**

4. Full Council, at its meeting on 10 February 2022, agreed to instigate the recruitment process for the appointment of a Standards Independent Person(s) as required under the Localism Act 2011 and as part of the County Councils Procedures for dealing with complaints against elected members. At that time I reported that the original pool of four IPs had unfortunately reduced to two.
5. The recruitment process involves the same Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee as referred to at paragraph 3 above.
6. Of four expressions of interest received, two were considered suitable for interview. One of those applicants is Mr Eddie Barnett who has a background in Policing and conflict resolution. Mr Barnett had already been interviewed by the Panel therefore I sought Panel members views on his appointment as a Standards IP without a further formal interview and they have given the proposal their unanimous support.
7. The second suitable applicant is Mrs Sue Charles who has a background in Pharmacy/NHS. She is a long time serving, much respected voluntary member of the County Councils School Admission Appeal Panels. In view of the high regard in which Mrs Charles is held I also consulted the Special Panel members on the proposal to appoint her as a Standards IP without interview. Again, Panel members gave their unanimous support.

8. The Standards IP appointments are for a four year period. The appointment of Mr Barnett and Mrs Charles would give the County Council a strong pool of four Standards IPs with contrasting backgrounds and skills (Education, HR, Policing and NHS/Public Sector)

9. **Recommend** – That:

(a) Council approve the recommendation of the Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee to appoint Ms Christina Robotham, Mr Eddie Barnett and Mr Adrian Bowen to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of four years ending 31 March 2026.

(b) the Council express their thanks to retiring member, Mrs Annie Barrett, for her contribution on the Panel since 2018.

(c) the Audit and Standards Committee be requested to carry out a recruitment exercise for IRP members in 2023.

(d) Council approve the recommendation of the members of the Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee to appoint Mr Eddie Barnett and Mrs Sue Charles as Standards Independent Persons for a period of four years to May 2026.



**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 19 MAY 2022**

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**ACCESS TO INFORMATION RULES – GENERAL EXCEPTION AND  
SPECIAL URGENCY NOTICES**

**Report of the Leader of the Council**

**1. Background**

1.1 In accordance with the Access to Information Rules contained within the County Council's Constitution, the Leader of the Council is required to submit reports to the Council detailing those key decisions taken by the Cabinet where it had not been possible to give the requisite 28 days public notice of the intention to take such a decision and that, accordingly, a "General Exception" Notice had been published. The report should include the number of decisions so taken and a summary of the matters in respect of which those decisions were taken.

1.2 Similarly, where a decision being taken by or on behalf of the Cabinet is urgent and 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 person(s) to whom the decision relates, then the Leader of the Council may seek the approval of the Chairman of the Corporate Review Committee to that decision being exempt from call-in; (this is referred to in the Access to Information Rules as Special Urgency provisions). A report on the use of this procedure must also be submitted to Council.

1.3 Details of the use of the "General Exception" and "Special Urgency" provisions is detailed in the following paragraphs

1.4 The Cabinet, at their meeting on 20 October 2021 took a key decision relating to the Government's Household Support Fund Grant which was made available to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need over the Winter period. (General Exception).

1.5 The Cabinet, at their meeting on 20 October 2021 took a key decision relating to the award of a Highways Construction Contract associated with the Pets at Home development at Redhill, Stafford. (General Exception).

1.6 The Cabinet, at their meeting on 17 November 2021 took a key decision relating to winter funding for home care. (General Exception).

1.7. The Cabinet, at their meeting on 16 March 2022 took a key decision relating to proposals to continue concessionary travel reimbursement to local bus operators in Staffordshire beyond March 2022 for a period of 6

months, in line with the extension of government funding. The approval of the Chairman of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee was also sought to the decision being exempt from call-in in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 1.2 above. (General Exception and Special Urgency).

1.8 The Cabinet, at their meeting on 6 April 2022, took a key decision relating to proposals to the Sale of Bilbrook House site, Codsall. (General Exception).

1.9 The Cabinet, at their meeting on 20 April 2022, took a key decision regarding Indemnity Clauses and Decision Making for Looked After Children/Use of Regulated Placements. (General Exception).

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the use of the General Exception and Special Urgency provisions contained in the Council's Constitution in respect of the Cabinet's decisions set out above, be noted.

## **Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel**

Report of the Vice-Chairman of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel

To Staffordshire County Council

In accordance with agreed practice, I am reporting on matters dealt with by the Police, Fire and Crime Panel at its meeting on 25 April 2022.

The main items considered were:

### **Confirmation Hearing - Chief Executive**

The Panels were required to hold a Confirmation Hearing following receipt of formal notification by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner of his wish to appoint his preferred candidate for the post of Chief Executive.

The Panel received a presentation by the Commissioner which explained the process followed by him to recruit a new Chief Executive for the Commissioner's Office. He introduced Louise Clayton as his preferred candidate. Ms Clayton briefly summarised her career, work experience and achievements to date.

The Panel questioned Ms Clayton on various issues including her experience of managing change, delivering results, working with partners, agencies and the public and measuring performance.

Following consideration, the Panel recommended that the Commissioner proceed with the appointment of Ms Clayton as the Chief Executive Officer for Staffordshire.

**Decisions published by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC).** No decisions had been published on the Commissioners website since the last meeting.

**Questions to the PFCC from Members of the Public.** No questions were submitted in time for the meeting.

### **Police and Crime Plan update**

The Commissioner introduced his Police and Crime update report and summarised some of the progress made in addressing his main priorities which were designed to 'Keep Staffordshire Safe'. The Commissioner reminded the Panel that the Police and Crime Plan provided the strategic direction for the force. The Commissioners priorities were:

- A flexible and responsive service
- Prevent harm and protect people
- Support victims and witnesses
- Reduce offending and reoffending

- A more effective criminal justice system

The Commissioner raised the issue of two recent HMICFRS inspection reports which had shown failings in the service. The first inspection had looked at Child protection arrangements and the second was an interim Peels inspection report which had highlighted two areas of concern. These were, effective investigations and appropriate ongoing support for victims, and the area of identifying and assessing the vulnerabilities of those who contact Staffordshire Police. The Commissioner expressed his concern and stated that this was 'not where the service want to be' and there were plans to address the issues raised.

Information on how the plans were being actioned would come to the panel as part of his Annual report in June 2022. In response to the panel's questions on how these action plans would be monitored, the Commissioner informed members that some of the actions had date requirements and some areas had previously been identified as needing improvement and so work had started to improve these. The Commissioner stated that he was comfortable that the actions needed to address the problems would not result in diverting resources away from core priorities. The Panel were reminded that the Commissioner held regular public performance meetings with the Chief Constable, and these could be observed or watched via the webcast. The agenda for the Commissioners performance meetings with the Chief Constable would be circulated to members of the Panel before each meeting for information but could also be found at [Public Meetings - Staffordshire Commissioner \(staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk\)](https://staffordshire-pfcc.gov.uk)

Following the Commissioner's presentation and questions from the Panel, the following information was shared with the Panel. This was in addition to that provided in the report:

- The Chief Constables new, more localised model of policing should be in place by the end of June 2022. It was hoped that this would help to provide focus on local issues and enable the police to respond in a more timely and appropriate manner.
- The Commissioners Independent scrutiny panels and his Audit panel were now fully recruited and had started work. He hoped that these would provide good oversight and independence of specific services such as stop and search and use of force. They would also be looking at strip and search guidance and repeat episodes of anti-social behaviour, where more needed to be done together with partners. The Panels would be supported by the Commissioner's office and members were being trained appropriately dependent on their needs.
- Funding grants were now available at a local level to support anti social behaviour projects and community safety.

- Bidding for additional Safer Streets funding would continue with a new round of opportunities available soon.
- Drug treatment and addiction was a particularly important aspect to long term reoffending and would be considered by the Community Safety Forum.
- Working with the Criminal Justice system, particularly the Probation service and the NHS would continue. It was reported that the use of Alcohol or drug treatment orders was being looked at to help quicken access to services.
- There was also research taking place to look at what works in reducing reoffending in various age groups, particularly helping mature offenders into employment. PSHE co-ordinators were also working in schools to help develop the PSHE curriculum to meet the needs of young people.
- The number of children going missing was a concern. The numbers going missing from either their home or a care setting would be provided to the panel.
- There was an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Delivery Group whose aim was to look at repeat incidents and help to tackle them at a local level. It was explained that this may lead to additional work short term but should lead to longer term gain.
- A working group had been established by the Commissioner to uniform the requirements for a 'Community Trigger' which currently was different in each local authority area.
- County Councillors were the appropriate contact point for replacement or road signs.
- Work with the NHS on prisoner mental health was continuing.
- The working of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was being reviewed with regard to the way information was shared between partners. Information on this piece of work would be shared with the appropriate panel/scrutiny committee.
- The potential use of Naloxone nasal spray to treat overdose victims would be reported back to the panel.
- The Chief Constable's new delivery model was more traditional than the current system with more local hubs. It was reported that this should not cost more but should deliver a more focused neighbourhood focused policing.
- The Chief Constable was keen to learn of the public's experience of policing and this should highlight any areas where officers were not confident in the way they respond to situations.
- The location of justice centres was not considered to be an issue, but there was more work taking place to establish why people didn't attend court or withdraw 'dropped out' from prosecutions at very short notice which resulted in wasted time and resources.
- Community Safety Strategic Partnerships are a statutory duty. Portfolio holders would normally be the lead members and questions could be channelled through them.

- The Commissioner’s new Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Strategic Board would meet three times a year. Again, the lead member would normally be the portfolio holder.
- There was no extra financial support from the Home Office or Central Government to deal with the recent and ant future public protests surrounding the HS2 developments.

The Deputy Commissioner briefly updated the panel on road safety issues and reported that sadly there had been 12 deaths so far this year compared to 18 for the whole of 2021. There were seven priority road user groups who appeared to be more at risk of accidents. These included: cyclists; newly qualified drivers; and more mature drivers. Work was ongoing to share information and educate drivers e.g. through schools and colleges and websites. Following a question on grants to support the work of the Safer Roads Partnerships, it was confirmed that there wasn’t any available funding at the moment through that partnership but there may be opportunities to bid through the Community Grants scheme.

The Panel received the report and asked for the following information:

- i. Information on the how the action plans to address the failings identified in the HMICFRS inspection reports be included in the Commissioners Annual Report (June 2022 panel meeting).
- ii. The agenda for the Commissioners performance meetings with the Chief Constable be circulated to members of the Panel before the next meeting.
- iii. The number of children going from either their home or a care setting.
- iv. Is Naloxone nasal spray used to treat overdose victims currently in Staffordshire and if not will it be considered.

**Questions to the PFCC by Panel Members** - Members of the Panel questioned/sought the views of the Commissioner on the following issues and received the responses indicated:

Question	Response
At the last meeting it was reported that liaison with the Fire Service and Housing Associations throughout the County needed to be developed and would be looked at. Had this been done?	The Commissioner would provide information to the Panel.

The member for Stoke on Trent thanked the Fire and Rescue service for their response to both the fires at the Leopard Public House earlier this year and the recent fire in Trentham.	This would be passed to the Fire Service.
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Webcast can be found at [Browse meetings - Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel - Staffordshire County Council](#)

For more information on these meetings or on the Police, Fire and Crime Panel in general please contact Mandy Pattinson e mail [mandy.pattinson@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mandy.pattinson@staffordshire.gov.uk)

*Details of Panel meetings are issued to contact officers in each of the District/Borough Councils in the County and Stoke-on-Trent City Council for posting on their own web sites.*

Councillor Richard Cox, Vice Chairman  
Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

