

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 25 January 2023

Attendance

Mark Deaville	Alan White (Chair)
Julia Jessel	Philip White
Ian Parry	David Williams
Jonathan Price	Victoria Wilson
Simon Tagg	

Cabinet Support Member in Attendance – Paul Northcott.

Also in attendance – Colin Greatorex

Apologies: Mark Sutton

PART ONE

101. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

102. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 - 2028



“We are proposing spending more money than ever before on supporting residents, while still investing heavily in the long-term future of our communities.

Millions of pounds are earmarked for schools, roads and backing businesses large and small, so residents can take advantage of good well paid jobs in Staffordshire.”

Alan White, Leader of the Council



“Despite the recent pressures brought by unexpected inflation and the rising cost of fuel and energy, this authority remains financially stable and able to put forward a balanced budget for the coming year which supports people, communities and businesses.

We will work closely with partners to make the most of how we spend our money and to provide the best services for our residents in the most

	cost-effective way”.
	Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2023 - 2028 and the draft budget for 2023/24.

Decision – (a) That the updates to the financial plans, as set out in the report, be noted.

(b) That the comments of the Director of Finance on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of the budget be noted and that the County Council be asked to take note of these comments when considering the budget and council tax.

(c) That the comments and recommendations of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Executive’s response thereto, be noted.

(d) That it be recommended to the County Council on 9th February 2023 that they consider and approve the following:

- (i) a net revenue budget of £649.663m for 2023/24;
- (ii) planning forecasts for 2024/25 to 2027/28 as set out in Appendix 11 to the report;
- (iii) a contingency provision of £15.000m for 2023/24;
- (iv) a net contribution from reserves of £2.108m for 2023/24;
- (v) a budget requirement of £647.555m for 2023/24;
- (vi) a council tax requirement of £432.196m for 2023/24;
- (vii) a council tax at Band D of £1,471.23 for 2023/24 which is an increase of 4.99% when compared with 2022/23;
- (viii) This results in council tax for each category of dwelling as set out in the table below:

Category of dwelling	Council Tax rate £
Band A	980.82
Band B	1,144.29
Band C	1,307.76
Band D	1,471.23
Band E	1,798.17
Band F	2,125.11
Band G	2,452.05
Band H	2,942.46

- (ix) that the Director of Finance be authorised to sign precept notices on the billing authorities respectively liable for the total precept payable and that each notice states the total precept payable and the council tax in relation to each category of dwelling as calculated in accordance with statutory requirements;
- (x) the Financial Health Indicators set out in Appendix 10 to the report.

(e) That it be recommended to the County Council on 9th February 2023 that they consider and approve the following recommendations which are included within the Capital and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2023/24, the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 and the Commercial Investment Strategy 2023/24 (Appendices 9a to 9c of the report):

- (i) Approve the Minimum Revenue Policy for 2023/24 as contained within the Capital and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2023/24 in Appendix 9a to the report;
- (ii) Approve the Prudential Indicators as set out within the Capital and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy 2023/24 at Appendix 9a to the report;
- (iii) Approve the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy, based on the 2021 CIPFA Codes (Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code), and 2018 MHCLG (now DLUHC) Guidance (on Local Government Investments and on Minimum Revenue Provision);
- (iv) Adopt the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) 2023/24 detailed in paragraphs 63 to 109 and Annex A and Annex B of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report);
- (v) Approve the policies on reviewing the strategy, the use of external advisors, investment management training and the use of financial derivatives as described in paragraphs 110 to 120 of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report);
- (vi) Approve the proposed borrowing strategy for the 2023/24 financial year detailed in paragraphs 41 to 62 of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report);
- (vii) The Treasury Management Strategy recommendations will operate within the prudential limits set out in Annex C of the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 (Appendix 9b to the report) and will be reported to the Cabinet Member for Finance, with respect to decisions made for raising new long-term loans, early loan repayments and loan rescheduling;
- (viii) Approve the Commercial Investment Strategy for 2023/24 (Appendix 9c to the report) and note the circumstances under which commercial investments can be made;
- (ix) Approve the governance arrangements that are in place for proposing and approving commercial investments;

- (x) Approve a maximum quantum for commercial investments of a further £20 million in 2023/24;
- (xi) Approve a maximum limit for an individual service investment loan of £10 million in 2023/24;
- (xii) Any upwards change in the amounts of the limits specified in recommendations (x) and (xi) be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.

(f) That the Director of Finance be authorised to adjust the contingency provision to reflect any grant and local taxation changes announced in the final 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement.

(g) That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Director of Finance be authorised to challenge Cabinet, the Senior Leadership Team and services to manage and deliver the current five-year plans and to identify further cost reductions and income generation opportunities, as appropriate.

Alan White
Leader of the Council