

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 18 October 2023

Attendance	
Mark Deaville	Alan White (Chairman)
Julia Jessel	Philip White
Ian Parry	David Williams
Jonathan Price	Victoria Wilson
Mark Sutton	

Cabinet Support Member in attendance: Paul Northcott

Apologies: Simon Tagg

Part One

36. Declarations of Interest in accordance with Standing Order 16

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

Member	Minute Nos.	Interest	Reason
Mark Deaville	44	Personal	Non-Executive Director of Nexxus

37. Decision notice of the meeting held on 20 September 2023

Decision – That the notes of the meeting held on 20 September 2023 be approved.

38. Leader's Update

Decision – That the oral report of the Leader of the Council giving an update on a range of issues including the terrorist attack on Israel earlier this month and the Council's call on everyone in Staffordshire, whatever their views, to express those views with toleration and respect, and to stand firmly against the antisemitism and islamophobia; the Government's decision to scrap the HS2 project between Birmingham and Manchester and the need to complete Phase One as planned which is crucial to fulfil the wider growth plans for Stafford; the Council continuing to argue for investment in the A50/A500 corridor, stretching from Cheshire, through Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire into the East Midlands; the Council's on-going work to fix potholes, resurface and improve roads across the county including the completion of work on two busy junctions on Eastern Avenue

in Lichfield, the resurfacing of the A34 Stone Road in Stafford, a further £500,000 improvement to the A38 Claymills Junction in Burton and work to resurface the road and footpaths on Broad Street in Leek; the Prime Minister's plans to create a smokefree generation, stopping the sales of tobacco to under 14s; and the on-going work to reduce the county's carbon emissions to net zero including the 10th anniversary of the Energy Recovery Facility at Four Ashes; be noted.

39. Minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 4 October 2023

Decision – That the minutes of the meeting of the Property Sub-Committee held on 4 October 2023 be received.

40. Staffordshire Means Back to Business

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

- It is important that we acknowledge the localised difficulties the delivery of our Economic Strategy sometimes creates for communities who live near that investment activity. The Chatterley Valley employment site being one such scheme where the ongoing closure of Peacock Hay Road is causing difficulties for local road users. I would like to reassure Cabinet and of course the local population, that Officers are working hard with the developer Harworths, following their contractor Buckingham's going into administration, to find an urgent solution to this issue so that we can get the road back open. A further update will be brought to the next Cabinet meeting. In the meantime, it is perhaps worth remembering that the scheme will unlock a 43-hectare employment site which will generate around 1,700 jobs, Gross Value-Added Benefits of £67 million per annum and £60 million of private sector investment. It will make a big impact but of course this doesn't lessen the inconvenience currently being felt by the local road users.
- The Council is committed to not only creating opportunities for business start-up and growth activity, but also supporting our major employers by securing the right infrastructure for Staffordshire's needs while balancing the interests of businesses and local people
- We have always objected in principle to the impact that HS2 would have had on our rural communities and beautiful landscape. Following the Government's announcement not to

build the route north of Birmingham, we were pleased to see, through the Network North announcement, that funding will be provided for improvements to the A50/500 corridor between Stoke and Derby through Staffordshire, cutting congestion for the 90,000 drivers who use the road each day and ensuring smoother journeys for drivers and freight. We are awaiting the detail around this announcement.

- We have gathered a coalition of like-minded authorities along the A50 A500 corridor and have secured their support to press hard for further investment activity along his route to support our major manufacturers. The development of this programme will centre around deliverable decarbonisation and energy use including smart clusters considering new hydrogen applications, innovation, skills and enhanced technologies. This initiative represents perhaps the most ambitious economic opportunity in the Midlands and the North and will secure significant additional benefits for our County, in conjunction with delivering the promised route improvements.
- The Network North announcement also included investment in upgrading J15 of the M6 in Newcastle-under-Lyme, improvements to the A5 between Hinckley and Tamworth, the reopening of the Leek to Stoke railways line and the opening of the Ivanhoe Line between Burton and Leicester, currently only for freight, to passenger services. In addition to these announcements, we will be pushing government to provide further improvements to our infrastructure to support Staffordshire businesses, to attract further private sector investment and jobs to the county and to offset the impact the construction of Phase One of Hs2 has already had on the lives of local people and businesses.
- The National Memorial Arboretum has been named the Best UK Attraction at the 2023 Group Leisure & Travel Awards for the third consecutive year. These awards recognise the best providers, attractions and destinations for groups, with the winners voted for by readers of Group Leisure & Travel magazine. In gaining the Best UK Attraction award, the Arboretum triumphed over impressive competition from other major visitor destinations, including Windsor Castle, Longleat and Buckingham Palace. We are of course extremely proud to have the NMA which represents everything we know Staffordshire is.

41. Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 2, 2023/24



"We continue to deliver on our priorities and to do what is necessary to support our most vulnerable residents who need us most, while creating the right conditions for our economy to thrive.


Our work by the 'We Are Staffordshire' team to promote the county as a top location to live, work, invest in and visit continues. During the quarter, the team showcased the county at a national online conference with 600+ attendees and are now busy planning for next year's UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF). This remains a priority, while also growing our economy by supporting local businesses and helping attract new ones with better quality jobs.

We continue to support vulnerable families through the Household Support Fund and over the summer almost 28,000 families of children in receipt of Free School Meals were issued with supermarket vouchers. Alongside this, the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme which also ran over the summer holidays offered more than 49,000 places and targeted some of our most vulnerable children and young people.

Work to tackle climate change is ongoing. The Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme and an extra £10.5m funding will bring eco-friendly heating solutions to rural properties that stand away from the gas network. A new permit scheme introduced at our Household Waste Recycling Centres is also helping promote sustainable waste disposal, while improving services for customers.

The council continues to face challenges within Children's services including the rising cost, higher than anticipated numbers and complexity of Children in Care, and ongoing placement pressures, however additional recruitment is helping ease this. We are also seeing increased demand for Education Health and Care Plans for children with special educational needs, however, additional key workers are now in post.

Demand for adult social care also remains high with additional capacity being sourced and further

	<p>options to streamline processes being explored. Despite the many pressures we face, we will invest to keep growing the county in a sustainable way to make a positive difference in the lives of our residents.”</p> <p>Leader of the Council</p> <p>“All council departments continue to deliver against their priorities, and we continue to manage our finances effectively.</p> <p>We continue to keep finances in as strong a position as possible and to ensure that we provide good value for money for local taxpayers. Well managed finances also mean we can invest in our future and continue to grow our economy.</p> <p>Like many other councils, we do face rising costs across the organisation and high inflation which puts additional pressures on finances. We also continue to face challenges around demand and capacity within Children’s services, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities teams and in adult social care.</p> <p>The latest revenue forecast outturn for the council shows a forecast overspend of £7.7m (1.1), compared to the quarter 1 forecast overspend of £9.5m (1.39%).”</p> <p>Ian Parry, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</p>
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Reasons for the Decision – To consider an overview of the progress in relation to delivering the council’s priorities and pledge as set out within the council’s Strategic Plan.

Decision – That the report be received.

42. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 15 November 2023 to 20 March 2024, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

Subject Matter	Contact
Staffordshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030	Name: Anthony Baines Tel: (01785) 895984

Climate Change Action Plan Review and Climate Change Annual Report	Name: Darryl Evers Tel: (01785) 854265
Strategic Vision for Early Years	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079
Half Yearly Treasury Management Report	Name: Rob Salmon Tel: (01785) 276354
Additional Nursing Capacity	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Provision of a Waste Transfer Facility	Name: Darryl Evers Tel: (01785) 854265
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029	Name: Rachel Spain Tel: (01785) 854455
Older People Commissioning Strategy	Name: Andrew Jepps Tel: (01785) 278557
Provision of Services for Children and Young People	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079
Families Health & Wellbeing (0-19) Service	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079
Drug and Alcohol Services	Name: Anthony Bullock Tel: (01785) 276649
Unregulated Placements	Name: Nisha Gupta Tel: 07890 402088
Integrated Performance Report - Quarter 3, 2023/24	Name: Rachel Spain/ Wendy Tompson Tel: (01785) 854455/ (01785) 854267
Burton Regeneration	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Capital Programme for Schools 2024/ 25	Name: Ian Turner Tel: (01785) 277228
Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service	Name: Natasha Moody Tel: 07976 191079

43. Exclusion of the Public

“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”.

PART TWO

44. Nexus Care (Nexus Trading Services Limited) Annual Report 2022/23

(Exemption paragraph 3)

Note by Clerk: Councillor Deaville declared an interest as a Director of Nexxus and left the room during the consideration of this item.

Reasons for the Decision – To consider the Nexxus Care (Nexxus Trading Services Limited) Annual Report 2022/23.

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

45. Unregulated Placements - Update
(Exemption paragraph 3)

Reasons for the Decision – To consider details of the use of unregulated placements.

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

Alan White
Leader of the Council