

COUNCIL AGENDA

To:- The Members of the Staffordshire County Council

Notice is given that the annual meeting of the Staffordshire County Council will be held in the Council Chamber - County Buildings at 10.00 am on Thursday, 15 May 2014 to deal with the matters set out on the agenda.

Nick Bell
Chief Executive
7 May 2014

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 13 March 2014 (Pages 5 - 16)**
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. **Statement of the Leader of the Council (Pages 17 - 22)**

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

8. **Petition Re: Proposed removal and relocation of the façade of the Carr Gymnasium in Leek**

To consider the petition regarding the proposed removal and relocation of the façade of the Carr Gymnasium in Leek in accordance with the County Councils' petition scheme.

9. **Notices of Motion**

- (a) Mr G Adamson to move the following motion:

"This Council is opposed to the proposals by the Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group to close the Minor Injuries Unit at Cannock Hospital. This Council calls on the Cannock Chase Clinical Commissioning Group to at least maintain the level of services at Cannock Hospital for the residents of Cannock Chase and surrounding areas".

- (b) Mr P E B Atkins to move the following motion:

"Staffordshire County Council has a crucial role to play in bringing everyone in Staffordshire together to improve the mental and physical health of all our communities and believes this should be a priority across all the local authority's functions, from public health, adult social care and children's services to our roles in housing, planning and public realm and the council will play a positive role in championing mental and public health on an individual and strategic basis".

10. **Recommendations to Council** (Pages 23 - 26)

Report of the Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation

11. **Committee Membership (to be circulated at the meeting)**

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

12. **Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees (to be circulated at the meeting)**

13. **Appointment of Members to Outside Bodies 2014/15 (to be circulated at the meeting)**

14. **Report of the Chairman of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority** (Pages 27 - 32)

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”.

PART TWO

(All reports in this section are on pink paper)

Nil

(Note: The County Council Members’ Club annual meeting, also in the Council Chamber, will follow immediately after the Council meeting)

NOTICES FOR COUNCILLORS

1. Fire/Bomb Alerts

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs. Do not stop to collect personal belongings, do not use the lifts, do not re-enter the building until told to do so.

2. Attendance Record

Please sign the Attendance Record Book, which will be located at the top of the main staircase. Please ensure that the book is signed again in the afternoon if you are attending the adjourned Council meeting.

3. Mobile Phones

Please switch off all mobile phones before entering the Council Chamber.

4. Tea/Coffee

Refreshments will be available from 9.30 am.

5. Questions

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 delivered to the office of the Chief Executive 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, 12 May 2014**. All questions and answers will be circulated around the Chamber before the commencement of the meeting. The question and answer will be taken as read. The Chairman will permit the questioner to ask one supplementary question on each question/answer. Only the first 15 questions received by the Director of Democracy, Law and Transformation before the deadline will be dealt with at the Council meeting. Further information on Questions can be found in Paragraph 8 of Section 12 of the Constitution.

NB. Questions for the County Council meeting on 17 July 2014 must reach the Chief Executive by not later than 1:00 pm on Monday, 14 July 2014.

6. Notices of Motion

A Notice of Motion must reach the Chief Executive nine clear days before the relevant Meeting of the Council, i.e. **by not later than midnight on Monday, 5 May 2014**. 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 17 July 2014 must reach the Chief Executive by not later than midnight on Monday, 7 July 2014.

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 your partner, ie your spouse or civil partner, a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners, (but only where you are aware that your partner has the interest) 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

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 13 March 2014

Present:

Attendance		
Ben Adams	Terry Finn	Ian Parry
George Adamson	John Francis	Sheree Peaple
Margaret Astle	Bob Fraser	Kath Perry
Charlotte Atkins	Michael Greatorex	Trish Rowlands
Philip Atkins	Sandra Hambleton	David Smith
Ann Beech	Gill Heath	Alison Spicer
Len Bloomer	Ian Hollinshead	Mark Sutton
Frank Chapman	Derrick Huckfield	Stephen Sweeney
Ron Clarke	Kevin Jackson	Simon Tagg
Maureen Compton	Keith James	John Taylor
Chris Cooke	Brian Jenkins	Martyn Tittley
Tim Corbett	Philip Jones	Diane Todd
Mike Davies	Mike Lawrence	Alan White
Peter Davies	Ian Lawson	Conor Wileman
Derek Davis, OBE	David Loades	David Williams
William Day	Robert Marshall	Susan Woodward
Mark Deaville	Shelagh McKiernan	Caroline Wood
Alan Dudson	Christine Mitchell	Mike Worthington
Janet Eagland	Geoff Morrison	
Brian Edwards	Mark Olszewski	

Apologies for absence: Carol Dean, Geoff Martin, Jeff Sheriff and Mark Winnington

PART ONE

33. Confirmation of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 13 February 2014

Mr Adamson requested the following amendments to Paragraph 28 of the minutes:

- The inclusion of reference to his motion being submitted on 1 February 2014 which was prior to the date upon which Mr Winnington had written to the Secretary of State to request release of the report.
- That all members of the Labour Group had left the Chamber in protest during consideration of the amendment to his motion.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the inclusion of the above-mentioned amendments requested by Mr Adamson, the minutes of the meeting of the County Council held on 13 February 2014 be confirmed.

34. Chairman's Correspondence

Long Service Award – Brian Edwards

The Chairman presented a Long Service Award to Mr Brian Edwards who had completed 24 years' service (i.e. six full terms of office) as a Member of the County Council. Mr Edwards was first elected to the County Council in May 1989 and had represented the Kinver County Electoral Division since that date.

35. Statement of the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council presented a Statement outlining his recent work and an overview of decisions taken by the Cabinet (and Portfolio Holders) since the previous meeting of the Council. In introducing his Statement, Mr Atkins informed Members that, later that day, he along with the Leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the Chief Executives of the County Council and the City Council, would be signing the City Deal which included plans to supply locally-produced, sustainable energy to major employers. It was anticipated that that the Deal would see more than £113m invested in the local economy and give rise to 20,000 new jobs over the next 10 years.

Infrastructure+

(Paragraph 1.1 of the Statement)

Mr Greatorex welcomed the recent announcement by Central Government of additional funding to local authorities to help tackle repairs to roads arising as a result of the damage caused by the recent adverse weather conditions.

Mr Jenkins sought an assurance that any "windfall" arising from the contract with Amey would be reinvested on repairing Staffordshire's roads. He also enquired about the implications of the contract on staff. In response, Mr Tagg indicated that the highways maintenance teams were carrying out repairs to approximately 300 potholes per week and he encourage local members to report any highway defects so that remedial action could be taken. He also indicated that staff had been consulted and had been involved in shaping the contract with Amey.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Atkins indicated that the County Council spent approximately £25m per annum on highway maintenance and, over the last four years, had invested an additional £50m on Staffordshire's roads. He confirmed that savings arising from the contract with Amey would be reinvested in County Council services

Centralisation of County Archive Service and William Salt Library Collections

(Paragraph 1.3 of the Statement)

Several Members spoke in support of the proposal to extend Staffordshire Record Office to enable the two record offices at Stafford and Lichfield as well as the William Salt Library collection to be brought together onto one site. In response, Mr Atkins indicated that the proposals would lead to an improvement in the quality of service offered and would ensure that the County's historic records were correctly conserved.

Approval of Revised Statement of Community Involvement when dealing with Planning Applications and Producing our Minerals and Waste Local Plans
(Paragraph 1.4 of the Statement)

In response to a question from Mr Worthington, Mr Atkins indicated that Staffordshire supplied around 60% of the West Midland region's sand and gravel requirements and that the Statement of Community Involvement would ensure that, for any future applications for mineral extraction, appropriate consultation took place with the communities which would be affected.

Supporting People Review
(Paragraph 2.1 of the Statement)

Several members paid tribute to the Chairman and Members of the Corporate Review Committee for the robust manner in which they had dealt with the recent call-in of the Cabinet's decision on the "Supporting People Review". They also thanked Mr White for the assurances he had given and the concessions he had made.

In response, Mr White thanked Members for their constructive comments during consideration of the call-in.

Mid-Staffordshire NHS Trust
(Paragraph 3.5 of the Statement)

Mr Adamson welcomed the proposals to transfer Cannock Hospital to the Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust as this would safeguard the future of the hospital. He also sought an assurance from the Leader of the Council that the County Council would engage fully with the Trust.

Mrs Rowlands referred to the issues which still needed to be addressed in relation to the future of a number of services provided at Stafford Hospital including accident and emergency, critical care, paediatrics, and maternity and hoped that these matters would be resolved quickly.

In response to questions from Members, Mr Atkins assured Members that the County Council was working hard to ensure that the health economy in Staffordshire was fit for purpose.

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

36. Notices of Motion

Mr White moved, and Ms Atkins seconded, the following motion:

"That this Council:

- (a) acknowledges the public opinion of the petition around the proposals to modernise day opportunities for people with learning disabilities and notes the decision made at Cabinet on the 15 January to develop tailored and flexible personal care to support people with learning disabilities to live fulfilled and

independent lives through smaller specialist centres and community based support; and

- (b) calls on the Cabinet to ensure, during the transition period for the modernisation of day opportunities for people with learning disabilities, that regular six monthly reports are submitted to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee for members to monitor outcomes for this vulnerable client group including all those who presently use Staffordshire County Council run day centres.”

Mr White indicated that protecting and supporting vulnerable people was the County Council’s top priority and that, for far too long the Council had tried to fit people into the services available rather than tailoring services to an individual’s needs. He also expressed his thanks to Members for the valuable contribution they had made during consideration of the call-in of the Cabinet’s decision in respect of the proposals to modernise day opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

Ms Akins indicated that there was a need for the County Council to closely monitor the impact of the proposals and that there was still a number of issues which needed to be resolved including transport (particularly in rural areas), ensuring that service provision was sustainable, monitoring the quality of services, and ensuring the availability of respite care.

Following a debate and a vote, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

RESOLVED – That this Council:

- (a) acknowledges the public opinion of the petition around the proposals to modernise day opportunities for people with learning disabilities and notes the decision made at Cabinet on the 15 January to develop tailored and flexible personal care to support people with learning disabilities to live fulfilled and independent lives through smaller specialist centres and community based support; and
- (b) calls on the Cabinet to ensure, during the transition period for the modernisation of day opportunities for people with learning disabilities, that regular six monthly reports are submitted to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee for members to monitor outcomes for this vulnerable client group including all those who presently use Staffordshire County Council run day centres.

37. Consideration of the Petition in Respect of Youth Services

Members were informed that the County Council’s Petitions Policy stated that a petition that included more than 5,000 signatures automatically prompted a debate at the next available Full Council meeting.

A paper petition totalling 15,691 valid signatures was received on 3 March 2014. The County Council was also in receipt of two e-petitions in respect of the same issue with a total number of signatures of 627. (The overall number of valid signatures was therefore 16,318).

The petition was on the following grounds:

We the undersigned petition Staffordshire County Council to reconsider and reverse its proposal to remove its Staffordshire Youth Service from the delivery of youth provision and of the closing of youth centres in Staffordshire.

The County Council proposes to save £4.5 million by ceasing to directly deliver youth services. This would have a devastating effect on young people, parents, carers, communities in which young people live, study, volunteer and work in, public and voluntary organisations who work in partnership with the Staffordshire Youth Service.

Staffordshire Youth Workers are skilled, professional and experienced people who care about young people and make a difference to people's lives. What the County Council are proposing will destroy a much needed service.

Jenni Crosby, as spokesperson for the petitioners, outlined the possible implications of the proposed changes in youth provision; the need for proper scrutiny of the proposals and for any issues which were identified to be addressed. Danny, a service user, then spoke about the role of youth workers and centres and outlined the positive impact the Youth Service had had on his life.

In responding to the petition, Mr Sutton explained that 75% of young people did not use youth services provided by the County Council and that the current provision was no longer affordable and did not provide value for money. He explained that, under the new proposals, resources would be allocated on a district by district basis according to local need rather than one flat rate for all districts. Furthermore, the aim of the proposals was for the County Council to move away from directly supported youth clubs and to better support the voluntary/community sector to provide the right activities, support and advice for young people.

Members noted that, given the timing of the petition, no final decision had yet been taken on Youth Services. That decision would be taken at Cabinet on 19 March 2014. The debate on the petition provided an opportunity to inform that decision, alongside the impact assessment and wider consultation exercise that would be considered by Cabinet.

Mr Deaville moved and Mr Greatorex seconded the following motion:

“That Council instructs the Cabinet to fully take account of the engagement process, all the replies to the consultation, the petitions and any views or recommendations of the Safer and Stronger Select Committee on March 17 before taking a decision on Achieving Excellence for Young People at their meeting on March 19.”

During the debate a range of issues were raised including:

- Concern that there was an assumption that the voluntary sector would “mop-up” the youth provision no longer directly provided by the County Council when there was no evidence to show that this would be the case.
- The expertise of youth workers and how this may be lost if the proposals were implemented.

- Difficulty in recruiting/retaining volunteers.
- Support for the Youth Parliament and Youth Action Council.
- Potential impact of the proposals on partner organisations such as the Police
- The excellent youth services already provided by the voluntary sector and by churches/religious groups.
- The adequacy of the funding to be provided to support young people in the future.

In responding to the debate, Mr Adams indicated that the County Council listened to the views of young people and, by way of example, explained that the Young Persons Travel Card had been introduced as a direct result of representations made by members of the Youth Action Council. He also confirmed that the County Council would continue to support the Youth Parliament and Youth Action Council and would also retain targeted youth support. Mr Marshall also referred to the excellent training for volunteers provided by SCVYS.

Following a vote, the Chairman declared the motion carried.

RESOLVED – (a) That the petition in respect of the Youth Service be received.

(b) That Cabinet be instructed to fully take account of the engagement process, all the replies to the consultation, the petitions and any views or recommendations of the Safer and Stronger Select Committee on March 17 before taking a decision on Achieving Excellence for Young People at their meeting on March 19.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting until 2:45 pm

Present at 2:45 pm

Ben Adams	Michael Greatorex	Ian Parry
George Adamson	Sandra Hambleton	Sheree Peaple
Margaret Astle	Gill Heath	Trish Rowlands
Charlotte Atkins	Ian Hollinshead	David Smith
Ann Beech	Derrick Huckfield	Mark Sutton
Len Bloomer	Kevin Jackson	Stephen Sweeney
Frank Chapman	Keith James	Simon Tagg
Ron Clarke	Brian Jenkins	John Taylor
Maureen Compton	Philip Jones	Martyn Tittley
Mike Davies	Mike Lawrence	Diane Todd
Peter Davies	Ian Lawson (Chairman)	Alan White
Derek Davis, OBE	David Loades	Conor Wileman
Mark Deaville	Robert Marshall	David Williams
Janet Eagland	Shelagh McKiernan	Susan Woodward
Terry Finn	Christine Mitchell	Caroline Wood
John Francis	Geoff Morrison	Mike Worthington
Bob Fraser	Mark Olszewski	

38. Annual Report on the Staffordshire Local Community Fund 2013

Members welcomed the report; expressed their thanks to those members of staff involved in administering the fund; gave examples of how the fund had been used to support their local communities; and also highlighted how such monies were often able to pump-prime grants from other funding streams.

RESOLVED – That the annual report on the Staffordshire Local Community Fund 2013 be received.

39. Recommendations to Council

Treasury Management, Annual Investment and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategies 2014/15

Members were informed that the management of the County Council's cash flows and borrowing had a significant impact on the budget. The Cabinet, at their meeting on 15 January 2014, approved the proposed strategies for the 2014/15 financial year. Adoption of the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) and the adoption of the Minimum Revenue Provision policy were however, matters that were reserved for the Full Council to determine.

RESOLVED – That, in accordance with the regulations:

(a) The Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) 2014/15 be adopted.

(b) That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy 2014/15 be adopted.

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 decisions 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 Independent Remuneration Panel's report of March 2014, including recommendations on the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2014/15, had been circulated to all Members and copies had been placed in the group rooms and the Members' library.

RESOLVED – (a) That the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be approved

(b) That the period of office for Ray Betteridge and Jane Landick, members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, be extended for a further period of 12 months to 31 March 2015.

(c) That a letter of thanks be sent to Ian Starkie and Gerald Griffin following their retirement from the Panel on 31 March 2014, in recognition of their nine years' service as members of the Panel, of which Ian Starkie served for two years as Chairman.

40. Report of the Chairman of the Police and Crime Panel

RESOLVED – That the Periodic Report of the Chairman of the Staffordshire Police and Crime Panel be received.

41. Report of the Chairman of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

RESOLVED – That the Periodic Report of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority be received.

42. Questions

Ms S. Woodward asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

At the beginning of the year, only 2.5% of the Staffordshire Local Crisis Support Scheme funds had been spent i.e. approximately £35,000 from an allocation of £1.4 million. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what the current position is?

Reply

The Staffordshire Local Crisis Support Scheme fund is a two year time limited fund of £1,475,587.00 per year running from 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2015. This fund is used in two distinct ways:

- Direct Crisis Support
- Crisis Prevention

The Direct Crisis Support helps people with food, services and/or goods who experience an unusual emergency, disaster, unforeseen circumstance or a pressing need, or if someone is vulnerable but wants to remain living independently in their community. Food and fuel are provided within 12 hours of approval of application and white goods are provided within 3 days. To date we have spent £52,637 on direct crisis support and this has supported over 500 people.

Supplementary Question

Given that, by my calculation, there is still only around 3.5% of this fund that has been spent and considering that there is still nearly funding of £1m remaining, will you consider giving the unspent funding as a donation to the food banks that are in operation across the county?

Reply

We are not just working on providing direct assistance. So far, we have allocated £498,700 on crisis prevention schemes. We are trying to spend as much as we can

on preventing people from getting into crisis situations rather than sorting out the crisis once it has happened.

Ms M. Compton asked the following question of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Transformation whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

In the original plans for Staffordshire Place 1 and 2, it was decided that the ground floor would be used for shops, cafes or restaurants. After two years, why are these spaces still empty?

Reply

Staffordshire Place achieved Practical Completion on 12th September 2011. Marketing of the retail units had commenced in April of that year by GVA Grimley who were appointed as the County Council's agents. By Practical Completion, Head of Terms for a lease had been agreed with two tenants but the leases had not yet been signed. A third unit was also subject to serious interest and was likely to progress to Heads of terms.

Shortly after the County Council's occupation of Staffordshire Place, a series of cladding failures occurred which called for a thorough review and rectification of the design and installation faults. The Developer (Stoford) and Contractor (Volker Fitzpatrick) then undertook the complete strip down and reinstatement of the façade. In addition they progressed the rectification of a large number of other defects which affected the retail units. Due to the extent of the repair works the retail units were unlettable and as such the leases were not completed. At the time the work was undertaken a general loss of retail confidence was felt throughout the UK which combined to drive the would-be tenants to withdraw from the potential leases.

The rectification works were finally completed on 18th December 2013 which has now enabled the remarketing of the units.

GVA Grimley have been re-commissioned and marketing will commence.

Compensation for the loss of rental income has been included within the settlement agreement which was made with the Developer and Contractor.

Supplementary Question

How can marketing begin again when just last week rain water was getting inside Staffordshire Place and the damp course is being rectified?

Reply

It is frustrating that we haven't been able to get retailers into the ground floor space at Staffordshire Place but it will happen. The remedial work will be completed shortly and, as I indicated, marketing of the retail units is proceeding.

Mr P. Davies asked the following question of the Leader of the Council whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

As a result of the changes that have taken place recently at East Staffordshire Borough Council, does the Leader of Staffordshire County Council envisage any positive improvements in relations with the new administration at East Staffordshire, and if so, how?

Reply

I look forward to working with Julian Mott, the new Leader of ESBC, and have written inviting him to attend the Staffordshire Partnership Board meetings and Staffordshire Hundred events, which the previous Leader of ESBC, Richard Grosvenor, regularly attended. Until then I have to wait and see what changes will come about.

Supplementary Question

I, like the Leader, would like to see relations between East Staffordshire Borough Council and the County Council improve. They have been somewhat strained over the years and I look forward that with the change in administration those relations will improve.

Reply

We will work with anybody, whatever their political party and I look forward to working with the Borough Council and achieving fruitful things together.

Mr G. Adamson asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

Is the Cabinet Member satisfied with the reply from the Secretary of State for Transport to his letter dated 3rd February 2014 concerning HS2 Phase One Major Projects Authority Assessment?

Reply

As Mr Adamson will be aware, we debated this matter at Full Council. I am satisfied that the Secretary of State for Transport took the time to respond to my letter and give me the key arguments for the decision he took. A copy of this response has been circulated to members and I would urge them to read it, however my concern is to focus on the matter at hand – pushing for the mitigation and compensation which residents in Staffordshire deserve. Fighting yesterday's battles hardly seems fitting when there are issues to be addressed here and now.

Supplementary Question

You appear to have given up the fight already despite the fact that the route of HS2 has not yet been confirmed. There is an awful lot to fight for and the report you appear to have given up on is vitally important; residents in Staffordshire should have the chance to see it. Do you now wish you had been more assertive in seeking release of the document?

Reply

The Secretary of State, in his reply, explains why he has not released the document. He exercised his right of veto on the advice of the Cabinet. We should be concentrating on fighting the battle on behalf of our communities, concentrating on securing compensation and mitigation for our residents.

Ms M. Compton asked the following question of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Transformation whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

Could we please have a definitive answer as to whether this Council intends to sell the Shire Hall?

Reply

I would reiterate my response from a previous full Council meeting that the County Council has not made any decision at this time to sell Shire Hall. We are simply considering it in the wider context of Stafford's development. Therefore discussion at this stage is premature.

Supplementary Question

Can you confirm that you are not going to sell the Shire Hall please? I'm not sure how the Shire Hall will fit into the context of Stafford's development either?

Reply

There are a number of interesting and historic buildings in the centre of Stafford which are empty at the moment. It does leave an interesting opportunity for the town centre, to make it more vibrant, build on its economy, and attract more visitors for example. We don't make enough of our town centre and its historical importance. We don't just want to sell the Shire Hall – we want it to remain the dignified building we currently enjoy. We want to be part of designing and developing its future. It is an asset that is currently underutilised and we could do something more with it along with the rest of the buildings in central Stafford.

Chairman

Statement of the Leader of the Council

1. Staffordshire's Communities

1.1 A50 Growth Corridor

The Cabinet has approved proposals for the County Council to act as 'delivery partner' in respect of two A50 Growth Corridor investment projects. The first project will include the construction of the completely new junction to the west of Uttoxeter. This junction will provide access to the proposed housing and employment site to the south of the A50, and the existing and new JCB factories. The second project will be to reconfigure the existing Dove Way bridge over the A50 in Uttoxeter, by converting it to a grade separated junction. A planning application for the second project is not due to be submitted until 2015 and will first be subject to further public consultation.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

1.2 Household Waste Recycling Centre's consultation

Since details of the proposed consultation on the Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) were made public, a possible opportunity had arisen at one of the HWRC sites which was currently commercially sensitive and could affect the dynamics of the proposal. The Cabinet have therefore decided to defer the consultation on the review to enable that opportunity to be explored further.

(Cabinet – 16 April 2014)

2. Staffordshire's People

2.1 Achieving Excellence for Young People

The Cabinet has considered the findings arising from the public consultation with young people and their families, and key stakeholders (carried out between 8 January 2014 and 26 February 2014), on the proposals for the development of a new approach to improving outcomes for young people in Staffordshire.

They have decided that, following formal staff consultation, the Implementation Plan be taken forward. The Implementation Plan details district transitional planning arrangements and the distribution of resources in accordance with need, in order to ensure adverse impacts are both managed and mitigated.

Cabinet has also accepted the following recommendations of the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee:

- That the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Cabinet Support Member for Public Health and Community Safety provide a report to the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee no later than 31st October 2014 on the progress of the Implementation Plan, as well as providing evidence to the Select Committee of the levels of engagement of young people aged 13 to

19 (and up to 24 with learning disabilities) in activities following the implementation of the proposals.

- That the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People be given authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Cabinet Support Member for Public Health and Community Safety, to work with local Members wherever possible to shape local youth offers.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People has also been given authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing and the Cabinet Support Member for Public Health and Community Safety, to take all such steps, decisions and actions as are necessary to give effect to the Cabinet's decision.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

2.2 Achieving Excellence for Early Years

Cabinet has approved the start of an engagement exercise with residents (including parents), partners and stakeholders on the principles of a new integrated approach to early years which will focus on improving outcomes for children, early intervention, parental responsibility and building resilience within families and communities.

A further report will be brought back to Cabinet in September 2014 summarising the outcome of the engagement exercise and setting out detailed proposals for the new approach to early years.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

2.3 Better Care Fund

The Cabinet has approved proposals detailing how the County Council, working with NHS and District Council colleagues, will implement locally the national initiative to establish a pooled budget (the "Better Care Fund") across the Health and Social Care economy in Staffordshire. In 2014/15, £1.1bn (made up of £859m transfer already planned plus a further £241m) nationally will transfer into a single fund under a Section 256 agreement to Local Authorities to support adult social care and to enable localities to prepare for further transition in 2015/16. In 2015/16, the funding will be substantially increased to £3.8bn through a transfer from existing CCG budgets. The funds are intended to be used to promote preventative and community-based care in order to reduce the impact on the acute sector and NHS.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

2.4 Ofsted Inspection Report

The County Council has received a "Good" rating by Ofsted following the inspection of the Council's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, which took place over a four week period in January/February 2014. Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board was also rated 'Good' by Ofsted – the first time under Ofsted's tougher inspection regime that both children's services and an SCB were both rated 'Good' simultaneously.

Cabinet has extended its thanks to staff and partners for their hard work and dedication in achieving the improvements that have led to this result over a period of only two and a half years.

An action plan to address the non-urgent areas for improvement identified by Ofsted is to be drafted and presented to the Children's Improvement Board.

(Cabinet – 16 April 2014)

2.5 Determination of Statutory Proposal to Enlarge Rykneld Primary School, Burton upon Trent

The Cabinet has agreed a statutory proposal to enlarge Rykneld Primary School, Burton upon Trent by increasing Reception places from 67 to 90 by 1 September 2019, conditional upon the granting of planning permission under Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by 31 December 2014. The proposal is supported by the school community and during the statutory four-week "representation period" no objections or comments were received.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

3. Our Staffordshire

3.1 An update on Inward Investment in Staffordshire: Powerhouse Central - A Wave 2 City Deal for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire

Cabinet has received details of the finalised Wave 2 City Deal agreed with Central Government. The City Deal includes plans to supply locally-produced, sustainable energy to major employers. It is anticipated that that the Deal will see more than £113m invested in the local economy and 20,000 new jobs created over the next 10 years. Cabinet has agreed to continue to develop the necessary governance arrangements with the Local Enterprise Partnership and Stoke-on-Trent City Council as agreed by Full Council at their meeting on 12 December 2013.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

3.2 Achieving Excellence Quarterly Performance Report

The Cabinet has received a quarterly report detailing the progress being made against the County Council's three priority outcomes of:

- The people of Staffordshire will be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth.
- The people of Staffordshire will be healthier and more independent.
- The people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

(Cabinet – 19 March 2014)

Fourth Quarter Budget Monitoring Report

The Cabinet has received details of the financial position of the County Council (including the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy) at the end of the fourth quarter 2013/14. They noted that the forecasted overspend over the last quarter had been reduced from 1.6% to 1.5%. This anticipated overspend was primarily due to the significant pressure resulting from the cost of social care for both adults and children.

The Cabinet has also approved proposals to transfer the capital resource no longer required to finance the Redhill project to meet the funding gap on the Alton Growth Corridor project.

(Cabinet – 16 April 2014)

4. Other Items

4.1 Working with local Government

One of the crucial roles that the County Council plays is sharing its experience and learning with others. I am pleased to inform colleagues of the successful visits we have had from other councils.

West Sussex District visited us in early April and this was an opportunity to highlight the way we work with District and Borough Councils through District Deals and our wider partnership approaches.

4.2 Working with Partners

I wanted to make Council aware of the tremendous success of our recent Staffordshire Hundred event. The event focused on the issue of Health, which remains a key issue for us and our partners in the NHS. We were delighted to be joined at the event by the Stephen Dorrell MP, Chair of the Health Select Committee. Mr Dorrell's input had a hugely positive impact, stimulating discussion on how we address our health challenges. It reinforced for me the crucial role that the County Council has and is playing in drawing partners together, to focus our resources and approaches. This is further highlighted through our various external and internal partnership approaches such as the Shire Leaders and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Strategic Consortium which are showing how we can work together and achieve on key issues like education and skills.

4.3 High Speed Rail 2

Following the passage of the High Speed Rail bill to its second reading I wanted to provide members with an update on the work we are doing to ensure that Staffordshire benefits from the plans.

Our position remains clear – we oppose HS2, but it's a decision that rests fundamentally with Parliament. Government clearly has the support of Parliament for

its proposals so our overriding aim is to ensure that the Bill contains the right mitigation measures to protect our local economy and our precious environment.

As part of these efforts, we have submitted a compelling bid for the national HS2 College to be built in Stafford. The Government invited areas around the country to submit bids and we see this as an opportunity for new investment in education in the county. While this in no way affects our opposition to HS2 as a whole, it is further evidence of the work we are doing to gain any benefits we can if this project goes ahead.

The next stage for the Bill will be the Petitioning stage and our officers are working hard to prepare our petition that will try to secure a commitment to maintain for the future current rail service levels for Stafford. This will ensure that our connection to Birmingham Airport and London will be preserved in Phase 1 of HS2 and bring some tangible benefits to the county.

We will keep members up to date as this progresses.

Recommendations to the Council

Independent Remuneration Panel

1. The County Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to provide advice and recommendations to the Council on its Members' Allowances Scheme. Two vacancies have arisen on the panel and a Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee was established to conduct a recruitment exercise to fill the vacancies.
2. The Audit and Standards Committee met on 24 March 2014 and considered the minutes of the Panel meeting when they had interviewed applicants for the position (Appendix 1).
3. The Committee **Recommends** – that Leslie Trigg and Michael Murray be offered appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel (subject to receipt of satisfactory references.)

Proposed Changes to the Constitution

4. Paragraph 3 of Section 2 of the Constitution outlines that proposed changes to the Constitution should be considered by the Audit and Standards Committee prior to consideration by the Full County Council.
5. Accordingly, at its meeting on 24 March 2014, the Audit and Standards Committee considered the following reports detailing proposed changes to the Constitution:-
 - Suggested amended wording for procedural standing orders to reflect new legislative requirements in respect of recording votes at Council meetings where budget and precept decisions are taken (Appendix 2).
 - Suggested amendments to the Members Code of Conduct to include reference to registering Gifts and Hospitality, the planning protocol and the mechanisms in place to make complaints about Member Conduct (Appendix 3).
6. The Committee **Recommends** – that:-
 - a) The proposed amendments to paragraph 14.9 of Section 12 of the Constitution outlined in the report relating to the recording of votes at full County Council meetings on decisions on Budget and Precept setting.
 - b) The proposed amendments to the Local Code of Conduct relating to registration of gifts and hospitalities, reference to the Planning Protocol and mechanisms for complaints be approved.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Fire and Rescue Authority – Proposed Future Size of the Authority

7. The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Fire and Rescue Authority has recently been undertaking a process to examine the question of whether the size of the Authority, in respect of the number of elected members from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council, is appropriate for the efficient and effective discharge of the Authority's duties going forward.

8. In this regard, the Fire and Rescue Authority is to hold a special meeting on 7 May to receive a proposal from a Working Group of its Members that the Authority reduces its size from 25 to 21 seats. Currently, the Stoke-on-Trent City Council appoints 6 Members of the Authority and the County Council appoints 19 Members (10 Conservative, 7 Labour, 1 UKIP and 1 Staffordshire Independent). If the Working Group's proposals are approved by the Fire and Rescue Authority this will result in the County Council having 16 seats on the Authority which, taking into account the political balance of the Council, will be allocated as follows -
Conservatives 9 seats, Labour 6 seats and the remaining seat will go to either UKIP or the Staffordshire Independent Group.
9. The proposals to reduce the size of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Fire and Rescue Authority from 25 to 21 seats require the approval of the two Member Councils. If either (or both) Council(s) refuse to grant consent, the Fire and Rescue Authority may apply to the Department for Communities and Local Government for authority to implement the proposed change.
10. **Recommend** – The views of Members on the proposal to reduce the size of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Fire and Rescue Authority from 25 to 21 seats are requested.

**Minutes of the Special Panel of the Audit and Standards Committee
Meeting held on 26 February 2014**

Present:

Janet Eagland
Kevin Jackson
Philip Jones

Conor Wileman
Caroline Wood

PART ONE

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 February 2014

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

6. 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 as indicated below.

7. Exempt minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2014

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

8. Applications for Consideration

The Panel was set up to appoint to the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in the Constitution at Section 8 - Audit and Standards Committee, paragraph 3.2 - to deal with any other matter involving a regulatory, judicial, quasi-judicial or licensing function of the County Council which by law cannot be the responsibility of the Executive and for which no other provision is made in this Constitution.

Members interviewed six candidates and following careful consideration of the applications forms and the interviews agreed to recommend the appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel of two applicants: Leslie Trigg and Michael Murray. The Chairman asked that the Clerk advise the other applicants that they were not successful and thank them for their interest in the position.

RECOMMEND TO AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE – that the Audit and Standards Committee recommend to the County Council that Leslie Trigg and Michael Murray be offered appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel (subject to the receipt of satisfactory references).

Chairman

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority Periodic Report of the Chairman on Authority Matters

Report of the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

1. There were 13 injuries and 3 deaths in accidental dwelling fires for the period April to December 2013 compared to 12 injuries and 3 deaths for the same period in 2012/13. The Service is continuing with its activities to drive down incidents and casualties. In comparison, 15 years ago the figures for accidental dwelling fire casualties were 270 per annum.

There were 1126 fires involving property and casualties for the period April to December 2013, which showed a decrease of 34 (3%) when compared to the same period in 2012/13.

There were 414 accidental dwelling fires between April and December 2013, a decrease of 8 (2%) when compared to the same period in 2012/13. This was a continuing downward trend and a consequence of the ongoing work with partners which sought to influence lifestyle issues which increased vulnerability.

The number of small fires excluding grass increased by 171 for the period April to December 2013 from 957 to 1128 when compared to the same period in 2012/13.

Grass fires between April and December 2013 had increased by 560, from 266 to 826, when compared to 2012/13.

Although the number of both small fires and grass fires had increased compared to the same period in the previous year they were still much lower than in 2011/12 where the weather conditions were comparable.

Fatal Fires – There were two fatal fires during the reporting period. The first on 23 December 2013 in Penkhull had been thought to have been started deliberately by the occupier or by an unknown third party. The 40 year old female was rescued from the property suffering from the effects of smoke inhalation and from severe burns to her body which resulted in her death on 25 January 2014. A smoke alarm was fitted within the property and it did activate. The incident is still under a joint investigation with Staffordshire Police and is subject to a Coroner's inquest. The second fire on 19 January 2014 in Blurton was thought to have been started by the careless disposal of a cigarette and was confined to newspaper and boxed clothing. The occupier, a 60 year old female, was rescued from the property and transported to hospital where she subsequently died. Evidence at the scene and witness testimony suggests that the fire had occurred whilst the lady was at a local shop. When she returned to the flat she attempted to deal with the fire herself but was overcome by smoke. The incident is subject to a Coroner's inquest.

Lives saved By Carbon Monoxide Alarm - On 21 December 2013 the Service received a report of the activation of a specialist smoke alarm system for the deaf and hard of hearing with a linked carbon monoxide (CO) alarm. The CO alarm had detected a fault on the boiler and activated the alarms system waking the occupants. The specialist system had been fitted some time ago by the Service's Specialist Deaf Technician team based in the north of the county. The occupants, a couple aged 72 and 82 years, stated they had not been feeling well and had recently been sleeping in until 10:30 hours, which was unusual. The couple's grandson was also staying

overnight in the property. Gas monitors detected a high reading of carbon monoxide within the property; the gas board attended and confirmed that it was a faulty boiler which they capped off and made safe.

Carbon Monoxide Alarm Programme - A twelve week pilot started in March to enhance Home Fire Risk Checks (HFRCs) by issuing free Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms. The pilot partnership was agreed between National Grid (NG) and Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) to provide the Service with 3,000 CO alarms for HFRC Technicians and Community Safety Officers (CSOs) to issue to households that may be at an increased risk to the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Volunteers Celebration Event - The Service has seen the introduction of the new Volunteer Programme since January 2013. This has included the recruitment of three Volunteer Programme Co-ordinators, a new policy, an improved recruitment process, marketing materials, training and an informative area on the website. Volunteer numbers increased to 65 by Christmas, with over 1,000 hours of volunteering having been completed during the 12 month period. The focus has been on how and where the Service can benefit from volunteers and improve the efficiency of working with communities. As a result of this, based on the needs of the Service, specific roles are now being created for volunteers and recruited to. In order to show the Service's appreciation for the work that the volunteers have done, a Volunteer Celebration was arranged at Headquarters in December. This event also provided a great opportunity for the volunteers to meet their counterparts from different areas of the Service.

Children and Young People's Strategy Consultation - A series of internal and external focus groups took place following the consultation launch on 17 January 2014. These groups were both fun and interactive, creating a 'buzz' in each session which led to data being captured on how young people are perceived, what aspirations they have, the barriers that prevent them reaching their aspirations, what needs to be done to break down those barriers and the ways in which young people prefer to receive information. All of this information has been analysed and will be used to shape the Strategy so that, as far as possible, it meets the needs of the children and young people throughout the Authority's area.

Sprinkler Event - The Service's first Fire Safety Engineering Conference was held at Branston Golf Club Burton on 19 March 2014. It was organised by Andrew Brown the Service's Fire Engineer supported by members of the Central Risk Reduction Team. It was attended by 85 delegates, including Fire Authority Members, Councillors, Approved Inspectors, Fire Engineers, Social Housing Providers, local authority Building Control Officers, as well as representatives from Fire and Rescue Services across the UK. The conference, 'Fire Safe by Design' included speakers from the Sprinkler Industry, design consultancies and two representatives from the Education Sector.

The morning session concentrated on the value of fire engineering in commercial buildings and the importance of timely consultation involving all key stakeholders early in the building design process; thereby preventing the traditional delays experienced when detailed, finalised designs are reviewed by the Fire and Rescue Service at Statutory Consultation stage. The afternoon session outlined the work being done in Staffordshire with high fire risk domestic and residential properties in the County.

As part of the conference, delegates were taken on a visit to a local infant school to see how a fire engineered approach and the installation of sprinklers had reduced the need for other fire safety measures and allowed greater design and architectural freedoms.

Feedback following the conference stated the event had been professional, enlightening, informative and the 'whole Fire Service' approach was encouraging to observe.

Dementia Campaign Update - An update has been received on the initiative being trialled where the Service is working closely with Pharmacies across the county who will identify people suffering with Dementia from their prescriptions and sign-post them for a Home Fire Risk Check (HFRC). The campaign aims to boost the number of vulnerable people benefiting from a free HFRC.

The Service teamed up with South Staffordshire Pharmacy Committee to launch the trial on 10 February 2014 with four pharmacies in Uttoxeter and 20 pharmacies in the Tamworth area. Family members, carers and friends who collect prescriptions for those with mild or moderate forms of dementia will also be encouraged to book a HFRC on behalf of the patient.

Eye-catching posters promoting the scheme will be on display in all participating chemists and pocket size leaflets featuring information on the HFRC referral process will be stapled to prescription bags. Should pharmacy staff recognise other people as being 'vulnerable' they will also give out the information and encourage them to book an HFRC. People will be asked to give a specific code relating to the pilot scheme when booking a HFRC. Its success will be assessed through the number of appointments made using the reference. The pilot will be monitored over a six month period, before potentially rolling it out across the county.

Community Facilities – Statistics - Community room use remains high with 2,352 uses, equating to 6,603 hours during November 2013 to February 2014. With the option of extending the CIC's Public Liability Insurance for those unable to provide their own, a number of small community groups have been able to start to utilise Community Rooms.

Flooding Response - Fire and Rescue Services across the country have been at the heart of the response to help those affected by adverse weather conditions and Service personnel have played their part in assisting the response. A crew from Rugeley with a High Volume Pump, a Prime Mover and Welfare vehicle provided support at Marlow in Buckinghamshire and our Enhanced Logistics Support Team assisted in the management and co-ordination of resources involved in dealing with the flooding across the South-West of England.

Financial Challenge – Financial Challenge briefings have been held for all staff and facilities for staff to make suggestions using the Money Box Forum and the suggestion wall have been made available. Responses to the suggestions will be shared with all staff.

Workplace Health Award - In January the Service received the Staffordshire Workplace Health Gold Award at an event at Cannock Fire Station, which attracted dozens of delegates from public bodies, private sector companies and voluntary organisations. The award was made by Staffordshire County Council in recognition of the work that SFRS has undertaken to improve staff health and wellbeing.

Chief Fire Officer Commendations - Chief Fire Officer Commendations were awarded to Firefighter Carl Speakman and Crew Manager Brian Cox for their professionalism and quick reactions in dealing with incidents whilst off duty in rendering first aid until the casualties could be dealt with by paramedics. Commendations were

also awarded to three members of the public; Martin Spooner, Mark Taylor and Rob Steele who removed a tree from a vehicle where a lady was trapped which allowed paramedics quick access to the driver and saved her from further injuries.

Charity Curry Night - A Charity Curry night was held in Stafford in support of the Fire Fighters Charity which was attended by the Executive Leadership Team and members of our Ceremonial Squad. £850 was raised on the night, which was matched by the local branch of Barclays Bank resulting in £1700 being donated to the Fire Fighters Charity that supports all members of Fire and Rescue Services and their families when in need. The Authority noted the grateful thanks to Dr Das Gupta for his enormous support to this Charity and for organising this latest fundraising event.

Joint Emergency Services Inter- operability Programme (JESIP) - Staffordshire Fire and Rescue has been the first Service in the region to begin delivery of this training and continues to drive forward the implementation of the Joint Emergency Services Inter-operability Programme (JESIP) at pace. The project initially sees Fire, Police and Ambulance officers training together to deal with major and complex incidents, with plans in place to roll out the JESIP legacy to the wider partners and military. The first phase of the Tactical Commander delivery to all Station and Group Managers was completed by 20 March. The second phase delivery to Operational Commanders commenced on 27 March. This will see all Watch Managers trained by 12 June, well ahead of the Home Office September deadline.

Brathay Challenge 2014 - The Brathay Apprentice Challenge 2014, supported by the National Apprenticeship Service, is the search for the Apprentice Team of the year where teams of apprentices have to prove their team building, leadership, logistical and communications abilities. The Teams compete in a series of work-related challenges to develop new skills and benefit their local communities as well as raise the profile of their employers and apprenticeships. The Service's apprentices have been busy as part of the Brathay Challenge, including organising charity car washes, promoting apprenticeships within schools and colleges and the wider community and undertaking the Community Project at St Giles Community Garden in Knutton, Newcastle. During National Apprenticeships week in early March, the team undertook a number of visits to careers events for young people and had a 'job swap' with two presenters from Signal 1 radio station. The presenters took part in the firefighters' rural challenge, dressed in full operational kit and a number of apprentices then visited the radio station where they were interviewed about the Fire Service and apprenticeships.

NHS Change Day - NHS Change Day, which was celebrated on 3 March, was about inspiring people to make a pledge to do something better together to improve care for people. The Service's pledge is: *"We will work in partnership with others to promote greater understanding of the fact that prevention is cheaper and more effective than cure."*

Shared Fire Control Project Update

2. The Authority has been advised of the progress of this collaborative project with West Midlands Fire Service. The joint control is based at Vauxhall Road, Birmingham and the name of the shared fire control has been agreed as "The Staffordshire and West Midlands Fire Control". The joint control went live on Monday 31 March 2014 at 10.00 am. The Authority has endorsed the decisions made by the Fire Control Project Governance Board to date. The transition had gone well and this has been a marvelous achievement for all those involved in the project.

Size of the Authority

3. The Authority has considered whether the present size of the Membership of Authority is appropriate going forward and has set up a Working Group to look at the possibilities of reducing the Membership of the Authority from 25 to either 21 or 19. The Working Group have met and made a recommendation which will be considered by the Authority at its additional meeting on 7 May 2014.

Confidential Reporting Policy

4. This Policy, often described as the 'Whistleblowers' Policy, requires the Authority to be informed of any occasion on which an employee has made a disclosure relating to inappropriate and possibly illegal actions by the Service or its officers and any steps taken by the Service in the light of such a disclosure. In accordance with the Policy the Secretary has confirmed that there have been no Confidential Reporting events in the previous twelve months.

L W Bloomer
Chairman

Mrs K M Banks
Vice Chairman

