

## DECISION NOTICE

### Cabinet Meeting - 21 January 2015

Present: Philip Atkins (Chairman), Ben Adams, Mike Lawrence, Ian Parry, Mark Winnington and Alan White.

Cabinet Support Members present: Mark Deaville, Gill Heath and Mark Sutton.

Also in attendance - John Taylor

#### PART ONE

#### 62. Decision notice of the meeting held on 17 December 2014

**Decision** – That the notes of the meeting held on 17 December 2014 be approved.

#### 63. Leader's Update



“Today’s agenda focuses on a number of areas that are absolutely critical in how we are working to improve the lives of people across Staffordshire, by creating a connected county where people can prosper, be healthy and happy.

We have a report on how we support families to give our children the best start in life; an update on successful work to accelerate economic growth and create more, better paid jobs for our people; a paper on new legislation to ensure people have more choice and say in the care they need; and a paper on how we manage taxpayers’ money well to ensure we continue to make a positive difference to Staffordshire people’s lives.”

Philip Atkins, Leader of the County Council.

**Decision** – That the oral report of the Leader of the County Council giving an update on a range of issues including how the County Council was working with its partners in the health sector to manage winter pressures on local hospitals, be noted.

## 64. Treasury Management, Annual Investment and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategies 2015/16



“We always look to achieve the best value for money for our taxpayers and we do this by running an efficient county council.

By using our cash reserves rather than borrowing more, we have been able to achieve substantial savings in what remain challenging financial times. This year we hope to make savings of around £1m. Like many councils we continue to face serious financial pressures but it is positive news that through well-thought out decisions, we are able to make those kinds of savings. Any savings we can make is excellent news for Staffordshire taxpayers and will help us to focus our resources where they are most needed.”

Ian Parry, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy, Finance and Corporate Issues.

**Reasons for the Decision** – The Local Government Act 2003 requires a local authority to have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that its capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The Prudential Indicators are approved as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The Treasury Management Strategy is a key element of the MTFS as the planned capital expenditure programme drives the borrowing required.

**Decision** – (a) That, in accordance with the regulations, it be recommended to the County Council, at its meeting on the 19 March 2015, that the Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) 2015/16 (described in paragraphs 24 to 70 and as detailed in Appendices 2 and 4 of the report) be adopted.

(b) That, as required by guidance, the following policies (as described in paragraphs 96 to 104 to the report) be approved;

- i) review of the strategy;
- ii) the use of external advisers; and
- iii) training.

(c) That the proposed borrowing strategy for the 2015/16 financial year comprising:

- the use of cash in lieu of borrowing required in 2015/16;
- the use of cash to repay loans early, subject to market conditions;
- as a contingency the ability to borrow new loans as a result of;
  - unexpected changes in the capital programme;
  - a reduction in the level of cash balances; or
  - the repayment of LOBO's;
- a forward borrowing strategy that will not be used in 2015/16; and
- a loan rescheduling strategy that is unlimited where this re-balances risk,

- The above to operate within the prudential limits set out in Appendix 5 to the report and in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy, Finance and Corporate Issues with respect to early loan repayment, raising new loans and loan rescheduling;

be approved.

(d) That, in accordance with the regulations, it also be recommended to the County Council that the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy 2015/16 (as summarised in paragraphs 105 to 107; and as set out in full at Appendix 8 to the report), be adopted.

## 65. Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub

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|  | <p>“Backing our small businesses is vital as they play an essential part in the county’s long-term economic growth and create thousands of jobs.</p> <p>The Growth Hub has done a fantastic job since it was set up in April and is on track to exceed its target for business engagement already. Small businesses face a range of challenges and the Hub is making a real difference in helping them to overcome them – whether this is through advice, signposting them to the appropriate organisations or directly through the grants scheme or private investment initiative. I’m pleased to report the success of the Growth Hub today.”</p> <p>Mark Winnington, Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.</p> |
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To update Cabinet on the work of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Growth Hub, a new programme working to improve access to business support and finance for small and medium sized (SME) businesses across the Local Enterprise Partnership’s area.

**Decision** – (a) That the success of the Growth Hub programme in unlocking investment and job creation among local businesses and improving cross-referral between business support initiatives, innovation and international trade support be noted.

(b) That the Cabinet and wider membership help to promote the Growth Hub services to local small and medium-sized businesses by raising awareness of the business helpline.

## 66. Best Start



“We know the quality of a child’s development up to the age of five has a huge bearing on all aspects of the rest of their life, therefore we owe it to every child to do all we can to ensure they have the best start possible.

Most parents do a good job taking care of their children and do not need our assistance beyond help accessing the right information to make positive choices for their families. However, despite intensive effort and investment by many different agencies in recent years, we have not been reaching all the young families who need us most.

This new approach to early years, including how we work with schools and other partners, involves providing the right information and advice, refocusing our resources on those in need and reconfiguring how we use our Children’s Centres in future.

This will change the philosophy of how we deliver services for maximum impact to benefit those most in need of support and to ensure every Staffordshire child is safe, healthy and ready to take advantage of all that a good education has to offer.”

Mike Lawrence, Cabinet Member for Children and Community Safety.

**Reasons for the Decision** – To inform Cabinet of the findings of the eight week consultation and to seek their approval to the final proposals for a new approach to giving children the best start in life.

**Decision** – (a) That the content of the report and the proposal for a new way of working for under-5s in Staffordshire be endorsed.

(b) That the contents of the Public Consultation Report and Community Impact Assessments for each district be noted.

(c) That authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Community Safety, to take all such steps, decisions and actions as are necessary to give effect to the proposals as set out in paragraphs 25-45 of the report.

**67. Care Act**

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|  | <p>“We want to ensure that Staffordshire is a place where people are healthy, are supported in their community and live as independently as possible for as long as possible.</p> <p>There are many different laws about care and support at the moment, so it’s difficult for people to know what information and advice they have access to, and what care and support they can access in the future.</p> <p>The Care Act is a huge opportunity for us to help ensure that people have better access, information and clarity on the right support when they need it and will complement the huge amount of work we are already doing to focus on prevention and early intervention to promote wellbeing for all our residents.”</p> <p>Alan White, Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing.</p> |
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**Reasons for the Decision** – To inform Cabinet of the approach which the county council was taking regarding the implementation of the Care Act.

**Decision** – (a) That the approach being adopted to implement the Care Act be approved.

(b) That authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing to sign off on policy implementation, in order that they can be implemented with effect from 1 April 2015.

**68. Decisions taken by Cabinet Members under Delegated Powers**

**Decision** – That the following decisions taken by Cabinet Members under delegated powers be noted:

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| <p>Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport</p> | <p>In approving:</p> <p>(i) The draw-down of monies to the value of £313,514.01 (from the £3million from the sale of land owned by Staffordshire County Council at Pye Green) to support the following schemes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A contribution of £59,056.01 in respect of the Feasibility Study, Ecology/Bat survey and Planning Application Fee for the proposed development of a Sports and Recreation hub on Cannock Chase District Council owned land on Pye Green Road.</li> <li>• A contribution of £154,458 in respect of Technical site surveys and the completion of all planning</li> </ul> |
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|   | <p>application documentation, Planning Application Fee and purchase of Signal Box for the Development of a full sized Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) on Bradbury Lane in Hednesford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A contribution of £50,000 in respect of the Rugeley Town Centre Improvements and a further £50,000 contribution to the Conservation area fund (to support an existing scheme to support traders to conserve and improve at risk premises).</li> </ul> <p>(ii) The arrangements for the draw-down of future monies from the sale of the land at Pye Green</p> <p>Note: These monies are held in a joint account between both authorities (Staffordshire County Council and Cannock Chase District Council) and are earmarked for projects that support Economic Prosperity and Public Health outcomes. Release of these monies is subject to separate approvals and will be based on project appraisals for each case.</p> |
| Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy, Finance and Corporate Issues | In approving the purchase of a parcel of land in Burton on Trent.   |

## 69. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 18 February to 18 June 2015, which detailed the following issues, was approved:

| <b>Subject Matter</b>   | <b>Contact</b>                              |
|---|---|
| Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015 - 2020 | Name: Rachel Spain<br>Tel: (01785) 854455   |
| Libraries in a connected Staffordshire (Part 3)                           | Name: Janene Cox<br>Tel: (01785) 278368     |
| Third Quarter Budget Monitoring Report                                    | Name: Rachel Spain<br>Tel: (01785) 854455   |
| Quarterly Performance Report  | Name: Lauren Jackson<br>Tel: (01785) 854561 |
| Fourth Quarter Budget Monitoring Report                                   | Name: Rachel Spain<br>Tel: (01785) 854455   |

## 70. Exclusion of the Public

**Decision** – 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 paragraph of Part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below.

**71. Exempt minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2014**  
(Exemption paragraph 3)

**Decision** – That the exempt notes of the meeting held on 17 December 2014 be approved.

**Philip Atkins**  
**Leader of the County Council**