

## Statement of the Leader of the Council

### 1. Quarter 4 2017/18 Integrated Performance Report

The Cabinet have received an overview of the county council's performance and the progress being made in delivering the Council's three priority outcomes at the end of the fourth quarter 2017/18. They noted that:

- In January 2018, the percentage of working age Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants (including Universal Credit claimants) in Staffordshire (1.1%) continued to be below both the West Midlands (2.4%) and national (1.9%) rates. Staffordshire recorded the second lowest rate of all the West Midlands Strategic Authorities.
- In January 2018, 87.1% of all schools in Staffordshire were rated as 'Good or Outstanding' by Ofsted, which was similar to the national average (88.7%). Of the 380 Staffordshire Schools inspected, 281 were rated "good" and 50 were "outstanding".
- Average annual resident earnings in Staffordshire (£27,789 in 2017) had improved significantly in recent years and were now similar to the national average (£28,758). However, growth in wages between 2008 and 2017 had been slower in Staffordshire (10.4% growth) when compared with the national (14.3%) and regional (12.7%) averages.
- Overall life expectancy at birth is continuing to increase in Staffordshire. Data for 2014-2016 showed that men and women in Staffordshire lived on average for 80 years and 83 years respectively. There were variations across Staffordshire, for example, men and women living in the most deprived areas of Staffordshire lived eight years and seven years respectively less than those living in less deprived areas.
- In December 2017 there was an improvement in the number of delayed transfers of care in Staffordshire, with the NHS delays falling sharply to 1,365 days, social care delays also improving (1,384 days), and the total number of delayed days was close to the Better Care Fund trajectory for the month. However, provisional data for January 2018 showed that our delayed transfers of care had risen again, and at a faster rate than that for England.
- In January 2018, there were 1,094 looked after children in Staffordshire, which was a rate of 64.8 children per 10,000 population. The year on year increase in Staffordshire was lower than the West Midlands average.
- At the end of January 2018, the rate of children subject to a child protection plan in Staffordshire per 10,000 was 38.5, below the national (43.3) and statistical neighbouring authorities (44.9) rates based on the most recent data.

The Cabinet have also received details of the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy at the end of the fourth quarter 2017/18. They noted that the latest revenue forecast outturn showed an overspend of £2.0m (0.4%), compared to the quarter 3 position of £4.6m (0.9%), a reduction of £2.6m. The main pressures related to delays in implementing the new Children's System (£3.7m), Looked after Children's pressures (£4.3m), and HR Terms and Conditions (£1.6m).

The latest capital outturn projection is £140.5m, compared to the quarter 3 position of £152.7m, a decrease of 8.0%. This projection is a fully funded position. This decrease is mainly due to slippage of project spend into 2018/19 including the Dementia Centre of Excellence Project, Maintenance and Replacement Schemes, the A50 Project, Superfast Broadband, Shugborough walled garden, Lichfield Library project, and reduced costs of the Wedgewood Block move project.

*(Cabinet – 18 April 2018)*

## **2. Enlargement of St Stephens Primary School, Fradley and Baldwins Gate CE (VC) Primary School.**

In response to new housing being built in the villages of Fradley and Baldwins Gate, the Cabinet have approved proposals to increase capacity at St Stephen's Primary School, Fradley by a ½ Form of Entry (FE) expansion (equivalent to 105 places); and at Baldwins Gate CE (VC), by 35 places (from 105 to 140 places). Governors at both schools are in full support of the proposed increases in primary school places.

*(Cabinet – 18 April 2018)*

## **3. Pothole Investment**

Our annual programme to tackle potholes is now well underway. The extra £5m investment is set to see around an extra 11,000 weather related potholes fixed after a longer than usual winter. This year, as well as tackling potholes, some of the investment will be used to help prevent them occurring in the first place.

## **4. HS2 petitioning**

Moving on to rail. Last month saw the county council back before the HS2 Select Committee championing the county's cause on Phase 2a which will run through 33 miles of Staffordshire from Fradley to Crewe. In total, we petitioned on around 60 items to mitigate the impact of the high speed service and, while we may not be successful on every point we have succeeded in getting HS2 Limited to agree to a number of measures including the lowering of the viaduct at King's Bromley, further mitigation should the proposed railhead at Stone go ahead and around £10 million pounds of permanent highways improvements. Of course, there is still much work to be done in ensuring that the voice of our communities continues to be heard.

## **5. Green Paper on Social Care**

Turning to health. As many of you will be aware, the Government is due to publish a long-awaited Green Paper on the funding of social care this summer. As you will all also be aware funding of social care is now the biggest pressure facing local government, with council's like ours now spending record amounts on care. Together with the County Councils Network we have been highlighting the need to find a long-term funding solution to both protect the care of the most vulnerable people and in turn also ease the pressure on the NHS.

## **6. Staffordshire Day**

We all know what a great place Staffordshire is to live and work, but it is also always good to spread the message a little further afield. May 1 saw the third annual Staffordshire Day and it was great to see many people take part and celebrate this fantastic county. It is an event which is now firmly in many people's diaries and will undoubtedly continue to grow each year.

## **7. Ironman 70.3 Staffordshire**

Another date already in people's diaries is June 10, which is the day we will welcome Ironman back to the county. Starting with the swim in Chasewater, this year the competition will have a new finishing post here in Stafford Town Centre. This annual sporting event not only showcases Staffordshire around the world but also raises money for the local economy and for charity.

## **8. Branston Locks**

Finally there was more great news at the start of the month when the major Staffordshire road project at Branston Locks was completed. The development will see 400 acres of land immediately west of the A38 developed with 2,500 new homes, a range of community facilities and a 50-acre employment site. It will also include retail, health, leisure and recreational facilities, as well as provision for older people. A new 1,550 place high school has been built by the county council on land nearby – the first in the county in 25 years – which I have visited and is extremely impressive. A new primary school will also be built and, in total, investment in the area could be over £800 million.