



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 3rd DECEMBER 2020**

**PRESENT:** Councillor D Cook (Chair), Councillors R Pritchard (Vice-Chair), J Chesworth, M Cook, S Doyle and J Oates

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Anica Goodwin (Executive Director Organisation), Rob Barnes (Executive Director Communities), Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance), Tina Mustafa (Assistant Director Neighbourhoods), Joanne Sands (Assistant Director Partnerships), Zoe Wolicki (Assistant Director People), Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer), Jodie Small (Legal, Democratic and Corporate Support Assistant) and Adam Deakin (Technical Infrastructure Engineer)

The following Councillor was in attendance:  
Councillor S Goodall.

### **51 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dr S Peple and T Jay

### **52 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting of Cabinet held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020 were approved as a correct record.

*(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

### **53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **54 QUESTION TIME:**

None.

### **55 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE (OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR BY THE COUNCIL)**

The Chair of the Infrastructure Safety & Growth Scrutiny Committee, Councillor S Goodall, presented the recommendation of the Committee in respect of the Castle Update. The Committee recommended that consideration of the Castle Review report by Cabinet, currently scheduled for the Cabinet meeting on 17 December 2020 be deferred to a later meeting of Cabinet to allow the report to be considered by Cabinet to include relevant financials (including cost / benefit analysis).

**RESOLVED** that consideration of the Castle Review report be deferred from 17 December 2020 meeting to a later meeting of Cabinet to allow the report to be considered by Cabinet to include relevant financials (including cost / benefit analysis).

*(Moved by Councillor S Doyle and seconded by Councillor J Oates)*

## **56 QUARTER TWO 2020/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Leader of the Council provided Cabinet with a performance update and financial Healthcheck. The report had been previously considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020, and two recommendations from that Committee were included in the report.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet approve:

- the contents of this report,
- the Corporate Scrutiny Committee recommendation to Cabinet that Officers are requested to ensure that the Scrutiny Chairs are advised of the timelines of their Corporate Plan projects so there is an opportunity for scrutiny to participate in the process as necessary,
- the Corporate Scrutiny Committee recommendation to Cabinet that council staff in the collections team be thanked for their work at this difficult time.

*(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

## **57 DRAFT BASE BUDGET FORECASTS 2021/22 TO 2025/26**

The Report of the Leader of the Council was presented which informed Members of the re-priced base budget for 2021/22, base budget forecasts for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 (the 5 Year Medium Term Planning Period) and the underlying assumptions and which asked Member to consider the future strategy to address the financial trends.

The Executive Director, Finance provided an overview to Cabinet of the key provisions in the report.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. the technical adjustments and re-priced base budget figures for 2021/22 & indicative budgets to 2025/26 be approved (as attached at Appendix B, C, D, E, F, G & H);

2. consideration be given to the proposed Policy Changes and Capital Programmes, as detailed within the report;
3. consideration be given to the planned changes to Council Tax and Housing Rent for 2021/22, as detailed within the report; and
4. in compliance with the Constitution of the Council, note that the Leader's Budget Workshop considered the budget proposals contained within this report on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020.

*(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor R Pritchard)*

## **58 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2021/22 ONWARDS**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to advise members that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age customers for 2021/22 should include continued alignment to Applicable Amounts with those of Housing Benefit was presented.

**RESOLVED** that Council consider and endorse or otherwise the proposed recommended changes detailed below:

That the planned review for the introduction of a banding scheme for Council Tax Reduction be deferred until 2021 and that the current scheme for working age customers continues to be aligned to Applicable Amounts with those of Housing Benefit for 2021/22.

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)*

## **59 REVIEW OF TEMPORARY RESERVES, RETAINED FUNDS AND PROVISIONS**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to advise Members on the levels of reserves and to seek approval to re-purpose unspent reserves, following the recent review by the Executive Director Finance.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

1. Approved the transfer of the reserves, as detailed in Appendix A, including £560,000 to the Transformation reserve, £64,467.85 to General Fund Balances and £5,000 to Housing Revenue Account Balances (HRA);
2. Noted the reserves to be spent in 2020/21 and 2021/22 which will otherwise be returned to balances; and
3. Noted the current levels of reserves remaining.

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor J Oates)*

## **60 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY MID-YEAR REVIEW REPORT 2020/21**

The Report of Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance on the Mid-year Review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy was presented to Members.

**RESOLVED** that Council be requested to approve:

1. the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year Review Report 2020/21;
2. that the planned investments in property funds be deferred, with a review during Spring 2021 when the situation should be clearer, to inform future investment plans.

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor J Oates)*

## **61 COUNCIL TAX BASE 2021/22**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance on the Council Tax Base for the Borough Council for 2021/22 was presented to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED**

That the calculation of the Council Tax Base for the year 2021/22 to be 22,366 (2020/21 – 22,367).

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor M Cook)*

## **62 WRITE OFFS 1 APRIL 2020 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance was presented to provide Members with the amount of debt written off for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and to seek approval to write off irrecoverable debt in line with policy regarding Business Rates in excess of £10k.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet

1. endorsed the amount of debt written off for the period of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 – **Appendix A-E**; and
2. approved the write off of irrecoverable debt for Business Rates of £53,099.66 – **Appendix F**.

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)*

## **63 DATA PROTECTION POLICY**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance provided an updated Data Protection Policy which details the framework within which Tamworth Borough Council will strive to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. Cabinet endorsed the policy and approved it for immediate implementation and publication.
2. The Data Protection Officer be given delegated authority to make amendments to the Data Protection Policy to reflect changes to future legislative changes.

*(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)*

#### **64 HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2020-2025**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods was presented to Cabinet. The report set out that the Homelessness Act 2002 required all housing authorities to have in place a Homelessness strategy. In August 2018 the Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy which set out the vision to, by 2027 support every person who sleeps rough off the streets and into a home. Its main focus was eradicating rough sleeping and preventing homelessness. A Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping strategy was made a mandatory document for all Local Authorities to have as stated in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Our new strategy identifies revised priorities drawing on the evidence base as well as our response to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on service delivery. The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to agree and endorse all principles within the report and its delivery plan.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

1. Approved the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020- 2025 attached at **Appendix 1**
2. Endorsed the evidence base **Appendix 2**
3. Supported the community impact assessment (CIA) at **Appendix 3**. This was developed with stakeholders facilitated by external support
4. Acknowledged the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny input into the development of the strategy.

*(Moved by Councillor M Cook and seconded by Councillor D Cook)*

#### **65 COUNCILS TENANTS ANNUAL REPORT & COMPLIANCE 2019/2020**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods to consider the draft Neighbourhood Services Annual Report 2019/20 to tenants as required by the Regulator Social Housing (RSH) as part of the landlord regulatory framework

evidencing effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance was received.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

1. Approved the digital draft `Neighbourhood Services Annual 2019/20` report for circulation to all the Council's tenants via the Council's website as required by the RSH (Regulator for Social Housing) to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance.
2. Agreed the distribution of the Annual report and future editions of 'Tamworth Matters' (Tenants Newsletter formerly Open House) as e-publications, available on-line as well as targeted hard copies to ensure value for money.
3. Delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods to make the necessary amendments to the draft Neighbourhood Services Annual Report 2019/20 prior to digital circulation to Council's tenants.
4. Acknowledged the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) white paper published on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020; `The Charter for social housing residents; social housing white paper`.
5. Accelerated a compliance review of the Landlord consumer standards; as required by the Regulator Social Housing (RSH) to assist with a self-assessment against the proposals announced in the white paper on 17/11/20.

*(Moved by Councillor M Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)*

## **66 TAMWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL PRIVATE SECTOR LEASING SCHEME**

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods to consider the future of the Private Sector Leasing scheme and provision of temporary accommodation was received.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet:

1. Approved the phased ending of the Private Sector Leasing (PSL) temporary accommodation Scheme
2. Approved the allocation of 10 floating Council stock properties (based on flexible need) for a permanent Council stock temporary accommodation scheme
3. Approved the use of a **minimum** further 10 council properties dispersed across the Borough as temporary accommodation for homeless people allocated on a needs basis as a result of cessation of the PSL scheme.

*(Moved by Councillor M Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)*

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Leader