



## **MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 28th FEBRUARY 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor M J Greatorex (Mayor), Councillors J Harper, D Cook, R Claymore, T Clements, M Cook, C Cooke, A Cooper, S Daniels, S Doyle, A Farrell, S Goodall, J Jones, R Kingstone, D Maycock, J Oates, S Peale, B Price, R Pritchard, R Rogers, S Smith, M Summers, P Thurgood, P Turner and J Wade

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Nicola Hesketh (Monitoring Officer), Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance), Joanne Goodfellow (Assistant Director Finance) and Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager)

### **61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Bailey, D Box, T Jay and J Wadrup

### **62 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF TWO PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.

*(Moved by Councillor T Clements and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)*

### **63 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

Councillor D Cook asked to make the following announcement:

Something that is close to myself and Cllr D Maycock's heart, Friday marked a year since the evil Russian invasion of Ukraine and I thought it would be fitting to note that event this evening given the year and the loss of life that's happened in that evil conflict. As you will be aware both myself and Cllr Maycock drove to Ukraine in March last year and it would be remiss of this council not to note that event one year in and to send our love and support to the people of Ukraine who continue to fight so bravely.

**64 TO RECEIVE ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER, MEMBERS OF THE CABINET OR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Leader of the Council Councillor J Oates made the following announcements

I have four announcements to make, it's a year since the conflict started in Ukraine and many people's worlds have changed beyond any recognition and any return, families have been separated, homes have been lost and loved ones have been killed in a horrific act of violence against that country. I would like to thank those who sprang to action 12 months ago and thank those who continue to provide support as we continue to stand with Ukraine

My second announcement is in relation to expressing sympathy and support for those affected by the earthquakes in Turkey. How scary must it be to go to bed as normal not expecting to be woken up by the world collapsing around you. It makes you realise how lucky we are to live in the place we do we can go to bed pretty much in the knowledge that the world isn't going to collapse around us as we sleep. Again, I would like to thank those who are supporting the people that have been displaced and the immediate rescue effort in Turkey, a number of people in Tamworth who jumped on and got involved with fund raising and providing support. Every time there is a crisis whether it is covid, an illegal invasion of a country or a natural disaster the people of Tamworth always step up and we should be proud to live amongst such wonderful people.

On 16th February Councillor T Clements in her role as Portfolio holder accompanied me to Stafford where we joined the Leader of the County council and other District Leaders to re-sign the updated Military Covenant with a commitment to look after our veterans of war and conflict. So, I would like to thank Councillor Clements for joining me in signing that commitment on behalf of Tamworth Borough Council.

On the 14th January 2023 Councillor P Turner was asked to take on a champion role as Town Centre Business Champion the specifics of the role are to disseminate the vision around the pipeline of projects to bring businesses together in a business district style approach and feedback and champion to the Council the positives and challenges that businesses face within Tamworth. So, I would like to welcome Cllr Turner on board.

The Chief Executive made the following announcement:

As members will be aware in the forth-coming elections in May there is now some new legislation called voter Id which means in its basic form people need to take some photographic ID when they go and vote. I would ask if all elected members can you spread that message when you are out canvassing. As a council we are doing social media campaigns and sending a flyer out to all properties in Tamworth. We want to support Democracy in Tamworth as best we can.

Councillor Summers made the following announcement:

Just some positive news I am pleased to announce that Tamworth has been shortlisted for a Rising Star award for £10,000 to help fund a local community

initiative from Let's Celebrate Towns which is a nationwide competition run by Visa designed to highlight towns across the UK that are helping local businesses and communities to thrive so hopefully we will be successful and I believe it is something we can apply to again for a greater amount later on as well so that's good news for us.

**65 QUESTION TIME:**

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 1**

**Under Procedure Rule No 10 Charlie-Rose Taylor Castanheira, , of Tamworth will ask the Portfolio Holder for Engagement, Civic Pride and Pride in Place, Councillor T Clements, the following question:-**

As we are about 2 weeks from International Women's Day, what are Tamworth Borough Council doing to support this event more widely for women in Tamworth?

**Councillor Clements gave the following answer**

Thank you to Miss Taylor Casteneira for her question  
As part of my Cabinet role, I have made sure that there is plenty going on to celebrate women in Tamworth in varying ways.

Tonight before the full Council four female members of the Council have recorded a message to go out on March 8<sup>th</sup>, International Women's Day celebrating women in politics what are the positives and negatives and trying to entice more women into the field of Politics. We are all meeting up for an informal coffee on March 11th too to have a good old natter. On International Women's Day itself, I am hosting a coffee and cake afternoon with around 25 businesswomen from across Tamworth to promote women in business and how they can help each other. We also have a female guest speaker. In the lead-up to the day itself, I will be visiting local schools to engage with young girls around the 'let her play' programme which gets young girls into football and the challenges around that. I am also going to visit the ladies' team at Tamworth FC.

So plenty going on and I'm looking forward to meeting so many inspirational females.

**Charlie Rose Taylor Casteneira asked the following Supplementary Question**

Can you also confirm in your opinion that the Conservative Controlling group supports a woman's rights to the maternity leave that she as earned and is entitled to under law. A female Councillor historically was deselected, and the key reason was her taking maternity leave. Today I've heard that the Conservative MP for Stafford has been deselected just two days after their

maternity leave ended. I have also been informed but have not yet seen the proof that a female Conservative Councillor was deselected from the Tamworth Conservative party as the local Chairman stated that as she as just had a baby her place is at home. In light of this can the controlling group really still state its support for women.

**Councillor T Clements gave the following answer.**

I fully support women having children, I've got a daughter myself. The other comments that have been made are better going to regulatory, I am the Cabinet member for engagement I don't make the rules.

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO.1**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor J Harper will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor J Oates, the following question:-**

I have several issues in my Bolehall ward that include deteriorating road surfaces and overgrown trees. Will the leader meet with me and representatives of Staffordshire County Council with a view of building a plan to address these long-standing issues on behalf of Bolehall residents?

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

As per our conversation last week I would be more than happy to arrange and attend a visit and a walk around your ward to look at the issues not only those stated here but all of those that relate to the Borough Council and County council and I would invite representatives and officers of both the Borough and County Council to accompany us on that visit. Historically I have done visits like that in the Bolehall Ward and we can hopefully get a plan of action on the points you have raised.

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 2**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor C Cooke will ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Entertainment and Leisure, Councillor R Pritchard, the following question:-**

Question: The castle has seen a number of litter bins vandalised and burnt by mindless vandals. What is the authority doing to address this matter.

**Councillor Pritchard gave the following answer:**

Vandalism is taken very seriously and is a criminal action. These petty acts by moronic individuals ruin everyone's enjoyment of the town centre and Castle grounds.

It is hugely disappointing that certain individuals have been causing repeated vandalism in the castle grounds, with bins attached, damaged, burned and recently the County Council's information board being broken.

All of these incidents have been reported to the Police for further investigation with a crime number. This will allow for a review of any relevant CCTV footage to understand if any perpetrators can be identified.

There is a weekly Community Safety Partnership ASB meeting which the Police attend. Where there are recorded incident numbers, the matters will be discussed to ensure that all can be done to prevent re-occurrence.

I understand the Police have a dedicated ASB patrol car and the Castle Grounds is included in the patrol. In addition, town officers regularly patrol this area.

The council is working hard to repair or replace any of bins as they are damaged by these mindless and sad individuals.

### **Supplementary**

Will the portfolio holder write to the Police asking them to take further action to address this important matter?

### **Councillor Pritchard gave the following answer:**

I am more than happy to write to the police and welcome other Councillors to co-sign that letter.

### **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 3**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor C Cooke will ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Entertainment and Leisure, Councillor R Pritchard, the following question:-**

On behalf of a resident who has contacted me, could the Leader tell us why the works are going on at the assembly rooms for the access?

### **Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

During the refurbishment of the Assembly Rooms, the building industry, amongst many, suffered resource shortages due to Brexit, in terms of supply and demand. The stone that was signed off for the front steps and accessibility ramp, was not available due to this issue, and would not have been until after the scheduled opening date of the venue. It was decided a temporary stone would be laid until the original, (and more fitting) stone became available once more. Once the stonework became available a time slot of early 2023 was agreed for the steps and ramp to be refurbished as per original designs, at a time that was deemed to be less inconvenient for the venue users.

### **Councillor Cooke asked the following supplementary question:**

Can I ask who paid for all this?

### **Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

All the works completed on the Assembly Rooms refurbishment were funded by Tamworth Borough Council and its partners including Local enterprise partnerships and heritage Lottery funding.

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 4**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor D Maycock will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor J Oates, the following question:-**

Would the leader agree with me that it is imperative that Tamworth residents take part in the consultation on the future of inpatient mental health services in Southeast Staffordshire, which effects the future of the George Bryan Centre?

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

The short answer is yes, it is vitally important that members of the public take part in the consultation and I would encourage members of the public to take part in all public sector consultation but this one is a critical issue. We have been lobbying to get the George Bryan Centre re-opened. Since the arson attack in 2019 the George Bryan Centre has been unable to serve the patients as it once did, not only that the NHS Trust took this as an opportunity to close down the remainder of the building and moved mental health services to Stafford. Time as moved on since then and the NHS Trust as put forward no business case to rebuild the George Bryan Centre and re-establish the local mental health support services. They are however looking at other investments elsewhere in the Town but they have not committed to or drawn up a plan to replace the George Bryan Centre. To me this is not good enough. We have been lobbying the trust and the last time I wrote to them we secured a meeting with senior planners and had a discussion about the future of the centre and about the other investment in Tamworth and I am happy to write again a second time to re-iterate the position that we have that we need that George Bryan Centre rebuilding and re-opening. So, we have lobbied the ICB and the department of health to get the George Bryan Centre back on track and back in action and I would in encourage any resident in Tamworth to take part in that consultation.

**Councillor Maycock asked the following Supplementary Question**

Would you allow the opportunity for Councillors to sign the letter.

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

Absolutely, I will get that letter drafted and circulated and anyone that wishes to put their name to the letter is welcome to do so.

## **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO.5**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor S Smith will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor J Oates, the following question:**

Tamworth Library on Corporation Street is currently undergoing a major refurbishment. During these works, the library services, as well as opening hours, have been maintained at the temporary Albert Street location. The last month, I have twice used both printing and computer facilities at Albert Road and found the equipment, services and friendliness of staff to be outstanding. Tamworth Library, Corporation St, is scheduled to reopen at the end of spring. Would the Leader agree with me that the County Council's refurbishment of Tamworth Library is fantastic news for Tamworth?

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

We are pleased and we praise the investment in Tamworth Library. We are committed to public services which include libraries and this commitment has been backed up by the County Council's investment in Tamworth. Many parts of the country including county have seen their libraries closed or moved to community management. In Tamworth's case we have seen investment in the library in the town Centre. During the refurbishment works which started in October the library service has been moved to Albert Road and the temporary building is good space and is fully staffed and provides a good service to users. However, when the service returns to Corporation the refurbished library will offer a full range of books, computer access and activity. The re-opening date is expected to be early June now which is just in time to celebrate the opening of the library which was performed by Britain's first female Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher 50 years ago. As part of the re-opening Tamworth's Councillors are encouraging everybody to join the library get a library card and see what facilities are on offer there.

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO.6**

This question has been withdrawn

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 7**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor D Cook will ask the Portfolio Holder for Voluntary Sector, Town Centre, Evening Economy and Community Safety , Councillor M Summers, the following question:-**

"The Leader of the Council created the cabinet position, Voluntary Sector, Town Centre, Evening Economy and Community Safety in December 2021. I recall it well as i was handed this new Cabinet position at the time. I held it for around 33 days, removing Christmas and New Year I probably held it less than 2 weeks before i resigned on Principle.

You replaced me in January 2022 Cllr Summers, my question is simple - Given that key elements of the Portfolio position taken from the Constitution are

- Evening Economy

- Town centre relationships (working in partnership with Cllr Clements)

Can you confirm what has been actioned, investigated, reviewed or planned in regards the health of the town centre economy over that past 13 months? Other than FHSF or Gungate which are both my legacy?

**Councillor Summers gave the following answer:**

Thank you, Madam Mayor, and Thank you Cllr Cook for the question.

Firstly, since you reference them. Future High Street Fund and Gungate projects are not so insignificant that they can be dismissed in terms of the health of the town centre economy, since the point of them is to boost it. They will form a significant portion of the regeneration of the town centre as you know.

Neither are directly my responsibility under my portfolio, although of course, I do contribute to them as a part of cabinet. I am surprised that you choose to refer to these ongoing projects as your legacy, since I know that a significant amount of teamwork involving both those on your cabinet at the time and the officers that do the heavy lifting on our plans were significant. I feel it is an injustice to them for their contributions to be dismissed as one person's legacy. And let's face it, no-one is likely to remember either of us in the history books for our work on Tamworth Borough Council Cllr Cook, and my own personal feeling is that rather than chasing legacies, I prefer to work to the best of my ability with my group in a team effort to effect change for the greater good of Tamworth

In direct answer to your question:

In the past 12 months the authority has developed and consulted on a new Gambling Policy, Statement of Licensing Policy and Cumulative Impact Assessment and most recently the Taxi Licensing Policy that is due before full council in March. The taxi policy I am proud to say if passed at the next full council will remove barriers to entering the trade such as just for one example, increasing the age limit for suitable vehicles to 10 years. Both myself and Cllr Tina Clements collaborated on the policy with the responsible officer to ensure we have a common-sense approach to taxi licensing. We also are currently investigating incentives to increase the number of taxi drivers and thus taxis within our town centre, which was something I heard the cry for loud and clear upon taking on the portfolio.

Officers have been carrying out enforcement operations in the form of Safer Nights in partnership with the Police, consisting of visits to licensed and food premises to ensure compliance as just some examples.

The responsible bodies group has been reinstated and has promoted successful engagement with a full range of partners. Officers take a proactive role in both Pub Watch meetings with local licensees and the Community Safety Forum. I am also looking to instigate with the help of Cllr Tina Clements and Cllr Paul Turner who has just been appointed our town centre business champion of course, a business and licensee forum.



The Economic Development Team have commissioned 3 separate projects Funded through UK Shared Prosperity Fund which all incorporate the Town Centre business support package for Town Centre businesses as well as a recently launched Town Centre 'Be Seen' Business grant scheme.

There are 3 feasibility studies which have been commissioned the first study will focus on overall business data research, the second will focus on a Tourism Strategy for Tamworth and the third will focus on a Place Marketing Strategy. The information and data gathered from these feasibility studies will inform and drive future council plans and support further potential work commissioned through UKSPF which will include a Town Centre focus.

Digital Islands are currently delivering a business support package for Town centre businesses, an online Business Hub which is free to join has been created and currently has 104 members registered. The online Hub is the entry point to access a wide range of support, advice, training courses, one-to-one advice and help from a range of business specialists. Workshops and webinars (both online and in-person) will be organised up until 2025, and hub members can shape what is included as part of the events.

The Tamworth Town Centre 'Be Seen' Business Grant offers grants between £2,500 to £10,000 to existing businesses with a premises based in the Town Centre who have been trading for more than 6 months. The grant is designed to assist businesses in establishing or improving their physical or digital presence to allow them to attract and reach new customers and establish or improve an effective brand and image. The objective of the grant is to support Town Centre businesses to adapt their businesses to gain new customers, increase turnover and/or increase opportunities for survival in the current economic climate.

The first round of applications are due to go to Nominations and Grants Committee on the 15th March 2023, a further round will be delivered July / August 2023 and again in 2024.

I have also directed our assistant director of partnerships to work closely with the Organisation Tamworth Street Angels, who I had the pleasure of patrolling with last year, to ensure that they can continue their amazing voluntary service on the streets of Tamworth during the evenings. I will take the opportunity now to thank Vic and Wendy Vandenberg for bringing the street angels to Tamworth and I will do what I can to assist them.

And lets not forget Purple Flag, the status I hope as an authority we will one day in the near future achieve. All of the hard work being carried out currently is being assessed against the purple flag criteria to identify what more we need to do to attain it. It is not a short process and I envisaged it would take at least 3 years. With Purple flag, we will be able to highlight proudly that Tamworth is a safe and fun place to have a night out.

**Councillor Cook asked the following supplementary Question:**

First of all just to clarify I did not dismiss Future Hight Street Fund and Gungate I simply said there were projects that were already there dating back to when I was Leader of this Council, I do not take away anybody's involvement in that it was a team effort. I note from the answer a Gambling Policy a Licensing policy Taxi's of no more than 10 years, Cumulative Impact Zone, food compliance community safety, business grants of 2k and then we talk about the current economic climate we bearyl scratch the problem. These are all things that were all happening long before Councillor Summers took the Portfolio. I think the meat of my question is what have you done Councillor summers.

**Councillor Summers gave the following answer:**

We are merely caretakers of our roles and what you have started I will continue. There is little point answering that question it doesn't actually make any sense. We continue the work we all started as a team that you were apart of for the past however long it has been or legacy as you call it. Apparently according to literature I have seen bearing your name the last 19 years was a waste of time Well you were part of it and we will continue to build on that legacy of yours to make it better than it already was.

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 8**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor D Cook will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor J Oates, the following question:-**

"Councillor Oates will of course be aware that Tamworth Borough Councils Monitoring Officer has for the last 10 months been pushing for the Council review and potentially adopt the new LGA Code of Conduct for Councillors. Something the Audit and Governance committee has found on its agenda a few times over the last year.

Within the consultation from the LGA is the following statement  
General principles of councillor conduct

**Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles**

I assume the Council Leader supports this upgrade of the Code of Conduct, otherwise I fail to see why officers would be continuing with this agenda. I could be wrong!

In that case can the Leader of the Council remind this Chamber of the Seven Principles, AKA the Nolan Principles. And can the Council Leader state his belief in holding all councillors to these Principle's?

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer.**

The Seven Principles of Public Life

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Do I believe that holding Councillors to the principles, I believe these are good principles and are good guidance for not only Councillors and people in public office but everyone in general to lead a positive life.

**Councillor Cook asked the following supplementary question:**

Can I thank the Leader of the Council for that very honest answer. Agree with everything he has said. Some in this chamber will be aware that recently the Tamworth Futures Group face book page was hacked, and fake posts were put out from that page. I have no proof but it as come to my attention that there is a possibility a Conservative Councillor did so, but I make no acquisition this evening. Can I ask the Leader to agree with me that if it is proved that a Conservative Councillor is hacking other people and other political groups face book pages, he will ask them to stand down.

**Councillor J Oates gave the following answer:**

I am not aware of the issue; however I would welcome a conversation with Councillor D Cook after the meeting. It is a bit of an odd supplementary based on the original question, but I appreciate where Councillor Cook is coming from on this. Linking it back to the principles and the code of conduct if you believe a member of the council as breached the code of conduct whether it be the old or updated code of conduct, it is reported to the relevant authority whether it's a Facebook hack or any other activity which doesn't fit the Nolan principles. I will follow that up with Cllr Cook after the meeting.

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO.9**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor M Cook will ask the Leader of the Council Councillor J Oates, the following question:-**

At the Joint Budget Scrutiny meeting a few weeks ago, I asked Cllr Robert Pritchard to confirm which play areas were due to be refurbished as part of the budget proposals, which we are due to discuss this evening. Cllr Pritchard responded that he was unable to confirm this due to an officer being off sick.

Following that meeting I emailed him on the 4th February and the 13th February asking the same question. After receiving no reply, I emailed yourself on the 16th, which you replied to on the morning of the 17th saying you'd find out. I chased again on 23rd February and you again replied quickly to confirm you were still waiting for Cllr Pritchard to confirm. Can you please therefore confirm to me which play areas are due to be upgraded as part of the budget proposals.

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

I have since chased Councillor Pritchard again and the member of staff is still off sick, and I still have not received the report in question and as soon as I receive it I will forward to Councillor M Cook

**Councillor M Cook asked the following supplementary:**

I'm sure that all members are keen to understand which play areas will be upgraded and when so that residents can start to enjoy them as soon as possible. On what you have just said there I do just have one small supplementary question. As Councillors are elected to do a job no matter if you like the person you are trying to help or whether you respect them ultimately you act professionally especially when helping others even more so. Can you confirm in this instance if you think Cllr Pritchard did not act respectfully by not replying in any way shape or form to me not even with an out of office or I can't say or even with information. I've waited 25 days for, and I've ended up asking you the question so do you think he acted professionally or could he have done better?

**Councillor Oates gave the following answer:**

I believe the information that Cllr Pritchard gave at the Scrutiny Committee has not changed and therefore as soon as he gets the information from his officer that will be circulated. So, do I believe Councillor Pritchard as acted inappropriately or not, Cllr Pritchard still doesn't have the information and therefore still cannot pass it on, as he been courteous or not, I've only got what's been said in this chamber. I do think that there is a particular example we have just seen there, and the example is about how can we attack Cllr Pritchard for being incompetent or discourteous. The real issue here is the refurbishment of play areas and representation and I've read recently about putting people before politics, well what we see here is an example of putting politics before people, so what I will do is on behalf of Cllr Cook and the people she represents I will not only chase Cllr Pritchard for that list I will also chase to make sure that any play areas in Amington are considered on that list because their current Councillor is more concerned as to whether Cllr Pritchard is discourteous or incompetent rather than chasing the issues as to whether the pay areas in Amington the ward she represents are being refurbished.

**QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL NO. 10**

**Under Procedure Rule No 11, Councillor J Harper will ask the Leader, Councillor J Oates, the following question:-**

Unauthorised parking in Market Street, George Street, Colehill and St Editha's Square has become a major issue in the town centre with some motorists brazenly using the pedestrianised areas as a 'free car park' without hinderance or any fear of repercussions. Would the Leader consider discussing this with the relevant county councillor with a view to finding a solution to this unacceptable practice?

**Councillor J Oates gave the following answer:**

Believe me I am as frustrated as anybody is with the situation in the Town Centre. The enforcement of stationary vehicle offences sits with clear streets and the enforcement of moving vehicles offences sits clearly with the police. As I state around the code of conduct I would recommend that member of the public and Councillors if you believe someone is committing an offence or breaching parking regulations please report them to the relevant enforcement authority. The difficulty we have is the traffic restrictions in the town centre are old, incomplete, and often misunderstood. There are a number of reasons why vehicles can and can't travel through the town centre and there are a number of areas and reasons where vehicles can and can't park, its not a clear piece of legislation in terms of the restrictions its not a clear order. I can confirm that Staffordshire County Council through a Divisional Highways Programme is reviewing the traffic restrictions orders which affect the town centre this is going on because a) they need reviewing and are causing confusion and being misunderstood and b) while we regenerate the town centre is opportune to ensure we have the right in restrictions in going forward. So yes, work in progress it is unacceptable we need to get it right we need the police to step up, we need the County Council to step up and we need clear streets to step up so we need to ensure that traffic restrictions are correct and they are applied correctly and enforcement action is taken correctly.

**Councillor J Harper asked the following supplementary question:**

Will the Leader invite Staffordshire County Council and the police to join you and myself for a site visit to see for themselves these respective areas.

**Councillor J Oates gave the following answer:**

Yes, absolutely, I think we have discussed this in this chamber we have exchanged emails with a number of partners, it is actually time to get down and see it face to face together with the Police Service with the County Council Highways Team with yourself and myself and we will get that date sorted, what I will do actually I'll extend that invitation to the Castle Ward Councillors as it sits within their Ward. I'll get on to that as soon as possible.

**66 CORPORATE VISION, PRIORITIES PLAN, BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24**

Report of the Leader of the Council

- To approve the Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Plans and their inclusion in the Corporate Plan (attached at Appendix A).
  
- To approve the recommended package of budget proposals (attached at Appendix B) to enable the Council to agree the:
  - General Fund (GF) Revenue Budget and Council Tax for 2023/24;
  - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2023/24;
  - 5 Year General Fund Capital Programme (2023/28);
  - 5 Year HRA Capital Programme (2023/28);
  - 3 Year General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (2023/26);  
and
  - 5 Year HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (2023/28).
  
- To comply with the requirement of the Council's Treasury Management Policy in reporting to Council the proposed strategy for the forthcoming year and the Local Government Act 2003 with the reporting of the Prudential Indicators (attached at Appendix N) and the requirement to prepare an annual Corporate Capital Strategy (attached at Appendix O).

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

Councillor D Cook moved to amend the original motion to remove recommendation 1 from the 28 recommendations and

vote on recommendation 1 separately.

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

**The Amendment was carried.**

**Council then voted on recommendation one to approve**

1. the Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes for 2023/24 (Appendix A);

**Recommendation one was carried.**

**Council then voted on recommendations 2-28 to approve**

- RESOLVED That Council approved
2. the proposed revisions to Service Revenue Budgets (Policy Changes) (Appendix C);
  3. the sum of £59,581 be applied from Council Tax Collection Fund surpluses in reducing the Council Tax demand in 2023/24 (Appendix E);
  4. the sum of £260,300 be applied to Business Rates Collection Fund deficits in 2023/24 (Appendix E);
  5. that on 1st December 2022, the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base 2023/24 for the whole Council area as 23,376 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")];
  6. that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 is £4,602,501 (Appendix E);
  7. the following amounts as calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
    - a. £48,785,510 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act (Outgoings excluding internal GF Recharges);
    - b. £44,183,009 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act (Income excluding internal GF Recharges);
    - c. £4,602,501 being the amount by which the aggregate at 7(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 7(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act);
    - d. £196.89 being the amount at 7(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (at 5 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic

amount of its Council Tax for the year;

8. the Council Tax level for the Borough Council for 2023/24 of £196.89 (an increase of £5 (2.60%) on the 2022/23 level of £191.89) at Band D;
9. an aggregate Council Tax (comprising the respective demands of the Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority) of £2,012.94 at Band D for 2023/24 be noted (£1,922.11 in 2022/23) (Appendix H);
10. the Council Tax levels at each band for 2023/24 (Appendix H);
11. the sum of £1,207,869 be transferred from General Fund Revenue Balances in 2023/24 (Appendix E);
12. the Summary General Fund Revenue Budget for 2023/24 (Appendix E);
13. the Provisional General Fund Budgets for 2024/25 to 2025/26, summarised at Appendix G, as the basis for future planning;
14. minimum level for balances of £500k to be held for each of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, General Capital Fund and Housing Capital Fund;
15. Cabinet be authorised to release funding from the General Contingency budget and that the release of funding for Specific Contingency items be delegated to the Corporate Management Team in consultation with the Leader of the Council;
16. proposed HRA Expenditure level of £17,517,810 for 2023/24 (Appendix D);
17. rents for Council House Tenants for 2023/24 be set at an average of £99.66 (2022/23 £93.14), over a 48 week rent year (including a capped 7% increase in line with the Governments updated Rent Standard for 2023/24);
18. rents for Council House Tenants due for 52 weeks in 2023/24 be collected over 48 weeks;
19. the HRA deficit of £823,480 be financed through a transfer from Housing Revenue Account Balances in 2023/24 (Appendix D);
20. the proposed 5 year General Fund Capital Programme of £10.809m, as detailed in Appendix I to the report;



21. the proposed 5 year Housing Capital Programme of £37.958m, as detailed in Appendix J to the report;
22. to delegate authority to Cabinet to approve/add new capital schemes to the capital programme where grant funding is received or there is no net additional cost to the Council;
23. the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy and Annual Investment Statement 2023/24 (as detailed at Appendix N);
24. adopt the revised clauses from, and the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities as updated in 2021;
25. the Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Limits for 2023/24 to 2025/26 contained within Appendix N;
26. adoption of the Treasury Management Practices contained within ANNEX 8;
27. the detailed criteria of the Investment Strategy 2023/24 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy within ANNEX 4;
28. the Corporate Capital Strategy and associated Action Plan (as detailed at Appendix O);

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

### **Named Vote**

Named vote takes place *In accordance with Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the Council is required to take a recorded vote on decisions which approve the budget or set the council tax.*

#### **FOR**

R Claymore  
T Clements  
D Cook  
M Cook  
C Cooke  
A Cooper  
S Doyle  
A Farrell  
S Goodall

#### **AGAINST**

S Daniels  
S People

#### **ABSTAIN**

M Greatorex  
J Harper  
T Jay  
R Kingstone  
D Maycock  
J Oates  
B Price  
R Pritchard  
R Rogers  
S Smith  
M Summers  
P Turner  
P Thurgood  
J Wade

- 67 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTION, NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN DULY GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE NO. 4.12.1 BY COUNCILLORS MARIE BAILEY, PAUL TURNER, CHRIS COOKE, SAMUEL SMITH AND ROBERT PRITCHARD**

**Notes for minutes, item 69 was considered before items 67 and 68**

**To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given in accordance with Procedure Rule No. 4.12.1, by Councillors Marie Bailey, Paul Turner, Chris Cooke, Samuel Smith and Robert Pritchard:**

Tamworth Borough Council is concerned by the scourge of plastic pollution.

It recognises the large impact that plastic pollution has on the environment with between 4.8 and 12.7 million tonnes of plastic entering the ocean each year. The authority believes it is the responsibility of all to combat plastic pollution.

We welcome the talks between the government, businesses, environmental groups, scientists and civil society on shaping a legally-binding global treaty that aims to end plastic pollution by 2040.

**RESOLVED** That Council

1. Work towards the elimination of the use of landfill for waste disposal
2. Ensure that in public spaces are clean and free of plastic waste
3. Support education initiatives to better inform the public on how to use recycling facilities and the importance of eliminating plastic waste
4. Facilitate the cooperation of local businesses, residents and local authorities to work together on the elimination of plastic pollution and reduce the use of plastic in Tamworth.

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

- 68 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTION, NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN DULY GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE NO. 4.12.1 BY COUNCILLORS ROBERT PRITCHARD, CHRIS COOKE, PAUL TURNER, THOMAS JAY, SAMUEL SMITH AND SIMON GOODALL**

**To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given in accordance with Procedure Rule No. 4.12.1, by Councillors Robert Pritchard, Chris Cooke, Paul Turner, Thomas Jay, Samuel Smith and Simon Goodall:**

According to a map produced by The Rivers Trust using the latest available public data, there has been hundreds of hours of raw sewage discharge in Tamworth during 2021.

These discharges are across multiple sites in the borough, and we are sure that residents will be shocked to find raw sewage is being dumped in local rivers in the 21st century. Residents should have access to clean rivers and open water and we very much support the steps the government is taking towards a 'polluter pays' principle when it comes to tackling river pollution.

**RESOLVED** That Council

1. Agreed to call on Severn Trent Water to undertake urgent action to prevent further raw sewage discharge into our local rivers in the short, medium and long term.
2. ask scrutiny to look into this matter and engage with local partners, environmental bodies and utility providers to develop a broader approach to improving water quality in rivers in Tamworth; and
3. support the Government's new initiative to use money from fines for water pollution to benefit the nature environment and call for some of this to be used to improve Tamworth's environment.

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

- 69 TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTION, NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN DULY GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE NO. 4.12.1 BY**

**COUNCILLORS MARTIN SUMMERS, PAUL TURNER, CHRIS COOKE, ALEX FARRELL AND SIMON GOODALL**

**To consider the following motion, notice of which has been duly given in accordance with Procedure Rule No. 4.12.1, by Councillors Martin Summers, Paul Turner, Chris Cooke, Alex Farrell and Simon Goodall:**

Loneliness and isolation are a serious public health issues that deserve more attention.

Residents can find themselves isolated for a number of reasons, leaving individuals at risk of suffering from health issues, mental health problems or other urgent needs without much needed help. We recognise that this is a particular risk to the elderly and disabled.

This is an issue that must be tackled at a local, as well as national level.

Following a discussion Cllr Summers moved the following amendment to the motion (that includes after the words this motion, add in) recognises the sterling work done by our charity, voluntary and third sector organisations and the excellent work done by Council Officers

RESOLVED: That Council

1. recognises the sterling work done by our charity, voluntary and third sector organisations and the excellent work done by Council Officers and further improve information and advice on existing services and activities that reduce loneliness and isolation.
2. Agreed to work with local partners to launch a campaign to raise awareness of the health effects of loneliness and isolation amongst target risk groups.
3. Support our voluntary and community sector partners to take active interest and role in ensuring the public health problem of social isolation in in Tamworth is recognised.
4. Task scrutiny to look at the issue of social isolation
5. Work to ensure addressing loneliness and isolation is reflected in relevant strategy of the authority.

*(Moved by Councillor M Summers and seconded by Councillor S Peuple)*

**70 ITEM OF BUSINESS REFERRED BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 4.2.24:**

Councillor A Cooper was duly appointed the Chair of the Planning Committee.

*(Moved by Councillor P Turner and seconded by Councillor C Cooke)*

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The Mayor