



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 8th SEPTEMBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor J Oates (Chair), Councillors R Pritchard (Vice-Chair), T Clements, S Doyle and M Summers

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Joanne Goodfellow (Assistant Director Finance), Tania Phillips (Head of Corporate Communications), Richard Powell (Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader), Laura Massey and Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager)

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Bailey and A Farrell

37 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th August 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by Councillor M Summers)

38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

39 QUESTION TIME:

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 1

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Mr Martin Hall, of Tamworth will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jeremy Oates, the following question:-

I would ask that Council outline in more detail the experience within the Executive Leadership Team, the Programme Manager, the scrutiny committee, cabinet and the audit and governance sub-committee to demonstrate the appropriate level of oversight, understanding and control of the part of the programme that the Borough Council are delivering.

Answer

The executive leadership team are the most senior employees within the council, the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service, Executive Director of Finance & Section 151 Officer and the Executive Director of Communities. It is implicit within these job roles to ensure the organisation is managed within its governance structure, approved budget and always acts in a lawful manner, the team above have the correct blend of skills and experience to ensure this is the case, not just for the FHSF project, but for the entire complexities which exist within a local authority.

For the FHSF project there is a specific and transparent governance structure which was approved by cabinet on the 17th June 2021 where a programme board has been set up which includes ELT, the Chief Executives of both south staffs college and the Staffs & Stoke LEP along with the Leader of the Council, and more recently by board agreement, the addition of the Cabinet members for Finance and Regeneration have joined the board for greater political representation.

The full terms of reference for this board, and the delivery group that reports to it are available on the council's website in the cabinet minutes for that meeting.

The programme manager has been engaged by the council, and has a proven record in construction related schemes, and is also supplemented by a directly employed project officer dedicated to the FHSF project.

The role of scrutiny and audit & governance committees are clearly set out in the councils constitution which is also available on the website. The Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny committee receives a quarterly report on the FHSF progress, and accordingly the Audit & Governance subcommittee reviews the specific project risks in the same timeframe. It is not appropriate to comment on the skills of individual elected members as each individual will bring their own set of qualification and experience to their elected member role, which adds value to their scrutiny of council business.

In terms of the experience and ability of councillors this is something a lot of people make assumptions around. As councillors we are just lay people who live work or represent a business or work in the town centre, some of us have been here a long-time others not but we bring is the normal person in the street questioning and approach to the decisions of the council. So, we receive all the technical data and all the information and that any of the employed staff and project officers bring to us and its up to us to a), scrutinise that so we can see that things are going in the right direction and b) direct where we would like to go. So in terms of experience of construction and building projects its one of those things that doesn't come as part of the role of being a Councillor but it is something we are expected to be involved in. It would be inappropriate to comment on the skills of different Councillors because their role is significantly different to the paid staff and people on the project Board.

Supplementary Question

I accept and understand the roles and the structure of council, and the backgrounds of people involved. This is probably the largest single project that Tamworth Council as ever engaged in and I just wanted to ask given the size of this project and how important it is this is more for our children that this project can be the best that it can be, had council considered bringing in external support that does have the significant amount of experience that a construction project of this type to help council to deliver rather than put that pressure on you guys.

Answer

The role of Mcbains is to provide that multi skilled support and advice. So that's why we engaged Mcbains and within that since that agreement we have engaged specialists in particular areas we have come across issues in terms of heritage, so we have engaged specialisms in those areas. In the build up to submitting the FHSF bid and the levelling up fund bid we have been engaged with the Local enterprise partnership in term of Staffs & Stoke LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP we have received not only funding but also expertise through those two bodies as well as the West Midlands Combined Authority. So in terms of the support that's out there we are engaging with partners wherever we possibly can to make sure when we are bidding for money we have a sound bid and we are also engaging with them and people like Mcbains and other multi skilled groups to make sure that when we are successful with that bid we have right people in place to deliver that bid and I will be the first to admit that the support for delivery of a successful bid across the region as not been as great for the support for submitting the bids in the first place. We have been engaging wherever we can, and we have been buying in those specialisms as we go along and as you rightly identify as a local authority, we won't have the skills on the shelf just in case we need them and we have to buy those skills in as and when we do. You are right the FHSF project itself is a once in a lifetime opportunity and what we can't do is make the mistakes of the past and we have to be flexible enough so when we do deliver we can mitigate changes in the economy and changes going forward in the same way as we focussed on retail in the 60's and 70's with the town centre retail as now changed forever and we are having to deal with those issues and we need to build in that flexibility and have that clear line of sight.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC NO. 2

Under Procedure Rule No 10, Mr H Loxton will ask the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jeremy Oates the following question:-

According to Staffordshire County Council it is Tamworth Borough Council that are responsible for the damaged bus shelter on Victoria Road. With that in mind could you please provide an update as to when the bus shelter will be repaired, or the area made good?

Answer

The damaged bus shelter in Victoria Road is a Tamworth Borough Council asset. This is the third time that the bus shelter has been damaged by the Arriva bus drivers hitting it.

Initially the Council were not notified of the damage by Arriva, and it was only when an officer visited the bus depot that they admitted liability. The matter is currently with both Arriva and the Councils insurers. and removal of the damaged shelter is imminent.

The second part I would like to add to this, and I fully welcome questions from Members of the public and I encourage members of the public to ask members of the Council. The reason I am raising this is no criticism of the person asking this question this is a general statement on a street level issue that as been raised in Cabinet and I wonder if there are other avenues where members can raise those questions. The reason I suggest that is each and every person in Tamworth is represented by three Councillors on Tamworth Borough Council and it is their specific job to represent the people they have been elected for. So, what I am suggesting is a street issue type question should be directed at their patch Councillor and if their patch Councillor fails to answer it then escalate through to ourselves. I don't want to discourage Questions, but I just want people to be aware that there are 30 Councillors who are there to represent the people and they are there to be their first point of contact and their bridge between the local authority and themselves so I would encourage people to use their local Councillors more often.

40 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

None

41 QUARTER ONE 2022/23 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Report of the Leader of the Council to provide Cabinet with a performance update, risk and financial health-check towards achieving the strategic priorities detailed within the Corporate Plan and Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The information contained within the report covers performance for the first quarter of the financial year i.e., April to June 2022. This report was scheduled for consideration by Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 16th August, however the item was deferred to be considered by the committee on 6th September 2022.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

endorsed the contents of the report

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

42 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING PROCESS 2023/24

Report of the Leader of the Council to seek agreement to the Proposed Budget and Medium-Term Financial Planning Process for General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for 2023/24.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

Agreed to adopt the proposed process for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Budget and Medium Term Financial Planning Process for 2023/24.

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

43 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT SERVICE AND ACTUAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021/22

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Risk and Customer Services to update Cabinet on the Annual Treasury report which is a requirement of the Council's reporting procedures.

It covers the Treasury activity for 2021/22, and the actual Prudential Indicators for 2021/22.

The report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council is required to comply with both Codes in accordance with Regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003. It also provides an opportunity to review the approved Treasury Management Strategy for the current year and enables Members to consider and approve any issues identified that require amendment.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet asks Council to

1. Approve the actual 2021/22 Prudential and Treasury Indicators within the report and shown at Appendix 1; and
2. Accept the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2021/22.

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

44 WRITE OFFS 1 APRIL 2022 TO 30 JUNE 2022

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Risk and Customer Services to ask Members to endorse the amount of debt written off for the period 1st April 2022 to 30th June 2022.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

Endorsed the amount of debt written off for the period of 1st April 2022 to 30th June 2022 – Appendix A-E and approve the write off of irrecoverable debt for Housing Benefit Overpayments of £16,589.88 – Appendix F respectively.

(Moved by Councillor R Pritchard and seconded by

Councillor S Doyle)

45 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning, Economy & Waste to seek Cabinet approval for the adoption and publication of a new Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. Agreed to increasing the number of speakers, and the time limit for each speaker, at Planning Committee meetings in line with the recommendations of the Infrastructure, Safety, and Growth Scrutiny Committee;
2. approved the publication of the new Statement of Community Involvement, as included at Appendix A, subject to any changes resulting from recommendation 1;
3. approved the publication of the new Local Development Scheme, as included at Appendix B; and
4. delegated authority to the Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader to make any minor typographical amendments to the documents before or after publication

(Moved by Councillor S Doyle and seconded by Councillor M Summers)

46 LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Skills, Planning, Economy & Waste to seek Cabinet approval to launch an issues and options consultation as part of the development of the new local plan for Tamworth.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet

1. approved the launch of the issues and options public consultation based on the document set out in Appendix A; and
2. delegated authority to the Assistant Director – Growth and Regeneration to make any final typographical and formatting amendments to the document prior to publication.

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

Leader