



CABINET

19 June 2024

A meeting of the CABINET will be held on Thursday, 27th June, 2024, 6.00 pm in Town Hall, Market Street, Tamworth

A G E N D A

NON CONFIDENTIAL

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 3 - 4)

3 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of Members' interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) in any matters which are to be considered at this meeting.

When Members are declaring a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of which they have dispensation, they should specify the nature of such interest. Members should leave the room if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of which they do not have a dispensation.

4 Question Time:

To answer questions from members of the public pursuant to Executive Procedure Rule No. 13

5 Matters Referred to the Cabinet in Accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Pages 5 - 8)

(Report of the Chair of Corporate Scrutiny)

6 Amendment to the terms of reference for the Staffordshire Leaders Board (Pages 9 - 36)

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

7 Sustainability Strategy and Productivity Plan (To Follow)

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

8 Write Offs 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 (Pages 37 - 50)

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

9 Corporate Peer Review (Pages 51 - 56)

(Report of the Leader of the Council)

Yours faithfully



Chief Executive

Access arrangements

If you have any particular access requirements when attending the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01827 709267 or e-mail democratic-services@tamworth.gov.uk. We can then endeavour to ensure that any particular requirements you may have are catered for.

Filming of Meetings

The public part of this meeting may be filmed and broadcast. Please refer to the Council's Protocol on Filming, Videoing, Photography and Audio Recording at Council meetings which can be found [here](#) for further information.

If a member of the public is particularly concerned about being filmed, please contact a member of Democratic Services before selecting a seat.

FAQs

For further information about the Council's Committee arrangements please see the FAQ page [here](#)

To Councillors: C Dean, D Foster, N Arkney, B Clarke, S Daniels and L Smith.



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 25th APRIL 2024

PRESENT: Councillor T Jay (Chair), Councillors S Smith (Deputy Chair), T Clements, A Cooper and M Summers

The following officers were present: Stephen Gabriel (Chief Executive), Paul Weston (Assistant Director Assets), Thomas Hobbs (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration) and Leanne Costello (Senior Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer)

153 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cllr J Oates.

154 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th April 2024 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor A Cooper and seconded by Councillor M Summers)

155 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

156 QUESTION TIME:

There were none.

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

There were none.

158 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of

Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(Moved by Councillor T Clements and seconded by Councillor M Summers)

159 ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Waste, Recycling and Environment Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

Resolved that Cabinet:

1. Approved the recommendations in the report

(Moved by Councillor A Cooper and seconded by Councillor T Clements)

160 UPDATE ON COMMERCIAL LEASE

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Town Centre and Assets.

Resolved that Cabinet:

approved the four recommendations within the report.

(moved by Councillor A Cooper and seconded by Councillor T Clements)

Leader

27th June 2024**Report of the Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee****Matters referred to Cabinet in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

Scrutiny Committee	Title of Matter referred	Date of Scrutiny meeting
Corporate Scrutiny	Housing Voids Update	22 nd April 2024

Exempt Information

None.

Purpose

To notify Cabinet of the report and recommendations from the Housing Voids Update item that was discussed at the meeting of Corporate Scrutiny on the 22nd April 2024

Recommendations

Following consideration of the item the Committee agree to the following recommendations being made to Cabinet:

1. To instruct Officers to review the costs versus return, of employing an in-house inspection team to see if we can drive down the costs of voids.
2. To review how we recover damages costs from existing tenants and see if there is a more proactive way we can approach this long term.
3. That the Portfolio Holder calls Equans in to address Members major concerns around void turnaround times and ask them what their action plan is to improve this.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor B Price)

Back Ground Information

Further to the Housing repairs Performance update on the 20th June and the follow up Update on the Housing Repairs Services on the 27th July along with requests from the other two Scrutiny Committee to look at housing repairs a cross Committee working group was established under Corporate Scrutiny.

The Working Groups first item was to look at Damp and Mould. At the meeting of the Committee on the 7th February general housing repairs were considered. The working group then met on the 6th March where a focus was taken on Voids, a number of questions were emailed to Officers who provided the working group with information they had requested and attended a Committee Meeting on the 18th March to answer initial questions with a view to return to full Committee on the 22nd April with a full response.

Executive Summary

At the Meeting of Corporate Scrutiny on the 22nd April, where the housing Void update report had been circulated the Committee raised a number of concerns around the Voids process including –

- The time taken to turnaround voids and the associated costs.
- The capacity of the contractor to manage the work and the change in turnaround times seen since the change of contractor.
- The current recovery rate of rechargeable repairs.
- Concerns around the possibility of the contractor completing property inspections on Council assets on behalf of the Council.
- The Council removing some improvement that could benefit the incoming tenant.

The Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods who attended on behalf of the assistant Director, Assets provided an update on how the rent loss was addressed including Liquidated and Ascertained Damages (LAD) from the contractor where properties were not returned within expected times.

They update the committee on Ideas for addressing turnaround times through working with the contractor on service improvement as well as tenancy management to promote prevention, such as annual inspections, incentive to return properties in good condition etc.

The Committee were advised that whole stock survey that was taking place to provide a baseline for the Council to look at Improving the service.

The Officer updated the Committee upon the barriers to recovering rechargeable repairs.

Following the discussion the Committee resolved to make three recommendations to Cabinet in this area.

Key considerations

1. Scrutiny committees have statutory powers to make recommendations to the Executive, and the Executive (Cabinet) has a statutory duty to respond. They may also make reports and recommendations to external decision making bodies.
2. The agenda for Executive meetings shall include a standing item entitled 'Matters Referred to the Cabinet In Accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules'. The reports of overview and scrutiny committees and sub-committees referred to the Executive shall be included at this point in the agenda (unless they have been considered in the context of the Executive's deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda) within one

calendar month of the overview and scrutiny committee or sub-committee completing its report/recommendations.

3. Scrutiny recommendations are addressed to the Cabinet, as the main Executive decision making body of the council (or, where appropriate, an external agency).
4. Cabinet is being asked to note the scrutiny report / recommendations and that an Executive Response to the scrutiny recommendations be prepared for consideration by the Cabinet within two months from receiving the report or recommendations.
5. The minutes of the meeting of the scrutiny committee provide the record of the scrutiny committee's consideration of the issue and the scrutiny recommendations made during the meeting.
6. The scrutiny committee will be notified of the Executive Response made in respect to the scrutiny recommendations and may track the implementation of the Cabinet decisions and any actions agreed. This enables the scrutiny committee to track whether their recommendations have been agreed, what actually was agreed (if different) and review any outcomes arising

Report Author

Daniel Cook Former Councillor and Chair of Corporate Scrutiny

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27th June 2024**Report of the Leader of the Council****Agreement to the amendment of the Terms of Reference of the Staffordshire Leaders Board****Exempt Information**

None

Purpose

To enable Cabinet to consider the revised Terms of Reference agreed by the Staffordshire Leaders Board.

Recommendations

To consider and agree the updates made to the Terms of Reference for the Staffordshire Leaders Board

Executive Summary

On 17th February 2022 Cabinet endorsed the report of the Leader of the Council where they agreed participation in the Staffordshire Leaders Board and approved the Leader of the Council as the representative, along with the Deputy Leader as a substitute member.

Cabinet on 29th September 2022 approved the revised Terms of Reference agreed by the Staffordshire Leaders Board (Appendix 1)

The County, Stoke and Staffordshire's eight District and Borough Councils have worked together over a number of years in many ways to benefit residents. This includes our collective response to the pandemic, supporting businesses and the economy, creating jobs and opportunities, delivering nationally important employment sites (such as i54 South Staffordshire and, Keele University Science and Innovation Park), reducing waste and increasing recycling, tackling climate change, and by reimagining and reshaping our High Streets and Town Centres.

The Leaders Board was created to build on this collaboration by recognising that a formal joint committee would be able to speak to central Government for the area and our communities. It also provides the foundation for exploring the potential of a deal with government, when the right time comes to do so, for the devolution of powers and funding to the area.

Although Stoke on Trent were not one of the original members of the Leaders Board it was always hoped that they could be brought on board at some point, and agreement has now been reached to enable this to happen. This will however require a number of amendments to be made to the Terms of Reference of the Board, and these amendments need to be considered and agreed by all parties, hence this report.

Terms of Reference updates

Further to the previous Cabinet agreement of the Terms of Reference (2022), the key changes to note are summarised below:

- a. Stoke-on-Trent City Council are added as a 'constituent authority', with the Board comprising of all ten authorities across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.
- b. The Terms of Reference now include a clause allowing the Board to exercise additional functions given to it by members.
- c. The remit section has been reworded in a number of places largely to change the emphasis around the Board's role (e.g. "oversee" rather than "lead and oversee").
- d. Health, Housing and Homelessness remain in the Terms of Reference but with the Board's role being one of coordination.
- e. The Terms of Reference now make clear that the scope of any potential Devolution Deal is not limited by the Terms of Reference themselves.
- f. The Terms of Reference now reserve the co-option of additional non-voting members and winding up the Board to the constituent authorities rather than being dealt with by unanimous voting at the Board.
- g. The notice period for exit has been reduced to three months.

The remit for the Leaders Board will be:

- a. To develop options for a devolution deal or deals for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent with HM Government.
- b. To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability.
- c. To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for enterprise development and organisation of business voice.
- d. To coordinate the alignment of local authority interaction with the Health sector in Staffordshire.
- e. To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for future development and infrastructure.
- f. To coordinate the alignment of relevant local authority plans in relation to Housing and Homelessness.
- g. To develop Staffordshire-wide joint initiatives to enhance local government efficiency and effectiveness.
- h. To develop plans and coordinate delivery for strategic economic growth that spans local boundaries.
- i. To develop opportunities for joint action with respect to addressing social inequalities across the geography.
- j. To act as a conduit for coordinated engagement with other sub-regional and regional bodies the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect.
- k. Where appropriate, to agree shared priorities and bids for funding to existing and new external funding sources.
- l. To monitor and evaluate projects and programmes of activity commissioned directly by the Committee.
- m. To communicate and, where collectively agreed, to align activity across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on a range of other key public priorities that affect citizens.
- n. To prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Committee may influence or control.

The full updated Terms of Reference proposed for the Leaders Board are attached as (Appendix 2).

Options Considered

None

Resource Implications There are no immediate and significant financial implications arising from the updated Terms of Reference for the Leaders Board in itself. The Board will continue to derive its support from its constituent members. As and when individual projects

are commissioned the Board will consider the resource requirements necessary to deliver those projects.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

The Joint Committee will act as a Joint Committee under Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

Equalities Implications

As and when individual joint projects are commissioned by the Board, and where appropriate, County Council consideration will be given to any specific Community Impact Assessment requirements.

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

In terms of Climate Change, as noted above a key remit of the Board is to oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability. This will further benefit Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent's joint Climate Change challenges and opportunities.

Background Information

Cabinet 17 February 2022
Staffordshire Leaders Board 23 June 2022
Cabinet 29 September 2022

Report Author

Stephen Gabriel – Chief Executive

List of Background Papers

Nil

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Terms of reference/constitution of the Leader's board
Appendix 2 - Updated Terms of Reference for the Staffordshire Leaders Board.

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The Staffordshire Leaders' Board Constitution for the Joint Committee

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To establish a Joint Committee of the local authorities in Staffordshire to explore opportunities for improved joint working and to develop and implement plans for devolution from Government through a County Deal.

2. Governance

- 2.1 The Joint Committee will act as a Joint Committee under Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 The Joint Committee will be known as the Staffordshire Leaders' Board ("the Leaders' Board").
- 2.3 The Leaders' Board will comprise the local authorities within the Staffordshire area: Cannock Chase District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, South Staffordshire District Council, Stafford Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, and Tamworth Borough Council ("the constituent authorities").
- 2.4 The Leaders' Board may admit Stoke-on-Trent City Council to membership at a later date and therefrom they will become a constituent authority with all the same rights and obligations as the other constituent authorities.
- 2.5 Political Proportionality rules will not apply to the Leaders' Board as constituted.
- 2.6 The Leaders' Board will be a legally constituted body with powers delegated to it by the constituent authorities in the following areas:
 - a) to prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Leaders' Board may influence or control.
 - b) to review future governance requirements and delivery arrangements and how these can be best achieved in Staffordshire.



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c) to have direct oversight of the projects and initiatives which the Leaders' Board has initiated or over which it has influence or control of the funding.

d) to have strategic oversight of other key projects and initiatives within its remit as set out herein.

- 2.7 The Leaders' Board will not hold funds or monies on behalf of the constituent authorities.
- 2.8 Should the Leaders' Board work plan necessitate a change in the delegated powers and terms of reference of the Leaders' Board any such change would require the approval of all the constituent authorities.
- 2.9 These terms of reference will be reviewed on a biennial basis or sooner if necessary.

3. Remit

- 3.1 The remit of the Leaders' Board will be:
- i. To lead and oversee the development of a county devolution deal for Staffordshire with HM Government.
 - ii. To lead and oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability.
 - iii. To lead and oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for Enterprise and Government Funding and Investment streams.
 - iv. To lead and oversee the alignment of local authority interaction with the Health sector in Staffordshire.
 - v. To lead and oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for future Infrastructure.
 - vi. To lead and oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans in relation to Housing and Homelessness.
 - vii. To initiate, lead and oversee Staffordshire-wide joint initiatives to enhance local government efficiency and effectiveness.
 - viii. To act as a local public sector decision-making body for strategic economic growth.



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- ix. To act as a conduit to other sub-regional and regional bodies such as the Local Enterprise Partnerships and the Midlands Engine.
- x. Where appropriate, to agree shared priorities and bids for funding to existing and new funding sources such as Local Growth Funds and the Shared Prosperity Fund.
- xi. To monitor and evaluate projects and programmes of activity commissioned directly by the Committee.
- xii. To communicate and, where unanimously agreed, to align activity across Staffordshire on a range of other key public priorities that affect citizens.
- xiii. To prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Committee may influence or control.

4. Membership

- 4.1 One member from each constituent authority (such member to be the Leader from each constituent authority) and for the purposes of these terms of reference this member will be known as the principal member.
- 4.2 Each constituent authority to have a named substitute member who must be an executive member.
- 4.3 Where both the principal member and the substitute member attend a meeting of the Leaders' Board the principal member shall be deemed as representing their authority by the Chair or Vice Chair.
- 4.4 In the event of any voting member of the Leaders' Board ceasing to be a member of the constituent authority which appointed him/her, the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.
- 4.5 Where a member of the Leaders' Board ceases to be a Leader of the constituent authority which appointed him/her or ceases to be a member of the Executive of the constituent authority which appointed him/her, he/she shall also cease to be a member of the Leaders' Board and the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.



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- 4.6 Each constituent authority may remove its principal member or substitute member and appoint a different member or substitute as per that authority's rules of substitution, and by providing twenty-four hours' notice to the Chair or the Secretary.
- 4.7 The Leaders' Board may from time to time, following a unanimous vote of those present and voting, co-opt additional non-voting members ("co-opted members") at its discretion but such co-opted members will not be members or officers of the constituent authorities.
- 4.8 Each constituent authority may individually terminate its membership of the Leaders' Board by giving twelve months written notice of its intent to leave the Leaders' Board to the Chair or the Secretary. At the end of these twelve months, but not before, the authority will be deemed to no longer be a member of the Leaders' Board.
- 4.9 Where an authority has previously terminated its membership of the Leaders' Board it may rejoin the Leaders' Board with immediate effect on the same terms as existed prior to its departure.

5. Quorum

- 5.1 The quorum shall be 5 members. No business will be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum exists at the beginning of a meeting. If at the beginning of any meeting, the Chair or Secretary after counting the members present declares that a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.

6. Chair and Vice Chair

- 6.1 The Chair of the Leaders' Board will be the principal member of Staffordshire County Council (subject to para 6.2 below)
- 6.2 The Leaders' Board will vote annually at its first meeting after all the constituent authorities' annual meetings as to whether the Chair should continue to be the principal member of the County Council or should be the principal member of one of the other constituent authorities.
- 6.3 The position of Vice Chair shall be filled by the principal member of one of the other constituent authorities of the Leaders' Board and



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this role will rotate annually between those other constituent authorities.

- 6.4 The Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair or in their absence the member of the Leaders' Board elected for this purpose, shall preside at any meeting of the Leaders' Board.
- 6.5 Appointments will be made in May of each year.
- 6.6 Where, at any meeting or part of a meeting of the Leaders' Board both the Chair and Vice Chair are either absent or unable to act as Chair or Vice Chair, the Leaders' Board shall elect one of the members of the Leaders' Board present at the meeting to preside for the balance of that meeting or part of the meeting, as appropriate. For the avoidance of doubt, the role of Chair and Vice Chair vests in the principal member concerned and in their absence the role of Chair or Vice Chair will not automatically fall to the relevant constituent authority's substitute member.

7. Voting

- 7.1 One member, one vote for each constituent authority.
- 7.2 All questions shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present, the Chair having the casting vote in addition to their vote as a member of the Committee. Voting at meetings shall be by show of hands.
- 7.3 On the requisition of any two Members, made before the vote is taken, the voting on any matter shall be recorded by the Secretary so as to show how each Member voted and there shall also be recorded the name of any Member present who abstained from voting.

8. Sub-Committees and Advisory Groups

- 8.1 The Leaders' Board may appoint sub-committees from its membership as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively and may delegate tasks and powers to the sub-committee as it sees fit.
- 8.2 The Leaders' Board may set up advisory groups as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively and may delegate tasks as it sees fit to these bodies, which may be formed of officers



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or members of the constituent authorities or such third parties as the Leaders' Board considers appropriate.

9. Hosting and Administration

- 9.1 The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will be the host authority, and the Head of Democratic Services (or equivalent post) from that authority shall be Secretary to the Committee ("the Secretary").
- 9.2 The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the s151 Officer role
- 9.3 The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the Monitoring Officer & Legal Adviser to the Leaders' Board.
- 9.4 The administrative costs of supporting the committee will be met equally by the constituent authorities, with each authority being responsible for receiving and paying any travel or subsistence claims from its own members.
- 9.5 The functions of the Secretary shall be:
 - a) to maintain a record of membership of the Leaders' Board and any sub-committees or advisory groups appointed
 - b) to publish and notify the proper officers of each constituent authority of any anticipated "key decisions" to be taken by the Leaders' Board to enable the requirements as to formal notice of key decisions as given under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to be met;
 - c) to carry out such notification to and consultation with members of any appointing constituent authority as may be necessary to enable the Leaders' Board to take urgent "key decisions" in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012;
 - d) to summon meetings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups;
 - e) to prepare and send out the agenda for meetings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups; in consultation



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with the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Committee (or sub-committee/ advisory group);

- f) to keep a record of the proceedings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups, including those in attendance, declarations of interests, and to publish the minutes;
- g) to take such administrative action as may be necessary to give effect to decisions of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups;
- h) to perform such other functions as may be determined by the Leaders' Board from time to time

10. Meetings

- 10.1 The Leaders' Board will meet no less than every four months and meetings will be aligned where necessary with deadlines for decisions on resources and investment plans.
- 10.2 Meetings will be held at such times, dates and places as may be notified to the members of the Leaders' Board by the Secretary, being such time, place and location as the Leaders' Board shall from time to time resolve.
- 10.3 Meeting papers will be circulated five clear working days in advance of any meeting. The Chair may choose to accept or reject urgent items that are tabled at any meeting.
- 10.4 Additional ad hoc meetings may be called by the Secretary, in consultation, where practicable, with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, in response to receipt of a request in writing, which request sets out an urgent item of business within the functions of the Leaders' Board, addressed to the Secretary:
 - (a) from and signed by two members of the Leaders' Board, or
 - (b) from the Chief Executive of any of the constituent authorities.
- 10.5 The Secretary shall settle the agenda for any meeting of the Leaders' Board after consulting, where practicable, the Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair; and shall incorporate in the agenda any items of business and any reports submitted by:
 - (a) the Chief Executive of any of the constituent authorities;
 - (b) the Chief Finance Officer to any of the constituent authorities;



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- (c) the Monitoring Officer to any of the constituent authorities; or
- (d) any two Members of the Leaders' Board.

10.6 The Leaders' Board shall, unless the person presiding at the meeting or the Leaders' Board determines otherwise in respect of that meeting, conduct its business in accordance with the procedure rules set out in paragraph 13 below.

11. Access to Information

- 11.1 Meetings of the Leaders' Board will be held in public except where confidential or exempt information, as defined in the Local Government Act 1972, is being discussed.
- 11.2 These rules do not affect any more specific rights to information contained elsewhere under the law.
- 11.3 The Secretary will ensure that the relevant legislation relating to access to information is complied with. Each constituent authority is to co-operate with the Secretary in fulfilling any requirements.
- 11.4 Any Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests received by the Leaders' Board should be directed to the relevant constituent authority(s) for that authority to deal with in the usual way, taking account of the relevant legislation. Where the request relates to information held by two or more constituent authorities, they will liaise with each other before replying to the request.

12. Attendance at meetings

- 12.1 The Chair may invite any person, whether a member or officer of one of the constituent authorities or a third party, to attend the meeting and speak on any matter before the Leaders' Board.
- 12.2 Third parties may be invited to attend the Leaders' Board on a standing basis following a unanimous vote of those present and voting.
- 12.3 Where agenda items require independent experts or speakers, the Officer or authority proposing the agenda item should indicate this to the Secretary and provide the Secretary with details of who is required to attend and in what capacity. The participation of independent experts or speakers in Leaders' Board meetings will be subject to the discretion of the Chair.



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13. Procedure Rules

13.1 Attendance

- 13.1.1 At every meeting, it shall be the responsibility of each member to enter their name on an attendance record provided by the Secretary from which attendance at the meeting will be recorded.

13.2 Order of Business

- 13.2.1 Subject to paragraph 13.2.2, the order of business at each meeting of the Leaders' Board will be:
- i. Apologies for absence
 - ii. Declarations of interests
 - iii. Approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting
 - iv. Matters set out in the agenda for the meeting which will clearly indicate which are key decisions and which are not
 - v. Matters on the agenda for the meeting which, in the opinion of the Secretary are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public
- 13.2.2 The person presiding at the meeting may vary the order of business at the meeting.

13.3 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 13.3.1 If a Member is aware that he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, the Member must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held:
- (a) in the case where paragraph 13.3.2 below applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;
 - (b) in any other case, wherever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;
 - (c) unless the Member has obtained a dispensation from their own authority's Standards Committee or Monitoring Officer. Such



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dispensation to be notified to the Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting.

- 13.3.2 Where a member has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any business of the Leaders' Board, the Member may attend the meeting (or a sub-committee or advisory group of the committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

13.4 Minutes

- 13.4.1 There will be no discussion or motion made in respect of the minutes other than except as to their accuracy. If no such question is raised or if it is raised then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chair shall sign the minutes.

13.5 Rules of Debate

- 13.5.1 A Member wishing to speak shall address the Chair and direct their comments to the question being discussed. The Chair shall decide the order in which to take representations from members wishing to speak and shall decide all questions of order. Their ruling upon all such questions or upon matters arising in debate shall be final and shall not be open to discussion.
- 13.5.2 A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:
- i. To amend the motion
 - ii. To adjourn the meeting
 - iii. To adjourn the debate or consideration of the item
 - iv. To proceed to the next business
 - v. That the question now be put
 - vi. That a member be not further heard or do leave the meeting
 - vii. To exclude the press and public under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972



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13.6 Conduct of Members

13.6.1 Members of the Leaders' Board will be subject to their own authority's Code of Conduct.

14. Application to Sub-Committees

14.1 The procedure rules and also the Access to Information provisions set out at paragraph 11 shall apply to meetings of any sub-committees of the Leaders' Board.

15. Scrutiny of decisions

15.1 Each constituent authority which operates executive arrangements will be able to scrutinise the decisions of the Leaders' Board in accordance with that constituent authority's overview and scrutiny arrangements.

16. Winding up of the Leaders' Board

16.1 The Leaders' Board may be wound up immediately by a unanimous vote of all constituent authorities.

17. Amendment of this Constitution

17.1 This Constitution can only be amended by resolution of each of the constituent authorities.

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The Staffordshire Leaders' Board Constitution for the Joint Committee

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To establish a Joint Committee of the local authorities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to explore opportunities for improved joint working and to develop plans for potential devolution of powers from Government through a County Deal or similar arrangements.

2. Governance

- 2.1 The Joint Committee will act as a Joint Committee under Section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and pursuant to Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 The Joint Committee will be known as the Staffordshire Leaders' Board ("the Leaders' Board").
- 2.3 The Leaders' Board will comprise the local authorities within the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area: Cannock Chase District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, South Staffordshire District Council, Stafford Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Tamworth Borough Council ("the constituent authorities").
- 2.4 Political Proportionality rules will not apply to the Leaders' Board as constituted.
- 2.5 The Leaders' Board will be a legally constituted body with powers delegated to it by the constituent authorities in the following areas:
 - a) to prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Leaders' Board may influence or control.
 - b) to review future governance requirements and delivery arrangements and develop options as to how these can be best achieved in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent for consideration by the constituent authorities.



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- c) to have direct oversight of the projects and initiatives which the Leaders' Board has initiated or over which it has control of the funding.
 - d) to jointly discharge any function expressly given to it by any or all constituent members
 - e) to have oversight of other key projects and initiatives within its remit as set out herein.
- 2.6 The Leaders' Board will not hold funds or monies on behalf of the constituent authorities.
- 2.7 Should the Leaders' Board work plan necessitate a change in the delegated powers and terms of reference of the Leaders' Board any such change would require the approval of all the constituent authorities.
- 2.8 These terms of reference will be reviewed on a biennial basis or sooner if necessary.

3. Remit

- 3.1 The remit of the Leaders' Board will be:
- i. To develop options for a devolution deal or deals for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent with HM Government. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not intended that these Terms of Reference place any restriction on the form or scope such a deal or deals.
 - ii. To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority action on Climate Change, Waste and Sustainability.
 - iii. To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for enterprise development and organisation of business voice.
 - iv. To coordinate the alignment of local authority interaction with the Health sector in Staffordshire.
 - v. To oversee the alignment of relevant local authority plans for future development and infrastructure.
 - vi. To coordinate the alignment of relevant local authority plans in relation to Housing and Homelessness.



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- vii. To develop Staffordshire-wide joint initiatives to enhance local government efficiency and effectiveness.
- viii. To develop plans and coordinate delivery for strategic economic growth that spans local boundaries.
- ix. To develop opportunities for joint action with respect to addressing social inequalities across the geography.
- x. To act as a conduit for coordinated engagement with other sub-regional and regional bodies the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect.
- xi. Where appropriate, to agree shared priorities and bids for funding to existing and new external funding sources.
- xii. To monitor and evaluate projects and programmes of activity commissioned directly by the Committee.
- xiii. To communicate and, where collectively agreed, to align activity across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent on a range of other key public priorities that affect citizens.
- xiv. To prioritise and make decisions on the use of the funding that the Committee may influence or control.

4. Membership

- 4.1 One member from each constituent authority (such member to be the Leader from each constituent authority) and for the purposes of these terms of reference this member will be known as the principal member.
- 4.2 Each constituent authority to have a named substitute member who must be an executive member.
- 4.3 Where both the principal member and the substitute member attend a meeting of the Leaders' Board the principal member shall be deemed as representing their authority by the Chair or Vice Chair.
- 4.4 In the event of any voting member of the Leaders' Board ceasing to be a member of the constituent authority which appointed him/her, the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.



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- 4.5 Where a member of the Leaders' Board ceases to be a Leader of the constituent authority which appointed him/her or ceases to be a member of the Executive of the constituent authority which appointed him/her, he/she shall also cease to be a member of the Leaders' Board and the relevant constituent authority shall as soon as reasonably practicable appoint another voting member in their place.
- 4.6 Each constituent authority may remove its principal member or substitute member and appoint a different member or substitute as per that authority's rules of substitution, and by providing twenty-four hours' notice to the Chair or the Secretary.
- 4.7 The Leaders' Board may from time to time co-opt additional non-voting members ("co-opted members") with the agreement of all the constituent authorities but such co-opted members will not be members or officers of the constituent authorities.
- 4.8 Each constituent authority may individually terminate its membership of the Leaders' Board by giving three months written notice of its intent to leave the Leaders' Board to the Chair or the Secretary. At the end of these three months, but not before, the authority will be deemed to no longer be a member of the Leaders' Board.
- 4.9 Where an authority has previously terminated its membership of the Leaders' Board it may rejoin the Leaders' Board with immediate effect on the same terms as existed prior to its departure.

5. Quorum

- 5.1 The quorum shall be 5 members. No business will be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum exists at the beginning of a meeting. If at the beginning of any meeting, the Chair or Secretary after counting the members present declares that a quorum is not present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.

6. Chair and Vice Chair

- 6.1 The Chair of the Leaders' Board will be the principal member of Staffordshire County Council (subject to para 6.3 below)
- 6.2 The position of Vice Chair shall be filled by the principal member of Stoke-on-Trent City Council (subject to para 6.3 below)



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- 6.3 The Leaders' Board will vote annually at its first meeting after all the constituent authorities' annual meetings as to whether the Chair should continue to be the principal member of the County Council. An annual vote will also take place as to whether the Vice-Chair should continue to be the principal member of Stoke-on-Trent City Council, or in each case, should be the principal member of one of the other constituent authorities, with the option to rotate both roles annually.
- 6.4 The Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair or in their absence the member of the Leaders' Board elected for this purpose, shall preside at any meeting of the Leaders' Board.
- 6.5 Appointments will be made in May of each year.
- 6.6 Where, at any meeting or part of a meeting of the Leaders' Board both the Chair and Vice Chair are either absent or unable to act as Chair or Vice Chair, the Leaders' Board shall elect one of the members of the Leaders' Board present at the meeting to preside for the balance of that meeting or part of the meeting, as appropriate. For the avoidance of doubt, the role of Chair and Vice Chair vests in the principal member concerned and in their absence the role of Chair or Vice Chair will not automatically fall to the relevant constituent authority's substitute member.

7. Voting

- 7.1 One member, one vote for each constituent authority.
- 7.2 All questions shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the members present, the Chair having the casting vote in addition to their vote as a member of the Committee. Voting at meetings shall be by show of hands.
- 7.3 On the requisition of any two Members, made before the vote is taken, the voting on any matter shall be recorded by the Secretary so as to show how each Member voted and there shall also be recorded the name of any Member present who abstained from voting.

8. Sub-Committees and Advisory Groups

- 8.1 The Leaders' Board may appoint sub-committees from its membership as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities



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effectively and may delegate tasks and powers to the sub-committee as it sees fit.

- 8.2 The Leaders' Board may set up advisory groups as required to enable it to execute its responsibilities effectively and may delegate tasks as it sees fit to these bodies, which may be formed of officers or members of the constituent authorities or such third parties as the Leaders' Board considers appropriate.

9. Hosting and Administration

- 9.1 The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will be the host authority, and the Head of Democratic Services (or equivalent post) from that authority shall be Secretary to the Committee ("the Secretary").
- 9.2 The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the s151 Officer role
- 9.3 The Leaders' Board will at their first meeting decide which of the constituent authorities will provide the Monitoring Officer & Legal Adviser to the Leaders' Board.
- 9.4 The administrative costs of supporting the committee will be met equally by the constituent authorities, with each authority being responsible for receiving and paying any travel or subsistence claims from its own members.
- 9.5 The functions of the Secretary shall be:
- a) to maintain a record of membership of the Leaders' Board and any sub-committees or advisory groups appointed
 - b) to publish and notify the proper officers of each constituent authority of any anticipated "key decisions" to be taken by the Leaders' Board to enable the requirements as to formal notice of key decisions as given under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 to be met;
 - c) to carry out such notification to and consultation with members of any appointing constituent authority as may be necessary to enable the Leaders' Board to take urgent "key decisions" in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities



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(Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012;

- d) to summon meetings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups;
- e) to prepare and send out the agenda for meetings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups; in consultation with the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Committee (or sub-committee/ advisory group);
- f) to keep a record of the proceedings of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups, including those in attendance, declarations of interests, and to publish the minutes;
- g) to take such administrative action as may be necessary to give effect to decisions of the Leaders' Board or any sub-committees or advisory groups;
- h) to perform such other functions as may be determined by the Leaders' Board from time to time

10. Meetings

- 10.1 The Leaders' Board will meet no less than every four months and meetings will be aligned where necessary with deadlines for decisions on resources and investment plans.
- 10.2 Meetings will be held at such times, dates and places as may be notified to the members of the Leaders' Board by the Secretary, being such time, place and location as the Leaders' Board shall from time to time resolve.
- 10.3 Meeting papers will be circulated five clear working days in advance of any meeting. The Chair may choose to accept or reject urgent items that are tabled at any meeting.
- 10.4 Additional ad hoc meetings may be called by the Secretary, in consultation, where practicable, with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, in response to receipt of a request in writing, which request sets out an urgent item of business within the functions of the Leaders' Board, addressed to the Secretary:
 - (a) from and signed by two members of the Leaders' Board, or
 - (b) from the Chief Executive of any of the constituent authorities.



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- 10.5 The Secretary shall settle the agenda for any meeting of the Leaders' Board after consulting, where practicable, the Chair or in their absence the Vice Chair; and shall incorporate in the agenda any items of business and any reports submitted by:
- (a) the Chief Executive of any of the constituent authorities;
 - (b) the Chief Finance Officer to any of the constituent authorities;
 - (c) the Monitoring Officer to any of the constituent authorities; or
 - (d) any two Members of the Leaders' Board.
- 10.6 The Leaders' Board shall, unless the person presiding at the meeting or the Leaders' Board determines otherwise in respect of that meeting, conduct its business in accordance with the procedure rules set out in paragraph 13 below.

11. Access to Information

- 11.1 Meetings of the Leaders' Board will be held in public except where confidential or exempt information, as defined in the Local Government Act 1972, is being discussed.
- 11.2 These rules do not affect any more specific rights to information contained elsewhere under the law.
- 11.3 The Secretary will ensure that the relevant legislation relating to access to information is complied with. Each constituent authority is to co-operate with the Secretary in fulfilling any requirements.
- 11.4 Any Freedom of Information or Subject Access Requests received by the Leaders' Board should be directed to the relevant constituent authority(s) for that authority to deal with in the usual way, taking account of the relevant legislation. Where the request relates to information held by two or more constituent authorities, they will liaise with each other before replying to the request.

12. Attendance at meetings

- 12.1 The Chair may invite any person, whether a member or officer of one of the constituent authorities or a third party, to attend the meeting and speak on any matter before the Leaders' Board.



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- 12.2 Third parties may be invited to attend the Leaders' Board on a standing basis following a unanimous vote of those present and voting.
- 12.3 Where agenda items require independent experts or speakers, the Officer or authority proposing the agenda item should indicate this to the Secretary and provide the Secretary with details of who is required to attend and in what capacity. The participation of independent experts or speakers in Leaders' Board meetings will be subject to the discretion of the Chair.

13. Procedure Rules

13.1 Attendance

- 13.1.1 At every meeting, it shall be the responsibility of each member to enter their name on an attendance record provided by the Secretary from which attendance at the meeting will be recorded.

13.2 Order of Business

- 13.2.1 Subject to paragraph 13.2.2, the order of business at each meeting of the Leaders' Board will be:
- i. Apologies for absence
 - ii. Declarations of interests
 - iii. Approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting
 - iv. Matters set out in the agenda for the meeting which will clearly indicate which are key decisions and which are not
 - v. Matters on the agenda for the meeting which, in the opinion of the Secretary are likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public
- 13.2.2 The person presiding at the meeting may vary the order of business at the meeting.

13.3 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- 13.3.1 If a Member is aware that he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting, the



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Member must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held:

(a) in the case where paragraph 13.3.2 below applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

(b) in any other case, wherever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;

(c) unless the Member has obtained a dispensation from their own authority's Standards Committee or Monitoring Officer. Such dispensation to be notified to the Secretary prior to the commencement of the meeting.

- 13.3.2 Where a member has a disclosable pecuniary interest in any business of the Leaders' Board, the Member may attend the meeting (or a sub-committee or advisory group of the committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

13.4 Minutes

- 13.4.1 There will be no discussion or motion made in respect of the minutes other than except as to their accuracy. If no such question is raised or if it is raised then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chair shall sign the minutes.

13.5 Rules of Debate

- 13.5.1 A Member wishing to speak shall address the Chair and direct their comments to the question being discussed. The Chair shall decide the order in which to take representations from members wishing to speak and shall decide all questions of order. Their ruling upon all such questions or upon matters arising in debate shall be final and shall not be open to discussion.
- 13.5.2 A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:
- i. To amend the motion
 - ii. To adjourn the meeting



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- iii. To adjourn the debate or consideration of the item
- iv. To proceed to the next business
- v. That the question now be put
- vi. That a member be not further heard or do leave the meeting
- vii. To exclude the press and public under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972

13.6 Conduct of Members

- 13.6.1 Members of the Leaders' Board will be subject to their own authority's Code of Conduct.

14. Application to Sub-Committees

- 14.1 The procedure rules and also the Access to Information provisions set out at paragraph 11 shall apply to meetings of any sub-committees of the Leaders' Board.

15. Scrutiny of decisions

- 15.1 Each constituent authority which operates executive arrangements will be able to scrutinise the decisions of the Leaders' Board in accordance with that constituent authority's overview and scrutiny arrangements.

16. Winding up of the Leaders' Board

- 16.1 The Leaders' Board may be wound up immediately by the unanimous agreement of all constituent authorities.

17. Amendment of this Constitution

- 17.1 This Constitution can only be amended by resolution of each of the constituent authorities.

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Thursday, 27 June 2024

Report of the Leader of the Council, Finance and Governance

Write Offs 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Exempt Information

None

Purpose

That Members endorse the amount of debt written off for the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Recommendations

1. Endorse the amount of debt written off for the period of 1st April 2023 to 31 March 2024 – **Appendix A-E**

Executive Summary

The Assistant Directors and Heads of Service are responsible for the regular review of debts and consider the need for write off and authorise where necessary appropriate write offs in line with the Corporate Credit Policy. This report shows the position for the last financial year. Further updates will continue to be produced on a quarterly basis.

Type	01/04/23 – 31/03/24 £ p
Council Tax	£9,053.69
Business Rates	£26,177.07
Sundry Income	£30,100.94
Housing Benefit Overpayments	£22,532.32
Housing	£72,198.69
Total	£160,062.71

Write offs for the previous financial year 2022/2023 totalled £220,597.40.

Options Considered

Business Rates bad debt is calculated by reviewing all outstanding debts to ascertain whether they are likely to be collectable. This is then used to determine the balance to apply the usual aged debtor percentage.

Business Rates	01/04/23 – 31/03/24 £ p
Bad Debt provision	(£852,209.74)
Amount written off to date under delegated powers	£26,177.07
Amount remaining	(£826,032.67)

Resource Implications

The write offs detailed are subject to approval in line with the Corporate Credit Policy/Financial Regulations and have been provided for under the bad debt provision calculation.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

Not applicable

Equalities Implications

Not applicable

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

Not applicable

Background Information

This forms part of the Council’s Corporate Credit Policy and effective management of debt. The Council is committed to ensuring that debt write offs are kept to a minimum by taking all reasonable steps to collect monies due. There will be situations where the debt recovery process fails to recover some or all of the debt and will need to be considered for write off in accordance with the schemes of delegation prescribed in the Corporate Credit Policy.

The Council views such cases very much as exceptions. Before writing off debt, the Council will satisfy itself that all reasonable steps have been taken to collect it and that no further recovery action is possible or practicable. It will take into account the age, size and types of debt together with any factors that it feels are relevant to the individual case.

Debt Write Off

Authorisations are needed to write off debt:

Authority	Account Value
Executive Director/Assistant Director (or authorised delegated officer)	up to £5,000
Executive Director Finance	£5,001 - £10,000
Cabinet	over £10,000

Bad Debt Provision

The level of the provision must be reviewed jointly by the unit and Accountancy on at least a quarterly basis as part of the management performance review, and the table below gives the mandatory calculation. Where the debt is less than 6 months old it will be written back to the service unit.

Debt Outstanding Period	Debt Outstanding Provision (net of VAT) %
Between 6 and 12 months old	50%
Between 12 and 24 months old	75%
Over 24 months old	100%

The financial effects of providing for Bad Debts will be reflected in the Council’s accounts at Service Unit level.

Report Author

Michael Buckland – Head of Revenues and Benefits
e-mail michael-buckland@tamworth.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Corporate Credit Policy - effective management of debt

Appendices

Appendices A to E give details of write offs completed for Revenues and Benefits Services and Housing for 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

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Thursday, 27 June 2024

Report of the Leader of the Council, Finance and Governance

Write Offs 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Exempt Information

None

Purpose

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Recommendations

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Equalities Implications

Not applicable

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

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The Council views such cases very much as exceptions. Before writing off debt, the Council will satisfy itself that all reasonable steps have been taken to collect it and that no further recovery action is possible or practicable. It will take into account the age, size and types of debt together with any factors that it feels are relevant to the individual case.

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The financial effects of providing for Bad Debts will be reflected in the Council’s accounts at Service Unit level.

Report Author

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e-mail michael-buckland@tamworth.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Corporate Credit Policy - effective management of debt

Appendices

Appendices A to E give details of write offs completed for Revenues and Benefits Services and Housing for 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

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Appendix A

Summary of Council Tax Write Offs 01/04/2023-31/03/2024

Date of Write Off	Head of Revenues			Assistant Director of Finance (£2,000.01-£5,000)	Executive Director of Finance (£5,000.01-£10,000.00)	Cabinet (£10,000.01 and Over)	Remitted	Credit Write Off	Reversed Write Off	Total	No. of Accounts (Write Off Only)	Reason(s)
	(£0.00-£75.00)	(£75.01-£500.00)	(£500.01-£2,000.00)									
12/01/2024			£1,992.19							£1,992.19	1	Hardship
23/02/2024	£28.29									£28.29	1	Hardship
15/03/2024		£285.18	£807.36							£1,092.54	2	Hardship
08/01/2024									(£4.76)	(£4.76)		Dividend received
09/01/2024									(£12.29)	(£12.29)		Dividend received
23/01/2024									(£179.61)	(£179.61)		Payment received
29/02/2024									(£5.52)	(£5.52)		Dividend received
14/03/2024									(£50.71)	(£50.71)		Dividend received
Q4 Totals	£28.29	£285.18	£2,799.55	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£252.89)	£2,860.13	4	
Q1 Totals (B/F)	£0.01	£0.00	£1,920.41	£2,132.85	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£884.27)	£3,169.00	3	
Q2 Totals (B/F)	£67.20	£1,338.33	£1,327.90	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£1,127.62)	£1,605.81	8	
Q3 Totals (B/F)	£19.36	£1,100.49	£1,608.48	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£1,309.58)	£1,418.75	5	
Overall Total	£114.86	£2,724.00	£7,656.34	£2,132.85	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£3,574.36)	£9,053.69	20	

Appendix B

Summary of NNDR Write Offs 01/04/2023-31/03/2024

Date of Write Off	Head of Revenues			Assistant Director of Finance	Executive Director of Finance	Cabinet	Remitted	Credit Write Off	Reversed Write Off	Total	No. of Accounts (Write Off Only)	Reason(s)
	(£0.00-£75.00)	(£75.01-£500.00)	(£500.01-£2,000.00)	(£2,000.01-£5,000)	(£5,000.01-£10,000.00)	(£10,000.01 and Over)						
25/01/2024			£960.66							£960.66	1	Liquidation
"			£1,467.54							£1,467.54	1	Unable to trace
"			£1,105.00							£1,105.00	1	Voluntary arrangement
19/02/2024				£3,983.10						£3,983.10	1	Administration
20/02/2024				£14,903.64						£14,903.64	5	Dissolved
22/02/2024				£2,664.59						£2,664.59	1	Voluntary arrangement
23/02/2024								(£296.85)		(£296.85)		Liability change
"								(£253.50)		(£253.50)		Dividend received
Q4 Totals	£0.00	£0.00	£3,533.20	£21,551.33	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£550.35)	£24,534.18	10	
Q1 Totals (B/F)	£0.00	£0.00	£1,398.94	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,398.94	1	
Q2 Totals (B/F)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	0	
Q3 Totals (B/F)	£0.00	£243.95	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£243.95	1	
Overall Total	£0.00	£243.95	£4,932.14	£21,551.33	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£550.35)	£26,177.07	12	

Appendix C

Summary of Sundry Income Write Offs 01/04/2023-31/03/2024

Date of Write Off	Assistant Director of Assets (up to £5,000.00)	Assistant Director Growth & Regeneration (up to £5,000.00)	Assistant Director People (up to £5,000.00)	Assistant Director Operations & Leisure (up to £5,000.00)	Assistant Director Neighbourhoods (up to £5,000.00)	Head of Revenues (£0.00-£2,000.00)	Assistant Director of Finance (£2,000.01 -£5,000.00)	Assistant Director Partnerships (up to £5,000.00)	Executive Director of Finance (£5,000.01-£10,000.00)	Cabinet (£10,000.01 +)	Total	No. of Accounts	Reason(s)
09/01/2024	£285.00										£285.00	1	Team folded, no assets
Q4 Totals	£285.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£285.00	1	

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Q1 Totals (B/F)	£3,051.48	£540.00	£0.00	£864.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£6,838.00	£6,678.07	£17,971.55	17	
Q2 Totals (B/F)	£7,661.58	£2,524.00	£0.00	£290.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£577.53	£0.00	£0.00	£11,053.11	13	
Q3 Totals (B/F)	£791.28	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£791.28	4	
Overall Total	£11,789.34	£3,064.00	£0.00	£1,154.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£577.53	£6,838.00	£6,678.07	£30,100.94	35	

Appendix D

Summary of Benefit Overpayment Write Offs 01/04/2023-31/03/2024

Date of Write Off	Head of Benefits				Executive Director of Finance (£2,000.01-£10,000.00)	Cabinet (£10,000.01 and Over)	Reversed Write Off	Total	No. of Accounts	Reason(s)
	(£0.00-£75.00)	(£75.01-£500.00)	(£500.01-£1,000.00)	(£1,000.01-£2,000)						
31/01/2024	£18.43						£18.43	2	Small balance	
"		£911.71					£911.71	2	Insolvency	
"		£397.76					£397.76	4	Deceased, 2 wks outstanding	
"		£385.70					£385.70	2	Deceased	
"					£8,357.13		£8,357.13	1	Deceased	
"					£7,818.82		£7,818.82	1	Uneconomic to pursue (vulnerable)	
29/02/2024	£8.59						£8.59	1	Small balance	
"		£80.90					£80.90	1	Uneconomic to pursue	
"		£448.68					£448.68	3	Deceased, 2 wks outstanding	
31/03/2024	£0.22						£0.22	1	Small balance	
"		£119.25					£119.25	1	Deceased, 2 wks outstanding	
"		£587.61				(£599.06)	(£11.45)		w/o reversed & reapplied to allow payment allocation	
Q4 Totals	£27.24	£2,931.61	£0.00	£0.00	£16,175.95	£0.00	(£599.06)	£18,535.74	19	

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Q1 Totals (B/F)	£2.47	£1,347.98	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£302.27)	£1,048.18	9
Q2 Totals (B/F)	£1.30	£1,557.55	£599.06	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£32.05)	£2,125.86	9
Q3 Totals (B/F)	£77.87	£744.67	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£822.54	10
Overall Total	£108.88	£6,581.81	£599.06	£0.00	£16,175.95	£0.00	(£933.38)	£22,532.32	47

Appendix E

Summary of Housing Write Offs 01/04/2023-31/03/2024

Date of Write Off	Assistant Director - Neighbourhoods				Executive Director of Finance	Cabinet	Remitted	Credit Write Off	Reversed Write Off (Write On)	Total	No. of Accounts (Write Off Only)	Reason(s)
	(£0.00-£75.00)	(£75.01-£500.00)	(£500.01-£2,000.00)	(£2,000.01-£5,000)	(£5,000.01-£10,000.00)	(£10,000.01 and Over)						
06/02/2024	£141.40	£1,166.08							£1,307.48	10	Deceased no estate	
"	£81.26	£2,508.55	£4,157.75	£8,765.87					£15,513.43	21	Statute Barred	
"			£1,371.11						£1,371.11	1	Hardhip	
"				£4,195.29					£4,195.29	1	Deceased no estate	
06/02/2024							(£26.94)		(£26.94)		Uneconomic to refund	
"							(£517.32)		(£517.32)		Over 6 years old	
Q4 Totals	£222.66	£3,674.63	£5,528.86	£12,961.16	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£544.26)	£0.00	£21,843.05	33	
Q1 Totals (B/F)	£218.85	£1,796.91	£4,864.00	£9,869.93	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£16,749.69	19	
Q2 Totals (B/F)	£252.17	£2,341.26	£8,719.28	£2,166.21	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£13,478.92	26	
Q3 Totals (B/F)	£274.33	£4,579.22	£9,153.82	£6,280.37	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£160.71)	£0.00	£20,127.03	51	
Overall Total	£968.01	£12,392.02	£28,265.96	£31,277.67	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	(£704.97)	£0.00	£72,198.69	129	

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Thursday, 27 June 2024

Report of the Leader of the Council

Corporate Peer Review

Exempt Information

None

Purpose

To advise members of the Corporate Peer Challenge being undertaken on 29 to 31 October 2024 by the Local Government Association (LGA) and seek approval for the programme of work in the run up and following the review.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Cabinet note the Corporate Peer Challenge will be undertaken 29 to 31 October 2024 and the scope will include core elements and the use of technology and innovation.
2. That Cabinet approve the programme of work in preparing for the review and commit to the publication deadlines as set out in **Appendix 1**.

Executive Summary

A Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) is a voluntary process which forms a key part of the LGA's new [improvement and assurance framework](#) for local government. It underpins the principals of Sector-led improvement (SLI) to support continuous improvement and assurance across the sector and is recognised as assisting councils to meet their [Best Value duty](#) to gain assurance both of the performance of its services and corporate governance (see extract at **Appendix 2**)

The LGA encourages all councils to have a Corporate Peer Challenge every five years and to publish their reports online.

This report outlines the process and timeline for the review.

Options Considered

This is a voluntary process to provide assurance, members can opt to not host a CPC, however this will be subject to challenge and may be a reputational risk if not undertaken.

Resource Implications

The CPC is fully funded by Government however a limited budget is required for the production of key documents and hosting of the event and associated workshops, which will be covered by existing budgets.

Once undertaken, a council must commit to publicise the report and develop an action plan in response to the recommendations.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

None specifically for this report. Authorities who fail to engage with the CPC process are being challenged.

Equalities Implications

CIA has been completed – No issues relevant to decisions in this report

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

Not relevant to this report

Background Information

Tamworth Borough Council had its previous CPC in 2013. There has been considerable change and challenge across the sector since this period, and the organisation itself has had some significant changes including a new Leader and Cabinet following the borough election in 2024, and a new Chief Executive who started in April 2024. This CPC has been commissioned to support the council in the next stage of its journey.

A CPC provides robust, strategic and credible challenge and support to avoid insularity within councils and covers five core elements:

- Local priorities and outcomes
- Organisational and place leadership
- Governance and culture
- Financial planning and management
- Capacity for improvement.

In addition, the team will be asked to review how the council can make best use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) including emerging technologies to support innovation and the delivery of corporate objectives.

The CPC process involves providing key information to the team and culminates in engagement with a wide range of people connected with the council over the 3-day challenge including residents, staff, members, external partners and stakeholders. They will attend council meetings, gather information and views prior to their visit. The Peers will also access reports based on Tamworth performance data held in [LG Inform](#).

Following the CPC visit, a report outlining the key findings and recommendations from the peer team will be shared with the council. In the spirit of openness and transparency, councils are required to publish this report, alongside an action plan, within three months of the corporate peer challenge. If the council is unable to publish the action plan at the same time as the report, it is required to publish the action plan no later than five months after the 3-day challenge.

All CPCs now include a progress review which takes place approximately ten months after the original 3-day challenge. The progress review provides space for a council's senior leadership to report to the peer team on the progress made against the CPC recommendations, discuss early impact or learning and receive feedback on the implementation of the action plan.

Following the progress review, a report outlining the peer team's findings is shared with the council. In the spirit of openness and transparency, the council are required to publish this report no later than 12 months after the original CPC.

Report Author

Christie Tims – Corporate Project Co-ordinator

List of Background Papers

Cabinet Report [LGA Peer Assessment 2013](#)

LGA [Feedback 2013](#) and [Letter 2013](#)

LGA [improvement and assurance framework](#)

Statutory [Best Value duty](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: Timeline for CPC Review

Appendix 2: Best value standards and intervention: a statutory guide, published 8 May 2024

Appendix 1

Timeline for CPC Review

Date	Action	Owner
27 June 2024	Cabinet approval of timeline	Leader of the Council
TBA July/August	Scoping Meeting with the LGA	Chief Executive/ Leader of the Council
31 August 2024	Data and Information Pack prepared including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position statement from the Council • Supporting documents • LG Inform Performance data • LGA Financial briefing 	Project Manager On behalf of ELT S151 Officer
September/ October 2024	Pre-engagement with the council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation of Council meetings • Engagement with Chief Executive and Leader of the Council • 	Chief Executive/ Leader of the Council
Week commencing 14 October 2024	Peer Team Briefing	Chief Executive/ Leader of the Council Project Manager
29 to 31 October 2024	Corporate Peer Challenge visit	All
30 November 2024	Draft Report	LGA Peers
31 January 2025	Deadline for TBC to publish CPC Report and Action Plan if available (Cabinet 23 January 2025)	ELT/Cabinet
31 March 2025	Final Deadline for TBC to publish Action Plan (Cabinet 27 March 2025)	ELT/Cabinet
31 August 2025	Progress review session with Chief Executive and Leader of the Council	Chief Executive/ Leader of the Council
31 October 2025	Final Report and Findings published by TBC and LGA	ELT/Cabinet

Appendix 2 : Best value standards and intervention: a statutory guide

Characteristics of a well-functioning authority

- Members provide quality leadership by setting a clearly articulated, achievable and prioritised vision for officers to follow that puts place and local people at its heart. Senior officers have the capacity and capability to provide the authority with effective strategic direction.
- The authority's corporate plan is evidence based, current, realistic and enables the whole organisation's performance to be measured and held to account. The authority's financial strategy and delivery arrangements are aligned with priorities in the corporate plan, and respond appropriately to local need, including the plans of partners and stakeholders.
- Members and officers, particularly those with statutory responsibility, including the Head of Paid Service, Section 151 and Monitoring Officer, uphold their duties and speak truth to power.
- The Monitoring Officer is sufficiently supported and protected to allow them to enforce regulations and codes of conduct without fear.
- Strong financial management and reporting, in accordance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code, runs throughout the whole organisation.
- Robust systems are in place and owned by members for identifying, reporting, mitigating and regularly reviewing risk.
- Effective succession planning, with the recruitment and development of officers with the necessary skills, ensures organisational resilience.
- Members and senior officers maintain constructive relationships and engage effectively with external stakeholders and the wider local community.
- A demonstrable commitment to leadership and member development, including specialist training for key roles
- Effective and timely responses to issues with acceptance of the need to make changes and without a culture of blame.

Indicators of potential failure

- A lack of corporate capacity or capability, resulting in a lack of strategic direction, oversight and sense of accountability.
- Leadership losing sight of the authority's role and function as a leader of place and provider or enabler of services to local residents and businesses.
- A lack of understanding of public sector standards, the Nolan Principles and appropriate behaviour.
- Corporate plan is out of date, unrealistic and unaffordable and/or has too many priorities.
- Poor quality financial management.
- Section 151, Section 73 and Monitoring Officers do not have direct lines of communication to the Head of Paid Service, do not demonstrate ownership and accountability, or are not involved in important decisions.
- Risk management is not effective, owned corporately and/or embedded throughout the organisation.
- A lack of political and/or organisational stability, with high leadership turnover, key posts remaining vacant or an overreliance on interim officers, creating a lack of continuity and/or decisions in the long-term interests of the authority.
- Leadership at both political and managerial levels is distracted and involved to an unhealthy extent in internal battles.
- The absence of fit for purpose and regularly reviewed approaches to workforce planning, procurement, risk and IT.
- A loss of stakeholder and public confidence.

- A sense of insularity, a failure to tolerate internal or external challenge, and to recognise the need for improvement.
- Decisions that are perceived as being difficult are avoided or deferred.

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