



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CABINET
HELD ON 25th FEBRUARY 2019**

PRESENT: Councillor D Cook (Chair), Councillors J Chesworth, S Doyle and M Cook

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance), Matthew Bowers (Assistant Director Growth & Regeneration), Lynne Pugh (Assistant Director Finance), Michael Buckland (Head of Revenues), John Day (Corporate Performance Officer) and Stephen Lewis (Head of Environmental Health)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Pritchard

2 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th January 2019 were approved and signed as a correct record.

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

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4 QUESTION TIME:

None

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

The Chair of the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee, Councillor S Goodall, presented an update on the Castle Review, including the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee's endorsement of the work undertaken to date, which was received by Cabinet.

The Chair of the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee, Councillor S Goodall, presented the following recommendations of the Committee on the Taxi Licensing Policy – Amendment Taxi Licensing Points System and Dress Code:

1. That the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee endorsed the proposed amendments to the Taxi Licensing Conditions at Appendix A to the report to the Committee and recommended them to Cabinet, subject to clarification of Points 20 and 22 of the Equality Impact Assessment; and
2. That there be a review of the policy by the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Committee 12 months following implementation.

This matter was considered further by Cabinet at item 9 on the Agenda.

The Chair of Corporate Scrutiny, Councillor J Oates, presented the recommendations of the Working Group for Member Support – sub-group Member Induction to Cabinet which had been endorsed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

Cabinet endorsed that:

1. At signing of the declaration newly elected and returning members would receive an up dated list of officers and details of their responsibilities.
2. At the earliest opportunity post local election existing members would receive an up dated list of officers and details of their responsibilities.
3. At signing of the declaration newly elected and returning members would receive “First point” of contact details.
4. At the earliest opportunity post local election existing members would receive “First point” of contact details.
5. Contact details of officers and information how and who to escalate issues with would be circulated to all members in full at the start of the municipal year.
6. Updates from cabinet members and senior officers highlighting key projects of the year, risks and challenges against their corporate plans would be presented to all members at the earliest opportunity post the Council’s AGM.
7. Subject to a protocol being prepared on how the following would work in practice, it was agreed in principle that where a scrutiny committee received reports, papers must be updated with the latest information, including cabinet papers as appendices.
8. The Constitution Review process would consider and make recommendations to Council on the supply of paper to members being removed from the Constitution and printed copies of reports being administered on a case by case assessment.

The Leader of the Council provided Cabinet with a performance and financial health-check. The report had been considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 7th February 2019.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet;

Endorsed the contents of this report

That the Capital budget for Disabled Facilities Grants be increased by £107,170 to reflect the additional grant funding from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government.

That £200,000 be vired from the Walkways at Magnolia capital scheme into the Bathroom Renewals scheme to fund additional bathroom replacements.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)

7 CORPORATE VISION, PRIORITIES PLAN, BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2019/20

The Leader of the Council proposed the Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes and their inclusion in the Corporate Plan and Support Service Plan.

The recommendation package of budget proposals to enable the Council to agree the:

- General Fund (GF) Revenue Budget and Council Tax for 2019/20;
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2019/20;
- 5 Year General Fund Capital Programme (2019/24);
- 5 Year HRA Capital Programme (2019/24);
- 3 Year General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (2019/22); and
- 5 Year HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (2019/24).

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

- RESOLVED** That Cabinet endorsed the following recommendations to proceed to Council
- 1 The Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes for 2019/20
 - 2 The proposed revisions to Service Revenue Budgets (Policy Changes)
 - 3 The sum of £62,517 be applied from Council Tax Collection Fund surpluses in reducing the Council Tax demand in 2019/20
 - 4 The sum of £752,887 be applied from Business Rates Collection Fund surpluses in 2019/20
 - 5 That on 29th November 2018, the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base 2019/20 for the whole Council area as 21,761 [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 2019/20 is £3,849,303
 - 7 The following amounts as calculated for the year 2019/20 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a. £49,832,645 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. £45,983,342 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. £3,849,303 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. £176.89 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 2019/20

- of £176.89 (an increase of £5.14 (2.99%) on the 2018/19 level of £171.75) 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 £1,715.41 at Band D for 2019/20 be noted (£1,648.36 in 2018/19)
- 10 The Council Tax levels at each band for 2019/20
- 11 The sum of £1,408,174 be transferred from General Fund Revenue Balances in 2019/20
- 12 The Summary General Fund Revenue Budget for 2019/20
- 13 The Provisional Budgets for 2020/21 to 2021/22, 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 £13,164,850 for 2019/20
- 17 Rents for Council House Tenants in General Accommodation for 2019/20 be set at an average of £85.52 (2018/19 £86.50), over a 49 week rent year (including the required 1% reduction);
- 18 Rents for Council House Tenants due for 53 weeks in 2019/20 be collected over 49 weeks;
- 19 The proposed 5 year General Fund Capital Programme of £5.297m, as detailed in Appendix I to the report;
- 20 The HRA deficit of £115,050 be financed through a transfer from Housing Revenue Account Balances in 2019/20
- 21 The proposed 5 year Housing Capital Programme of £44.496m, 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 2019/20
- 24 The Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Limits for 2019/20 to 2021/22
- 25 Adoption of the Treasury Management Practices contained within ANNEX 8;
- 26 The detailed criteria of the Investment Strategy 2019/20 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy within ANNEX 4; and
- 27 The Corporate Capital Strategy and associated Action Plan

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

8 WRITE OFFS 01/04/18 TO 31/12/18

The Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance proposed that Members endorse the amount of debt written off for the period 01 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 and sought approval to write off irrecoverable debt in line with policy regarding Business Rates in excess of £10k.

RESOLVED: The Committee endorsed the amount of debt written off for the period 01 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 as set out in Appendices A-D, and:
Approved the write off of irrecoverable debt for Business Rates of £322,199.74, as set out in Appendix E.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)

9 TAXI LICENSING POLICY - AMENDMENT TAXI LICENSING POINTS SYSTEM & DRESS CODE

The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Partnerships presented the Taxi Licensing Policy – Amendment Taxi Licensing Points System and Dress Code.

RESOLVED That Cabinet;

- 1 Considered the proposed amendments to the Taxi Licensing Conditions that introduce a Taxi Licensing Points system for drivers and operators that breach conditions and include guidance on appropriate dress, and recommended them to Council for adoption
- 2 Agreed that there be a review of the policy by the Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Committee, 12 months

following implementation.

(Moved by Councillor S Doyle and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

10 AMINGTON COMMUNITY WOODLAND

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services and the Leader of the Council updated Cabinet on the progress of the Amington Community Woodland Project, and requested that Cabinet approve the plan for the project and delegate approval for procurement of a Landscape Architect and professional team to the Assistant Director Operations and Leisure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services.

RESOLVED

That;

1. Cabinet endorsed the programme management approach as detailed in Appendix 3
2. Cabinet endorsed the draft Project Initiation Document (Appendix 1) and reporting lines for the Amington Community Woodland Project.
3. Cabinet approved commencement of the Amington Community Woodland Project, as per the project plan (Appendix 2).
4. Cabinet endorsed the design principles and consultation programme set out in the report
5. Cabinet approved the list of services required from an appointed Landscape Architect and associated professional team, as detailed in Appendix 4.
6. Cabinet authorised the commencement of the procurement process for the Landscape Architect and professional team and delegate responsibility for the appointment to the Assistant Director Operations and Leisure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services to appoint.
7. The 2018/19 approved Capital Programme be increased by a total of £305k being:
 - Additional £115k for the Amington Community Woodlands scheme to reflect the additional external funding secured through the “Small Habitats Grant”
 - Additional £150k for the Amington Community Woodlands scheme to reflect the revised

- phasing of the project funded through Section 106 agreement.
- Additional £40k for the Community Woodland Cycleway scheme to reflect the additional Section 106 contributions to fund the scheme.
8. Cabinet gave delegated authority to the Assistant Director Operations and Leisure in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services to:
- a. agree the final design for the hard and soft landscaping works
 - b. prepare and endorse the contract briefs to be used as part of future procurement of contractors to implement the elements of the scheme;
 - c. Commence the procurement processes
 - d. Award the contracts to the successful tenderers.

(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

Leader