



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 20th FEBRUARY 2025

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

GUEST: Councillor M Couchman

The following officers were present: Stephen Gabriel (Chief Executive), Anica Goodwin (Executive Director Organisation), Rob Barnes (Executive Director Communities), Joanne Goodfellow (Interim Executive Director Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer), Christie Tims (Corporate Project Co-ordinator), Tracey Pointon (Legal Admin & Democratic Services Manager) and Laura Sandland (Democratic and Executive Support Officer)

112 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence. Councillor D Foster arrived at 18.09pm

113 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd January 2025 were approved as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor N Arkney)

114 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

115 QUESTION TIME:

There were no questions

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

Report of the Chair of Infrastructure, Safety and Growth to notify Cabinet of the recommendations from the Revised Local Development Scheme report that was discussed at the meeting of Infrastructure Safety & Growth Scrutiny Committee on the 29th January 2025.

Resolved that the committee

1. Develop a Policy for Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's)

(Moved by Councillor M Couchman and seconded by Councillor C Adams)

Cabinet thanked the members of Infrastructure Safety & Growth Committee for bringing the recommendation to Cabinet. Cllr B Clarke confirmed that work is ongoing on the new Local Plan and the HMO's are one element of the Housing part of the plan that will be included. Cllr Clarke gave assurance that this would be included. Cllr Couchman is also a member of the Local Plan Working Group.

117 WRITE OFFS 1 APRIL 2024 TO 31 DECEMBER 2024

Report of the Leader of the Council to ask members endorse the amount of debt written off for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st December 2024.

Resolved that the committee

1. Endorsed the amount of debt written off for the period of 1 st April 2024 to 31st December 2024 – Appendix A-E
2. Approved the write off of irrecoverable debt for Business Rates of £132,655.94 – Appendix F respectively

(Moved by Councillor B Clarke and seconded by Councillor S Daniels)

118 CORPORATE VISION, PRIORITIES PLAN, BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2025/26

Report of the

Resolved that the committee approved

1. the Vision Statement, Priority Themes, Corporate Priorities and Outcomes for 2025 – 2030 (Appendix 1);
2. the proposed revisions to Service Revenue Budgets (Policy Changes) (Appendix E of the MTFS);
3. the sum of £33,143 be applied from Council Tax Collection Fund surpluses in reducing the Council Tax demand in 2025/26 (Table 16, Section 7.8 of the MTFS);

4. the sum of £92,642 be applied to Business Rates Collection Fund deficits in 2025/26 (Table 16, Section 7.8 of the MTFS);
5. that on 12th December 2024, the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base 2025/26 for the whole Council area as 23,596 [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 2025/26 is £4,925,901 (Appendix F and Appendix H of the MTFS);
7. the following amounts as calculated for the year 2025/26 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a. £4,925,901 being the amount 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);
 - b. £208.76 being the amount at 6 (a) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (at 4 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 2025/26 of £208.76 (an increase of £6.06 (2.99%) on the 2024/25 level of £202.70) at Band D;
9. an aggregate Council Tax (comprising the respective demands of the Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority) of £2,209.81 at Band D for 2025/26 be noted (£2,107.68 in 2024/25) (Appendix H of the MTFS);
10. the Council Tax levels at each band for 2025/26 (Appendix H of the MTFS);
11. In accordance with Section 11c of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, a discretionary council tax premium of 100% on second homes and empty homes to be implemented with effect from 1st April 2026;
12. the sum of £148,939 be transferred to General Fund Revenue Balances in 2025/26 (Appendix F of the MTFS);
13. the Summary General Fund Revenue Budget for 2025/26 (Appendix F of the MTFS);
14. the Provisional General Fund Budgets for 2026/27 to 2027/28, summarised at Appendix F of the MTFS, as the

- basis for future planning;
15. 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;
 16. 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;
 17. proposed HRA Expenditure level of £19,713,680 for 2025/26 (Appendix I of the MTFS);
 18. rents for Council House Tenants for 2025/26 be set at an average of £110.40 (2024/25 £107.50), over a 48 week rent year (including a 2.7% increase in line with the Government's updated Rent Standard for 2025/26);
 19. rents for Council House Tenants due for 52 weeks in 2025/26 be collected over 48 weeks;
 20. the HRA deficit of £409,240 be transferred from the Housing Revenue Account Balances in 2025/26 (Table 18, Section 8.8 of the MTFS);
 21. the proposed 5 year General Fund Capital Programme of £7,162,780, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the MTFS;
 22. the proposed 5 year Housing Capital Programme of £51,047,190, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the MTFS;
 23. 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;
 24. the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy and Annual Investment Statement 2025/26 (as detailed at Appendix 3);
 25. the Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Limits for 2025/26 to 2027/28 contained within Appendix 3 to the MTFS;
 26. the detailed criteria of the Investment Strategy 2025/26 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy; and
 27. the Corporate Capital Strategy and associated Action Plan (as detailed at Appendix 1 of the MTFS).

(Moved by Councillor D Foster and seconded by Councillor L Smith)

119 CORPORATE REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2024/25

Report of the Leader of the Council to seek approval for the proposed fees and charges payable with effect from 1st April 2025.

Resolved that the committee

1. Agreed to implement the annual inflationary increase (5.5%) for the fees and charges where appropriate.
2. Agreed that delegated authority be given, to set the new fees and charges for the TEC 2 and Flex Buildings, to the Portfolio Holder and the Interim Executive Director Finance, in consultation with the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration; and
3. endorsed increases in the charges applied for goods sold through the catering bar and shops throughout the year as these are based on cost price plus a margin.

(Moved by Councillor N Arkney and seconded by Councillor B Clarke)

120 CORPORATE PLAN 2025 TO 2030

Report of the Leader of the Council to advise members of the consultation responses that have supported the development of the Corporate Plan 2025 to 2030 and approve the new vision and priorities ready to be included in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, which will be debated at Full Council on 25 February. To advise members on the development of the draft Annual Delivery Plan and supporting performance framework to track and monitor process.

Cabinet thanked Officers Christie Tims & Amerdip Kaur for the work and support on the Corporate Plan

Resolved that the committee

1. approved the Corporate Plan Narrative set out at Appendix A
2. agreed the updated performance management framework and the plan for quarterly reporting going forward. This includes the draft template for the Annual Delivery Plan (Appendix B) to be used to develop the framework for assessing the progress to deliver the priorities from the

Corporate Plan 2025-2030

3. delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to finalise the actions required for the Annual Delivery Plan for the launch of the new Corporate Plan on 1 April 2025.

(Moved by Councillor L Smith and seconded by Councillor S Daniels)

121 REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Homelessness and Planning to seek Cabinet approval in relation to the publication of the revised Local Development Scheme.

Resolved that the committee

1. Updated Local Development Scheme in Appendix A be approved for publication.
2. 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 B Clarke and seconded by Councillor S Daniels)

Leader