

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET DECISIONS

TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2022

PRESENT: Councillor P Roberts (Chair)

Councillors J Aberley, M Deaville, K Flunder, R Ward and
M Worthington

APOLOGIES: Councillors J Porter and S Scalise

18 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED)**

DECISION:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16 August 2022 be approved as a correct record.

19 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY**

There were no declarations of interest made.

20 **ITEMS REQUESTED BY CABINET AND/OR NON-CABINET MEMBERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CABINET PROCEDURE RULES 8.5(B) AND (E), IF ANY**

DECISION:

That the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Councillor Ross Ward, replace Councillor Joe Porter as the Council's representative to the District Community Safety Partnership.

21 **FORWARD PLAN**

DECISION:

That the Forward Plan be approved for publication.

22 **STAFFORDSHIRE LEADERS BOARD - REVISED CONSTITUTION**

The purpose of the report was to agree the revised constitution for the Staffordshire Leaders Board Joint Committee.

Options considered:

There are no options to consider at this stage.

DECISION:

That the revised constitution for the Staffordshire Leaders Board as set out in Appendix A to the report be agreed.

23 **SMDC RESPONSE TO THE ENERGY CRISIS**

To consider the support which the Council currently provides to residents in the face of the cost-of-living crisis, and specifically rising energy costs and the predicted future energy price increases in October 2022. To consider options for the provision of additional support to residents.

The report would be considered by the postponed Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 17 October 2022.

Options considered:

The report set out the current position and initial steps that the Council intended to take; however, it was important that the Council adopted a flexible approach to emerging issues and opportunities.

DECISION:

1. That the action being taken to respond to the cost-of-living crisis be noted.
2. That the creation of a Fuel Bank for Staffordshire Moorlands to support those residents paying for their household energy via a pre-payment meter and who are experiencing fuel poverty be supported.
3. That the ECO4 statement of intent and delivery of the scheme in collaboration with Beat the Cold be approved.
4. That further conversations with the North Staffordshire Financial Inclusion Group about working together to develop an affordable credit model that includes Staffordshire Moorlands be approved.

24 **JOINT PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2022-2025**

The report presented the Council's Joint Procurement Strategy 2022-2025 for approval.

Options considered:

There were two options available to the Council:

1. To not implement a new Joint Procurement Strategy to contribute to the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities (not recommended).
2. To adopt the new Joint Procurement Strategy as presented in the report (Recommended).

DECISION:

That the contents of the report be noted and that the Joint Procurement Strategy be approved and adopted.

25 **ACCESS TO SERVICES, DIGITAL AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES - 2022/23 ACTION PLAN**

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The purpose of the report was to consider the 2022/23 Action Plan for the implementation of the recently approved Access to Services, Digital and Organisational Development Strategies.

Options considered:

There were no options to consider at this stage.

DECISION:

That the combined action plan for delivery of the strategies as detailed at Appendix B of the report be noted.

26 **FIRST QUARTER FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2022/23**

The purpose of the report was to inform members of the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 30th June ("First Quarter 2022/23"). The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 21 September 2022.

Options considered:

Detailed Analysis was contained within the main body of the Report.

DECISION:

1. That the First Quarter 2022/23 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report be noted.
2. That the write offs set out in Appendix D be approved.

27 **REVISED LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME**

The purpose of the report was to request permission to undertake a consultation with both the public and the Major Precepting Authorities in respect of proposed changes to the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme with effect from 1st April 2023. The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 21 September 2022.

Options considered:

The alternative to introducing a new scheme for Council Tax Reduction from 2023/24 was to leave the existing scheme in place. This would be a short-term option; lead to continuation of increasing costs of administration; and in the longer term, significantly affect the collection of Council Tax and the effectiveness of the scheme to support households within the Council's area. If the existing scheme remained our proposal would be to remove the calculation letter that accompanies the bill currently and set a monetary limit on the changes to Universal Credit reported by the DWP, so that there were fewer changes to Local Council Tax Reduction. In addition we would allow using the amount of Income advised by DWP without any

adjustment, in order to aid automation and increase the allowable time for backdating where good cause is shown to 6 months.

DECISION:

That approval be granted for the Council to consult with the public and Major Precepting Authorities on the introduction of a new income banded / grid scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1st April 2023 to reduce the significant administrative burden placed on the Council by the introduction of Universal Credit and to increase the overall level of support for the lowest income families.

28 **SMDC REFRESHED SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY**

The purpose of the report was to inform the Cabinet as to the work completed to develop the Move More Staffordshire Moorlands Strategy in replacement of the current Physical Activity and Sport Strategy. The report was considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 28 September 2022

Options considered:

In effect, there were two options:

1. The report set out clearly the reasons why the existing strategy needed updating and therefore the approval of the proposed Move More Staffordshire Moorlands Strategy should be recommended.
2. To do nothing and not recommend the proposed Move More Staffordshire Moorlands Strategy be approved.

DECISION:

That the Move More Staffordshire Moorlands Strategy be approved.

29 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to Section 100A(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 100 I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the Paragraphs indicated.

30 **PROPOSALS FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE DFG PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet approved a report that set out proposals for delivery of the Council's Disabled Facilities Grant programme from April 2023; sought approval to participate in County wide agreements in connection with contractor procurement and Occupational Therapy services; and set out the options considered for the delivery of the grant programme.

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31 **LEISURE FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND OPERATING MODEL PROPOSALS**

The Cabinet noted the progress made in developing a transformational plan for the Council's Leisure Centres, including capital investment proposals and review of the future operating model for these facilities.

32 **NEW STAFF PAY GRADE STRUCTURE**

The Cabinet approved a new staff pay grade structure for implementation after consultation with the Councils' workforce.

33 **APPLICATION FOR WRITE OFF OF NON- RECOVERABLE DEBTS**

To Cabinet approved the write off of balances which were deemed non recoverable.

The meeting closed at 11.46 am

_____ Chairman