

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 15 June 2023 at 10.00 am in The Telford Room, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT

PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY 22 JUNE 2023

(DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN: TUESDAY 27 JUNE 2023)

Present: Councillors S Davies (Chair), E M Callear, L D Carter, C Healy, K Middleton, S A W Reynolds, P Watling, N A M England and R Mehta.

Also Present: Cllr A J Eade (Conservative Group Leader) and Cllr W L Tomlinson (Liberal Democrats Group Leader)

Apologies: Councillor R A Overton

CAB-1 Declarations of Interest

None.

CAB-2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

CAB-3 Leader's Announcements

The Leader announced that the Administration's mandate was to deliver on its priorities with the focus being on local residents, the Princess Royal Hospital A&E and to fight for planning decisions to remain at a local level.

The Leader reported that planning consent had been approved for Station Quarter which had benefitted from both government and private sector funding. He added that a college/university on the site would be a boost for the Town Centre developing skills for the future.

The Leader stated that current issues locally were the cost of interest rate rises which affected rents and mortgages, together with the cost of food, energy and inflation. He noted that the Council faced similar difficulties with the cost of energy, wage demands and contractual inflation and that in response, some projects may have to be delayed in order to achieve financial stability.

The Leader discussed the coming four years and his commitment to maintain the lowest council tax rate within the West Midlands, but that tough decisions would have to be made in order to keep up with cost pressures.

CAB-4 2022/23 Financial Outturn Report

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Customer Services and Governance presented the report of the Chief Financial Officer.

Despite the significant pressures faced during 2022/23, the Council ended the year within budget. The gross revenue budget for 2022/23 was £435m and the net budget was £135m. The revenue outturn position was within budget by £0.012m after the proposed transfers to and from reserves and balances had been made. There had been no unplanned use of budget strategy reserves. This would support the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and support financial resilience during the current uncertainties to the local government funding system and increasing demand for services. Additional investment had been required to both Children's Safeguarding and Adult Social care during 2022/23.

Capital spending ended the year at £75.7m against an approved budget of £87.16m. Some re-phasing of expenditure in 2023/24 would take place as a result of re-profiling spend. The re-phasing would generate some treasury management benefits during 2023/24.

The currently unaudited accounts for NuPlace reported an operating profit for 2022/23 with a dividend of £0.188m being paid to the Council as its sole investor.

At year end, Council Tax and NNDR collection were ahead of target whilst Sales Ledger collection was slightly behind target.

The draft statement of accounts was considered at the Audit Committee on 31 May 2023 with the accounts being available for public inspection for 30 working days from 31 May 2023.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report, noting the Council's sound financial footing despite the difficulties that the Authority faced in terms of reduced government funding. Residents were central to the work that the Council did in terms of their health, wellbeing and safety which was vital. New business was attracted to Telford and due to the support offered by the Council, businesses continued to grow.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat group welcomed the financial stability and hoped that this would continue going forward and complimented officers on the draft accounts.

The Leader of the Conservative group echoed the comments of Councillor Tomlinson on the work carried out over successive years delivering stability and services.

RESOLVED – to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL that:

- a) **the revenue outturn position for 2022/23, which remained subject to audit by the Council's external auditors, and related virements be approved;**
- b) **the transfers and changes to reserves and provisions, and associated approval to the relevant members of the Senior Management Team (as determined by the Chief Executive) after consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to spend the reserves detailed in the report be approved;**
- c) **the capital outturn position and related supplementary estimates, re-phasing and virements set out in the report be approved;**
- d) **delegated authority be granted to the Director: Finance & HR to make any changes required, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Governance and Customer Services.**

CAB-5 Adult Social Care Charging Policy

The Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care and Health Systems presented the report of the Director: Adult Social Care.

The Council's Adult Social Care Charging Policies, compared to national Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) maximum charging guidelines, were currently significantly below these guidelines. In addition the current charges were not comparable with many other Local Authorities being lower than the average charging rates.

A review had been undertaken on the Adult Social Care Residential and Non-Residential Care Charging Policies. This had identified key areas for proposed change which were set out in the report.

The report set out the increasing number of people needing access to social care services, specialist care, complex care and support and the increase in the ageing population.

Whilst additional investment totalling over £7.26m (net of savings) into Adult Social Care in 2023/24 has been agreed, it was not possible to continue providing the same services, in the same ways. In order to ensure that the Council could continue to meet the needs of vulnerable adults in the community, it would be necessary to explore new approaches to deliver better outcomes for people and to ensure that Council operated as efficiently as possible.

The consultation would help the Council to fully understand the impact of the proposed changes and ensure the provision of the highest standard of care. Contributions would remain affordable and based on the individual's circumstances following a financial assessment.

Cabinet Members welcomed the report but highlighted concerns regarding funding challenges and the difficult decisions that would need to be made whilst providing the level of care required across the Borough.

The Leader of the Liberal Democrat group welcomed the consultation, but recognised that there would need to be an increase in charges in order to deliver a balanced budget. It was important to signpost residents to services they could access, whilst ensuring the most vulnerable were protected.

The Leader of the Conservative group noted the population changes and the increase in the ageing population nationally, but felt that this did not necessarily give rise to draw and demand.

RESOLVED – that

- a) **the consultation documents, with the proposed changes to the draft policies appended to the report, be approved;**
- b) **the approach set out in the report in relation to consultation and engagement with people with care and support needs and their families be approved;**
- c) **an eleven week consultation period be approved;**
- d) **authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member: Adult Social Care and Health Systems in consultation with Director: Adult Social Care to receive the outcome of the consultation and update the policies and implementation of proposals from 01 January 2024; and**
- e) **the charging be increased in accordance with inflation and / or national guidance each year thereafter until further review, as appropriate.**

CAB-6 Annual Governance Statement 2022-23

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services and Governance presented the report of the Director: Policy & Governance.

Under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Council was required to produce an Annual Governance Statement which accompanied the Annual Accounts. This set out the Council's adherence to its governance arrangements and measured its effectiveness and it was pleasing to note that the conclusion of the report was that the Council had robust governance measures in place..

RESOLVED – that:

- a) **the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 be approved and the report noted; and**

- b) **the Local Code of Good Governance be approved.**

CAB-7 Representations on Outside Bodies

The Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services and Governance presented the report of the Director: Policy and Governance.

A review of outside bodies had been carried out to assess the needs of the Council and partner organisations in terms of representation and representatives. Partners had been engaged by email and phone to ascertain their needs and review representative attendance. The reviewed list of outside bodies for which appointments were required was set out in the report.

RESOLVED – that:

- a) **the outside bodies as set out in the report be noted: and**
- b) **authority be delegated to the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member: Finance, Governance and Customer Services to consider which bodies to nominate to and which Councillor was nominated.**

The meeting ended at 10.46 am

Signed for the purposes of the Decision Notices

Anthea Lowe
Director: Policy & Governance
Date: **Thursday 22 JUNE 2023**

Signed

Date: Thursday 13 July 2023