

## COUNCIL

7.00 pm, Wednesday, 27 February 2013

**Present:-** The Mayor David Becket – in the Chair

**Councillors** Miss Walklate, Mrs Heames, Mrs Johnson, Studd, Mrs Burnett, Clarke, Cooper, Mrs Beech, Hambleton, Howells, Cairns, Boden, Matthews, Olszewski, Mrs Hambleton, Wemyss, Mrs Williams, Williams, Mrs Astle, Fear, Hailstones, Mrs Hailstones, Allport, Eagles, Kearon, Taylor.J, Waring, Miss Olszewski, Lawton, Loades, Holland, Bailey, Miss Cooper, Jones, Miss Reddish, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Mrs Heesom, Snell, Sweeney, Mrs Bates, Miss Mancey, Mrs Burgess, Eastwood, Miss Baker, Mrs Peers, Plant, Stringer, Stubbs, Turner and Mrs Winfield

**In attendance:-** John Sellgren (Chief Executive), Kelvin Turner (Executive Director, Resources and Support Services), Neale Clifton (Executive Director, Regeneration and Development), Dave Adams (Executive Director, Operational Services), Paul Clisby (Head of Central Services), Phil Jones (Head of Communications) and Nick Lamper (Senior Member Services Officer)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors James Bannister, Dylis Cornes, Simon Tagg, Matt Taylor, Billy Welsh, Simon White and Ian Wilkes.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meetings held on 28 November 2012 and 23 January 2013 be approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor.

### 4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor thanked those who had supported recent Mayoral events and referred to upcoming functions.

In particular, he reminded members that tickets were on sale for the Mayoral Ball, which would be held at Keele University on Friday 22 March.

### 5. LICENSING COMMITTEE - RECOMMENDED FEES 2013/14

The recommendations of the Licensing Committee (from its meeting held on 13 February 2013) were submitted in relation to licensing fees for 2013/14 in respect of sex establishments and gambling.

**Resolved:** That the recommended licensing fees be approved.

**6. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX 2013/14**

A report was submitted setting out the recommendations of Cabinet for the revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14 and the setting of the 2013/14 council tax.

The Finance and Budget Management portfolio holder, Councillor Stubbs, undertook a presentation on the proposals.

The recommendations in the report having been moved by Councillor Stubbs and seconded by Councillor Boden, the following amendment was proposed by Councillor Jones:-

*That, in Appendix A, recommendation (g), the following be added after the words "be agreed":-*

*"...and various options be explored to invest in long-term sustainable green energy-saving devices such as solar panels on properties owned by the council."*

The amendment was accepted by the mover of the original motion, Councillor Stubbs, and became part of the substantive motion.

The following amendment was then moved by Councillor Sweeney and seconded by Councillor Howells:-

*That, after the words "...set out in appendix A", the following be added:-*

*"To cancel the planned increase in Admission fees and Parking charges for customers of Jubilee 2 (to value of £25,000)*

*"To support our local Community Centres and their Management Committees by increasing their Repairs and Maintenance Budget (to value of £25,750)*

*"To decrease the Council Tax by 1% (Newcastle under Lyme levy – to value of £70,000)*

*"To raise £82,500 by making a nominal £1.50 per day charge per council employee parking on Council work place car parks (over 9 months further to statutory consultation period of 90 days) in 2013/14 which will rise to £110,000 over a full year*

*"To raise £5,000 by making a nominal £1.50 per day charge per councillor (i.e. who park in Council work place car parks on an occasional basis)*

*"To raise £13,500 by capping car mileage rates paid to council staff to the HM Revenue and Customs rate of 45p per mile (over 9 months further to statutory consultation period of 90 days) in 2013/14 which will rise to £18,000 over a full year*

*"To raise £9,750 by the removal of evening meeting allowance payments (over 9 months further to statutory consultation period of 90 days) in 2013/14 which will rise to £13,000 over a full year*

*"To raise £10,000 by the abolition of the 7<sup>th</sup> cabinet member and a return to daytime Cabinet meetings"*

Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and lost.

As chair of the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Shenton remarked on the success of the process by which the budget proposals had been scrutinised both formally in committee and through the Scrutiny Café initiative. Scrutiny would continue to monitor the budget going forward. She thanked the officers for the clarity of information provided.

The Leader also thanked the Finance team for the work undertaken to make the proposals clear and transparent and noted that the number of respondents through the stakeholder events had been in the region of 650. He believed that the proposals would put the council on a firm footing for a strong future and offered to work with any member in the chamber to achieve this.

As the substantive motion was put to the vote, a recorded vote was requested by the Leader and 12 other members rising in their seats to support the request. The motion was carried.

The following members voted **for** the motion:-

Councillors Allport, Astle, Bailey, Baker, Bates, Beech, Boden, Burgess, Burnett, Cairns, Clarke, Eagles, Eastwood, S Hambleton, T Hambleton, Johnson, Jones, Kearon, Lawton, M Olszewski, S Olszewski, Plant, Reddish, Robinson, Shenton, Simpson, Snell, Stringer, Stubbs, J Taylor, Turner, Walklate, Waring, Wemyss, G Williams, J Williams and Winfield (37)

The following members voted **against** the motion:-

None (0)

The following members **abstained**:-

Councillors Becket, John Cooper, Julie Cooper, Fear, L Hailstones, P Hailstones, Heames, Heesom, Holland, Howells, Loades, Mancey, Matthews, Peers and Sweeney (15)

The following members were **not present** during the vote:-

Councillors Bannister, Cornes, Studd, Tagg, M Taylor, Welsh, White and Wilkes (8)

**Resolved:**

- (a) That the Revenue Budget for 2013/14 be approved in the sum of £13,169,360 (£14,118,640 net expenditure less £949,280 council tax support grant) as set out in Appendix B.
- (b) That the Council Tax at Band 'D' be £176.93, unchanged from 2012/13.
- (c) That the Capital Programme to 2013/14 be approved as set out in Appendix F, together with the Prudential Indicator relating to the Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions on the Council Tax.
- (d) That the revised minimum balances requirement be £1,300,000 and the excess of £200,000 above the current levels be transferred to the Insurance Fund (£150,000) and the Renewals and Repairs Fund (£50,000).

- (e) That £80,000 be transferred from the Standards Fund into the Municipal Mutual Insurance Provision.
- (f) That a Revenue Investment Fund be established with an initial contribution of £100,000 from the General Fund Revenue Budget in 2013/14.
- (g) That the principle of financing “invest to save” projects from the Budget Support Fund, as outlined in paragraph 4.9 of the report, be agreed and various options be explored to invest in long-term sustainable green energy-saving devices such as solar panels on properties owned by the council.
- (h) That it be noted that at its meeting on the 16 January 2013 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2013/14:
  - (i) 34,361 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, as its council tax base for the whole Council area for the year (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”))
  - (ii) For dwellings in those parts of the Council’s area to which a Parish precept relates as in the table below:

Kidsgrove	6,259
Loggerheads	1,839
Audley	2,423
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill	566
Chapel and Hill Chorlton	186
Keele	315
Madeley	1,413
Maer	245
Silverdale	808
Whitmore	1,240
- (i) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2013/14 (excluding Parish precepts) is £6,079,430.
- (j) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2013/14 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
  - (i) £62,375,343 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
  - (ii) £56,003,240 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
  - (iii) £6,372,103 being the amount by which the aggregate at (j)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (j)(ii) 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 31B of the Act).

- (iv) £185.45 being the amount at j (iii) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (h (i) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (v) £292,673 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act.
- (vi) £176.93 being the amount at (j) (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (j) (v) above by item T (h (i) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item (Parish precept) relates.
- (vii) **Part of the Council's Area**

Audley Parish Council	£196.10
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	£194.19
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	£192.16
Keele Parish Council	£199.81
Kidsgrove Town Council	£191.70
Loggerheads Parish Council	£198.39
Madeley Parish Council	£221.53
Maer Parish Council	£195.57
Silverdale Parish Council	£184.92
Whitmore Parish Council	£197.97

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (j) (vi) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above, divided in each case by the amount at (h) (ii) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(viii)

**Valuation Bands**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
<b><u>Part of the Council's Area</u></b>								
Kidsgrove Town Council	127.80	149.10	170.40	191.70	234.30	276.90	319.50	383.40
Loggerheads Parish Council	132.26	154.31	176.35	198.39	242.47	286.56	330.65	396.78
Audley Parish Council	130.74	152.52	174.31	196.10	239.68	283.25	326.84	392.20
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	129.46	151.04	172.61	194.19	237.34	280.49	323.65	388.38
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	128.11	149.46	170.81	192.16	234.86	277.56	320.27	384.32
Keele Parish Council	133.21	155.41	177.61	199.81	244.21	288.61	333.02	399.62
Madeley Parish Council	147.69	172.30	196.92	221.53	270.76	319.98	369.22	443.06
Maer Parish Council	130.38	152.11	173.84	195.57	239.03	282.49	325.95	391.14
Whitmore Parish Council	131.98	153.98	175.97	197.97	241.96	285.95	329.95	395.94
Silverdale Parish Council	123.28	143.83	164.37	184.92	226.01	267.10	308.20	369.84
Other Parts of Borough Area	117.96	137.61	157.27	176.93	216.25	255.56	294.89	353.86

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Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (j)(vi) and (j)(vii) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (k) That it be noted that for the year 2013/14 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

<u>Precepting Authority</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Staffordshire County Council	684.83	798.97	913.11	1027.25	1255.53	1483.81	1712.08	2054.50
Staffordshire Fire Authority	45.09	52.61	60.12	67.64	82.67	97.70	112.73	135.28
Staffordshire Police Authority	118.41	138.14	157.88	177.61	217.08	256.55	296.02	355.22

- (l) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (j) (viii) and (k) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Kidsgrove Town Council	976.13	1138.82	1301.51	1464.20	1789.58	2114.96	2440.33	2928.40
Loggerheads Parish Council	980.59	1144.03	1307.46	1470.89	1797.75	2124.62	2451.48	2941.78
Audley Parish Council	979.07	1142.24	1305.42	1468.60	1794.96	2121.31	2447.67	2937.20
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	977.79	1140.76	1303.72	1466.69	1792.62	2118.55	2444.48	2933.38
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	976.44	1139.18	1301.92	1464.66	1790.14	2115.62	2441.10	2929.32
Keele Parish Council	981.54	1145.13	1308.72	1472.31	1799.49	2126.67	2453.85	2944.62
Madeley Parish Council	996.02	1162.02	1328.03	1494.03	1826.04	2158.04	2490.05	2988.06
Maer Parish Council	978.71	1141.83	1304.95	1468.07	1794.31	2120.55	2446.78	2936.14
Whitmore Parish Council	980.31	1143.70	1307.08	1470.47	1797.24	2124.01	2450.78	2940.94
Silverdale Parish Council	971.61	1133.55	1295.48	1457.42	1781.29	2105.16	2429.03	2914.84
Other Parts of Borough Area	966.29	1127.33	1288.38	1449.43	1771.53	2093.62	2415.72	2898.86

7. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2013/14**

A report was submitted seeking the council's approval of the Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14, including the Prudential Indicators, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy contained within it.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2013/14 be approved;
- (2) That the Prudential Indicators contained within the report be approved;
- (3) That the Investment Strategy contained within the report be approved;
- (4) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy contained within the report be approved; and
- (5) That the current contract with Sector Treasury Services Limited be extended for a further 12 months.

8. **CAPITAL STRATEGY 2013-16**

A report was submitted to enable the council to consider and approve the Capital Strategy 2013 to 2016.

**Resolved:** That the Capital Strategy be approved.

9. **LOCALISM ACT 2011 - PUBLICATION OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2013/14**

A report was submitted along with the Pay Policy Statement required to be published each financial year in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

**Resolved:** That the Pay Policy Statement as submitted be approved and published on the council's website by 31 March 2013.

10. **REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

The chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees provided a combination of written and verbal reports on the activities of their committees since the last ordinary meeting of the council.

**Resolved:** That the reports be received and the work undertaken by the committees be noted.

11. **REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE STATUTORY COMMITTEES**

The chairs of the Planning, Licensing, Public Protection and Audit and Risk Committees provided a combination of written and verbal reports on the activities of their committees since the last ordinary meeting of the council.

**Resolved:** That the reports be received and the work undertaken by the committees be noted.

**12. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND PROGRESS ON ANY OUTSTANDING PETITIONS**

Written responses were provided in respect of those questions raised at the council meeting held on 28 November 2012, where responses had not been provided at the meeting.

There were no outstanding matters to report in respect of petitions.

**Resolved:** That the answers provided be noted.

**13. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

The following questions were raised by members and the answers indicated provided in response.

**1. Question to the Leader from Councillor Nigel Jones**

What is the current mechanism for providing home security support for vulnerable residents and, in the light of there currently being no take-up of the scheme, can officers investigate improved ways of implementing this scheme such as through the LAPs and report back to the next council meeting?

The Leader referred the question to the relevant portfolio holder.

**Response from Councillor Tony Kearon, portfolio holder for Safer Communities**

Councillor Kearon indicated that the service had previously been delivered via the Handyperson Scheme with 50% of the cost of materials having been met. However, since the county council had withdrawn funding for the Handyperson Scheme funds had now been allocated to cover 100% of labour and materials. Uptake had increased over the last few weeks. Further efforts would be made to publicise the scheme and he would be happy to discuss it outside the meeting.

**Supplementary Question and Response**

Councillor Jones asked whether the portfolio holder would agree that the LAPs could play a useful role in the scheme and whether he would consider channelling funds through them in the spirit of true localism?

Councillor Kearon indicated that, because the scheme used the same criteria as Disabled Facilities Grants, additional training and administration costs were avoided by having the applications processed by the same staff who dealt with the Disabled Facilities Grants. However, he had no objection to LAPs being able to refer residents to the scheme and would encourage their involvement.

**2. Question to the Leader from Councillor Nigel Jones**

Is the current administration planning to fund an officer post to assist community and voluntary groups in obtaining finance from external sources and will this be a full-time or part-time appointment?



The Leader referred the question to the relevant portfolio holder.

**Response from Councillor Mike Stubbs, portfolio holder for Finance and Budget Management**

Councillor Stubbs indicated that there was no such plan, but that a request was pending for an Economic Development post to raise funds for internal use, which would provide advantages to the community.

**3. Question to the Leader from Councillor John Taylor**

In light of the recent revelations that the Government has undertaken pre-consultation with Fire Authorities on a proposal to allow Fire and Rescue Services to contract out 'any or all of their functions', can the leader tell the Council what notification, if any, he has received about the plans?

**Response from Councillor Gareth Snell, Leader of the Council**

The Leader indicated that the first he had known of the proposal had been when Councillor Taylor had brought it to his attention.

**Supplementary Question and Response**

Councillor Taylor indicated that officials had broken the news to all 46 Fire and Rescue Authorities on 21 November 2012 and had had 22 responses. He asked whether the Leader knew if Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority had responded and whether that authority supported the proposals, and requested that the Leader contact the authority to ascertain the position in the county.

The Leader indicated that he would write to County Councillors Bloomer and Tagg in their capacities as chairman and vice-chairman of the authority.

**14. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS**

There were no petitions for receipt.

**15. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES**

**Resolved:** That the following changes to committee memberships and vice-chairmanships be approved:-

- (a) Councillor Dave Stringer to replace Councillor Sophia Baker as a member and vice-chair of the Audit and Risk Committee;
- (b) Councillor Sophia Baker to replace Councillor Matt Taylor as vice-chair of the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee; and
- (c) Councillor Dave Stringer to replace Councillor Matt Taylor as a member of the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee.

**16. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2013/14**

The draft timetable of meetings for 2013/14 was submitted for the council's consideration.

Resolved:

- (1) That, subject to (2) below, the timetable of meetings be approved.
- (2) That the dates of the meetings of the Scrutiny Committees be finalised by officers in consultation with the Scrutiny Committee chairs.

**17. NOTICE OF MOTION**

Notice of the following motion had been submitted by Councillor Loades in accordance with Procedure Rule 12:-

"That this council opposes the HS2 proposed high speed rail line route through the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme after the recent plan for the route has been announced and agree to support the 51m action group."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Howells.

Councillor Jones proposed the following amendment to the motion:-

*That all words after "announced" be deleted and the following be added:-*

*"...and will consider making a detailed response including the principle of joining 51m, to be debated at a future council meeting, and will work to ensure the best outcome for the residents of the borough."*

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Wemyss and, upon being asked whether he would accept it, Councillor Loades declined. It was therefore put to the vote and lost.

Councillor Snell then proposed the following amendment to the motion:-

*That the motion be amended to read:-*

*"That this council does:*

- "1) note the publication of the proposed HS2 route north of Birmingham.*
- "2) commission the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Committee to form a proportionally balanced Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to evaluate the proposals published by the Department for Transport and seek evidence from partners at Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership board, the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce and others before making a report to Cabinet on the environmental and economic impact of the proposals.*
- "3) resolve to formally respond to the consultation launched by the Secretary of State in January 2013 subject to the decision of the Cabinet on the recommendation of the Scrutiny Group mentioned in 2).*
- "4) immediately, via letter, express its disappointment to the Secretary of State for Transport that North Staffordshire has not been included in areas to be serviced by a station for High Speed Rail.*

“5) *continue to engage with local residents, community groups, parish councils and other to ensure that their concerns are also highlighted to the appropriate authorities.*”

Councillor Boden seconded the amendment.

Councillor Jones asked Councillor Snell whether he would be prepared to vary the wording of his amendment and he declined to do so.

Councillor Snell subsequently withdrew his amendment with the consent of the meeting and Councillor Loades' original motion was put to the vote and lost.

**18. URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

The council agreed to send its congratulations to Julia Cleary, Democratic Services Manager, upon the recent birth of her daughter.

**THE MAYOR DAVID BECKET**  
**Chair**

The meeting concluded at 9.35 pm.