

CABINET

Tuesday, 6th September, 2022
Time of Commencement: 2.00 pm

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|---------------------|--|---|
| Present: | Councillor Simon Tagg (Chair) | |
| Councillors: | Sweeney Heesom | Johnson J Waring |
| Apologies: | Councillor(s) Fear | |
| Officers: | Martin Hamilton Geoff Durham Simon McEneny Janet Baddeley Daniel Dickinson Sarah Wilkes | Chief Executive Mayor's Secretary / Member Support Officer Executive Director - Growth and Development Communications Manager Head of Legal & Governance /Monitoring Officer Head of Finance / S151 Officer |

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July be agreed as a correct record.

3. **WALLEYS QUARRY - ODOUR ISSUES**

Cabinet considered a report updating on the current position with odour issues at Walley's Quarry.

Current complaint data to both the Council and the Environment Agency was presented. There had recently been a period of stability at a low level in terms of the Hydrogen Sulphide being recorded at the four monitoring stations. Members were referred to the table at paragraph 4.2 of the report which showed how often the concentrations of hydrogen sulphide exceeded the World Health Organisation's odour annoyance guideline levels. The latest data showed that since June, except for a couple of instances at the Galingale site there had been a consistently low percentage of the annoyance threshold being exceeded.

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The latest figures for complaint data, shown in the table at paragraph 3.1 showed that in June/July, reports to the Council and to the Environment Agency (EA) had declined. However, there had been an increase in the complaints to the EA in August.

It was noted that the level of odour was lower in the summertime than in the winter. The test now as autumn arrived would be to see if the improvement in odour levels was down to the engineering works that had taken place at the site or due to the warmer weather – or a balance of the two.

The Leader agreed that the next few weeks would be a test to see if the works had made a significant difference and the EA's regulation of the site. Reference was made to the Abatement Notice process and the upcoming court case. The Council would continue to do its part in holding the company to account.

It was reported that, within the last few days with the rain returning, the odour could be smelt on Cemetery Lane.

Resolved: That contents of the update report be noted.

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4. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24 TO 2027/28

Cabinet considered a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2027/28.

This was the first part of the budget setting process. At present, there were considerable pressures on the Council due to inflation. Last year, a £400,000 reserve was put into the budget for this year for the cost of living which would mitigate the effects for this year.

The Leader stated that there was a period of uncertainty with inflation costs and the cost of living which the Council was aware of when this years' budget was set and provision would also be made in the next one. A pledge had been made to keep Council Tax below 2% for the next four years.

A letter needed to be sent to the Government, informing them of some of the pressures being faced by this Council including the inflation on some of the investment and regeneration projects which the Council was currently involved in.

Resolved:

- (i) That the funding pressures of £2.249m in 2022/23 and £4.770m over the 5 year period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) be noted.
- (ii) That the approach regarding the development of savings and income generation proposals in the medium term be agreed.
- (iii) That the continued uncertainty regarding the medium term impact of local government funding, COVID-19 and the Cost of Living crisis be noted.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. THE COUNCIL PLAN 2022 - 2026

Cabinet considered a report on the Council Plan for 2022 to 2026. The Plan set out the key visions and priorities for the next four years, based around providing good local services, a prosperous Borough and a safe and welcoming place for all. To achieve these, there were four key priorities:

- One Council delivering for local people
- A successful and sustainable growing Borough
- Healthy and Active safe Communities
- Town Centres for all.

The Plan showed the ambition of continuing to regenerate the town centres, ensuring that they were fit for the future and providing good public services.

The Council had set the goal to become a carbon neutral Authority by 2030 and the Council Plan outlined how this would be done. In addition, working with partners across the County through the Sustainability Board – making the pledge to make the County carbon neutral by 2050. The Council would work with the Business Improvement District and the police to improve the town centre. The new local plan would be put into place, protecting urban green spaces and those around villages and provide the required housing in the right places. Also, enhancing carbon capture areas with over sixty green spaces across the Borough protected for the long term for tree planting.

The achievements over the past four years had been phenomenal, especially taking into account the Covid pandemic

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the Council Plan 2022-26 be approved.
 - (ii) That delegated power be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any necessary refinements to the draft plan prior to publishing on the Council's website.
 - (iii) That the Council Plan 2022-26 be forwarded to Full Council.

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6. **ALTERNATIVE FUELS - RECYCLING AND WASTE AND STREETSCENE HGV'S**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval for the trial use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), for the Council's HGV fleet as part of its commitment to reduce carbon emissions.

HVO was a credible alternative to diesel and would reduce the net CO2 emissions of the Council's vehicles by up to 90%. HVO could only be used in vehicles with Euro 6 engines and all of the Council's HGV's apart from one road sweeper had these engines.

This would be an interim measure as hydrogen was seen to be the emerging technology for HGV's and the Council would be partnering with Keele University to investigate this further.

- Resolved:** That the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO), a renewable

diesel alternative, for the Council's HGV fleet operating in the Recycling & Waste and Street Cleansing operations on a trial basis, be approved.

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7. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT SERVICE FROM 1 APRIL, 2023

Cabinet considered a report seeking authority to proceed with preparations to deliver the Disabled Facility Grants from 1 April, 2023 when the current contract would end.

The grants were for home adaptations and the funding was from Central Government via the Better Care Fund managed by the County Council. The responsibility for the fund and putting it in place lay with this Council.

Members were referred to the Project Plan appended to the report. The Occupational Therapy Services were previously provided by Staffordshire County Council and it was now being considered to return it to be a locally sourced occupational therapy support service.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the project plan for activities leading up to the new service on 1st April 2023, be approved, noting that regular progress updates will be provided by the Executive Director for Sustainable Environment to the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Well-being.
 - (ii) That the Executive Director for Sustainable Environment be authorised, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing, to agree the appointment of a contractor to deliver the Occupational Therapy expertise to the service following a competitive tendering process led by Stafford Borough Council
 - (iii) That the use of the Dynamic Purchasing System, being developed in partnership with 4 other Staffordshire Local Authorities, be approved for obtaining estimates from suitable contractors for adaptation works.

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8. COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF 12 CHEDDAR DRIVE, SILVERDALE, NEWCASTLE, STAFFORDSHIRE. ST5 6QR

Cabinet considered a report seeking authority to compulsory purchase 12 Cheddar Drive and to dispose of the property ensuring that it would be brought back into use as a home.

Every effort had been made to trace the owner of the property which had been left in a state of disrepair for several years. A confidential appendix was attached to this agenda at item 14.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the serving of the necessary legal papers to acquire 12 Cheddar Drive, Newcastle, Staffordshire, ST5 6QR, through Compulsory Purchase under Part II and section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 be approved.
 - (ii) That the subsequent disposal of the property through the

most appropriate means to bring it back into use as a home be approved.

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9. **FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT - FIRST QUARTER (APRIL-JUNE) 2022-23**

Cabinet considered the regular performance review report for Quarter 1, April – June, 2022.

Resolved: That the contents of the attached report and Appendices A and B be noted and Cabinet will continue to monitor and challenge the Council's performance alongside its financial performance for the same period.

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10. **FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Forward Plan listing upcoming key decisions to be made by Cabinet.

Resolved: that the Forward Plan be received.

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11. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

12. **DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

Resolved:- That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration if the following matter because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs contained within Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

13. **COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF 12 CHEDDAR DRIVE, SILVERDALE, NEWCASTLE, STAFFORDSHIRE. ST5 6QR - CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX**

Consideration was given to the confidential appendix which formed part of the report at item 9 on this agenda.

Resolved: That the information in the confidential appendix be noted.

**Councillor Simon Tagg
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 2.47 pm