

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in a virtual environment on Monday 14th September 2020.

Present:

Councillors D Goodfellow (Chairman), G Allen, E W R Barker, R A Faulkner and B G Peters.

Officers Present:

The Chief Executive, the Heads of Service (Sal Khan and Mark Rizk), the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Accountant (min no 99/20 only), the Corporate and Commercial Manager (min no 97/20-102/20 inclusive only), the Shared Services Centre Manager (Human Resources, Organisational Development and Payments) (min no 98/20 only), the Waste Minimisation Officer (min no 103/20 – 104/20 inclusive) and the Principal Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present:

Cabinet Support Member Councillor S McGarry.

An apology for absence was received from Cabinet Support Member Councillor Mrs B Ashcroft.

PART II

93/20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations at the commencement of the meeting.

94/20 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

95/20 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business submitted to the meeting pursuant to Rule 12.

96/20 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period 1st September 2020 to 31st December 2020 was submitted for information.

NOTED.

97/20 **PROCUREMENT POLICY 2020**

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the newly developed Procurement Policy was considered.

The following appendices had been circulated with the report for the meeting:

- Appendix 1: Procurement Policy;
- Appendix 2: Equality and Health Impact Assessment.

Cabinet noted that the Procurement Policy had been developed to build upon the Council's well embedded approach detailed in previous Procurement Strategies, and was intended to support compliance with the Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Regulations, which formed part of the Council's Constitution. The Policy incorporated methods and techniques designed to meet the varying requirements of the Council and would continue to assist in the delivery of high quality services to support strategic priorities while ensuring Value for Money.

The reasons for making the decision below were set out in the report.

Resolved:

That the Procurement Policy be adopted.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

98/20 **APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2020 REPORTING**

The report of the Chief Executive on the update on ESBC progress against the apprenticeship target for public bodies was considered. The following appendices had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting:

- Appendix 1 New starters spreadsheet;

- Appendix 2 Suggested narrative for publication.

Cabinet noted that the Council was required to report annually on progress towards meeting the target for those public sector employers of over 250 employees (headcount) to employ an average of 2.3% of their headcount (not FTE) as new apprentice starts between 1 April 2017 and March 2021. The 'starts' could be newly employed apprenticeships or existing employees that had begun apprenticeships. The next return should be submitted by 30th September 2020. In reporting ESBC "should appropriately demonstrate in their returns that they have had regard to the target".

The reasons for making the decision below were set out in the report.

Resolved:

That the report include a narrative to explain the Council's apprentice starts compared to FTE employees, and proportion of suitable vacancies; the Council's commitment to the apprentices employed in longer term apprenticeships and real jobs and the challenge of lack of suitable apprenticeship standards available in areas where the Council needed to develop skills for future needs (appendix 2 refers).

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

99/20

QUARTER 1 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2020/21

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the forecast outturn position in relation to the Council's revenue budget, capital programme of expenditure, treasury and risk management activities was considered.

The following appendices had been circulated with the report

- Appendix A: Forecast variances against budget at outturn 2020/21;
- Appendix B: Investments at 30th June 2020;
- Appendix C: Corporate and Strategic Risks – Quarter 1 2020/21.

Cabinet noted the forecast net pressures against the original budget of £2.2m for the full financial year against a net budget of £11.024m and that the vast majority of these pressures had arisen due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and related lockdown. The Government had provided a number of funding packages to local authorities to support them with Covid-19 related financial pressures and that once this actual and estimated additional funding of £2.1m was taken into consideration, the forecast net pressures amounted to £0.1m.

The reasons for making the decision below were set out in the report.

Resolved:

That the financial position at quarter one of 2020/21 in relation to revenue and capital budgets together with the degree of financial uncertainty that existed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic be noted;

That the latest position in respect of the Council's investments and borrowing be noted;

That the corporate and strategic risks, together with actions being taken to manage these be noted.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

100/20

CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21 QUARTER 1

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the update on progress at the end of the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year towards achieving the priorities set out in East Staffordshire Borough Council's Corporate Plan was considered.

The following appendices had been circulated with the report:

- Appendix 1: Contains comprehensive data on all Corporate Indicators;
- Appendix 2: Contains comprehensive data for Quarter 1 2020/21 from the benchmarking exercise coordinated by East Staffordshire Borough Council;
- Appendix 3: Contains comprehensive data on the benchmarking exercise for the end of year 2019/20 coordinated by East Staffordshire Borough Council.

Cabinet noted that of the 109 indicators in total for the three corporate priorities, 68 were green, 4 were amber, 3 were red, 24 were not yet due to be reported on; 8 had been deferred and 2 had been deleted and of the 75 "live" targets, 90.67% were green status; 5.33% were amber status and 4% were green status. Following an appraisal of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the delivery of the Corporate Plan targets, an Executive Decision had been taken to revise 25 targets, which included agreeing targets for 10 indicators, amending 4 targets, the deferral of 8 targets, the deletion of 2 targets and the introduction of 1 new target as detailed in EDR number 232/20. The report provided an update against the revised set of targets.

The reasons for making the decision below were set out in the report.

Resolved:

That performance at the end of the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year towards achieving the Council's Corporate Priorities be considered.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

101/20

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2020

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the Annual review letter showing complaints about the Borough Council dealt with by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) for the year ended 31st March 2020 was considered.

The following appendices had been circulated with the report:

- Appendix 1:Annual Review Letter 2020;
- Appendix 2:Spreadsheet providing additional information on the complaints and enquiries received and decisions made in the period;
- Appendix 3:Formal Complaints Per Local Authority Breakdown.

Cabinet noted the positive nature of the Ombudsman's annual letter and that most of the formal complaints submitted to the Council had been resolved at Stage 1 of the complaints procedure; and that few complaints had proceeded to stage 2 or stage 3 of the procedure. None of the complaints that had eventually been submitted to the Local Government Ombudsman had been upheld.

The reasons for making the decision below were set out in the report.

Resolved:

That the Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2020 be received and noted.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

102/20

COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING UPDATE (OCTOBER 2020)

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the latest situation and associated response in East Staffordshire by the Council and its partners to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was considered.

Cabinet noted that the report included a backwards looking review of the response activities considering all relevant aspects of the response including considerations regarding: People & Processes; Service Changes & Communications; Community & Partners and Finances and that throughout the response to the COVID-19 situation, critical services had continued.

Cabinet placed on record their collective thanks to all Council staff for the hard work being carried out in continuing to deliver Council services during the pandemic.

The reasons for making the decision below were set out in the report.

Resolved:

That the update detailed within the report be noted.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor D Goodfellow		
Councillor G Allen		
Councillor E W R Barker		
Councillor R A Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		

103/20

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.