

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in a virtual environment on Monday 16th November 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 Corporate and Commercial Manager (min no 122/20 only), the Environmental Health Manager (min no 123/20 only), the Planning Manager (Min no 124/20 only) and the Principal Democratic Services Officer.

Also Present:

Cabinet Support Members Councillors Mrs B Ashcroft and S McGarry.

PART II

118/20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor D Goodfellow declared an ordinary interest in respect of minute no 122/20, as a family member owned property within the selective licensing area, he left the meeting whilst this matter was discussed and did not vote thereon.

119/20 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 26th October 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		

120/20 **URGENT BUSINESS**

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

121/20 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period 1st November 2020 to 28th February 2021 was submitted for information.

NOTED.

122/20 **COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING UPDATE (NOVEMBER 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 recent 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.

Councillor E W R Barker placed on record his thanks to the Leader on behalf of the Cabinet for all of hard work carried out by him during the COVID-19 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		

123/20 **SELECTIVE LICENSING SCHEME EVALUATION – YEAR 3**

At this juncture Councillor D Goodfellow left the meeting and Councillor E W Barker took the chair for the duration of this item only.

The report of the Head of Service (Mark Rizk) on the third year of operations of the Selective Licensing Scheme Pilot and the annual review of the Selective Licensing Fees was considered.

Cabinet noted that the designation had been successful in tackling the poor housing conditions within the selective licensing area, with the vast majority of rented properties being licensed, or in the process of a licence being issued. Four landlords were subject to legal action due to non-compliance with the scheme. Whilst all valid applications had been granted a licence, a number of properties had not had an initial inspection undertaken due to covid-19 restrictions. Whilst there had been a reduction of inspections and revisits due to Covid-19 restrictions, compliance with the scheme had increased, and there had been no significant increase of complaints within the area or an increase in homelessness figures.

It was noted that in accordance with government advice issued on 28th March 2020 on proposed licensing schemes it had been necessary to put on hold the consultation on the future expansion of the scheme. A review of the feedback received indicated that the majority of residents were in support of the scheme to improve housing conditions, reduce anti-social behaviour and improve the area, whereas the majority of landlords and letting agents strongly disagreed to the proposal, stating that there were no issues with property conditions in the proposal areas and that the proposal would not improve property standards.

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

Resolved:

That the ongoing designation of the selective licensing pilot scheme for the remaining 2 years until 11 September 2022 be approved and an annual review be undertaken in 2021 in accordance with the Selective Licensing Policy.

Voting concerning the above decision was as follows:

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

124/20

BROWNFIELD SITE REGISTER – PART 2

At this juncture Councillor D Goodfellow re-joined the meeting and resumed the Chair.

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations and specifically “part 2” of the register was considered.

Cabinet noted that as part of the requirements to publish a brownfield site register since 2017, Local Planning Authorities could choose to enter sites in a 'part 2' register which would give the site planning permission in principle. It was highlighted that whilst there were benefits to preparing a part 2 register, there were also cost and resource implications which were set out at section 4.6 of the report. The required resources of a Part 2 register would go above and beyond the financial commitments required for a Part 1 Register and beyond the 'new burdens' grant provided to local planning authorities.

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

Resolved:

That the Brownfield Register Part 1 continue to be updated on an annual basis, without identifying any sites under part 2.

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		

125/20

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.