

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Coltman VC Room at the Town Hall, Burton upon Trent on Tuesday 18th October 2022.

Present:

Councillors R Faulkner (Vice-Chairman), Mrs B Ashcroft, B G Peters and S Sankey.

Officers Present:

The Chief Executive, the Heads of Service (Sal Khan, Mark Rizk and Thomas Deery), the Monitoring Officer and the Programmes and Transformation Officer Team Leader.

Also Present:

Cabinet Support Members Councillors A Clarke and M Metcalfe.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G Allen.

PART II

301/22 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations at the commencement of the meeting.

302/22 **MINUTES**

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2022 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 Mrs B Ashcroft		
Councillor B G Peters		
Councillor S Sankey		

303/22 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business prior to the commencement of the meeting.

304/22 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan for the period 1st September 2022 to 31st December 2022 was submitted for information.

NOTED

PROCUREMENT POLICY UPDATE 2022

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the procurement policy update 2022 was considered. The report provided an overview of the refreshed Procurement Policy which was recommended for approval and implementation within the Council.

The Procurement Policy Update 2022 continued to detail all considerations that need to be incorporated into a procurement exercise. It now include strengthened actions for maximising opportunities for local supply while maintaining compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. As a local authority they follow the necessary rules to ensure that the procurement of goods and services was open, fair and transparent ensuring that the Borough of East Staffordshire received good quality at a competitive price.

The revised Procurement Policy aimed to look at how the procurement process could be made more appropriate for potential suppliers to bid for opportunities, and also how the procurement of goods and services could benefit the Borough. The Council would try to encourage more businesses, including local businesses to engage in procurement by breaking bigger contracts down into smaller ones or smaller lots, and by making the process to bid for contracts as simple as it can (within the rules and regulations that it has to observe).

Cost will always play a role in fair procurement of goods and services, but where possible the Council could maximise local opportunities, and the revised Policy would enhance the existing framework for delivering that. It is also important to look at more than just the financial cost. The Council should also look at what additional value, or benefit, they would get from what they are buying, e.g. the construction of new buildings and developments could benefit local companies through them supplying materials and labour, and locality through employment opportunities either during construction or afterwards in the new businesses which move into these new developments.

Similarly if goods are sourced from local businesses, then this not only cuts down on our carbon footprint (supporting the Council's Climate Change Action Plan), but also supports these local businesses and communities. This then creates a ripple effect with local workers having better financial stability and available income to enjoy businesses in their area such as shops and restaurants ensuring the proceeds of business supports communities.

Whilst the revised Procurement Policy may not give all the answers instantly, it provided the necessary steps to build on the current solid base and further maximise opportunities for businesses.

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor Mrs B Ashcroft		
Councillor R Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		
Councillor S Sankey		

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REVIEW LETTER 2022

The report of the Head of Service (Sal Khan) on the local government ombudsman annual review letter 2022 was considered.

The purpose of the report was for Members to note the contents of the Annual Review Letter showing complaints about East Staffordshire Borough Council dealt with by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Of the 6 complaints and enquiries received by the LGO relating to the Council: 3 were categorised as “Environmental Services and Public Protection & Regulation”; 2 were categorised as “Benefits & Tax”; and 1 was categorised as “Planning & Development”.

Of the 7 decisions made by the LGO 5 were not formally investigated (3 referred back for local resolution, 1 closed after initial enquiries; and 1 with advice given). As mentioned above, of the 2 investigations, 1 complaint was upheld and 1 complaint was not upheld.

Just 2 detailed investigations relating to the Council were carried out by the LGO for the period 2021/22, with just 1 of the 2 complaints being upheld.

A total of 34 formal complaints were received by the Council during the 2021/22 financial year, a decrease from the 50 complaints received in the previous financial year. The vast majority of formal complaints were resolved at Stage 1 of the procedure.

Those voting for the motion	Those voting against	Those abstaining
Councillor Mrs B Ashcroft		
Councillor R Faulkner		
Councillor B G Peters		
Councillor S Sankey		

NOTED

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.

