

Chair - Councillor R P Cooke

Present (for all or part of the meeting):-

Councillors:

A R G Brown

M G Dodson

A T A Godfrey

A S Harp

R A James

J A Nixon

G P K Pardesi

P Roycroft

Cabinet Member - Councillor J K Price - Environment Portfolio

Cabinet Member - Councillor R M Smith - Resources Portfolio

Cabinet Member - Councillor C V Trowbridge - Leisure Portfolio

Also in Attendance - Councillor A D Hobbs (Arrived Late)

Officers in attendance:-

Mr B Kean

Mr I Curran

Mr B Kean

Mr N Raby

Mr R Simpson

Mr P Kendrick

Dr T Redpath

Mr R Wolfe

Mr A Bailey

- Head of Finance

- Head of Law and Administration

- Head of Finance

- Head of Human Resources and Property
Services

- Head of Operations

- Head of Technology

- Corporate Business and Partnerships
Manager

- Revenues and Benefits Manager

- Scrutiny Officer

RSC63 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 12 January 2021, as previously circulated, were submitted and signed.

RSC64 Apologies

An Apology for absence was received from Councillor M V Holmes (Substitute G P K Pardesi).

RSC65 Councillor Session

Councillor A D Hobbs had submitted the following item under Paragraph 2.7(c)(ii) of the Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules:

“I would like to ask the committee to look at ways Stafford Borough Council can help vulnerable people who get themselves into financial difficulties, especially Council Tax arrears. Also can I request our financial colleagues explain to the committee how vulnerable people are asked to pay outstanding bills”.

Councillor A D Hobbs was not present for this part of the meeting. Accordingly, the Revenues and Benefits Manager agreed to provide a written response to the Councillor session item.

RESOLVED:- that in exercise of the powers delegated to the Committee, a written response be provided to the Councillor Session Item.

RSC66 Recovery Programme Update

Considered the report of the Corporate Business and Partnerships Manager concerning an update for the Committee regarding the work that had been undertaken in quarter three as part of the Recovery Programme.

The Corporate Business and Partnerships Manager reported that there were huge difficulties and challenges that lay ahead for each of the recovery workstreams as officers tried to navigate through a third lockdown and continue to respond to the pandemic at the same time as delivering business as usual. All of the four recovery workstreams were trying to gain an understanding of the longer-term impact of the pandemic on the economy, community and our own activities. This was being kept under constant review as the landscape on which the Council was working was subject to continual change. The report set out the progress being made against each of the four recovery workstreams.

The Committee discussed the following aspects of the report with the Cabinet Member (Resources Portfolio), the Head of Finance and the Corporate Business and Partnerships Manager:-

- A thank you to all staff and Members that had and continued to provide support to vulnerable residents throughout the Borough
- An update on the financial assistance provided by the Government as part of the Council’s Financial Recovery
- The financial implications of the Pandemic on Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy

RESOLVED:- that in exercise of the powers delegated to the Committee, the report be noted.

RSC67 Quarter 3 Performance Reporting

The Committee considered the performance and financial management details for those areas within the remit of the Committee for the quarter 3 period up to 31 December 2020.

The Committee discussed the following aspects of the report with the Cabinet Member (Resources Portfolio), the Cabinet Member (Environment Portfolio), the Head of Human Resources, the Head of Operations and the Corporate Business and Partnerships Manager:-

- LI19 - % Calls Abandoned – An explanation as why there was underperformance during this quarter and the impact of the chargeable garden waste service
- LI21 – Days taken to process new Housing Benefit/Council Tax Claims - An explanation as to why there was underperformance in the area
- Clarification of the reasons for the staffing variations and confirmation that vacant posts would be filled where appropriate

RESOLVED:- that in exercise of the powers delegated to the Committee, the performance and financial management data relating to areas of activity within this Committee's remit be noted.

RSC68 Review of the Constitution

A meeting of the Review of the Constitution Task and Finish Review Working Group had been held immediately prior to this Committee, which had considered a number of recommended amendments to the Constitution.

The Committee subsequently confirmed that those amendments to the Constitution as recommended by the Task and Finish Review Working Group, be presented to Council at its next meeting due to be held on 20 April 2021.

RESOLVED:- that in exercise of the powers delegated to the Committee, the recommendations of the Review of the Constitution Task and Finish Review Working Group, be presented to Council at its next meeting due to be held on 20 April 2021.

RSC69 Work Programme - Resources Scrutiny Committee

Considered the report of the Head of Law and Administration, which presented the Resources Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

The Committee discussed the scheduling of the Freedom Leisure Annual Report in their Work Programme.

RESOLVED:- that in exercise of the powers delegated to the Committee, the Work Programme be approved, subject to the amendments made during the meeting.

CHAIR