

Chairman - Councillor W J Kemp

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

Councillors:

C A Baron

B M Cross

A S Harp

E G R Jones

D McNaughton

Also present:-

Cabinet Member - Councillor F Beatty - Economic Development and
Planning Portfolio

Cabinet Member - Councillor J M Pert - Community and Health Portfolio

Cabinet Member – Councillor C V Trowbridge - Leisure Portfolio

Councillors A T A Godfrey and B McKeown.

Officers in attendance:-

Mr T Clegg

Mr R Simpson

Mrs E Fullagar

Dr T Redpath

Mr A Yendole

Mr A Bailey

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Chief Executive

Head of Operations

Interim Head of Finance

Corporate Business and Partnerships
Manager

Strategic Planning and Placemaking
Manager

Scrutiny Officer

EDP6 Minutes

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 June 2021, as previously published on the Council's website, were submitted and signed.

EDP7 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J A Barron, P A Leason and M Phillips.

EDP8 Councillor Session

Councillor B McKeown had submitted an item for consideration by the Committee in accordance with paragraph 2.7c (i) of the Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules as follows:-

1. At a Stafford Borough Council Cabinet meeting on July 4 2019, members of the Cabinet considered a report submitted by Cllr Carolyn Trowbridge, Cabinet Member for Leisure; The report was entitled "Planning Obligations" with a particular focus on the internal administration process for "collecting, monitoring and allocating financial contributions from existing and future Planning Obligations." (i.e.) Section 106 agreements.
2. Appendix 2 to the report provided a list of 24 developments from which a total of £972,420 had been received from developers, which remained unspent in the Council's coffers. The 'oldest' developer contribution remaining unspent was received in May 2010 from a development on Doxey/Castletown. The remaining 23 contributions listed were received between December 2015 and September 2018.
3. The report acknowledged "the current process for allocating S106 agreements is the same irrespective of the project value. It is proposed that in order to streamline the process, projects under £50,000 be approved under delegated authority to Head of Development and the Portfolio Holder for Leisure."
- 4 The report also acknowledged that agreements laid out in Appendix 2 "need to be formally allocated to projects. ... the process for allocating the funds to a particular project will be subject to consultation with Local Councillors irrespective of the amount."

Question submitted by Councillor Brendan McKeown.

- Q1. "Can the Cabinet Member for the Leisure Portfolio, please provide an update on what actions have been taken since July 2019? In particular, which measures have been implemented to streamline the Section 106 process for projects under £50,000 to be approved under delegated authority to Head of Development and the Portfolio Holder for Leisure."
- Q2. "Can the Cabinet Member provide an assurance that the above streamlined process will be in place by December 31 2021 or sooner?"
- Q3. "Point 3.10 of the July 4 2019 Cabinet report says "To ensure Local Ward Members are involved in the process it is proposed that they will be invited to an initial meeting." When will that meeting be arranged?"

The Cabinet Member (Leisure Portfolio) provided the following response:-

- Q1 - Provided an update on Section 106 Agreements since July 2019. Affirmation that projects worth up to £50,000 had been delegated to the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Head of Development. Projects had been undertaken in Holmcroft Road, Charnley Road, Victoria Park and Westbridge Park. An appointment for a dedicated Section 106 Agreements Officer would shortly be made.
- Q2 - Confirmation that the above streamlined process would be in place by December 31 2021.
- Q3 - An explanation of the Ward Member in the Section 106 process involvement in both rural and town areas and the need to follow the due legal process in all cases.

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

EDP9 Members' Item

Councillor C A Baron had submitted the following item under Paragraph 2.8 of the Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules:-

“As it is some time since committee discussed the future of the Indoor Market and, taking into account the new owners of the Guildhall Centre and the market building, will the officers please update committee on the immediate future of the market.”

In response, the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Planning Portfolio) and the Head of Operations explained the following:-

- Confirmation that the immediate future of the indoor market and traders was safe
- New traders were continually adding to the indoor market in spite of difficult trading conditions
- Traders would be kept informed of any future developments as long as they were not commercially sensitive
- The indoor market would continue to be part of Stafford life

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

EDP10 Stafford Transformed

Considered the report of the Head of Development that provided the Committee with an update on the progress across a number of regeneration projects within Stafford.

The Committee discussed the following regeneration projects within Stafford with the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Planning Portfolio) and the Chief Executive:-

- Stafford Town Centre Transformation
- Stafford Station Gateway
- Victoria Park
- Stafford Western Access Route
- Shire Hall Repurposing
- Staffordshire History centre
- Eastgate
- Stafford College Skills and Innovation Hub
- Wren House, Stafford and Rural Homes

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

EDP11 **Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring**

The Committee considered the performance management details for those areas within the remit of the Committee for the quarter 1 period up to 30 June 2021.

The Committee discussed the following aspects of the report with the Cabinet Member (Economic Development and Planning Portfolio), the Cabinet Member (Community and Health Portfolio), the Chief Executive, the Head of Operations, the Interim Head of Finance, the Corporate Business and Partnerships Manager and the Strategic Planning and Placemaking Manager:-

- 1.2.2 - Continue to supply affordable housing working with Registered Providers and Homes England - an explanation of the demand for affordable housing and the Local Plan process
- 1.2.3 - Improve and maintain performance of development management and local land charges from April 2018 for 3 years - an explanation of the performance and the measures in place for improvement, staffing levels and the need for an update on at the next meeting
- 1.3.3 - Supporting the development of Meecebrook Garden Community - an update on when work was likely to commence on site
- 1.3.7 - Monitor land sales for potential new Gypsy and Traveller site - an update on the search for new Gypsy and Traveller sites
- 1.4.1 - Develop Stafford as a hub of productivity to help businesses develop, grow and thrive - the Committee to be provided with further information as to how many businesses had received a grant
- 1.4.4 - Support the facilitation of lifelong learning to create a local workforce with specialist skills that can respond to growth ambitions -

the Committee to be provided with further information as to how many businesses had received a grant

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

EDP12 **Work Programme – Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee**

Considered the report of the Head of Law and Administration, which presented the Economic Development and Planning Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for the forthcoming meetings up to February 2022.

The Committee discussed the following additions to the Work Programme:-

- Development Management Update
- Stafford Borough Wide projects
- Stafford Town Centre and Market Update
- Stafford Borough Rural Strategy

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

CHAIR