

Chair - Councillor A T A Godfrey

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

Councillors:

R P Cooke	-	Resources Portfolio
I D Fordham	-	Environment Portfolio
J Hood	-	Community Portfolio
R Kenney	-	Deputy Leader
G P K Pardesi	-	Leisure Portfolio
A F Reid	-	Economic Development and Planning Portfolio
A N Pearce	-	Climate Change Portfolio

Also present - Councillors A P Edgeller and L Nixon

Officers in attendance:

T Clegg	-	Chief Executive
A Nevin	-	Head of Wellbeing
W Conaghan	-	Press and Communication Manager
J Dean	-	Democratic Services Officer

CAB56 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024 as published on 19 January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

CAB57 Funding for Voluntary Sector Organisations

Considered a report seeking approval for the extension of support given by the Council to voluntary sector organisations for a 12 month period commencing from April 2024. During which time a review would be undertaken of the authority's approach to supporting the voluntary sector.

The Cabinet Member, Community Portfolio introduced the report noting the detail as contained within paragraphs 1 and 3.

Councillor Hood concluded her comments by recommending that the proposals as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

The Cabinet subsequently voted on the recommendation, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the proposals of the Cabinet Member, Community Portfolio, be approved as follows:

That:-

- (a) approval of the spend of £130,250 to enable the extension of current grant agreements for a further year be supported;
- (b) Officers carry out a review of the approach to supporting the voluntary sector and working with the sector to deliver the Council's corporate objectives.

CAB58 Permission to Spend - Stafford

Considered a report requesting permission to spend the funding award of Contain Outbreak Management Funds allocated by Staffordshire County Council via the Health Inequalities Directors' Group (HIDG) to tackle health inequalities in the borough.

The Cabinet Member, Community Portfolio introduced the report noting the detail as contained within paragraphs 1, 3 and 5.

Councillor Hood concluded her comments by recommending that the proposals as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

The Cabinet subsequently voted on the recommendation, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the proposals of the Cabinet Member, Community Portfolio, be approved as follows:

That:-

- (a) permission to spend the £193,833 funding allocated to Stafford Borough Council in relation to 4 separate projects, identified to deliver interventions in housing and health hot spot areas and strengthening existing health and wellbeing programmes be granted;
- (b) authority be delegated to the Head of Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet member the detailed split of the funding, based on the four projects proposed:
 - (i) Proactive Housing Repair Service;
 - (ii) Right Stuff Boxing trauma informed approach for children at risk of exclusion;
 - (iii) Station Gateway Health Impact Assessment;
 - (iv) Vaping and e-cigarettes reducing use by children and young people.

CAB59 Permission to Spend - Hotel Accommodation, Stafford

Considered a report requesting permission retrospectively to spend the funding allocation from the Home Office in relation to the costs associated with the operating of a hotel housing those seeking asylum in Stafford.

The Cabinet Member, Community Portfolio introduced the report noting the detail as contained within paragraphs 1, 3 and 5.

Councillor Hood concluded her comments by recommending that the proposal as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

The Cabinet subsequently voted on the recommendation, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the proposal of the Cabinet Member, Community Portfolio, be approved as follows:

That permission to spend the £50,250 funding allocated to Stafford Borough Council in relation to the costs incurred by the Council arising from the operation and use of the hotel for housing asylum seekers be approved (the detailed split of the funding, based on commitments incurred be delegated to the Head of Wellbeing in consultation with the Cabinet Member).

CAB60 Council Tax Charges in Respect of Unoccupied Dwellings

Considered a report:-

- informing members of new powers that have been given to them in respect of Council Tax charges on certain unoccupied dwellings; and
- recommending that, at its meeting on 27 February 2024, Council resolve to introduce charges in line with those new powers and the remove the 12-month exemption currently given to some uninhabitable dwellings, with effect from 1 April 2024.

The Cabinet Member, Resources Portfolio introduced the report noting the detail as contained within paragraphs 1, 3, 5, 6 and the associated appendix.

Councillor Cooke concluded his comments by recommending that the proposals as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

Councillor I D Fordham welcomed the report which proposed positive actions which would benefit the whole community.

The Cabinet subsequently voted on the recommendation, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the proposals of the Cabinet Member, Resources Portfolio, be approved as follows:

That:-

- (a) the report be noted;
- (b) Council be recommended to resolve to end the current 12-month exemption given to properties which are unoccupied, substantially unfurnished, uninhabitable and in need of or undergoing major repair or structural alteration with effect from 1 April 2024;
- (c) Council be recommended to resolve to introduce a 100% Premium be added to the Council Tax liability in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for 12 months with effect from 1 April 2024;
- (d) Council be recommended to resolve to introduce a 100% Premium to the Council Tax liability in respect of properties which are not occupied as any person's sole or main residence and are substantially furnished (often referred to as second homes) with effect from 1 April 2025.

THIS ITEM IS NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN AND WILL BE REFERRED TO COUNCIL ON 27 FEBRUARY 2024

CHAIR