

Councillor Tony Nixon (Mayor)

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

Councillors:

J A Barron	W J Kemp
R J Barron	R Kenney
F Beatty	P A Leason
R P Cooke	A M Loughran
A G Cooper	B McKeown
B M Cross	D McNaughton
M G Dodson	J A Nixon
A P Edgeller	G P K Pardesi
P M M Farrington	A N Pearce
I D Fordham	J M Pert
A T A Godfrey	M Phillips
A S Harp	J K Price
M V Holmes	P Roycroft
J Hood	R M Smith
R A James	R M Sutherland
E G R Jones	C V Trowbridge
P W Jones	M J Winnington

Officers in attendance:-

Mr T Clegg	-	Chief Executive
Mr I Curran	-	Head of Law and Administration
Mr A Bailey	-	Scrutiny Officer

C65 Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 February 2022 were agreed as a true and correct record.

C66 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C A Baron, A R G Brown, M Green, A D Hobbs and L Nixon.

C67 Announcements

(a) Ladies Lunch

The Mayor announced thanked all those Members that attended Ladies Lunch that was held at Stafford College on Thursday 31 March 2022. The event raised in the region of £400 for the Charity Appeal.

(b) Mayor's Quiz Night

The Mayor announced that the Mayor's Quiz Night would be held on Monday 25 April 2022 and anyone interested in joining in this event, should contact the Mayor's Office.

(c) Civic Dinner

The Mayor announced that the Civic Dinner would be held on Friday 29 April 2022 at the County Buildings and anyone wishing to attend should contact the Mayor's Office

(d) The War in Ukraine

The Leader of the Council announced all the measures in place to assist those refugees fleeing from the war in Ukraine to settle in Stafford Borough.

C68 Notice of Motion

A Notice of Motion pursuant to Paragraph 13.1 of the Council Procedure Rules had been submitted proposed by Councillor F Beatty and seconded by Councillor J K Price as follows:-

“Stafford Borough Draft Nature Recovery Declaration

The Council recognises that:

Nature is in long term decline. With 41 per cent of wild species in decline nationally, and 15 per cent facing extinction. The requirement to take action to reverse this is urgent. We recognise that:

- (a) Nature provides us with vital support systems [‘ecosystem services’], and severe declines in biodiversity are undermining nature’s productivity and adaptability, posing excessive uncertainty for our economies and wellbeing.
- (b) A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, happy, prosperous society.

- (c) The impacts of climate change are contributing to nature's decline, while restoring and protection of natural habitat provides a wide variety of cost-effective benefits to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- (d) Many of our areas of work across the Borough have an impact on nature, and we have responsibilities to make decisions to protect and enhance it.

This Council further acknowledges that:

To address the nature crisis and aim to achieve the multiple environmental benefits that nature can bring to people, the 'Bigger, Better, More and Joined-up' principles of the 2010 Lawton Report - 'Making Space for Nature' - should be followed to help rebuild nature:

- (a) There must be more space given to wildlife.
- (b) Existing wildlife spaces must be expanded.
- (c) The quality of existing wildlife spaces should be improved by better habitat management.
- (d) The connectivity between wildlife spaces must be enhanced.

In order to support the recovery of nature across Stafford Borough, and in recognition of new obligations under the Environment Act 2021, this council commits to:

- (1) Improve and protect the Borough's habitats resilience to climate change, providing natural solutions to reduce carbon and manage flood risk, and sustaining vital ecosystems
- (2) Prioritise the restoration of natural habitats in accordance with Stafford Borough's Nature Recovery Network Map.
- (3) Formulate a tree planting policy which is underpinned by Nature Recovery Network mapping across the local authority area, pursuing a "right tree, right place" approach. Recognise that tree planting can be deleterious to habitat restoration and should only be planned on land with low ecological value/restoration potential.
- (4) Seek to manage council-owned land for the benefit of wildlife
- (5) Embed nature's recovery into all strategic plans and policy areas, not just those directly related to the environment. Ensure the Local Nature Recovery Strategy is well understood across the authority and complements other relevant plans and strategies.
- (6) Working with partners, demonstrate leadership by supporting and engaging with businesses, communities and the wider public to take action to put nature into recovery.

- (7) The Council designates the Councils Economic Development and Planning Cabinet Member as portfolio lead for Nature Recovery and also a lead officer to coordinate the council operations in relation to the ecological emergency.
- (8) Integrate the targets, objectives and outcomes of this motion with those outlined in the existing Climate Change and Green Recovery Strategy to ensure measures to tackle climate issues do not contravene the principles of enhancing biodiversity. The value of well managed heathland, wetland and other habitats of principal importance in sequestering carbon is of equal importance and must be acknowledged.
- (9) Where appropriate, and in accordance with the council's Climate Change and Green Recovery Strategy, the council will invest in nature-based solutions to climate change in order to tackle the nature crisis and climate emergency together.
- (10) Support the development of a Staffordshire wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and through the recently commissioned Nature Recovery Network Mapping, develop a local evidence-based action plan including short and long-term targets for putting nature into recovery by 2040, in accordance with the council's climate change obligations. Areas of focus will include:
 - Land management
 - Biodiversity
 - Roads and highways
 - Planning and development
 - Air quality
 - Transforming urban spaces
 - Health and wellbeing
 - People and communities
 - Education and awareness
- (11) That the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitor the Local Nature Recovery work and the council's action to support biodiversity and nature recovery on an annual basis.
- (12) Work closely with Stafford Borough's partners via the recently formed Staffordshire Sustainability Board and other organisations to promote Local Nature Recovery."

Members discussed the Motion as provided by paragraph 15 of the Council Procedure Rules. During the discussion, an amendment to the Motion was proposed by Councillor A N Pearce, seconded by Councillor A T A Godfrey that the following additional commitment be added:-

“(13) To bring forward an action plan to achieve these targets setting out how and the dates that they will be achieved and that this be brought back to Council within 6 months.”

Members discussed the amendment to the Motion as provided by paragraph 15 of the Council Procedure Rules and at the conclusion of the debate voted on the amendment to the motion which, was declared to be lost.

Members then continued to discuss the original Motion as provided by paragraph 15 of the Council Procedure Rules and at the conclusion of the debate voted on the motion which, was declared to be carried.

C69 Interim Position Report - First Stage of the Business Case for the Extension of the Shared Service Arrangements

Considered the report of the Leader of the Council (**V3** 24/03/2022).

The Leader of the Council introduced the report drawing attention to a number of key messages and concluded his comments by moving that the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor R M Smith.

Members of the Council then considered the report as provided for in the Council Procedure Rules. During the course of the discussion, an amendment to the report was moved by Councillor A T A Godfrey and seconded by Councillor R P Cooke that:-

“The following recommendations are to replace all of the recommendations in Item 8 of the Full Council Agenda.

Stafford Borough Council to continue to work with Cannock Chase district Council in examining the possibility of further shared service provision.

Stafford Borough Council to end the sharing of its Chief executive with Cannock Chase District Council. Mr Tim Clegg to revert to his full-time position as Chief executive Officer of Stafford Borough Council.”

Members of the Council then discussed the amendment to the report as provided by paragraph 15 of the Council Procedure Rules.

At the conclusion of the debate and in accordance with Paragraph 17.4(a) of the Council Procedure Rules a recorded vote was taken; voting on the proposal was as follows:-

For	Against	Abstain
J A Barron	F Beatty	
R J Barron	A G Cooper	
R P Cooke	B M Cross	
I D Fordham	M G Dodson	
A T A Godfrey	A P Edgeller	
M V Holmes	P M M Farrington	
J Hood	A S Harp	
W J Kemp	R A James	A Nixon
R Kenney	E G R Jones	
P A Leason	P W Jones	
A M Loughran	J A Nixon	
B Mckeown	J M Pert	
D McNaughton	M Phillips	
G P K Pardesi	J K Price	
A N Pearce	P Roycroft	
	R M Smith	
	R M Sutherland	
	C V Trowbridge	
	M J Winnington	

The Mayor declared that the proposal to be lost.

Members of the Council then considered the original report as provided for in the Council Procedure Rules.

In accordance with Paragraph 17.4(a) of the Council Procedure Rules a recorded vote was taken; voting on the proposal was as follows:-

For	Against	Abstain
F Beatty	J A Barron	A Nixon
A G Cooper	R J Barron	
B M Cross	R P Cooke	
M G Dodson	I D Fordham	
A P Edgeller	A T A Godfrey	
P M M Farrington	M V Holmes	
A S Harp	J Hood	
R A James	R Kenney	
E G R Jones	P A Leason	
P W Jones	A M Loughran	
W J Kemp	B Mckeown	
J A Nixon	D McNaughton	
J M Pert	G P K Pardesi	
M Phillips	A N Pearce	
J K Price		
P Roycroft		
R M Smith		
R M Sutherland		
C V Trowbridge		
M J Winnington		

The Mayor declared that the proposal was duly carried.

RESOLVED:- that subject to approval of the proposals by Cannock Chase Council at its Council meeting on 27 April 2022, the following be approved:-

- (i) To continue to explore the opportunities of further shared services with Cannock Chase Council;
- (ii) That the Joint Chief Executive be authorised to continue to develop the second stage of the detailed business case which is to be reported to Cabinet on 6 October 2022 and Council on 22 November 2022 (“the Term”) together with an outline implementation plan;
- (iii) During the Term, Mr Clegg will remain employed by Stafford Borough Council and seconded to Cannock Chase Council by agreement under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972;
- (iv) Council agree to continue to share the full costs of the Joint Chief Executive post with Cannock Chase Council on a 50/50 basis as set out in the report to Council on 17 May 2021.
- (v) That in order to continue to provide adequate cover arrangements and to provide a mechanism in relation to conflicts of interests, that the Joint Deputy Chief Executive arrangements remain in place during the Term to support the completion of the detailed business case in line with the report to Council on 17 May 2021;
- (vi) That the non-decision-making Shared Services Board continue to consider any matters that arise in the interim. The Board will report to both Councils’ Cabinets with the final proposal being put to each Council meeting for final determination;
- (vii) That the Head of Law and Administration together with the interim Deputy Chief Executive (Joint Shared Head of Human Resources), in consultation with the Leader of each Council are authorised to finalise the necessary legal and HR arrangements in relation to the above recommendations;

- (viii) Increase the budget provision for independent advice and support to the development of the second stage of the business case to £60,000. The full cost to be shared 50:50 by each Council;
- (ix) Inviting the Local Government Association to:
 - Engage with Members early in the development of the second stage of the business case to seek their views on the wider sharing of services:
 - Hold one to one sessions with all Heads of Service to obtain feedback on existing shared services and their considerations and thoughts on the proposals.
 - Review the second stage of the completed business case, prior to its submission to both Councils for consideration, to ensure that it provides sufficient and balanced information for Members to make a final decision on.

C70 Review of the Constitution

Considered the report of the Head of Law and Administration (V1 13/03/2022).

Councillor R P Cooke introduced the report, thanking both Members and Officers for their work in undertaking the Review of the Constitution and concluded his comments by moving that the recommendations as set out in Paragraph 2 of the report be approved. The proposal was seconded by Councillor R A James.

Members of the Council then voted on the proposal as set out, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the amendments to the Constitution detailed in the report, be approved.

MAYOR