

## CABINET

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday 14 December 2023.

**Present:** Cllr Robert Cook (Leader), Cllr Nigel Cooke (Cabinet Member), Cllr Clare Gamble (Cabinet Member), Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Cabinet Member), Cllr Steve Nelson (Cabinet Member) and Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Cabinet Member).

**Officers:** Garry Cummings, Clare Harper (DCE&F, T&P), Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Geraldine Brown, Peter Bell (CS), Elaine Redding (ChS), Reuben Kench, Tara Connor (CS,E&C), Carolyn Nice, Sarah Bowman-Abouna (A,H&W), Chris Renahan and Craig Taylor (R&IG).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Marc Besford, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Tony Riordan, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Ted Strike and Cllr Sylvia Walmsley

**Apologies:** , Cllr Lisa Evans (Cabinet Member).

### **CAB/51/23 Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

### **CAB/52/23 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **CAB/53/23 Minutes**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

### **CAB/54/23 Financial Update and Medium Term Financial Plan**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the on the financial position as at 30th September for the current year (2023/24) and presented outline plans for the 2024/25 Budget and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

Members noted that despite significant efforts around cost mitigations, inflationary and demand pressures had continued and the projected position for 2023/24 was a projected overspend of around £6.9m. The financial position had been communicated to all managers and staff and everyone was being encouraged to challenge all spend to try and mitigate the impact. As outlined in previous reports, any overspend would need to be funded from reserves. Work was underway to assess reserves and this would be incorporated into the MTFP report in February.

The report also outlined the indicative MTFP for future years. It was noted however that, future years funding levels were assumed based on announcements made to date. This would only be confirmed upon receipt of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which was expected week commencing 18th December. Many of the pressures around inflation, Adult's Services, Children's Services and pay awards experienced in the current year were continuing and this had been built into projections.

The local government finance settlement for 2023/24 included the referendum limit for 2024/25, setting Council tax at 3% and the Adult Social Care levy at 2%. The MTFP was based on a 2.9% increase and no application of the Levy. The Budget Report in February would consider the council tax levels however given the overall position the Council would need to seriously consider increasing the rise to the referendum levels anticipated by Government.

The position for the Council, based on the assumptions in the report and an increase level of council tax still meant there would be a gap of £5m in 2024/25 and £8m by 2025/26. In simple terms, the Council needed to reduce the base budget position by £9m, so the Council must reduce spending. The planned programme of transformation was key to doing this, while also ensuring positive outcomes for residents.

Despite the budget challenges, ambition remained for Stockton-on-Tees and getting a better future for everyone who lives, works and plays in the Borough. There was confidence that the Council could work with partners and communities to put in place new and innovative approaches which would not only save money but also reshape what was done for the better and in the best interests of residents. This will be done through Powering Our Future Programme which see the Council focus its transformation around the following five principles.

**Communities Powering Our Future:** We need to change the way we work with our communities so they use their knowledge, skills and strengths to help them deliver positive outcomes for themselves. Not only will this save money, it will mean that our residents are healthy, happy and feel like they belong.

We will empower communities and increase individual, family and community level activities, helping people and communities to be independent and have less reliance on Council services.

**Partnerships Powering Our Future:** By working with partner organisations we can make sure our residents have support when they need it and that Stockton-on-Tees provides opportunities which make it a great place to live, work and play.

**Transformation Powering Our Future:** Our ambitious and entrepreneurial spirit will make sure our residents have bright futures. We will work with our partners and communities in new ways, embracing technology and different approaches to create opportunities and reduce inequality, using the limited amount of money we have available.

We will continue to carefully manage our resources. We will focus on creating a new relationship with communities, while providing efficient services that offer value for money and are valued by our residents.

Colleagues Powering Our Future: Our talented workforce will step up to the challenging budget situation by using their knowledge and skills to work with our partners and communities in innovative, adaptable and dynamic ways with the best interests of our residents being the focus of everything they do.

Our people will be empowered to work together and do the best they can for our communities.

Regeneration Powering Our Future: Our exciting regeneration projects will make sure Stockton-on-Tees is a place of choice for business. Not only will this generate more income through Council Tax and Business Rates, there will be more employment opportunities too, which will reduce demand on services, saving us money.

Our borough will be recognised for its thriving economy at the heart of Tees Valley and as a place where everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

In order to address the budget gap the Council would act quickly so the first of the transformation reviews delivered through the Powering our Future programme would take place between now and early next year.

In the meantime, all staff were being instructed to think carefully before authorising any spending and to consider how the Council could work with partners and communities to ensure the best possible outcomes for residents, despite a reducing budget.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The updated financial position for 2023/24 be noted.
2. The revised Capital Programme at Appendix A of the report be noted.
3. The emerging issues for the MTFP be noted.

**CAB/55/23 0-19 Children's Public Health Programme: Partnership with Harrogate & District Foundation Trust**

Consideration was given to a report on the 0-19 Children's Public Health Programme: Partnership with Harrogate & District Foundation Trust.

The report provided the background and detail for the proposed partnership with Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust (HDFT) to deliver Public Health 0 to 19 Health & Wellbeing Programme through the mechanism of an agreement made under section 75 of the National Health Services Act 2006 between partners (NHS bodies and local authorities).

The proposed Section 75 agreement included arrangements for delegating the functions described in the report to the NHS partner. Delegation was permitted where it if it would lead to an improvement in the way those functions were exercised.

The health-related functions, detailed within the paper were part of a wider programme of support which consisted of health visiting, school nursing and children and family's healthy weight, infant feeding and nutrition services. These services were more commonly known as '0 to 19' and 'Growing well, growing healthy'. Services were

delivered by HDFT through an existing contract which commenced 01 April 2018 and expires 31 March 2024.

The programme aimed to promote the health and wellbeing of families and children aged 0-19 or up to age 25 with a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). It offered practical advice, interventions, and support on a range of topics related to parenting, health, and wellbeing.

The service also worked in partnership with other services and agencies to support and enable families to access health information and services appropriate to their needs such as primary and secondary care, family hubs, children's services, voluntary organisations and nurseries amongst many others.

The report set out:

- The background of the Programme
- The strategic alignment to the Local Authority's approach to Transformation, Powering our Future and the Fairer Stockton-on-Tees framework to improve outcomes for communities in the Borough and address inequalities, particularly health inequalities for children, young people and adults.
- The proposed use of a Section 75 Agreement to delegate the specific health-related functions to HDFT under the Section 75 of the National Health Act 2006

RESOLVED that:-

1. The background and the alignment to the strategic direction of the Council be noted. The summary of evidence used to inform the commissioning approach was outlined in an appendix to the report.
2. The use of a Section 75 Agreement under Section 75 of The National Health Service Act 2006 be agreed.
3. The responsibility for agreeing and finalising the terms of a new Section 75 Agreement be delegated to the Director of Adults, Health and Wellbeing and Director of Corporate Services through their authorised officers in line with the Council's Schemes of Delegation.

## **CAB/56/23 2023 Event Summary and 2024 Memorial Lighting Calendar**

Consideration was given to a report 2023 Event Summary and 2024 Memorial Lighting Calendar.

This report provided an overview of the Council's 2023 Events Programme, including community led events and street parties which had been delivered by third parties on Council land. Despite the challenges of unpredictable weather and rising costs of delivery, the Council's biggest event, Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF) received very positive feedback in the independent market research, with 90% believing it to be good for promoting the area and a good use of Council resources.

In addition, the report provided the suggested calendar for memorial lighting for 2024.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The success of events programme during 2023 be noted.
2. The memorial lighting calendar for 2024 be approved.
3. Delegated authority be given to the Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make in year amendments or additions to the lighting calendar.

### **CAB/57/23 Lived Experience and Making It Real Board**

Consideration was given to a report on the Lived Experience and Making It Real Board.

Adults and Health would form a Making It Real Board made up of People with Lived Experience who have, are or will in the future, access services. The local authority was successful in a funding bid to help build Making It Real. As part of the Powering our Future programme, the Community Mission was focussed on empowering our communities to become more independent and utilise their insights and experiences to inform future service delivery. A fundamental part of this work would be to gain knowledge from communities, including people with Lived Experience by fully engaging them in the transformation journey, putting communities at the heart of everything the Council did.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The proposal for a Making It Real board and timescales for implementation be implemented.
2. Agree in principle to develop a policy and supporting processes to enable the payment of expenses and potentially financial remuneration for People with Lived Experience for their time involved with Making It Real.
3. Agree in principle plans for training, development, and communications to support Making It Real and to link in with other initiatives including Powering Our Future and CQC inspection preparation work.

### **CAB/58/23 Annual Report of the Governing Body for the Learning & Skills Service**

Consideration was given to a report that provided an update on the work of the Learning and Skills Service in supporting residents, employers and community partners with learning opportunities and employment initiatives during the 22/23 academic year.

The report also highlighted the outcome of the full Ofsted inspection which took place in June 2023. The report also demonstrates the ongoing success of the Governing Body as an advisory committee empowered by Cabinet to provide challenge, support and strategic oversight.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

### **CAB/59/23 LA Governor Appointments**

In accordance with the procedure for the appointment of school / academy governors, approved as Minute CAB 27/13 of the Cabinet (13 June 2013), Cabinet was invited to

consider the nominations to School / academy Governing Bodies listed in the appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that:-

Fairfield Primary School – Lucy Duncan

Myton Park Primary School -

Mandale Mill Primary School –

The Glebe Primary School - Councillor Tony Riordan