

9 January 2017

Dear Sir/Madam

CABINET MEETING

A meeting of the Cabinet has been arranged to take place on **TUESDAY 17 JANUARY 2017** at **6.00 PM** in **THE COMMITTEE ROOM, DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSE, LICHFIELD** to consider the following business.

Access to the Committee Room is via the Members' Entrance.

Yours faithfully



Neil Turner BSc (Hons) MSc
Director of Transformation & Resources

To: **Members of the Cabinet**

Councillors: Wilcox (Leader), Pritchard (Deputy Leader), Eadie, Fisher, Greatorex, Pullen, Smith and Spruce.

-
1. Apologies for Absence
 2. Declarations of Interest
 3. Money Matters: Council Tax, National Non Domestic Rates and Pension Contributions (copy attached)
 4. Expenditure on Framework Planning Consultants and Temporary Senior Planning Officer (copy attached)
 5. To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the District Board held on 14 November 2016. (copy attached)
 6. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: "That as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded



from the meeting for the following items of business, which would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972”

7. To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting of the Asset Strategy Group held on 8 December 2016

(copy attached)



Money Matters : Council Tax, National Non Domestic Rates and Pension Contributions

Cabinet Member for Finance and Democracy

Date: 17 January 2017
Agenda Item: 3
Contact Officer: Anthony Thomas
Tel Number: 01543 308012
Email: Anthony.thomas@lichfielddc.gov.uk
Key Decision? YES
Local Ward Members Full Council



Cabinet

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 To approve the calculation of the Council Taxbase for Lichfield District, as required under Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act (LGFA) 1992.
- 1.2 In accordance with the LGFA 1992, the Council is required to estimate the surplus/deficit on the Collection Fund for both Council Tax and Business Rates. The dates these estimates must be made are:
 - Council Tax – **15 January** (or in the event this a Saturday, Sunday or Bank Holiday, the next working day). In 2016/17 the relevant date will be 16 January and to ensure we are compliant with this date, the projected surplus/deficit will be based on the figures previously reported to Cabinet in the six months Money Matters Report on 6 December 2016.
 - Business Rates (NNDR) – **31 January** using the NNDR1 Form.
- 1.3 The Council as the Billing Authority must then notify each relevant major Precepting Authority of their share of any estimated surplus or deficit within seven days of making the estimate.
- 1.4 The Council must submit its estimates for Business Rates to the Department for Communities and Local Government using the NNDR1 form. This form includes:
 - An estimate of the Business Rates Collection Fund surplus/deficit for the current year.
 - Estimates of the level of Business Rates to be collected for the forthcoming financial year.
- 1.5 The timing of receipt of the NNDR1 form due to updates to the software to reflect the Revaluation and the Autumn Statement is uncertain. To enable completion by the statutory deadline, a delegation to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Democracy and the Chief Financial Officer is recommended.
- 1.6 The Council has the opportunity to pay the past service element of its Employer Pension contributions for the three years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 in advance at a discounted level.
- 1.7 To note the temporary increase in the investment limits related to the Council's Bank.

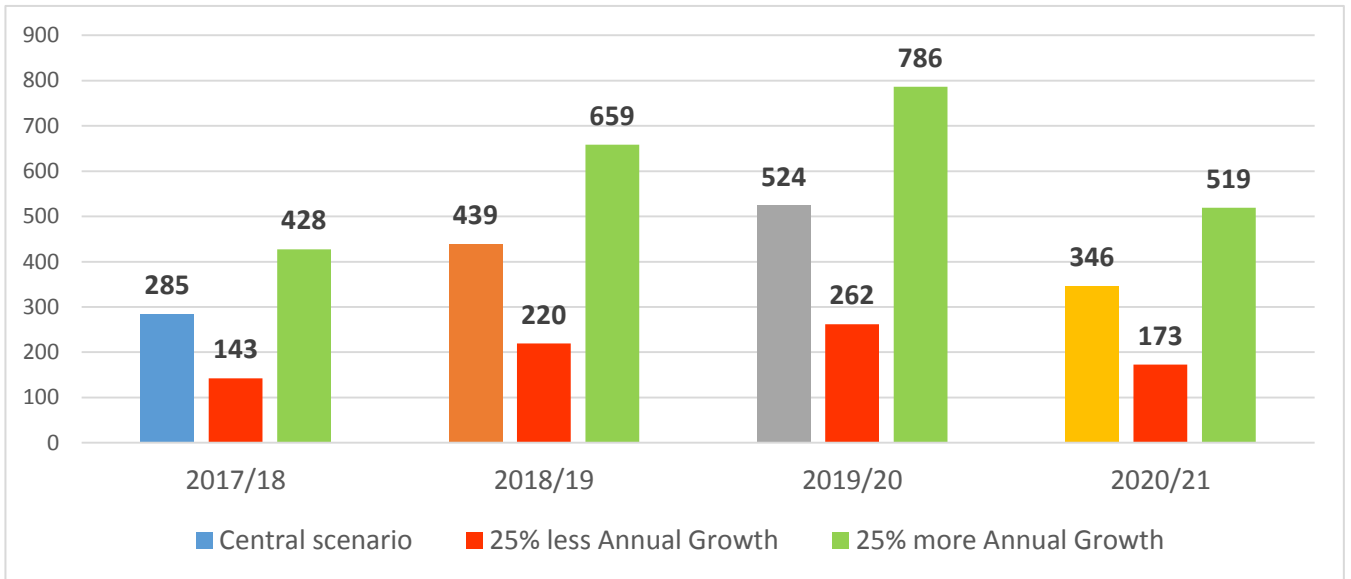
2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations, the Council Taxbase for Lichfield District for the financial year 2017/18 of **36,935**.
- 2.2 To note the estimated Council Tax Collection fund Surplus of **(£300,930)** and the estimated Business Rates Collection Fund surplus of **(£1,873,470)** for 2016/17.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Democracy and the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151) to complete and certify the NNDR1 for 2017/18 on behalf of the Council.
- 2.4 To approve the payment of the Council's past service element of Employer Pension Contributions of **£2.278m** for the three financial years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 in advance in April 2017.

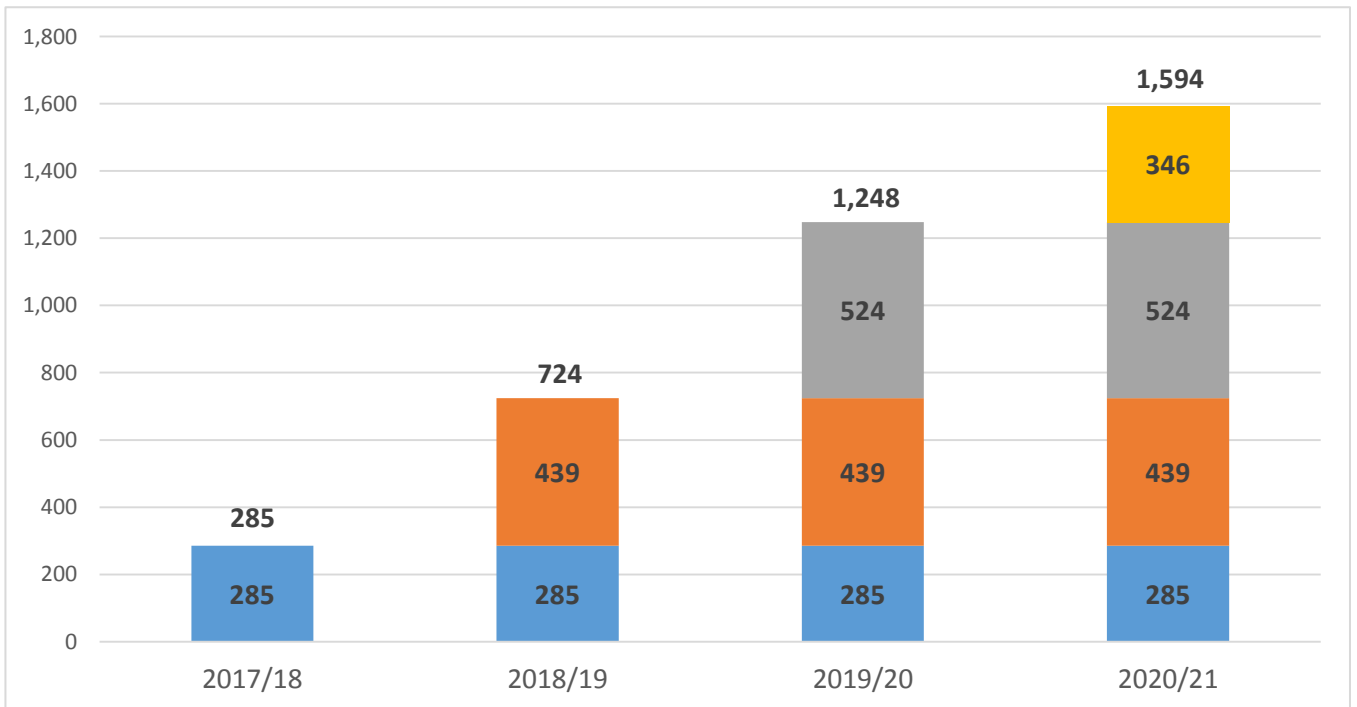
3. Background

Council Taxbase

- 3.1 The Council Taxbase represents domestic properties within the District for Council Tax purposes.
- 3.2 The calculation includes an allowance for property growth. The starting point is the Five Year Housing Supply 2016¹ and this is adjusted by factors for risks such as delays or non-delivery and to convert growth to Band D equivalents.
- 3.3 The property growth (Band D Equivalents) estimated for the period of the Medium Term Financial based on the Mid-Point or central scenario of **50%** being delivered plus two alternatives is shown in detail at **APPENDIX A** and in summary in the graph below:



- 3.4 The central scenario is also shown on a cumulative basis in the graph below. These growth projections will also be used in the calculation of New Homes Bonus income.

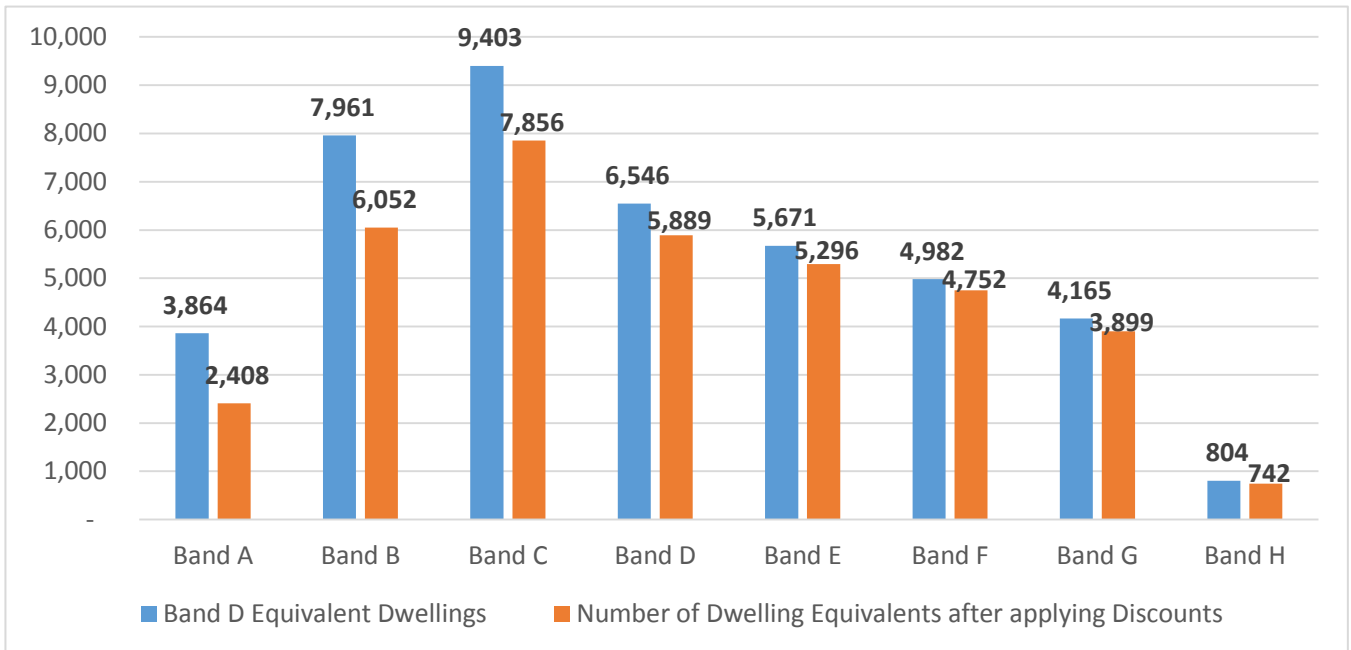


¹ Housing Trajectory – Five Year Supply table 3.3 housing trajectory.

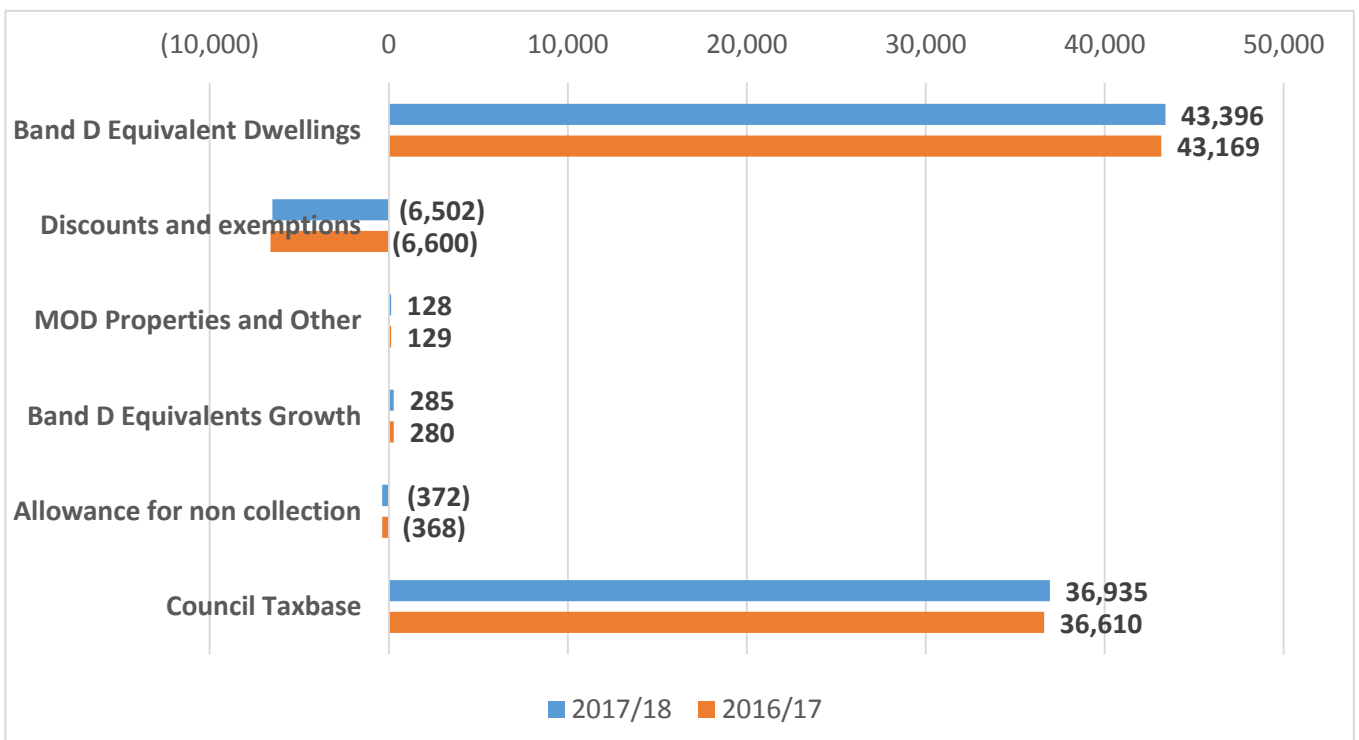
3.5 The Council Taxbase is calculated as follows:

- The Band D equivalent dwellings (the dwellings in each Council Tax Band multiplied by the Band D ratio).
- The Band D equivalent dwellings are reduced by discounts such as single person discount or Local Council Tax Support and exemptions.
- An allowance is made for contributions in lieu of Council Tax for Ministry of Defence Properties.
- An estimate is made for property growth during 2017/18.
- A projection is made for non-collection of **1%**. This reflects the in-year collection rate (2014/15 was **98.83%** and for 2015/16 was **98.79%**) and changes in exemptions and discounts.

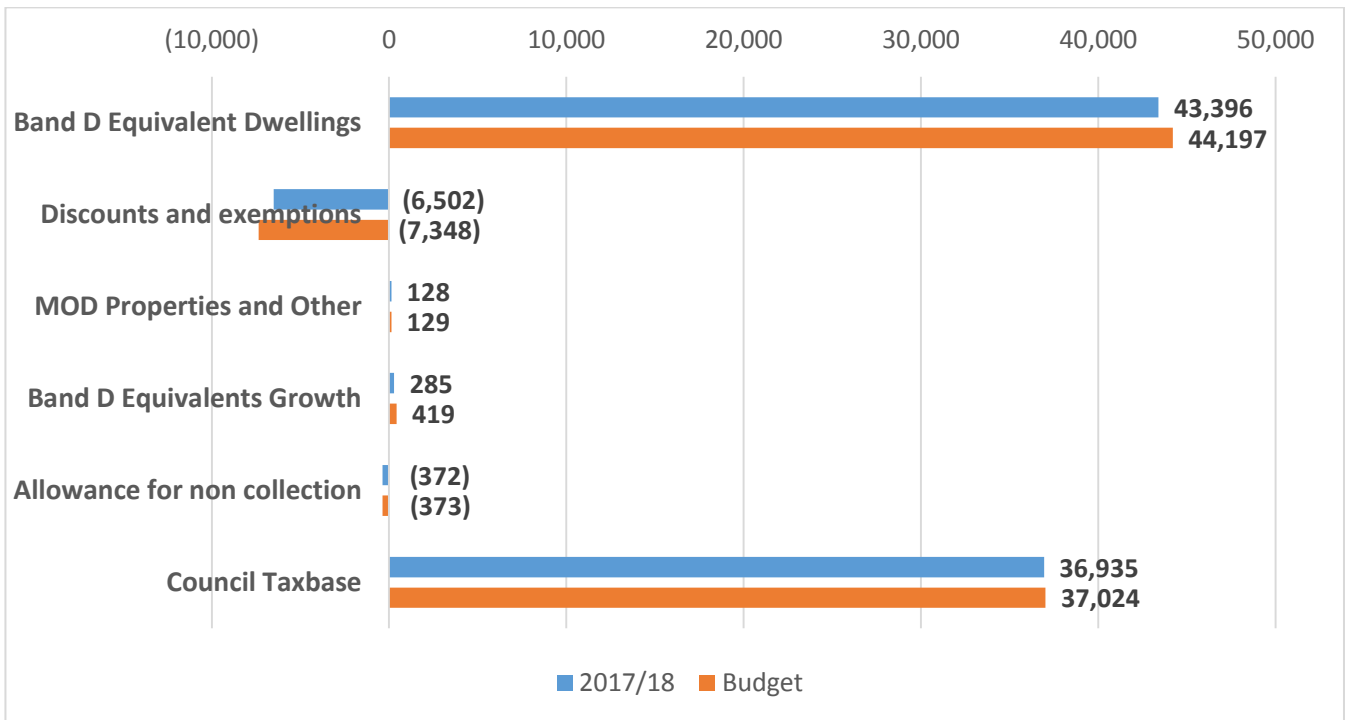
3.6 The Council Taxbase (Band D equivalents) by Council Tax band for the District in 2017/18 prior to and after discounts and exemptions is shown in the graph below and in detail at **APPENDIX B**.



3.7 A comparison of the figures used in the calculation of the Council Taxbase for 2017/18 of **36,935** compared to the calculation for 2016/17 of **36,610** is shown in the graph below:



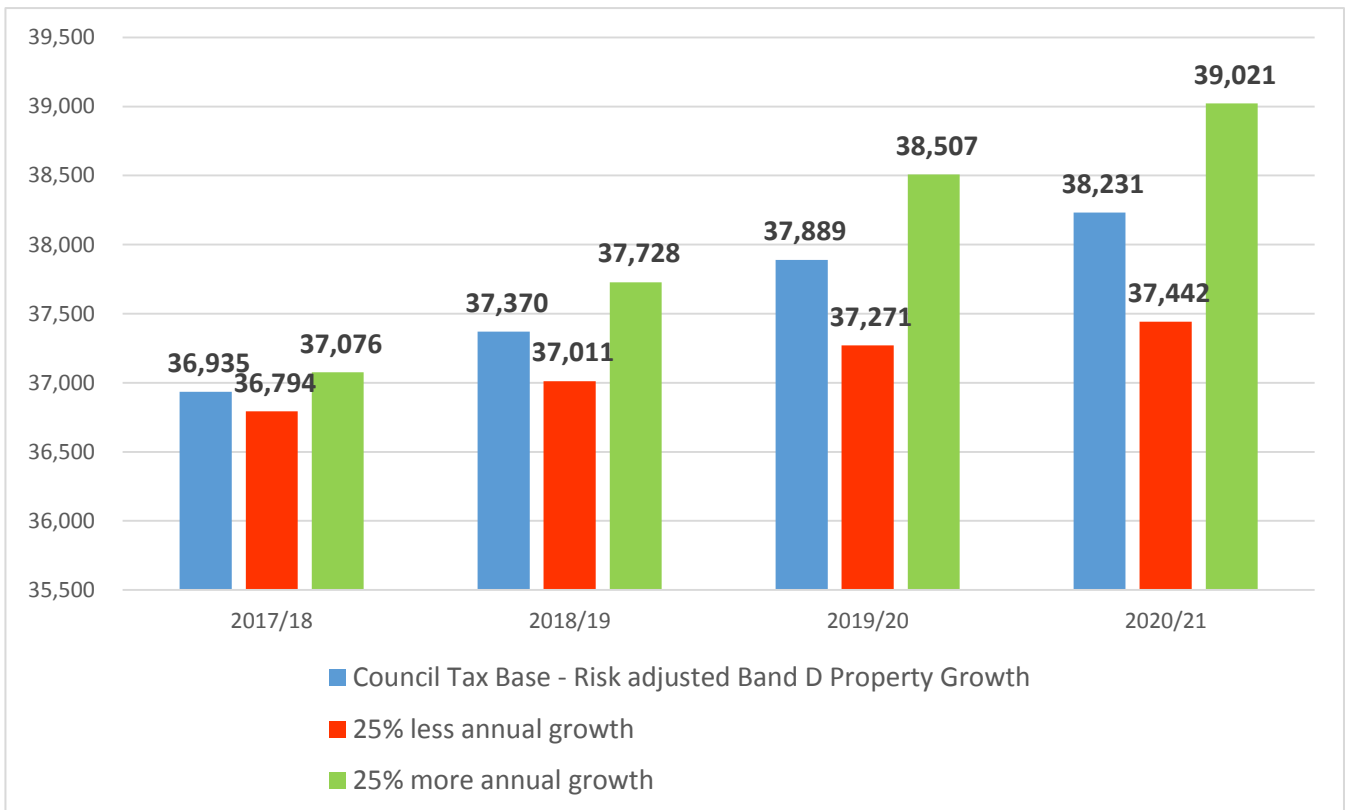
3.8 A comparison of the figures used in the calculation of the Council Taxbase for 2017/18 of **36,935** compared to the Approved Budget for 2017/18 of **37,024** is shown in the graph below:



3.9 The Council Taxbase will be used by this Council, Parish Councils, Staffordshire County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue to calculate their element of the Council Tax for 2017/18.

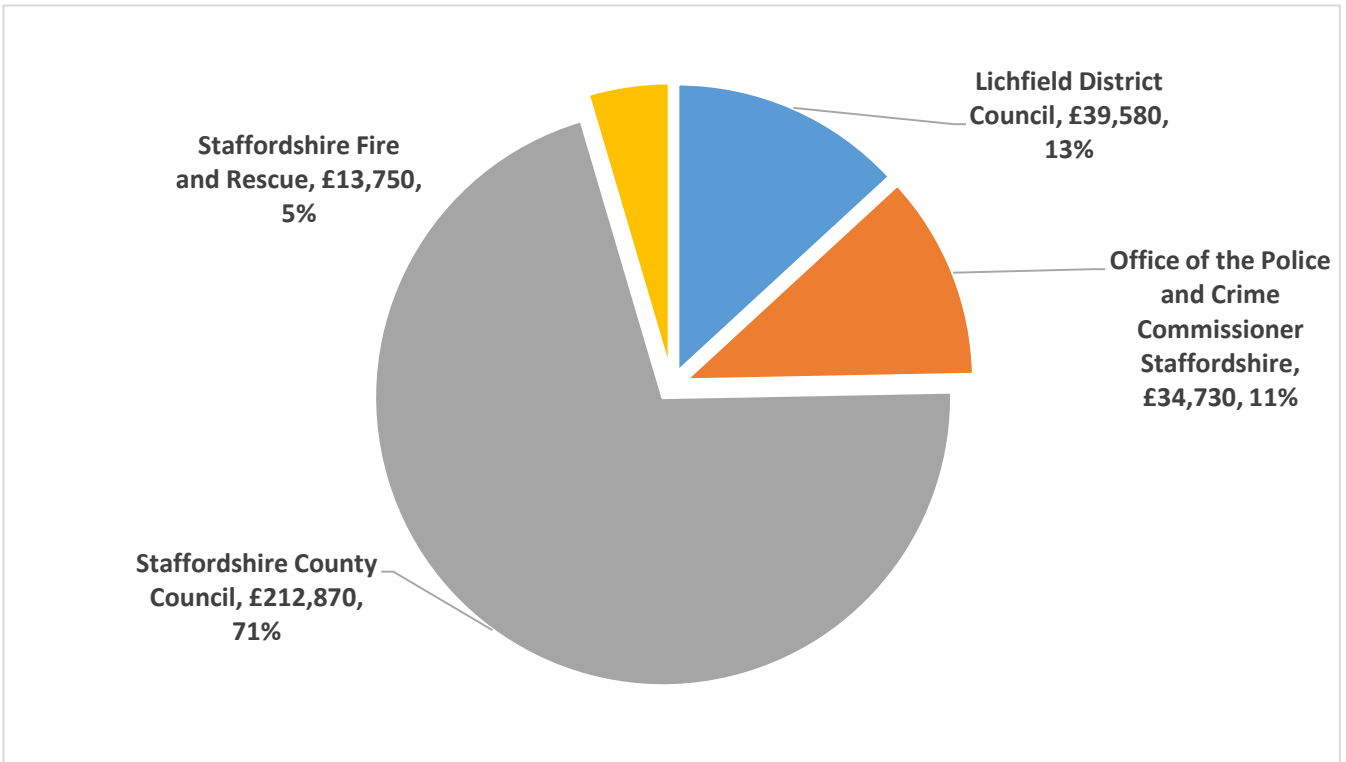
3.10 The Council Taxbase for 2017/18 by Parish area is shown at **APPENDIX C**.

3.11 In addition, to the Council Taxbase for 2017/18, the graph below shows the Council Taxbase for 2017/18 to 2020/21. This information will be used in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the calculation of Council Tax.



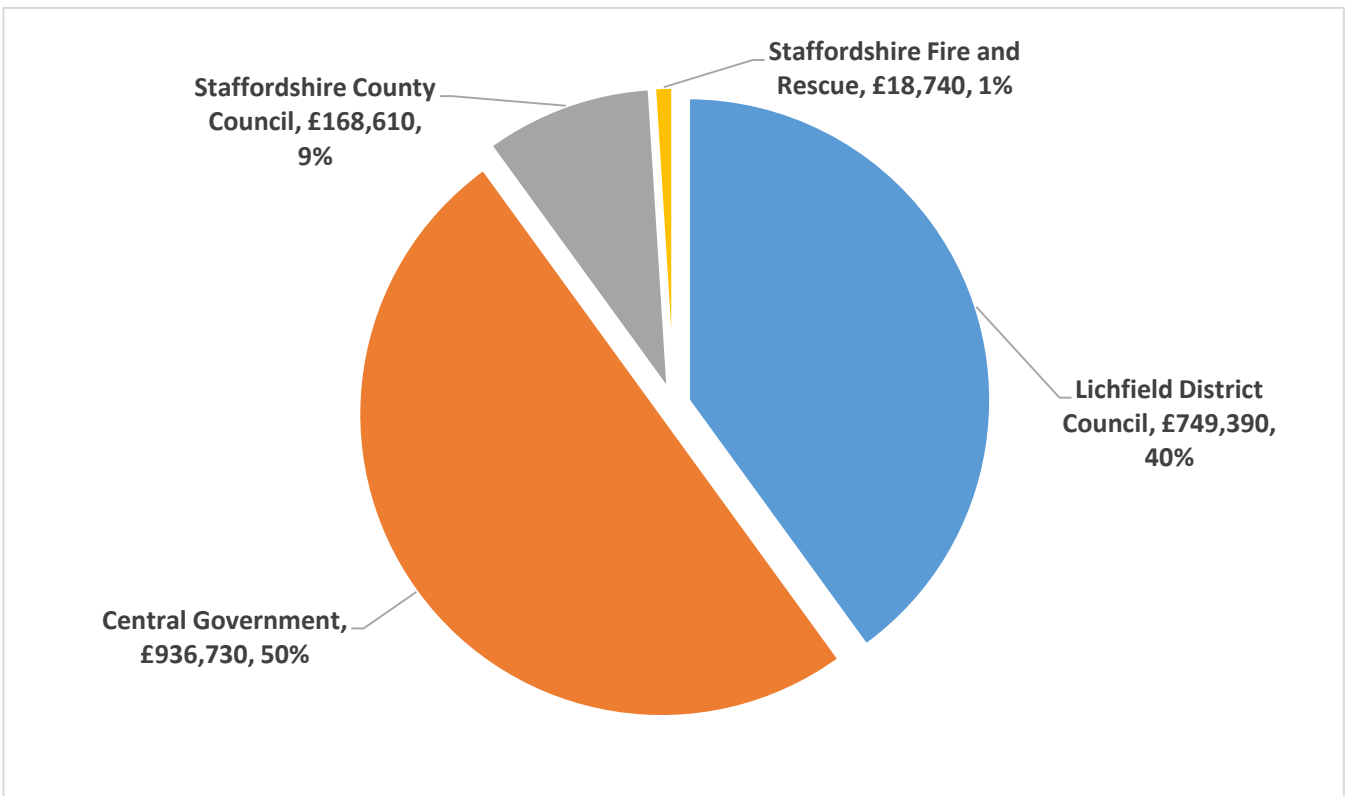
The Projected Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus for 2016/17

3.12 The six months projected Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus for 2016/17 of (£300,930) and its distribution to partners in 2017/18 is shown in the graph below:



The Projected Business Rates Collection Fund Surplus for 2016/17

3.13 The six months projected Business Rates Collection Fund Surplus for 2016/17 of (£1,873,470) and its distribution to partners in 2017/18 is shown in the graph below:



Employer Past Service Pension Fund Contributions for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20

3.14 Every three years a valuation is undertaken by the Pension Fund Actuary to check progress against the plan to ensure the Council's Pension Fund liabilities are fully funded. The contribution strategy produced by the Pension Fund Actuary must attempt to close any deficit over a set period of time.

3.15 The employer contributions are based on two methodologies set by the Actuary:

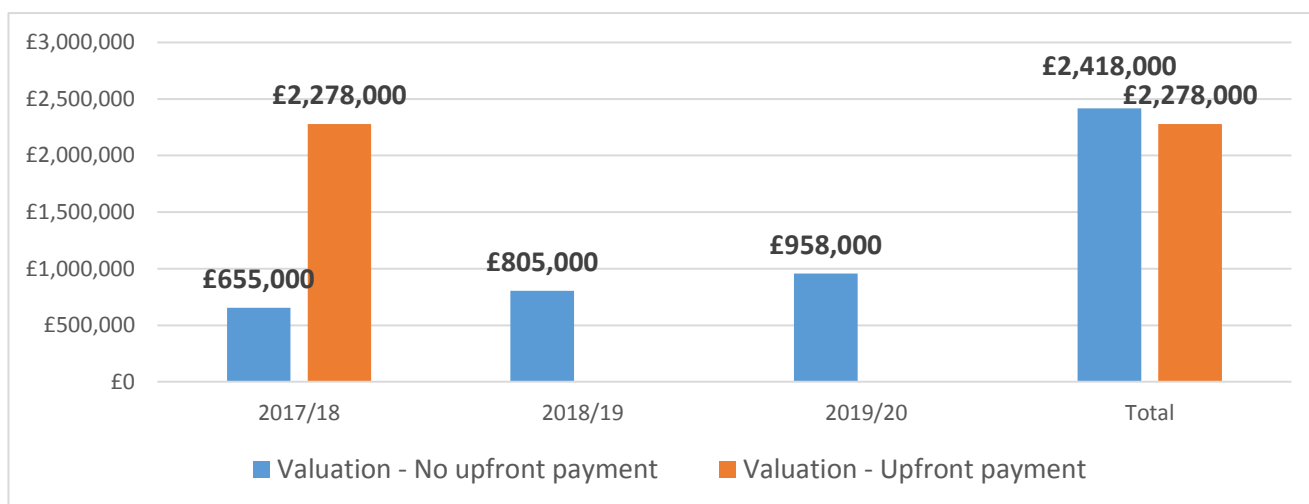
- There is a variable element based on **16.2%** of pensionable pay.
- There is a past service element that is fixed and is not based on pensionable pay. This element was previously introduced by the Actuary to reduce the risk of shortfalls occurring in pension contributions due to Councils reducing the size of their payrolls.

3.16 The Valuation Results for 2016 provide two options for the payment of the past service element:

- Payment in each relevant financial year 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 with a total of **£2.418m**.
- Payment of all three years in April 2017 for a discounted figure of **£2.278m**.

3.17 The payment of all three years in April 2017 would mean a saving of **(£140,000)**.

3.18 The payment in all three years would have a cash flow impact and this is shown in the graph below:



3.19 The payment of three years past service element would however mean a loss of investment income of **£28,000** based on budgeted investment returns and therefore the net saving to the Council would be **(£112,000)**.

Treasury Management

3.20 The Council's approved Annual Investment Strategy in relation to the Council's current bank account (an unsecured bank with a rating of BBB+) is £500,000 for 100 days (should the rating fall to BBB or BBB- this would change to £500,000 next day only).

3.21 The Council's ability to adhere to this limit depends on two key assumptions:

- The Council's Treasury Management Team is aware of all sums being paid to the Council or they appear in the daily balances by 11.30am.
- There are alternative investment opportunities available for short periods of time.

3.22 There has been an occasion in November 2016 where the Acting Section 151 has had to sanction a temporary increase to the approved limit by leaving sums in excess of the approved limit in the Council's bank account.

3.23 The judgement of the Acting Section 151 is that this is low risk to the Authority however the limit will need to be considered and reviewed in more detail with the approval of the forthcoming Annual Investment Strategy given the level of some of the grants due to be received related to Friarsgate.

Alternative Options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The calculation of the Council Taxbase and Collection Fund surpluses and deficits must be undertaken in line with statutory requirements and therefore there are no alternative options. 2. The Council could continue to pay the Past Service Element of Employer contributions in each year that it becomes due for payment.
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Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There has been no consultation specifically about this Report due to the statutory nature of calculations.
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Financial Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accounting requirements are that any payment should match the financial year to which economic benefit is received. Therefore in 2017/18 there would be a prepayment for 2018/19 and 2019/20 of the past service element of pensions. 2. To remain compliant with accounting requirements, the 'matching' principle would be achieved in 2017/18 by classing the 2018/19 and 2019/20 element as a prepayment of pension obligations. This would involve carrying the prepaid element forward to later years on the Council's Balance Sheet. 3. The <u>total</u> employer pension contributions based on accounting requirements for both options (including the contributions based on pay) are shown compared to the approved budget for the three years 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 in the graph below: <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> <table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Budgeted Employer Pensions</th> <th>Employer Contributions based on Pay (Option 1)</th> <th>Past Service Element - Upfront Payment</th> <th>Employer Contributions based on Pay (Option 2)</th> <th>Past Service Element - No upfront Payment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2017/18</td> <td>£1,807,590</td> <td>£1,303,390</td> <td>£618,000</td> <td>£655,000</td> <td>£805,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018/19</td> <td>£1,920,710</td> <td>£1,336,510</td> <td>£758,000</td> <td>£805,000</td> <td>£805,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>£2,039,050</td> <td>£1,374,850</td> <td>£902,000</td> <td>£958,000</td> <td>£958,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> </div> 4. The total employer pension contributions under both options are higher than the Approved Budget and therefore will result in a cost pressure. 5. The upfront payment of the past service element for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 would reduce the cost pressure over the three years by (£112,000) compared to payment in each financial year. 6. The projected cost pressures (assuming the upfront payment option is selected) will be £113,800 in 2017/18, £173,800 in 2018/19 and £237,800 in 2019/20 and will be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy. 	Year	Budgeted Employer Pensions	Employer Contributions based on Pay (Option 1)	Past Service Element - Upfront Payment	Employer Contributions based on Pay (Option 2)	Past Service Element - No upfront Payment	2017/18	£1,807,590	£1,303,390	£618,000	£655,000	£805,000	2018/19	£1,920,710	£1,336,510	£758,000	£805,000	£805,000	2019/20	£2,039,050	£1,374,850	£902,000	£958,000	£958,000
Year	Budgeted Employer Pensions	Employer Contributions based on Pay (Option 1)	Past Service Element - Upfront Payment	Employer Contributions based on Pay (Option 2)	Past Service Element - No upfront Payment																				
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2019/20	£2,039,050	£1,374,850	£902,000	£958,000	£958,000																				

Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) underpins the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2016-20.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. None identified in this report.
Crime & Safety Issues	1. None identified in this report.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Decrease in the Collection rates for Business Rates (NDR) and Council Tax.	The periodic Money Matters Reports to Cabinet and Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee provide information on collection rates.	Yellow – Material
B	The assumed level of growth included in the calculation of the Council Taxbase is not achieved.	The periodic Money Matters Reports to Cabinet and Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee provide information on housing growth.	Yellow – Material
C	The assumed level of discounts and exemptions increases.	The periodic Money Matters Reports to Cabinet and Strategic (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee provide information on the projected surplus or deficit in the Council Tax Collection Fund.	Yellow – Material
D	Failure to calculate the Council Taxbase and Collection Fund Surplus or Deficit	These are calculated in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and relevant regulations.	Green - Tolerable

Background documents

- Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- Local Government Finance Act 1992
- Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Taxbase) Regulations 1992 (as amended).
- Local Government Act 2003.
- Council Taxbase (CTB) Return at October 2016.
- Money Matters: Calculation Of Business Rates – National Non Domestic Rates 2016/17 and Council Tax Base 2016/17, together with Collection Fund Surplus / (Deficit) For 2015/16 – 12 January 2016.
- Money Matters: Medium Term Financial Strategy (Revenue and Capital) 2016-20 Cabinet - 9 February 2016.
- Money Matters : 2016/17 Review of Financial Performance against the Financial Strategy – Cabinet 6 September 2016
- Money Matters : 2016/17 Review of Financial Performance against the Financial Strategy – Cabinet 6 2016
- Lichfield District Council Pool 31 March 2016 Formal Valuation – Draft Results

Relevant web links

Provision for Housing Growth

	2016/17	Medium Term Financial Strategy			
		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Provision for Growth					
Housing Completions per Five Year Housing Supply Paper 2016 (page 12)	621	633	976	1,164	769
Risk Allowance for Non-Completions and timing differences	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Housing Completions Projection	311	317	488	582	385
Band D Ratio	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Band D Equivalent	280	285	439	524	346

25% less Annual Growth
25% more Annual Growth

143	220	262	173
428	659	786	519

The Council Taxbase Return and the Council Taxbase for the purposes of setting the Council Tax in 2017/18

	Band A Disabled Relief	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Total
Total Number of Dwellings on the Valuation List	0.0	5,796.0	10,236.0	10,578.0	6,546.0	4,640.0	3,449.0	2,499.0	402.0	44,146.0
Ratio to Band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
Band D Equivalent Dwellings	0.0	3,864.0	7,961.3	9,402.7	6,546.0	5,671.1	4,981.9	4,165.0	804.0	43,396.0
<u>Discounts and Exemptions</u>										
Exempt Dwellings	0.0	(95.3)	(107.3)	(132.4)	(89.0)	(37.9)	(28.9)	(43.3)	(2.0)	(536.2)
Disabled Relief	12.8	32.7	8.6	(35.6)	(4.0)	(7.3)	14.4	(46.7)	(30.0)	(55.1)
Single Person Discount - 25%	(2.1)	(506.0)	(710.1)	(720.0)	(383.5)	(248.4)	(183.1)	(130.0)	(20.5)	(2,903.7)
Discount - 50%	0.0	(6.0)	(0.8)	(2.2)	(1.5)	(2.4)	(2.2)	(10.0)	(3.0)	(28.1)
Local Council Tax Support Discount	(3.8)	(873.3)	(1,074.9)	(634.0)	(170.1)	(72.5)	(26.0)	(28.0)	(5.6)	(2,888.3)
Other Discounts	0.0	(15.3)	(24.5)	(22.7)	(8.5)	(6.1)	(4.3)	(8.5)	(1.0)	(90.9)
Sub Total - Discounts and Exemptions	6.9	(1,463.3)	(1,909.1)	(1,546.8)	(656.6)	(374.7)	(230.0)	(266.5)	(62.1)	(6,502.3)
Number of Dwelling Equivalents after applying Discounts	6.9	2,400.7	6,052.2	7,855.8	5,889.4	5,296.4	4,751.8	3,898.5	741.9	36,893.7
Contributions in Lieu (MOD Properties)										128.0
Council Taxbase Return (CTB) Taxbase										37,021.7
Provision for Growth										285.0
Provision for Non Collection @ 1%										(371.7)
Total Council Taxbase for Council Tax Setting Purposes										36,935.0

Council Taxbase for the purposes of setting the Council Tax in 2017/18 by Parish Area

Parish Areas	2017/18 Apportioned Taxbase
Alrewas	1,169.4
Armitage with Handsacre	2,046.3
Burntwood	8,147.8
Clifton Campville with Thorpe Constantine	360.6
Colton	321.5
Curborough and Elmhurst and Farewell and Chorley	241.2
Drayton Bassett	439.6
Edingale	267.8
Elford	285.1
Fazeley	1,458.9
Fradley and Streethay	1,356.5
Hammerwich	1,348.6
Hamstall Ridware	145.1
Harlaston	182.2
Hints and Canwell	175.1
King's Bromley	535.0
Lichfield	11,795.2
Longdon	741.0
Mavesyn Ridware	439.3
Shenstone	3,456.6
Swinfen and Packington	138.0
Wall	193.9
Weeford	95.4
Whittington and Fisherwick	1,118.9
Wigginton and Hopwas	476.0
Total Council Taxbase for Council Tax Setting Purposes	36,935.0

Expenditure in excess £50,000 on Framework Planning Consultants and Temporary Senior Planning Officer

Report of Councillor I Pritchard

Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Development & Environment

Date: 17 January 2017
Agenda Item: 4
Contact Officer: Sean Coghlan & Claire Billings
Tel Number: 01543 308199 & 308171
Email: Sean.coghlan@lichfielddc.gov.uk
Claire.billings@lichfielddc.gov.uk
Key Decision? YES

CABINET

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The planning department has been engaging the services of Urban Vision Partnership Ltd (Urban Vision) through a Framework agreement for various work since 2015. This has included work related to planning appeals; landscape assessment; additional support in processing householder applications during staff vacancies; and cover for a vacant post in planning policy. Urban Vision only provide consultancy support to Local Authorities – avoiding any potential conflict of interest (a common issue with planning consultancies). Given the predicted increase in planning applications and associated appeals, it is likely that continued use of these services will still be needed.
- 1.2 The total expenditure for various work undertaken by Urban Vision within the last 4 years has been £53,808. This exceeds the £50,000 procurement approval limit for officers. Therefore, Cabinet endorsement is sought to approve this additional expenditure (£3,808), and to allow an extended level of expenditure up to £150,000 within the terms of the Framework agreement. Cabinet's endorsement is also sought to extend the period of access to the Framework agreement to 31st March 2018 (currently expires 12th October 2017).
- 1.3 In September 2016, the Oyster Partnership Ltd (recruitment agency) were contracted to provide a temporary senior planning officer for the Development Management service in order to cover the maternity leave of a permanent senior planning officer. The temporary officer was employed for approximately 6 months from 12th September 2016 to 31st March 2017 at a cost of approximately £43,000.
- 1.4 A temporary officer is still needed to be retained beyond the initial contracted period, and therefore, expenditure will exceed £50,000 (whether procured through recruitment agencies or framework planning consultants). The extended contract period will be up to 12 months - equating to a total spend of up to £86,000. Cabinet endorsement is sought to approve this level of expenditure.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the level of expenditure of up to £150,000 with Urban Vision to 31st March 2018.
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes the already exceeded expenditure above £50,000 (£3,808) and that this will be reported to the Audit Committee.

- 2.3 That Cabinet approves the level of expenditure of up to £86,000 for a temporary senior planning officer (12 month maternity cover).
- 2.4 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Cabinet Member and Director of Place and Community to allow access to the Framework agreement to 31st March 2018.

3. Background

Framework Planning Consultants

- 3.1 The Council, including various service areas within the Community & Place Directorate have been using Urban Vision via a Framework agreement (NHS Construction Consultancy Framework) to provide consultancy support on a range of specialist planning and environmental matters since 2015. This has included work for major planning appeals (5 year housing land supply); landscape visual impact assessment; additional support in processing householder applications during staff vacancies and peaks in work; and cover for a vacant post in planning policy (assisting with the CIL charging schedule and preparation of the Planning Obligations SPD).
- 3.2 Urban Vision is a multi-disciplinary consultancy providing development and regeneration services for the public sector. The partnership is a joint venture between Capita, Galliford Try and Salford City Council. Capita is the majority shareholder (50.1%).
- 3.3 The NHS Construction Consultancy Framework was procured via an OJEU process in April 2013. The framework runs from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2018. A review of the OJEU indicates that the framework permits any local authority to use a wide range of services - including planning consultancy. Lichfield District has registered with the NHS Shared Business Service as an Associate Member (13th October 2015) - entitling the authority to access the Framework's services to 12th October 2017 (2 year period). This agreement can be extended to reflect the life of the framework up to 31st March 2018. Cabinet's approval is sought extend the Framework agreement to 31st March 2018.
- 3.4 Capita were successful in tendering to be placed on the framework, which allows direct award to a specific consultants (including Urban Vision) or following a mini-competition process. Where the direct award is used the consultant must use the competitively tendered rates submitted to the NHS during the procurement exercise – ensuring value for money is obtained. Through avoiding a separate tendering process, yet accessing competitively tendered fee rates, the Council gains valuable programme benefits (e.g. the need to quickly appoint expert witnesses to comply with strict appeal timetables) - avoiding the costs and resources required for a separate procurement exercise.
- 3.5 Prior to procuring Urban Vision through the Framework in 2015, previous contract awards for appeal work were based on competitive quotes (planning balance expert witness and landscape visual impact assessment). On each occasion, Urban Vision demonstrated best value in terms of price and quality.
- 3.6 As previously noted, Urban Vision only work with public sector clients and therefore have a wealth of experience and expertise in local authority planning, and most importantly – no conflict of interest. This is particularly important in major planning appeals where almost all major planning consultancies have competing land interests and a collective interest in challenging the Council's 5 year housing supply. This is a major consideration in the success of housing appeals. The Council has previously sought competitive quotes from the private sector for an expert planning witness (5 year housing supply) – none were received; all quoting 'conflict of interest' as the reason for not tendering.
- 3.7 Urban Vision provide cost effective and high quality consultancy work, which supports the wider planning service during peaks in workloads; when there are vacancies in roles; or when more

detailed specialist advice in relation to, for example, appeal expert witness, landscape assessment or CIL work, is needed due to the expertise not being available in-house. It is expected that major appeals and a continued increase in planning applications will require this specialist support up to March 2018. To date, all costs have been planned within budget limits – funded through additional planning applications fee income and earmarked appeal reserves. This year will see planning fee income exceed £900,000 (a record high), well above the original budgeted income of £571,000. Within this context, an earmarked reserve request of £60,000 (for use on consultants) is subject to the approval of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and £160,000 of this additional income will be included as a one-off contribution in the eight months Money Matters Report.

- 3.8 It has been noted that since 2014 expenditure for work undertaken by Urban Vision has totalled £53,808. This relates to several different pieces of consultancy work for different sections of the Place & Community Directorate (Development Services and Economic Growth). As this already exceeds the £50,000 officer limit, retrospective Cabinet approval is required for this expenditure. This will be reported to the Audit Committee. Cabinet endorsement is also sought for expenditure of up to £150,000 for the continued use of Urban Vision through the Framework agreement up to March 2018, to support the effective and efficient service delivery of planned sustainable growth.

Temporary Senior Planning Officer

- 3.9 The senior planning officer is responsible for their own caseload of planning applications and also supports the wider Development Management planning applications team. This post is essential to maintain an effective and efficient service in processing planning applications (securing essential housing supply), pre-application queries and other related planning matters.
- 3.10 In September 2016 the current permanent senior planning officer post-holder went on maternity leave. It is expected that the post-holder will remain on maternity leave for 12 months, unless otherwise agreed/advised. There was no capacity with other senior planning officers within the team, and therefore, in order to manage the officer's workload a 12-month temporary post was advertised for maternity cover. Unfortunately, the advert (including re-advertisement) did not prove successful in attracting an appropriate candidate.
- 3.11 Given the very short time-frame between the close of the re-advertisement and the start of the maternity cover, it was decided to opt for a 6 month initial contract to ensure compliance with procurement and financial regulations. This allowed for a swift handover ensuring there was no break in service delivery at a time of increasing workload and stress levels within the team. Furthermore, subject to Cabinet approval on expenditure, this option allows for a further competitive process to be undertaken in the New Year to ensure best value is achieved (and compliance with the procurement and financial regulations).
- 3.12 Urban Vision (Framework Planning Consultants) were approached in September, but did not have the capacity to provide full-time cover for the role. Therefore, following the submission of three competitive quotes (securing best value), the support of an agency was sought to ensure sufficient officer cover was provided.
- 3.13 The current agency senior planning officer, engaged through Oyster Partnership, has proved to be both competent and effective in covering the planning application caseload and engages well within the Development Management team. The cost of the 6 month contract is approximately £43,000, based on an hourly rate of £41 and expires on 31st March 2017. It is expected that agency will re-tender for the work in the New Year (further 6 month contract). The continued use of the same officer has benefits in terms of continued service delivery (familiarity with systems, policies and procedures etc).
- 3.14 It is very unlikely that the workload of the team would reduce from March 2017 based on current application and pre-application levels. Therefore, it is considered that maternity cover at the senior planning officer level would remain necessary during the whole maternity period, in order to ensure the Development Management service can function effectively to meet relevant

government targets without placing undue strain on other members of the team, who already have high individual workloads.

- 3.15 The current hourly rate for the agency planner was the subject of a competitive process and demonstrates value for money (up to £43,000). It is to be appreciated that this rate is for the current 6 month period until the 31st March 2017. However, through a further competitive process it is expected that 12 month cost for the maternity cover would not exceed £86,000.
- 3.16 Cabinet endorsement is sought to this level of expenditure.

Alternative Options	Alternative options to the use of framework consultants (who have already been successful in tendering via the open market) would be to use alternative consultancy support on a case-by-case tender basis. This would add delay to the process; incurring potential costs at appeal (unreasonable delay) and no guarantee that appropriate (without conflicts of interest) and more cost effective consultants could be procured within very short time-frames.
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Consultation	None
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Financial Implications	The level of expenditure for framework consultants and maternity cover is already planned for within budget (re-profiled by additional fee income). An earmarked reserve request of £60,000 (for agency staff and consultants) is subject to the approval of the MTFs, and £160,000 of additional fee income will be included as a one-off contribution in the eight months Money Matters Report.
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Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	The processing of planning applications and defending appeals in an effective and timely manner, ensures the delivery of additional housing, businesses and essential infrastructure for the District (planned economic growth).
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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	None
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Crime & Safety Issues	None
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	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Failure to procure framework consultants would potentially undermine the Council's ability to effectively and efficiently defend major planning appeals – with a potential increase in overall costs.	To secure framework consultants.	Yellow. The Council would be a risk of failing to effectively defend major planning appeals, with the potential of costs being awarded against the Council.
B	Failure to secure further temporary officer support would impact on the effective and efficient processing of planning applications – undermining the delivery of the	To secure temporary officer cover for a further 6 months.	Yellow. The Council would be at risk of failing to effectively process planning applications – impacting on planned economic growth with resultant impacts on reduced housing supply and business

Local Plan and planned sustainable economic growth.		growth (reduced New Homes Bonus and business rate retention)
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Background documents: None

Relevant web links: None



LICHFIELD DISTRICT BOARD

Held at 4 pm on 14th November 2016 at Lichfield Fire Station, Birmingham Road, Lichfield

Present:

Elected Members:

Councillor Mike Wilcox, Lichfield District Council
 Councillor Alan White, Staffordshire County Council
 Councillor Caroline Wood, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Representatives from Partner Organisations:

Rob Horton representing Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
 Darrin Gamble representing Strategic Housing Partnership
 Sandra Payne representing Support Staffordshire (Lichfield and District)

In attendance:

Ashley Baldwin, Susan Bamford, Jenni Coleman, Richard King, Pat Leybourne, Diane Tilley, Helen Titterton of Lichfield District Council, and Wayne Mortiboys, the District Commissioning Lead, Staffordshire County Council

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>CLlr Mike Wilcox welcomed Rob Horton to his first meeting of the District Board. Apologies had been received from CLlr Doug Pullen, Eleanor Wood and Jon Topham.</p> <p>Susan Bamford advised board members that Jon Topham would not be attending future meetings due to a change in his role. CLlr Mike Wilcox asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Jon, thanking him for his contribution to the work of the District Board.</p>	SB
2	<p>Minutes of the Meeting 21st March 2016</p> <p>The minutes were agreed.</p>	
3	<p>Matters Arising</p>	

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
	<p>3.1 Voluntary Sector Strategic Capacity Building Contract - Sandra Payne, Support Staffordshire gave the board an update on the work with Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services (SCVYS) and South Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Action (SSCVA) as the county council's new strategic partners. Sandra reiterated that the contract with Staffordshire County Council is far more focused than the historical 'infrastructure' support. The board was advised that in year one Support Staffordshire (and SSCVA in South Staffordshire) will be focussed on a clear set of priorities around ensuring that all of the new community library groups are well supported from the outset, that friends of and volunteer groups for the countryside parks are supported and volunteering is promoted. A piece of work is also underway looking at adult health support needs and community transport will be looked at in Year2. Sandra also confirmed that they are working with District Commissioning Leads to give a local flavour to the county contract.</p> <p>Wayne Mortiboys agreed to circulate a copy of the delivery plan, available at the beginning of December 2016.</p> <p>3.2 The Prevent Delivery Plan had been agreed via email, following the cancellation of the Board meeting in June 2016.</p> <p>3.3 The update on the Pilot Policing Model was not available.</p>	WM
4	<p>Support Staffordshire – Outcome of Consultation</p> <p>Sandra Payne fed back on the outcome of the consultation with voluntary, community and social enterprise members which took place in Spring this year. The overall purpose of the consultation was to understand the support needs of members. Some of the keys issues identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Volunteer management • Governance <p>Whilst funding has been identified as a key issue, this needs to be seen in the context of wider financial management and therefore Support Staffordshire are developing a training session to cover this topic. Eight start up sessions are also being planned.</p> <p>Members of the board welcomed the courses and the support they would give to voluntary and community sector groups.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <p>The District Board noted the outcome of the consultation and the work planned in response.</p>	
5	Tamworth & Lichfield for Business Survey Findings	

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
	<p>Ashley Baldwin, Spatial Policy and Delivery Manager, Lichfield District Council was welcomed to the meeting. Ashley advised that he would be focusing on what is going to be done in response to the business survey findings.</p> <p>The survey had highlighted a lack of knowledge about economic growth. He advised the Board that the council's new structure, which included the new post of Head of Economic Growth aligns with the corporate growth strategy. An Economic Development strategy has now been agreed by the Council and the outcomes in the action plan aligned to the results of the business survey. A key aspect of this is the business growth programme with grants from £10k to £200k available, subject to match funding. These are being targeted at medium sized businesses. The Board was also advised that a new start up programme, Enterprise, is in place. This is being delivered by Blue Orchid and will offer tailored support.</p> <p>High retail interest is being shown in Friarsgate and the Site Allocation Plan provides a document to assist with the identification of sites for development. The Business Improvement District (BID) also forms a central plank of the economic growth strategy and a Property Investment Programme for small and medium enterprises gives support to office/industrial activities to help improve their accommodation.</p> <p>Board members discussed the skill needs of the local population, the significant level of out commuting and the extent to which this can be shaped through the planning process. The impact of Brexit was also raised and Diane Tilley advised that a Brexit Summit had recently been hosted by the County Council.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <p>The actions in response to the survey were noted.</p>	
6	<p>Welfare Reform</p> <p>Pat Leybourne, Head of Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services advised the Board that the welfare reforms that have been introduced since 2012 have aimed to bring about a simplification of the benefit system in order to improve incentives to work, deliver fairness to the tax payer and to those claiming benefit and to protect the most vulnerable. In the Chancellor's autumn statement in 2014, further changes to the welfare system were announced to bring about the £12 billion of welfare savings promised at the 2015 election and the key changes were presented to the Board.</p> <p>The main changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current benefit cap of £26k has been reduced to a maximum of £20k per year • The rate of housing benefit may reduce when a 'rent cap' is introduced in the social sector; the rent figure that is used in the calculation of housing benefit will be capped at the relevant local housing allowance rate which is the same rate used for those living in the private rented sector 	

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18-21 year olds will lose their automatic entitlement to housing costs under Universal Credit • Some social landlords may decide to implement the 'pay to stay' which will mean charging market rents to households whose income is £30k per annum or more <p>The benefits cap had previously affected 12 claimants, this then changed to include an additional 7 and a further 40 notifications were received in the first week in November. There could now be around 80 claimants impacted by the cap, with a further 20 to be affected.</p> <p>The Board was advised that the Discretionary Housing Policy is being reviewed and made simpler to encourage more people to apply.</p> <p>Pat advised the Board that the legislation regarding the 18-21 year olds eligibility for housing benefits is still pending so implementation may be delayed. The rent cap for supported accommodation is to be deferred until 2019/2020 and the results of the consultation are currently being awaited.</p> <p>Households with 3 children will no longer receive support for the 3rd child, although there will be protection and allowances for circumstances such as domestic violence, households merging, foster carers and victims of rape.</p> <p>The DWP are continuing to roll out universal credit; by 2018 all Job Centres will be on board and local authorities will continue to manage the case load. Managed migration for all claimants will take place between 2019 and 2022.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>	
7	<p>Early Help Strategy (for children and young people)</p> <p>Wayne Mortiboys, District Commissioning Lead advised the Board of the need to raise awareness of the Early Help Strategy within partner organisations and to consider how they might help support the successful implementation.</p> <p>He highlighted that the strategy is about taking steps to address emerging issues at the earliest opportunity and looking at different tiers of intervention, between universal needs and safeguarding. Evidence shows Early Help can also reduce the high cost of late intervention so that we can make the best use of our limited, shared resources.</p> <p>Wayne advised board members that he would be booking 121s with them to identify what respective organisations can do to support Early Help.</p> <p>Interest was expressed in the early help assessment tool and the links with Lets Work together.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <p>a) Board Members noted the Strategy and agreed to share within their respective organisations appropriately</p>	

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
	<p>b) Board Members agreed to consider how their organisation can contribute to the successful implementation of the Strategy and share examples with the District Commissioning Lead at the earliest possible opportunity</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Partnership Reserve</p> <p>Cllr Mike Wilcox, Leader, Lichfield District Council confirmed the position of the partnership reserve to the Board. This reserve of £239,712 has accumulated over several years from a variety of sources, including Local Area Agreement reward grant and residual sums from various individual projects. Authority to make decisions on spending the Partnership Reserve currently rests with the District Board. An initial report on this issue was received by the Locality Commissioning Board (LCB) in October 2015 but further work was required before proposals could be put to the District Board. At the same time, there was a period of uncertainty regarding the likely availability of public health funding for locality commissioning in 2016/17 and the issue of the partnership reserve was put on hold.</p> <p>Cllr Wilcox reiterated that the authority to spend the reserve rests with the District Board and there is a need to ensure it is being used effectively, taking a flexible approach.</p> <p>Board members discussed the importance of transparency and degrees of wider member engagement at different stages in the commissioning process from priority setting to procurement.</p> <p>The uncertainty about future funding was also discussed and the challenges of funding for all projects over the 3 year period.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Authority to invest the partnership reserve is delegated to the Locality Commissioning Board b) Funding is invested in accordance with the aspirations set out in accordance with the Locality Commissioning strategic aspirations and the cross cutting principles (and in accordance with the finance and contract procedure rules of Lichfield District Council as accountable body) c) The Board receive reports on how the funding is being used and the outcomes achieved d) A second elected Member representative / deputy for Cllr Doug Pullen (Chairman of the LCB) to be discussed at the next meeting of the LCB. 	<p>LCB</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Community Safety Partnership Mid Year Progress Report 2016/17</p> <p>Jenni Coleman, Community Safety Manager presented the six monthly update on the progress being made against the Community Safety Delivery Plan (2016-2019). She highlighted a number of projects that were going well including the Positive Futures activities through the SPACE scheme to encourage young people to engage in positive activities and the completion of 140 No Cold Calling zones</p>	

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	<p>across the district including in Lichfield city, Burntwood, Chasetown, Shenstone, Longdon, Stonnall, Armitage and Little Aston. A Christmas/New Year campaign is also being planned focussing on alcohol and drivers, with joint working with community guardians.</p> <p>Jenni confirmed that the partnership is awaiting 20% additional funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner and a fresh tendering process is to be embarked upon for domestic abuse.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <p>The District Board noted the report and agreed to consider further reports as appropriate.</p>	
10.	<p>District Board Terms of Reference</p> <p>District Board members considered a report seeking endorsement of the terms of reference of the District Board which was last reviewed in 2011. Some amendments had been made having regard to the requirements of locality commissioning and also membership changes.</p> <p>Board members discussed the benefits of the District Board. Diane Tilley reminded board members that a review had taken place in 2013 which concluded the networking opportunities brought value to the Board and at that stage the meetings were reduced down to 3 meetings a year. She also suggested a further review could take place if board members felt it would be helpful. Wayne Mortiboys also reiterated that the District Board operates as a virtual network with the opportunity to share information in between meetings.</p> <p>Board members recognised there was benefit in meeting and the need for representation from the business sector was raised again.</p> <p>Decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Board approved the amended terms of reference b) The Board asked for a letter to go the Chamber of Commerce asking for a representative from the Business Enterprise Partnership 	SB
11	<p>Partner Update</p> <p>Staffordshire County Council - Cllr Alan White advised board members that the NHS has been unable to contribute £15m to the Better Care Fund so compensatory savings are now having to be found. A spending freeze is in place and difficult decisions were having to be made, including the closure of the Lichfield Foyer and negotiations about funding of Disabled Facilities Grants. He also confirmed that Consumer Advice funding for CAB is affected and the Cabinet decision on this matter is subject to call in.</p> <p>Changes to the way Health and Social Care are delivered will be announced by the beginning of December but Cllr White emphasised that no additional funding will</p>	AW

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
	<p>be available. He confirmed he will bring more information to the next District Board meeting.</p> <p>Wayne Mortiboys advised that £4m capital is available for the new health centre in Burntwood. He also advised that the adult social care contract with South Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust is being negotiated with a view to reconfiguring the way social workers work . The start date of the new contract will be 1/4/17. The Head of Terms to move the Library into the St Mary's Centre have also now been signed.</p> <p>The ending of the Citizen's Advice funding was discussed and concerns were raised about the potential impact and timescales. It was confirmed that this will be an agenda item at the Leader/Chief Execs meeting on 17 November.</p> <p>Clinical Commissioning Group – Eleanor Wood was unable to attend the meeting but submitted the following partners update:</p> <p>Work continues on the development of the Lichfield/Burntwood Network Partnership. This will bring the practices across Lichfield & Burntwood together to start working on identified needs e.g. home visiting. The aim is to assist the practices in managing workload and streaming patients more efficiently to release capacity. There is work ongoing to allow integration of records so that joint clinics can be set up. This has already been achieved in Cannock and so the partnership is keen to learn from that work. This is not a merger of the Lichfield/Burntwood practices. The practices will still retain their individual contracts.</p> <p>Information on successful Estates and Technology Transformation Fund bids has recently been released. The 6 Staffordshire CCGs have been successful in bidding for monies to transform IT and start the integration work with local providers. The Greenwood House Estate bid has also been approved however there are still some hurdles we need to jump until we get the final agreement. These are that the premises directions need to be changed nationally to allow the scheme to happen. It is anticipated that they will be amended in November. The bid will also still need to go through a due diligence process as well to ensure that the business case is robust. If successful the scheme is anticipated to start in 2017.</p> <p>Staffordshire Fire and Rescue – Rob Horton advised board members that the Fire Service 2016-2020 Efficiency Plan had been passed, this is required for a four year funding settlement from the Home Office. The Efficiency Plan sets out the significant financial challenge currently faced by the Authority, including funding and budget assumptions and a savings plan. http://www.staffordshirefire.gov.uk/Documents/Staffordshire_Efficiency_Plan.pdf</p> <p>Rob also highlighted the availability of the new fire station facilities for community and partner use.</p> <p>Strategic Housing Partnership – Darrin Gamble advised that the partnership focus is on welfare reform and trying to prepare citizens for the future changes. The Strategic Housing Partnership met in June and November this year and have set up 3 task and finish groups looking at mapping services, housing allocation – e.g.</p>	

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action
	<p>for 18-21 year olds and promotion, a campaign to raise awareness of the planned changes. The task and finish groups will report back in February 2017.</p> <p>Support Staffordshire – Sandra Payne advised board members of the setting up of the Team Staffordshire partnership , which is a collective bidding consortia, originally set up for the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) Fund. She also confirmed that the Team Staffordshire had been successful in securing BBO funding in the South Staffordshire area.</p> <p>District Council –Diane Tilley advised board members that the council management restructure is being implemented, with 2 directors and 5 Heads of Service now in place, the remaining 3 Heads of Service and an Assistant Chief Executive (on a 2 year fixed term contract) will be recruited externally, with interviews taking place in January. The new structure is key to taking forward a very significant change programme for the council.</p> <p>Cllr Mike Wilcox confirmed that the Friarsgate development is moving forward with 3 more establishments signed up. He also confirmed that the council is moving ahead with trying to secure a retail offer for Burntwood.</p>	
12	<p>AOB</p> <p>Cllr Mike Wilcox advised that Helen Titterton is leaving the council at the end of the year. District Board members wanted to put on record their appreciation for the significant contribution Helen has made to the effectiveness of the District Board since it was set up in 2007.</p>	
13	<p>Items for next Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Staffordshire College – Area Review • Sustainability and Transformation Plans - Visibility • Draft Community Safety Delivery Plan 	
	The meeting finished at 1800	