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#### LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Simon Fletcher Chief Executive Tel (01543) 308001 District Council House Frog Lane Lichfield WS13 6YY

9 May 2022

To: Members of the Lichfield District Council

In accordance with Paragraph 4(2) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972, you are hereby summoned to attend the Annual meeting of the Lichfield District Council which will be held in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane Lichfield on **TUESDAY**, **17 MAY 2022** at **6.00 pm**.

Access to the Council Chamber is via the Members' Entrance or the main door to the vestibule.

Chief Executive

# AGENDA

- 1. Apologies For Absence (if any)
- 2. Declarations Of Interest
- 3. Election of Chair of the Council for the ensuing year (followed by declaration of acceptance of office)
- 4. To Approve as a Correct Record The Minutes of the Previous Meeting 3 10
- 5. Election of Vice-Chair of Council for the ensuing year (followed by declaration of acceptance of office)
- 6. Chair's Announcements
- 7. Report of the Leader of the Council on Cabinet Decisions from the Meeting held on 10 May 2022 and Cabinet Member Decisions 11 14
- 8. Minutes of the Planning Committee

The Chair of the Planning Committee to move that the proceedings of the meeting held on 4 April 2022 be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

15 - 18

9. Minutes of the Audit & Member Standards Committee

The Chair of the Audit & Member Standards Committee to move that the proceedings of the meeting held in the 20 April 2022 be received and where necessary approved and adopted. 19 - 22

10. Report of the Chair of Audit and Member Standards Committee

To receive the annual report of the Chair of Audit & Member Standards Committee 23 - 30

- 11. To Consider Any Recommendations Made at the Meeting of Cabinet on 10 May 2022 in Connection with the Appropriation of Stychbrook Park 31 36
- 12. Report of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee

To receive the annual report of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee 37 - 42

- 13. Membership of Cabinet, Committees, Panels and other appointments (including allocation of seats and appointments by political groups)
  - (a) To agree the political allocation of seats on committees and panels
  - (b) To receive from the Group Leaders a list of appointments to the Cabinet, committees and panels subject to no Member being disqualified from serving due to a conflict of interest
  - (c) To agree that the Constitution be amended to reflect any changes made.
  - 43 48
- 14. Election of Chairs and appointment of Vice-Chairs of Committees, Panels etc.
  - (a) The Leader of the Council to move that the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees and panels etc. be as submitted.
  - (b) To appoint the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

49 - 50

15. Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies

To consider and approve the appointments of representatives on outside bodies. 51 - 52

16. Questions

To answer any questions submitted under procedure rule 11.2.

# COUNCIL

# 12 APRIL 2022

### PRESENT:

Councillors Gwilt (Chair), Greatorex (Vice-Chair), Anketell, Baker, Ball, Barnett, Birch, Checkland, Cox, Cross, Eadie, Eagland, D Ennis, L Ennis, Grange, Ho, Humphreys, Lax, A Little, E Little, Marshall, Matthews, Norman, Parton-Hughes, Powell, Pullen, Ray, Robertson, Silvester-Hall, Mrs Tranter, Strachan, Tapper, Warburton, Warfield, Westwood, White, M Wilcox, S Wilcox, A Yeates and B Yeates

## 78 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Banevicius, Evans, Leytham, Salter, Smith and Spruce.

## 79 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mark Hooper and Christine Lewis declared a pecuniary interest in item 10, Appointment of Monitoring Officer, as the item related to their posts.

### 80 TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 February 2022 were approved as a correct record.

## 81 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair commended the charitable work Councillor Pullen had been doing in connection with the Ukraine crisis.

Councillor Pullen hoped that Councillors and Citizens would welcome the Ukrainian people arriving in Lichfield. Councillor Eagland asked if information could be shared to Councillors on how residents could help or donate.

# 82 REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON CABINET DECISIONS FROM THE MEETINGS HELD ON 8 MARCH AND 5 APRIL AND CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

Councillor Pullen submitted his report on Cabinet Decisions from the meetings held on 8 March and 5 April 2022 and Cabinet Member Decisions.

#### 83 MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Norman submitted the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March 2022.

Councillor Roberts noted that a Task Group had yet to be set up to review the Council Community Fund and he hoped that this would be actioned before the next Council meeting.

Councillor Norman advised that there had been a delay but progress was now being made.

# 84 MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

It was proposed by Councillor Marshall, seconded by Councillor Baker and

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 7 March 2022 be approved and adopted

#### 85 MINUTES OF THE REGULATORY AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

It was proposed by Councillor B Yeates, seconded by Councillor Barnett and

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Regulatory and Licensing Committee held on 9 March 2022 be approved and adopted.

#### 86 MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Councillor Robertson commented that he was happy to see the real Living Wage mentioned but would like to see a stronger commitment to it, as paying staff less than this wage was inconsistent to LDC's Wellbeing and Belonging Strategy.

It was proposed by Councillor Matthews, seconded by Councillor Warburton and

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2022 be approved and adopted.

### 87 APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER

Members were advised that the Local Government and Housing Act (1989) obliged the Council to nominate one of its officers as a Monitoring Officer.

It was proposed by Councillor Lax, seconded by Councillor Powell and

**RESOLVED: (1)** That the designation of Mark Hooper, Governance Manager as the Monitoring Officer be approved.

**(2)** That the designation of Christine Lewis, Principal Governance Officer as the Deputy Monitoring Officer be approved.

(MARK HOOPER AND CHRISTINE LEWIS DELCARED A PECUNIARY INTEREST AND LEFT THE ROOM DURING CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM)

### 88 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Members noted the Council's duty under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 to prepare and publish an annual Pay Policy Statement and gave consideration to the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2022.

Councillor Robertson stated that nearly 10% of employees were earning less than the real Living Wage and asked that these salaries be re-examined.

Councillor White commented that LDC was compliant with the National Living Wage standards which are set by government.

It was moved by Councillor Pullen, seconded by Councillor Marshall and

**RESOLVED:** That the updated Pay Policy Statement as submitted be approved for publication.

# 89 UPDATE TO THE CONSTITUTION (SCHEME OF DELEGATION)

It was proposed by Councillor Lax, seconded by Councillor Pullen and

**RESOLVED: (1)** That the Head of Operational Service be delegated:

"Powers and functions of the Council in relation to Street Trading in Council owned parks and public open space"

**(2)** That the delegation to the Head of Regulatory Services, Housing & Wellbeing be amended to:

"The power to suspend or revoke private hire/taxi licences."

#### 90 QUESTIONS

#### **Questions under Procedure Rule 11.2 for Council**

# Q1. Question from Councillor Anketell to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Recycling

"In December 2019 Lichfield District Council declared a climate emergency and to become carbon neutral by 2050.

What communications has he had with the Cabinet Member for the Local Plan, council officers and others about finding ways under current powers to encourage or incentivise future planning applications for housing and other buildings in Lichfield District to include solar PVs on their roofs and/or walls in order to help reach that target?

This is particularly urgent in the light of the recent IPCC report that the current plans of the UK government mean that the UK will fail to meet even its own inadequate targets in our acknowledged climate emergency."

# Response from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Recycling

"Cllr Anketell may wish to familiarise himself with the Local Plan 2040 review and in particular Local policy SD2: Renewable and low carbon energy and Strategic policy 10 (SP10): Sustainable development.

These identify this council's support for solar, wind and other renewable energy sources in future developments to make a positive and marked contribution to moving towards a zero-carbon economy. The Local Plan 2040 states that new development should reduce energy consumption through sustainable approaches to building design and layout, such as through the use of low-impact materials and high energy efficiency; and incorporate renewable or low carbon energy technologies, where appropriate.

The Cabinet member for the Local Plan will be looking, after submission of our Local Plan 2040 for public examination, to work with officers to bring forward a review of our current Supplementary Planning Documents to look at what further measures we can introduce, to add to what is already set out in the Local Plan 2040 document."

## **Councillor Anketell asked the following Supplementary Question:**

Councillor Antetell referred to measures used elsewhere to encourage the installation of solar power in new buildings and asked "Does the Cabinet Member not wish to fulfil his brief on Climate Change?"

# Response from the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Recycling

"Thank you for the question. I can assure you that we are looking all the time at how we can make things better, make things greener. So, one of the things we're looking at is solar power. We are looking to put solar panels in our green fields and on buildings. This is something that worries me but it's something that we possibly need to do but it's finding that fine line where we can do both.

I'd love to see the documentation and the information you've got from Bristol and anything else. There are already councillors here sending me information. I'm working with the officers all the time to make things a lot better for everybody. Thank you."

# Q2. <u>Question from Councillor Norman to the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Housing & Health</u>

"At the last meeting of Council, in reply to my concern over the support he gave an application in Lichfield City that was recommended for refusal by our Planning Officers, the Chair of the Planning Committee said: "It became obvious to me that there was a very, very strong tide of opinion which was very much for the application" and that "If I had not expressed an opinion at that point the Planning Committee would not have been fulfilling its role to represent the views of the people of the District."

Does the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Housing & Health agree with him that the popularity of an application might legitimately override the planning considerations, both local and national, that I understood were the main considerations that members of a planning committee should consider?"

# Response from the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Housing & Health

"I would draw attention to the House of Commons Briefing Paper No 01030 issued 30 August 2019 titled: "Must planning committees follow officers' advice in reaching decisions" and section 3 Probity in Planning.

#### "3.1 The Nolan Committee

The Nolan Committee, reporting on standards in public life in 1997, argued that councillors should be more willing to take decisions against the advice of officers:

"Paragraph 286: It should be firmly stated that there is nothing intrinsically wrong if planning committees do not invariably follow the advice of officers. Planning officers exist to advise planning committees, which are entitled to reach their own decisions by attaching different weight to the various planning criteria which are relevant to an application. If a

decision is thought to be perverse, a planning officer should so advise the committee, but respect the committee's conclusion."

I note in the particular application giving rise to this question, neither the senior planning Officer or the planning solicitor thought it necessary to advise the Committee they thought their decision was perverse. The representatives of the main Heritage Assets, the Cathedral and Erasmus Darwin supported the application. They strongly disagreed with Historic England's opinion that the development would have an overriding harmful impact on a number of heritage aspects.

# The Briefing Paper continues:

"Paragraph 289: Councillors themselves may be influenced by feelings which do not derive from dispassionate examination of the planning issues. They may see themselves as leaders of local opinion rather than as judges, and they may even have been elected on a specific platform of opposing or supporting a particular development or type of development. In our view, if planning decisions by local authorities were to be regarded as quasi-legal decisions, in which councillors played a role similar to that of inquiry inspectors or judges, there would be no point in involving councillors in such decisions. They might as well be taken by planning officers, or by inspectors."

"This conclusion surprised many in the planning field, mainly because they felt that the analysis did not take account of the main issue – the policy framework. The Sweet & Maxwell Planning Encyclopedia commented:

The missing element in the Committee's analysis is the policy framework within [which] decisions must be taken, comprising both national policy (now principally represented by the PPGs) and local policy (now principally represented by the development plan). It is the policy framework which places the greatest constraints upon councillors' ability to reflect local community interests. The principal reason for Britain's national policy framework, indeed, is the need to pursue objectives, such as housing targets, that will often override local community wishes. Part of the impetus for planning gain is that the practice, as with its counterparts in other countries, minimises the cost to local communities of accommodating growth that is the product of national forces. (Sweet & Maxwell Encyclopaedia of Planning Law and Practice, Monthly Bulletin August 1997 page 19)"

The main planning matter the committee were required to consider was the question of balance between public benefit and heritage assets. The purpose of the planning system is to ensure sustainable developments happen in the right place at the right time for the benefit of the economy and the local community.

The Members of the committee come from wards across the District and must be apolitical in their decision making.

The Members took the view the public benefit outweighed the heritage considerations. This is a genuine planning consideration that neither overrides national or local policy. Based on sound planning grounds I fully agree with the comments made by the Chair of Planning who in that role should remind the members of the key issues.

Quite often in making a planning decision it is a matter of weighing up competing issues. In so doing the members reached a different outcome to the recommendation, which they are fully entitled to do. The question is suggesting Committee Members should always follow a recommendation which begs the question, what is the point of having a Planning Committee of elected Members if they always follow the Officers' recommendations?"

### **Councillor Norman asked the following Supplementary Question:**

"I'm interested in the Blue Hoardings Site in Burntwood which is designated as a town centre both in the Local Plan and in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Chair of Planning at the time spoke in favour of the developer, which was a planning application for housing, against this. In other words the Chair spoke against the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan and I'd like to know if the Cabinet Member is happy with this?"

## Response from the Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Housing & Health

"As reflected in my answer, I'm happy with the approach taken by the Chair on such matters. The question Councillor Norman put forward and his supplemental seem to suggest that at all times you follow all recommendations without due regard for all the planning policies and weighing up the pros and cons. My answer makes it clear that the role of each individual member of the Planning Committee is to weigh up the balance against competing interests and this is what is done throughout. So, I agree with the Chair and what he said at the meeting and I agree with him on what he said concerning Burntwood. Otherwise the members of the committee may as well not turn up and engage in the process of weighing up recommendations and balancing competing interests because that is what happens all the time in planning applications"

# Q3. Question from Councillor Norman to the Chair of the Council

"At the last meeting of Council, which he chaired, I started to speak on the Labour amendment for a one-year council tax freeze at 1 hour and 16 minutes into the meeting and at 1 hour,19 minutes and 42 seconds in he ruled, despite my protestations, that I had, had my 10 minutes allowed [under Procedure Rule 15.4].

Can he explain why he misled the Council meeting?"

# Response from the Chair of The Council

"Cllr Norman is of course correct; I apologise for cutting him short and at the next meeting of the Council I will be stepping down as Chairman"

#### 91 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & 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

#### IN PRIVATE

# 92 CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL ON CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

Councillor Pullen submitted his report on confidential Cabinet Member Decisions and answered Members questions.

### 93 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Leytham submitted the confidential Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March 2022 and answered Members questions

# 94 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

It was proposed by Councillor Matthews, seconded by Councillor Warburton and

**RESOLVED:** That the confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2022 be approved and adopted.

(The Meeting closed at 6.42pm)

**CHAIRMAN** 



#### REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

## CABINET DECISIONS – 10 May 2022

### 1. Future Procurement Plan

The Cabinet:

1.1 Noted the Future Procurement Plan including the forthcoming contracts that will require sign off by individual Cabinet Members.

#### 2. Local Plan 2040 - Submission

The Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agreed that the Local Plan 2040 and accompanying Proposals Map should be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, together with the summary comments and officer responses at Appendix A, the list of suggested modifications at Appendix B and the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) attached at Appendix G of the Cabinet report.
- 2.2 Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Leisure & Local Plan, in consultation with the Interim Director of Regeneration and the Leader of the Council, to agree the finalised Regulation 22 Statement of Consultation, the overall Duty to Cooperate Statement and individual Statements of Common Ground (SoCG).

# 3 Appropriation of Stychbrook Park

The Cabinet:

3.1 Recommended to Council the appropriation of the Public Open Space (POS) at Stychbrook Park under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the purposes of building the new Lichfield Leisure Centre.

# 4 Second Update -Development Management Service Review & Improvement Plan

The Cabinet:

4.1 Noted the performance of, and the progress being made by the Development Management Service in terms of implementing the revised structure and with regard to its improvement programme.

# 5 Performance Report 2022

The Cabinet:

- 5.1 Noted the outturn report and available data sets as set out in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of the Cabinet report.
- 5.2 Approved the revised actions and additional key performance indicators set out in Appendix 3 of the Cabinet report for the revised delivery plan.

#### **CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

# 6 Parking Enforcement Contract Extension

The Leader of the Council approved that the contract for Parking Enforcement with Stoke on Trent City Council is extended for a further 3 years ending in September 2023.

# 7 Car Park card payment upgrades and ANPR (Pay on Exit)

The Leader of the Council approved the award of contracts for Car Park card payment upgrades and ANPR (Pay on Exit).

#### **CONFIDENTIAL CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS**

# 1 Contract Extension – Temporary Staff

The Leader of the Council approved the contract extension of a Temporary Member of Staff (Regeneration) as reported in the Cabinet Member Decision as circulated to all Members on 11 April.

2. Confidential Decision of the Chief Executive in Consultation with the Leader of the Council; Decision of the Cabinet Member for Innovation & Corporate Services

Details of an urgent confidential decision were circulated to Members as a Decision Notice on 6 May, together with an associated decision of the Cabinet Member for Innovation & Corporate Services, and formally reported to Cabinet on 10 May.

Doug Pullen Leader of the Council



# PLANNING COMMITTEE

# 4 APRIL 2022

#### PRESENT:

Councillors Marshall (Chair), Baker (Vice-Chair), Anketell, Barnett, Birch, Checkland, Cross, Evans, Ho, Humphreys, Matthews, Ray, Salter, Tapper and S Wilcox

#### 38 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Evans.

### 39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Anketell, Baker, Checkland, Matthews and Ray declared personal interests in application no. 21/00288/FULM as they were also Members of Lichfield City Council who had registered objections on this application.

Councillor Ray declared a non-pecuniary interest in application no. 20/01245/FULM as he knew one of the landowners connected to the applicant company, however, he advised that he was not predetermined.

Councillor Marshall declared a personal and prejudicial interest in application no. 20/01245/FULM as some of the landowners are known to him. He therefore vacated the Chair and left the room whilst this application was discussed and debated, Councillor Baker, Vice-Chair took the Chair for this one item.

#### 40 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2022 previously circulated were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 41 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Applications for permission for development were considered with the recommendations of the Chief Executive and any letters of representation and petitions of observations/representations received together with the supplementary report of observations/representations received since the publication of the agenda in association with Planning Applications 21/00288/FULM and 20/01245/FULM

21/00288/FULM – Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 13 residential dwellings with associated road works, parking and landscaping

Land at Rosaries, Trent Valley Road, Lichfield, Staffordshire

FOR: Mr B Johnson

**RESOLVED:** That this planning application be REFUSED for the following reasons:-

(1) It has not been demonstrated that trees protected by Tree Preservation Order 2021/00461/TPO would not be detrimentally compromised as a result of the proposals, which, given their positive visual contribution, would have

- a significant detrimental impact on the character of the area and the surrounding street scene contrary to the requirements of Core Policy 3 (Delivering Sustainable Development), Core Policy 13 (Our Natural Resources), Policies BE1 (High Quality Design) and NR4 (Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows) of the Lichfield Local Plan Strategy and the Trees, Landscaping and Development Supplementary Planning Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- (2) It has not been demonstrated that the development would not cause significant harm to existing habitats of protected species and, the scheme fails to demonstrate that a net gain to biodiversity can be achieved. As proposed the scheme of development therefore would cause harm to protected species and present a net loss to biodiversity and as such, fails to comply with the requirements of Core Policy 13 (Our Natural Resources), Policy NR3 (Biodiversity, Protected Species and their Habitats) of the Lichfield Local Plan, the Biodiversity and Development Supplementary Planning Document, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act and the National Planning Policy Framework. The development is not considered to be of a sustainable form which complies with the provisions of paragraph 38 of the NPPF.

(Prior to consideration of the application, representations were made by Mrs Helen Robertson (Objector), Councillor Angela Lax (Ward Councillor) and Ms Louise Hinsley of CT Planning (Applicant's Agent)).

20/01245/FULM - Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels (143,000) with a net generating capacity (AC) of up to 49.9MW, including mounting system, battery storage units, inverters, underground cabling, stock proof fence, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure, landscaping and environmental enhancements for a temporary period of 40 years and a permanent grid connection hub

Land South Of Main Road, Haunton, Tamworth, Staffordshire

FOR: Haunton Farmers Solar Ltd

**RESOLVED:** That this planning application be approved subject to the conditions contained in the report of the Chief Executive.

(Prior to consideration of the application, representations were made by Mr Roger Nicholls (Objector) and Mr Peter Grubb of Lighthouse Development Consulting (Applicant's Agent)).

# TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. 2021/00455/TPO - LAND TO THE NORTH WEST WESTFIELDS ROAD, ARMITAGE

Confirmation of Tree Preservation Order no. 2021/00455/TPO – Land to the North West Westfields Road, Armitage.

**RESOLVED:** Tree Preservation Order confirmed with modifications, as set out in the report of the Chief Executive.

(Prior to consideration of the application, representations were made by Mr Watkin (Objector's Representative) and Mr Chris Bailey (Supporter)).

## 43 ENFORCEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Planning Committee considered the updated version of the Planning Enforcement Plan at Appendix A and noted an in-depth review had been undertaken to ensure it is in line with current National legislation and guidance, reflects the resources within the Planning

Enforcement Team and is a more customer-friendly document.

**RESOLVED:-** The Committee considered and approved the updated Enforcement Plan April 2022 as no issues were raised and it was agreed that the Plan be adopted with immediate effect.

### 44 PRE-APPLICATION CHARGING REGIME - REVIEW AND UPDATE

The Planning Committee considered the report which sought approval for amendments to the current pre-application charging regime to increase the charges payable. It was noted that the charging regime had not been reviewed since 2017 and the current pre-application fee levels were inadequate to appropriately fund the service provided.

**RESOLVED:-** The Committee considered and noted the contents of the report and approved the increased pre-application fee charges, as set out in Appendix 1 and agreed that this be introduced with immediate effect (from 5 April 2022) for all relevant pre-application queries received from such date.

(The Meeting closed at 8.25 pm)

**CHAIR** 



# AUDIT AND MEMBER STANDARDS COMMITTEE

# 20 APRIL 2022

#### PRESENT:

Councillors Spruce (Chair), Ho (Vice-Chair), Grange, Norman, Silvester-Hall, White and M Wilcox

Observer:

Officers in Attendance: Mark Hooper, Jane Irving, Will Stevenson, Anthony Thomas, Christie Tims, Andrew Wood

Also Present: Kirsty Lees (External Auditor), Avtar Sohal (External Auditor) Councillor Rob Strachan (Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Revenues & Benefits)

#### 97 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Councillor Robertson.

### 98 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest during this item. However, Councillor White subsequently declared a personal interest during Item 11 (Audit Plan (including Planned Audit Fee 2021/22)) as the individual responsible for appointing the chairs of the Staffordshire pensions committee and Staffordshire pensions panel.

#### 99 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 February 2022, previously circulated, were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

### 100 ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

Anthony Thomas (Head of Finance & Procurement) presented the report to the committee. It was noted that the report was similar to the previous year, with a relatively small number of changes highlighted within. Mr Thomas also highlighted that the Critical Accounting Judgements within the report were naturally subject to a degree of subjectivity involved with a reliance of surveyor's analysis. The committee were informed that later reports from the external auditors would also discuss some of the information covered in this item. However, these reports would be approaching the data from differing perspectives.

Members asked if the authority had received any preliminary views from actuaries as to what their analysis or assumptions would be in relation to the pension scheme. It was confirmed that nothing had been received so far.

Following members questions surrounding the calculation of average useful lives in relation to assets it was agreed that officers will look at disaggregating land value and building value to provide greater transparency.

Mr Thomas confirmed to members that recommendation 2.3 (To delegate to the Head of Finance and Procurement the ability to make further changes to the accounting policies to

reflect the subsequent release of new or updated guidance) was a delegation that would no longer be needed.

**RESOLVED:** (1) The committee agreed to remove recommendation 2.3 from the report.

(2) The committee approved the Council's proposed Accounting Policies and also approved the Council's approach to the Critical Accounting Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty.

#### 101 CHAIR OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL

Andrew Wood (Audit Manager) presented the report to the committee. Mr Wood highlighted that the attendance table would be updated following the meeting. The report details assurances in relation to internal audit, external audit, inspections, financial management, risk management and corporate governance.

The Chair noted that the authority had recently undergone a corporate peer challenge review, the results of which were largely positive. The Chair paid tribute to all committee members, citing this committee as the most effective he has worked on.

**RESOLVED:** The committee endorsed the Annual report of the Audit & Member Standards Committee 2021/22 and authorised the Chair to circulate the report to all Councillors.

#### 102 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AUDIT & MEMBER STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Mr Wood presented the report to the committee. He confirmed any weakness noted have been discussed with management and recommendations raised. It was noted that 82% of the plan has been completed at year end against a target of 90%, with a customer satisfaction score of 4.7 out of 5. The committee were assured that the irregularity mentioned in Appendix 1 had been investigated and the audit report in relation to this was currently being finalised, ready for circulation.

Members raised the importance of scrutiny in relation to payment card standards. These comments were taken on board and payment card standards will be included in an upcoming audit review.

**RESOLVED:** The committee noted the Internal Audit's Annual Report, including results for the quarter to 31 March 2022.

# 103 INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN, CHARTER & PROTOCOL 2022/23

The committee were informed that leadership team had been consulted on the Internal Audit Plan and that audit resources were focused into the higher risk areas of the council's arrangements. Mr Wood explained plans to conduct a review of internal processes, which will report back in July 2022. Changes to the charter and protocol were minor and highlighted in throughout.

Mr Wood assured the committee of his belief that the department has sufficient resources. He noted that whilst they are a small team, they operate in a larger environment and knowledge pool that can be drawn on regularly. He also explained that the number of audit days was determined by a variety of factors including report preparation, briefing, field work, drafting and signoff. However, these time scales are indicative, and days not utilised would be held in contingency for any additional instances that may arise later.

Members raised concerns about the possibility for fraud when providing payments for refugees. It was clarified that when dealing with these payments, judgements would not be taken on face value. Details of compliance would be required and issues noted at other councils would be focused on. The existing framework designed for Covid-19 grants will be built upon and further assurances can be provided to committee. However, members also highlighted that the authority has legal obligations, but also moral obligations on this matter.

**RESOLVED:** Members approved the 2022/23 proposed internal audit plan, charter and protocol.

### 104 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The committee were informed that monthly meetings had taken place with leadership team to update the risk register accordingly. SR1 has been rescored 6 to 9 in relation to uncertainty over the supply of goods and increasing energy costs. In relation to SR3, leadership team is continuing to monitor leavers from the authority to ensure resources are maintained. SR7 has also been rescored from 6 to 9 due to geopolitical risks. Whilst there has been a perceived increase in cyber security risks, the authority is working to ensure this is adequately managed. Members were informed that the authority is looking an external operator to test the security of existing services.

Members asked if there had been any consideration as to how the authority would continue supplying general services to residents in the event of a general war. Mr Wood stated that this has not been discussed specifically with leadership team, but he would subsequently take the issue forward with them.

The committee were assured that there are robust arrangements in place to remove staff from council systems when they leave the work force.

Mr Wood also confirmed that he has received the full support and respect of leadership when conducting his work.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the risk management update and received assurance on actions taking place to manage the Council's most significant risks.

## 105 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Mark Hooper (Governance Manager & Monitoring Officer) presented the report to the committee. Mr Hooper highlighted a number of presentational changes undertaken this year in order to make the document more accessible. The Chair highlighted this as a very thorough document.

**RESOLVED:** (1) Members approved the Annual Governance Statement.

- (2) Members delegated authority to the Chair and the Governance Manager to make further minor amendments to the Annual Governance Statement, prior to the inclusion of the final version in the Statement of Accounts.
- (3) Members approved the Local Code of Corporate Governance for 2022/23.

# 106 THE ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT FOR LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

This report was presented to the committee by Avtar Sohal (External Auditors) who noted that this report replaces the previous value for money commentary. The committee were informed that nothing had been identified as a significant weakness, although Covid-19 was brought into the report due to its significance as a national issue. In terms of strength, Mr Sohal stated LDC was at the upper end of councils his team are working with.

Members questioned the absence of the Overview & Scrutiny committee from the report and recommended that this be looked at very soon.

Members also questioned the description of £100,000 as a "small cost" in the report.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the contents of the Annual Audit report.

# 107 AUDIT PLAN (INCLUDING PLANNED AUDIT FEE 2021/22)

Councillor White declared a personal interest as the individual responsible for appointing the chairs of the Staffordshire pensions committee and Staffordshire pensions panel.

Kirsty Lees (External Auditors) took the committee through select highlights of the report. She highlighted that this year, the finance team will be using new ledger system for the first time, which naturally heightened the risk level compared to the previous year. Value for money 2021/22 did not identify any risks or significant weakness, however, members were assured that if any are identified throughout the audit, the council will be informed.

Mr Thomas confirmed that internally there has been no adverse reaction from the implementation of the new ledger system.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the contents of the Audit Plan.

### 108 INFORMING THE AUDIT RISK ASSESSMENT - LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Ms Lees presented the report to committee, explaining that management had previously been asked questions to inform audit planning. It was requested that members confirm the responses in this report are in line with their existing knowledge of the council.

**RESOLVED:** Members considered the responses enclosed and noted the contents of the report.

### 109 ACCOUNTING ESTIMATE MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

It was acknowledged by all that the contents of this report had been effectively covered during previous items. No further questions were raised by members.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the contents of the Accounting Estimate Management Summary.

# 110 WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted that this was the last Audit meeting of the existing calendar and paid tribute to the committee Chair. The Chair and members also paid tribute to the work of Anthony Thomas and all officers involved with this committee.

**RESOLVED:** Members noted the contents of the work programme.

(The Meeting closed at 7.32 pm)

CHAIR



# Annual Report of the Audit & Member Standards Committee 2021/22

#### 1. Introduction from the Chair of the Audit Committee

The start of the financial year commenced with continued major uncertainty in many aspects of the Authority's operations, due to Covid-19 issues and the Council has continued to provide support to the local area through the management Covid Grants. The Committee has received assurance around the Council's response to Covid-19.

In relation to the committee's work, this has seen a transition to 'hybrid' working with officers working largely from home and utilising the new office spaces within Frog Lane. Committee meetings have been undertaken through a hybrid approach. The work of the Audit Committee meetings should be visible to members of the public and, as such ,meetings have been held remotely via Zoom and broadcast live on YouTube streams. This availability appears to have been well received by a number of viewers.

The Annual Report's main purpose is to allow the Council to demonstrate to residents, stakeholders and partners, the significance of the Audit & Member Standards Committee's role and the positive contribution it has made to the Council's overall governance arrangements.

The internal audit programme completion level has been high when compared to the agreed plan and the number of concerns identified throughout the programme have been few. Members have been able to interrogate further where there have been instances of less than adequate assurances.

During the year the Council has undergone a Corporate Peer Challenge review and this has increased the levels of assurance obtained by the Council and Committee. This provided an opinion and conclusion on the governance arrangements within the Council and strong financial leadership. In addition the Peer Challenge identified that corporate risk is given a high profile in the Council.

Risk Management within the Council has been challenged by the Committee in relation to the levels of risks above the risk appetite of the Council and the concerns around Cyber Security. During the year regular quarterly updates were provided to Committee and responses gained from the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council. These responses provided assurance to the Committee.

As we ended the 2021/22 financial year, the District Council continued with Grant Thornton UK as its External Auditor.

During the year there have been continued arrangements put in place for the Internal Audit Shared Service arrangement with Tamworth Borough Council. This arrangement was renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and will complete September 2023.

The Committee has appreciated the support and assurance the audit personnel have given from these arrangements.

I am therefore thankful for all members and officers who have contributed to the work of the committee over the last 12 months. There will be continuing financial challenges facing us, as well as continuing our work to ensure the Council's overall governanceframework remains fit for purpose.

#### 1. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference, which the Committee operated to during 2021/22, is detailed at Part 3 of the Council's constitution at the following link:

https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/documents/s8011/Part%203%20Final%20v4.pdf

#### 2. Member and Officer Attendance

The Audit & Member Standards Committee met 5 times during the 2021/22 municipal year.

Membership of the Audit & Member Standards Committee during the 2021/22 municipal year and their attendance is detailed below:

	Date of Committee Meeting				
Audit & Member Standards	22/07/21	22/09/21	11/11/21	03/02/22	20/04/22
Committee Member					
Councillor Christopher Spruce	$\overline{\checkmark}$	$\square$	$\overline{\mathbf{A}}$		TBC
Councillor Wai-Lee Ho	$\overline{\checkmark}$	$\square$	$\overline{\mathbf{A}}$		TBC
Councillor Joanne Grange		$\square$			TBC
Councillor Steven Norman	$\overline{\checkmark}$	$\square$	$\overline{\mathbf{A}}$		TBC
Councillor Dave Robertson	$\overline{\checkmark}$	$\square$	$\overline{\mathbf{A}}$	$\overline{\square}$	TBC
Councillor Janice Silvester-Hall		$\square$			TBC
Councillor Alan White	$\overline{\checkmark}$	$\square$			TBC
Councillor Michael Wilcox	$\square$	$\square$	Ø	$\square$	TBC

A number of the Audit & Member Standards Committee Members also sat on various other Committees. There were no reports received during the year that necessitated members absentingthemselves.

Senior officers from the council also attend the Audit & Member Standards Committee meetings as appropriate, including the Head of Finance & Procurement (Section 151), Chief Operating Officer and the Audit Manager (Shared Service). The External Auditors also attend and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement, Revenues & Benefits usually observes.

# 3. Training & Effectiveness

No specific Audit Committee training has taken place since November 2019, but this will be addressed this coming year following collation of information received in relation to a review of the Committee's effectiveness which will shape the future training and development of the Committee in 2022/23.

Due to the hard work and commitment of the Committee members during the year this has led to the committee being able to effectively carry out its role. This was further supported by the annual review of the Committee's effectiveness as reported in February 2022.

# 4. Sources of Assurance during 2021/22

In fulfilling its terms of reference, the business conducted by the Audit & Member Standards Committee during 2021/22 is detailed at **Appendix A** per the following themes: -

- Internal Audit;
- External Audit / Inspection;
- Financial Management;
- Risk Management;
- Corporate Governance;

The Committee gained assurance in 2021/22 from these themes as follows:-

#### **Internal Audit**

In respect of the 2020/21 financial year, a positive Internal Audit Opinion was given from the Shared Head of Audit as follows:

On the basis of our audit work, our opinion on the council's framework of governance, risk management and internal control is adequate in its overall design and effectiveness. Certain weaknesses and exceptions were highlighted by our audit work. These matters have been discussed with management, to whom we have made recommendations. All of these have been, or are in the process of being addressed.

# **External Audit / Inspection**

The main responsibility of the External Auditor is to report on the Council's Accounts and whether the council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Grant Thornton reported on the 2020/21 Accounts. Due to the ongoing pandemic the Council is yet to receive Grant Thornton's finalised Annual Audit Report.

## **Financial Management**

The Committee scrutinised the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts and also received assurances on the Council's financial management arrangements (e.g. treasury management, prudential indicators) from the Head of Finance & Procurement (Section 151 Officer). The Committee also received regular Internal Audit Progress Reports, including a number giving assurance on financial management and controls during the period. The Committee also received assurance on compliance against Financial Procedure Rules and Contract procedure rules.

### **Risk Management**

The Committee has received quarterly updates on the Council's Risk Management arrangements via review of the Strategic Risk Register. The risk environment continues to develop following the progress made in respect of Covid-19 and together with Cyber Security has dominated the Council's risk management arrangements this year and will continue into 2022/23. The Council has aligned its strategic risks to the new Strategic Plan as well as introducing the 3 lines of defence model to risk management activities and has developed its sub strategic risk processes.

The Audit & Member Standards Committee also gained assurance around risk management and challenged management in relation to the approach taken in respect of cyber security.

The Council's current 8 strategic risks are as below, together with their position on the matrix.

SR1, SR7 SR5, SR2, SR6 SR3, SR4, SR8

- **SR1:** Pressures on the availability of finance may mean the Council is not able to deliver the key priorities of the strategic plan.
- SR2: Resilience of teams to effectively respond to a further serious disruption to services.
- **SR3**: Capacity and capability to deliver / adapt the new strategic plan to emerging landscape.
- **SR4:** Failure to meet governance and / or statutory obligations e.g. breach of the law.
- **SR5**: Failure to adequately respond to the wider socio-economic environment over which the Council may have little control, but which may impact on the growth and prosperity of the local area.
- **SR6**: Failure to innovate and build on positives / opportunities / learning arising (including from the Covid-19 situation) to maximise outcomes for the Council, e.g. technological solutions.
- **SR7**: Threat to the Council's ICT systems of a cyber-attack.
- **SR8**: Being a Better Council, The Council is not able to deliver the key priorities of the strategic plan. This risk is being reviewed at Leadership Team on 19 January 2022 and an update to the scoring will be provided.

### **Corporate Governance**

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and review of effectiveness for the 2020/21 financial year, concluded that the effectiveness of the system of internal control was fit for purpose overall.

#### The Committee also:

- undertook a review of its own effectiveness in line with CIPFA good practice and confirmed
  that it continued to meet its terms of reference. The Committee also reviewed its skills.
  Consideration was given to whether appointing an Independent Person was necessary but
  the Committee concluded that it had sufficient skills and experience in the existing
  membership to be able to conduct its business effectively.
- received assurances on updates on the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules;
- received an update on the implications for the audit regime resulting from the Redmond Review; and
- received the annual report of the Monitoring Officer and Exceptions and Exemptions to Procedure Rules

Regular updates on the adequacy of the Council's counter fraud arrangements were also taken including the approval of the suite of counter fraud and corruption policy

statement, strategy and guidance notes; whistleblowing policy, anti-money laundering policy and prevention of tax evasion policy).

### 5. Conclusion

The Committee has been able to confirm that there were no areas of significant duplication or omission in the systems of governance in the authority that had come to the Committee's attention during 2021/22 that were not being adequately resolved.

Through members receiving this report, the role and purpose of the Committee has been promoted and it has demonstrated that the Committee has continued to perform, meet its terms of reference and added value. This work will continue in 2022/23 with the Committee's refreshed work programme.

# Appendix A

# **Summary of Audit & Member Standards Committee Work Plan by Assurance Theme 2021/22**

		Assurance	Theme			
Meeting	Report	Internal	External	Financial	Risk Managemen	tCorporate
Date		Audit	Audit /	Management		Governance
			Inspection			
22/07/21	Annual Treasury			$\overline{\checkmark}$		
	Management Report					
	CIPFA Resilience Index			<b>4</b>		
	Internal Audit Quarterly	V				
	Progress Report					
	Quality Assurance &	V				
	Improvement					
	Programme/PSIAS					
	Risk Management Update				<b>1</b>	
	RIPA reports, policy and					V
	monitoring					
	Model Code of Conduct					V
22/09/21	Statement of Accounts			<b>4</b>		
	Local Audit Update		V			
	Overview of Council's			V		
	Constitution in respect of					
	Financial Procedure Rules					
	Overview of Council's			V		
	Constitution in respect of					
	Contract Procedure Rules		<u> </u>			
	Audit findings report 20/21		Ĭ <u>V</u> I			
11/11/20	-		<u> </u>			
11/11/20	Local Audit Update		Ĭ <u>V</u> I			
	Mid woon Transum			<u> </u>		
	Mid-year Treasury Management Report					
		<b></b>	+			
	Internal Audit Progress Report					
	Risk Management Update		+		<u> </u>	
	Counter Fraud Update	<b>V</b>				
	Report					
03/02/22	Treasury Management			<u> </u>		
03/02/22	Statement and Prudential					
	Indicators					
	Internal Audit Progress	<b>V</b>				
	Report					
	Risk Management Update				<b>I</b>	
	Review of Audit Committee				_	
	Effectiveness					
	Audit Committee LDC		<b>a</b>			
	Progress Report and					
	update year ended 31					
	March 2022					

		Assurance Theme					
Meeting Date	Report	Internal Audit	External Audit / Inspection	Financial Management	Risk Managemen	tCorporate Governance	
20/04/2022	Accounting Policies and Estimation Uncertainty			Ø			
	Annual Governance Statement			☑			
	Chair of Audit Committee Annual Report						
	Annual report for Internal Audit 2021/22 (including year end progress report)	Ø					
	Internal Audit Plan, Charter & Protocol 22/23	Ø					
	Risk Management Update				Ø		
	Annual Report on Exceptions & Exemptions to Procedure Rules 2020/21					V	
	Annual Report of Monitoring Officer - complaints					<b>1</b>	
	Annual Letter for LDC from Local Government Ombudsman					Ø	
	Annual Audit Letter		Ø				
	External Auditors Audit Plan 21/22		Ø				
	Informing the Audit Risk Assessment – LDC		Ø				



# Agenda Item 11

COUNCIL

# Appropriation of Stychbrook Park

Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Leisure & Local Plan

Date: 17 May 2022

Contact Officer: Ben Percival

Tel Number: 07772 913265

Email: <u>ben.percival@lichfielddc.gov.uk</u>

Key Decision? YES

Local Ward Cllr Robertson & Cllr Ball

**Members** 

# 1. Executive Summary

1.1 Stychbrook Park has been identified as the preferred site for the proposed new Lichfield Leisure Centre. In accordance with Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 Lichfield District Council is required to appropriate the public open space before any development can proceed.

# 2. Recommendations

2.1 That Council approve the appropriation of the Public Open Space (POS) at Stychbrook Park under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the purposes of building the new Lichfield Leisure Centre.

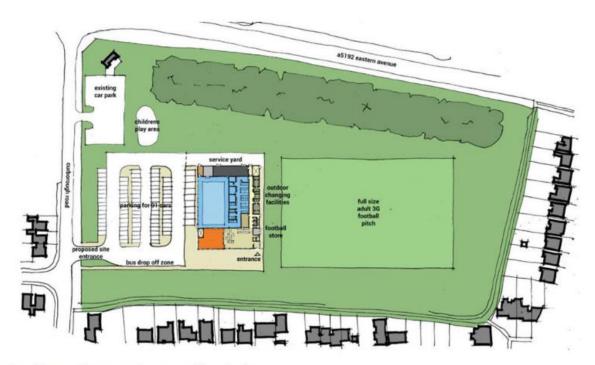
# 3. Background

- 3.1 Cabinet confirmed at its meeting on 7 October 2019 the council's aspiration to invest in future leisure provision, specifically a new facility to replace the limited-lifespan Friary Grange Leisure Centre.
- 3.2 A detailed site analysis report was prepared by Pozzoni Architects in May 2020 which identified any sites within Lichfield large enough for a leisure centre in the council's ownership. This report suggested that Stychbrook Park was the preferred site. The selection of Stychbrook Park as the preferred site was supported by:
  - the Leisure Centre Member Task Group 14 September 2020;
  - the Leisure, Parks and Waste Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23 September 2020;
  - Cabinet 6 October 2020.
- 3.3 Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 specifies that 'a principal council may not appropriate any land consisting or forming part of an open space unless before appropriating the land they cause notice of their intention to do so, specifying the land in question, to be advertised in two consecutive weeks in a newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated, and consider any objections to the proposed appropriation which may be made to them.'
- 3.4 The 1972 LGA s.122 Notice consultation took place for just over six weeks, commencing 2 September 2021 and concluding 15 October 2021. During this time the council placed the requisite two adverts in the Lichfield Chronicle local newspaper. To broaden the consultation and ensure residents the Council also:
  - engaged through social media,
  - wrote to all those signed up to the councils e-news, some 19,000 people,
  - wrote to 200 properties neighbouring the park making them aware of the advert.

- launched a microsite specific to the project so that anyone who was interested could continue to follow our progress.
- 3.5 Despite the broad engagement, in total there were only 118 responses to the consultation; for context more than 1,500 responded to the recent consultation regarding the Beacon Park golf course. 84 respondents objected to using Stychbrook Park, 17 respondents supported its use and often wanted additional facilities. A further 17 submissions made comments and asked questions about leisure centre proposals, but they didn't directly object to Stychbrook Park being used.
- 3.6 The responses that included more detailed statements and requests for information have been categorised into key themes: difficult
  - transport links/parking,
  - accessibility,
  - wildlife/trees/woodland,
  - pollution (noise, light),
  - the loss of existing facilities,
  - impact on climate change,
  - increase in localised crime,
  - facility design/mix comments,
  - the impact of COVID 19,
  - potentially using other sites,
  - impact on local people
  - querying the consultation process.
- 3.7 The New Lichfield Leisure Centre, Member Task Group discussed the findings of the consultation at its meetings on 3 November 2021 and 28 March 2022. Members resolved that a recommendation should be made to Cabinet in support of moving forward with Appropriation of Stychbrook Park. It was felt that the number of objections were outweighed by the resident benefit delivered by a leisure centre. It was further considered that many of the objections were extraneous to the appropriation of the site, but will be carried forward to any subsequent planning process where they will be fully explored and resolved.
- 3.8 Lichfield District Council's Open Space Assessment 2020 states that the Lichfield area has 82 ha of amenity space on 82 sites, with large sites around Beacon Park and Eastern Avenue. Stychbrook Park is along Eastern Avenue and adjacent to Christian Fields. There is a total coverage of amenity green space within a 480m/10-minute walk distance. The assessment also states that future development should continue to provide complete coverage for accessibility. This assessment indicates that Stychbrook Park is not required for open space purposes.
- 3.9 As can be seen from the location plan for the new leisure centre below. Whilst an area of Stychbrook Park will be lost in order to build a new leisure centre, substantial open space will remain. The existing children's play area will remain along with wooded areas and other grassed areas. The adjacent Christian Fields will be unaffected and still provide local residents with amenity green space within 480m/10-minute walk distance.
- 3.10 A new leisure centre will deliver a step-change in physical activity provision for residents, providing facilities to a standard commensurate with customer expectations. Only through providing a network of excellent quality facilities, can we encourage residents to make positive choices relating to their leisure time.

- 3.11 Physical activity makes a huge contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents and the local economy. Physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, accounting for 6% of deaths globally. Overweight and obesity are responsible for a further 5% of global mortality. For adults, doing regular exercise helps to prevent and manage over 20 chronic conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, stress and mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions.
- 3.12 The appropriation is a separate process to planning approval and is required to be completed ahead of any planning application. Once appropriated, the council could then make a planning application to develop a leisure centre on the site. The planning application will include a further consultation exercise and allow for a fuller examination of some of the issues detailed in 3.6 which are more relevant to the planning process than to the approval of the appropriation.
- 3.13 Cabinet at their meeting 10 May 2022 recommended that Council approve the appropriation of the Public Open Space (POS) at Stychbrook Park under Section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the purposes of building the new Lichfield Leisure Centre.

## Stychbrook Park – Location Plan



A plan of the new leisure centre layout at Stychbrook Park

Alternative Options	<ol> <li>The Council could choose not to Appropriate the site but that would mean its use for a leisure centre couldn't be progressed in this location.</li> </ol>
Consultation	<ol> <li>The 1972 LGA s.122 Notice consultation took place for just over six weeks, from 2 September until 15 October with the S122 Notice placed in local newspaper.</li> <li>Local residents adjacent to Stychbrook Park were mailed to make them aware of the S122 notice.</li> <li>The new Lichfield leisure centre Member Task Group were consulted and made recommendation to Cabinet to make the Appropriation.</li> </ol>
Financial Implications	<ol> <li>There are no financial implications, efficiencies or implications to the funding gap in making the Appropriation.</li> </ol>

Approved by	Yes
Section 151 Officer	
Legal Implications	<ol> <li>On 23 June 2021 Kings Chambers advised that because Stychbrook Park is considered as public open space, s.122 (2A) of the Act would apply and there will be a need to carry out publicity and consultation.</li> <li>On 3 August 2021, South Staffordshire Council's legal team clarified the process that LDC would need to follow to comply with s.122 of the Act in that 'a principal council may not appropriate any land consisting or forming part of an open space unless before appropriating the land they cause notice of their intention to do so, specifying the land in question, to be advertised in two consecutive weeks in a newspaper circulating in the area in which the land is situated, and consider any objections to the proposed appropriation which may be made to them.'</li> </ol>
Approved by Monitoring Officer	Yes
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	<ol> <li>Sustainable leisure centre provision in support of active lifestyles contributes to:</li> <li>a. Enabling people – to live healthy and active lives.</li> <li>b. Developing prosperity – to enhance the district for visitors</li> </ol>
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	<ol> <li>There are no equality, diversity and human right implications associated with the proposals at this stage.</li> <li>A full equality impact assessment will be conducted on the building's design and an access statement will accompany any future planning application.</li> </ol>
Crime & Safety Issues	1. None at this time
Environmental Impact	<ol> <li>The proposed site is currently public open space.</li> <li>The environmental impact of any development will be explored in detail as part of subsequent site investigations and any planning application.</li> <li>Mitigation measures will be identified and agreed as appropriate.</li> </ol>
GDPR / Privacy Impact Assessment	1. Not required.

	Risk Description & Risk	Original	How We Manage It	Current
	Owner	Score		Score
		(RYG)		(RYG)
Α	Loss of existing facilities – grass football pitches	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Yellow Severity: Yellow	Ensure that grass play can transition onto 3G pitch. Continue to work with FA on district-wide football facilities.	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Yellow Severity: Yellow
В	Appropriating the land needs to be completed prior to any planning considerations.	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Yellow	Appropriate the land prior to any planning application being made.	Likelihood: Green

		Severity: Yellow		Impact: Yellow Severity: Green
С	Appropriating the land for the purposes of a new Leisure centre doesn't guarantee any subsequent planning consent.	Likelihood: Yellow Impact: Yellow Severity: Yellow	After Appropriation is complete, to carry out a planning application process.	Likelihood: Green Impact: Yellow Severity: Green

# **Background documents**

# Relevant web links:

Leisure Centre Task Group agreed the preferred site 14 September 2020: <a href="https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/documents/s9048/Task%20Group%20Meeting%20Notes%2014%20Sept%202020%20v1.pdf">https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/documents/s9048/Task%20Group%20Meeting%20Notes%2014%20Sept%202020%20v1.pdf</a>

A report was taken to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee detailing the new leisure centres' preferred site on 23 September 2020; seeking support for a recommendation to Cabinet that Stychbrook Park be identified as the preferred site for the new Lichfield Leisure Centre.

https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/documents/s9050/Preferred%20LC%20site%200S%20FINAL.pdf

The preferred site was then endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting on 6 October 2020 - Item 4 – New Lichfield leisure centre preferred site:

 $\underline{\text{https://democracy.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=138\&MId=1641\&V} \\ er=4$ 



### Agenda Item 12

## Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report

Report of the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee

17 May 2022 Date:

Contact Officer: **Christine Lewis** 

01543 308065 Email: Christine.lewis@lichfielddc.gov.uk

**Key Decision?** NO Local Ward None.

Members

Tel Number:

www.lichfielddc.gov.uk

Council

#### **Executive Summary** 1.

1.1 To report the work and outcomes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Member Task Groups for the year 2021-2022. All information has been taken from previously approved minutes and decision notices.

## Recommendations

2.1 To note the outcomes of the Overview & Scrutiny function for 2021-2022

## **Background**

3.1 The Overview & Scrutiny function at Lichfield District Council.

> Following a review by a member task group, the overview and scrutiny function was changed from a four committee system to one overarching scrutiny committee and a greater emphasis on the use of member task groups. This was to create greater focus both on matters of importance and making a difference as this is key to Overview and Scrutiny reaching its potential and being of value to the District Council and to local people

The 2021 to 2022 year has been the first of the operation of this new system. This annual report, as required by the Councils Constitution, is to highlight the work and the outcomes of the Committee as well as any Member Task Groups that has or is in operation. The terms of reference for the Committee can be found at Appendix 1. A Toolkit has been developed to help all Members of the Council understand the function with training also provided. Copies of this Toolkit available upon request.

The recent LGA Corporate Peer Challenge noted the changes in the O&S function and noted in their feedback that

"The council recently reviewed its arrangements for scrutiny and now has a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place. These new scrutiny arrangements are being embedded and this change still needs time to see how it works in practice. The peer team recommend that this is kept under review to ensure scrutiny is as effective as it should be for the council."

Council resolved at their meeting on 20 April 2021 that there be an evaluation of the effectiveness of the new committee structure be undertaken after the next District Council Local Elections in 2023.

#### 3.2 ITEMS COVERED BY THE FULL COMMITTEE AND OUTCOME

#### **Scheme of Delegation**

At its first meeting in July 2021, the Committee received a draft of a revised Scheme of Delegation and views were given. It was requested that definitions be highlighted if required for example what significant objections actually means when dealing with Planning applications. It was noted that guidance around Planning decision making was being updated where this may be more appropriate.

Outcome - The Scheme of Delegation was amended and published.

#### **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

The Committee has received reports on the MTFS at its September 2021, November 2021 and January 2022 meetings.

The Committee has continuously reviewed the Strategy and given Cabinet views notably on the following areas. The outcome of these individual views are reported below each bullet point

- The level of general reserves there was compared to what was required as it was higher.

  Outcome This was noted by Cabinet and debated at their meeting. Reported that it was to be prepared for the outcome of the funding reform and the uncertainty it could present to the Council.
- That it was right to keep Shopmobility and Burntwood public conveniences remained in the budget.
  - Outcome These items have remained in the Strategy agreed.
- It was requested that wording be added to the Corporate Fees and Charges Policy to make clear
  that it related to revenue or net income or costs and on what basis costs were being done as it
  could give a different as to whether something was profitable. Similar with the Cost Recovery
  Pricing Policy and again requested wording be reviewed and made clearer. It was also asked
  that the costs of applying discounts be made clear.
  - Outcome The Strategy was amended to show full cost recovery in line with the legislative framework as well as terms have been updated to income and surplus.
- That a rise in Council Tax should not be considered when the Council has a high level of reserves
  and residents have been affected financially by Covid. It was noted that there needed to be
  middle ground and resident needs would be considered however increasing costs to deliver
  services would be also.
  - Outcome This was considered and debated at Full Council. Cabinet view was that a freeze had been considered however in a time of uncertainty did not think this would be the best decision
- That hybrid meeting continuation and enhancement be supported, as budgeted for, if legislation was passed to allow it.
  - Outcome This budget has remained in the MTFS
- That changes to Car Parking proposals be deferred to allow night time economic recovery due to Covid and Omicron.
  - Outcome There has been a deferral in proposals
- That when looking ahead to the 25 projections on both revenue and capital, there is no mention of any funding set aside for either the Burntwood Town Deal or the emerging Staffordshire County Deal.
  - Outcome Noted there wasn't anything firm that could be added at this stage.
- That ways of engaging for the Budget Consultation should be explored.
   Outcome It was reported that this was already being undertaken including the use of third party platform.

#### **A Better Council**

The Committee received a presentation on the Be A Better Council (BABC) programme including the associated Themes and intended outcomes. There were views given on the need for be some milestones or gateways to be included to aid success measuring. Members felt that data gathering and data use to inform the delivery of services was key and requested that proposals on how this would be done be brought forward to the Committee.

Outcome – That further information on data use will be considered further as well as briefing papers giving updates provided.

#### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Strategic Allocation Funds Assessment

At their January 2022 meeting, the Committee were asked to give views on whether the current guidance and criteria used by the Strategic Infrastructure Group (SIG) when determining applications should be amended especially as there had been a significant oversubscription against accrued monies available on the most recent bidding round. The Committee gave the following views

- That retrospective applications should be excluded as the projects have been delivered. It was suggested that an exceptional circumstance option be considered.
- That areas that do not have a neighbourhood plan should still be considered. It was noted that
  there could be instances that schemes are not in neighbourhood plans as they are referred to in
  other areas like the district wide Local Plan and therefore should still be deemed valid. It was also
  noted that those areas with neighbourhood plans already benefited from up to 25% of CIL
  regardless.
- That projects should be "shovel ready" to ensure delivery and not sit in abeyance whilst other funding was being sourced. However it was noted that there could be instances that securing CIL could open up other funding opportunities making schemes more viable. A "in exceptional circumstances" option could be considered. It was highlighted that the four external bids were not "shovel ready" and that may be due to their smaller organisational nature. It was felt that it should not become a situation where monies are only spent in-house/other authorities.
- That the proposed projects recommended to be allocated CIL be accepted as agreeable by the Committee.
- That any remaining unallocated monies be retained for future bids.
- That areas that are not putting applications in, be encouraged to do so.

Outcome – The criteria was amended to include the above views.

#### **Disabled Grants Facilities**

At their January 2022 meeting, the Committee considered delivery options for Disabled Grants Facilities. This item was held in private as it included confidential information.

Outcome – The decision made by Cabinet were in line with the views given by the Committee.

### **Corporate Peer Challenge - Update**

The Committee received a verbal report on outcomes of the Corporate Peer Challenge and resulting Action Plan. An update on what areas of the Action Plan had already been achieved was also received. Views were given that included that a report should come back to Overview & Scrutiny at the end of May to consider what actions had not been achieved and why. This would also coincide with the review date set with the Peer Challenge Group along with interim progress briefing papers

Outcome – that an update report be on the next Work Programme for its first meeting after the review of the Peer Challenge Group

#### **Health Matters**

The Chair is also a co-opted Member of Staffordshire Council Council's Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The responsibility for the scrutiny of health matters lies with the County Council however there is a mechanism through these co-optees to raise local issues.

Over the year, the Chair has received the following comments that have been passed to SCC.

- The lack of public transport to Derby hospital especially to attend appointments
- Issues being experienced around where Covid-19 booster jabs were available. It was noted that appointments booked via GPs were offered at the Samuel Johnson hospital however those booked without GP referral eg via online, were sent outside of the district including Tamworth and Norton Canes and this was very difficult for some residents. The Cabinet Member for Community Engagement requested details of these instances so he could raise the issue directly
- Concerns that there were difficulties getting the second dose jab for the Moderna vaccine.
- Ambulance long waiting times as Members had been contacted regarding these and it was asked to have it raised where they were positioned when waiting for calls.

#### 3.3 CALL IN

The Committee can exercise the right to call in, for reconsideration, key decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet. The full Call In process can be found in the Council's Constitution.

There have been no Call In requests made in the year 2021-2022

#### 3.4 MEMBER TASK GROUPS

There have been six Member Task Groups in operation throughout the 2021-2022 year. The below give further detail on each.

#### **New Leisure Centre**

Chaired by Cllr Baker, this Task Group was created in April 2020 but due to the nature of the project is still meeting. They have met twice in the 2021-2022 year. The outcomes of their work has included the review of all responses received on the S122 Consultation. A review of all possible sites and the recommendation to Cabinet of appropriation of the Stychbrook Park. A continuous review of possible funding opportunities as well as general oversight of the project.

### **Lichfield City Masterplan**

Chaired by Cllr Ball, this Task Group was created in May 2021 and has met a total of six times so far. The outcomes of this group to date is to consider the Car Parking Strategy, Public Realm Strategy and BRS Delivery Strategy which have all subsequently been approved by Cabinet.

#### Climate Emergency

Chaired by Cllr Norman this group has met twice so far. The group has agreed the scope of their work and invited and heard from external parties as witnesses. They have reviewed the current Organisational Carbon Reduction Plan and investigated other Authorities Action Plans and associated webpages resulting in feedback to Officers. There will be future meetings where the Cabinet Member will be invited.

#### **Dual Waste Recycling**

Chaired by Cllr Matthews, this group to date has met once to consider the communication strategy planned for the roll out of the dual recycling system. They reviewed leaflets and the utilisation of social media and were largely supportive of the plan but reserved the right for a follow up meeting if deemed necessary.

#### **Councillor Community Fund**

Membership of this task group has now been established and the first meeting was scheduled for the 11<sup>th</sup> May. It had been requested that the group consider the processes and any risks of the current scheme.

#### **Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

Requested by the Cabinet Member to review scheme and consider options to ensure the maximum help can be provided to local residents. Membership has now been established and a date for the first meeting is currently being sought.

Alternative Options	Overview & Scrutiny is required to hold the Executive to account and can help shape policy, contribute towards the continuous improvement of Council services and review or investigate matters of particular concern either within the District Council or within the Community. The Council could choose to govern in a different manner from the current executive arrangements.
Consultation	None
Financial Implications	None arising from this report.
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	The Scrutiny function reviews and helps progress the delivery of the Strategic Plan through feeding views into matter pre-decision.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	The Committee consider these matters when deliberating reports and items
Crime & Safety Issues	<ol> <li>Insert whether the recommendation(s) will impact (positively or negatively) on our duty to prevent crime and disorder within the District (Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1988).</li> </ol>
Environmental Impact	<ol> <li>These are considered via individual items however the Committee are still conscious of reducing any impact. Task Groups are held virtually where possible to reduce the usage of energy at the Council House as well as the need to travel. Printing of papers is only permitted in exceptional circumstances.</li> </ol>
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	None undertaken

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	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
А	No O&S Function leading to no democratic check and balance for the decision making body.	Ensure there is a functioning O&S Committee and the importance of its function made clear through the Constitution.	State if risk is Red (severe), Yellow (material) or Green (tolerable) as determined by the Likelihood and Impact Assessment.
В			
С			
D			
Ε			

# Background documents Meeting minutes O&S Toolkit

Relevant web links www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/council

### FOR COUNCIL 17 May 2022

### **CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS:**

COMMITTEE / PANEL	SIZE	Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind
Council	47	34	10	1	2
Leader and Cabinet	7	7			
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14	9	3		2
Audit & Standards Committee	9	6	2		1
Planning Committee	15	11	3	1	
Regulatory and Licensing Committee	13	8	3	1	1
Disciplinary and Grievance Appeals Committee	7	5	1	1	
Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee	7	5	1		1

COMMITTEE / PANEL	SIZE	Con	Lab	Lib Dem	Ind
Licensing and Consents Appeals Committee					
Any 3 from Regulatory and Licensing Committee	3				
Employment Committee	10	7	3		
Disciplinary and Grievance Appeals Committee	7	5	1	1	
Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee	7	5	1		1
Appointments Committee To be made of four Cabinet Members and the Leader of the Principal Opposition Group	5	4	1		
Joint Committee for Waste Management The Leader of the Council or authorised deputy The Portfolio Holder responsible for Waste or authorised deputy	2	2			

FOR: COUNCIL 17 May 2022

CABINET		
Leader of Cabinet	D. R. Pullen	
Deputy Leader of Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Local Plan, Parks & Leisure	I. M. Eadie	
Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement & Revenues and Benefits	R. W. Strachan	
Cabinet Member for Community Engagement	R. E Cox	
Cabinet Member for Innovation & Corporate Services	A. F. Smith	
Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Housing and Health	A. C. Lax	
Cabinet Member for Recycling	E. A. Little	

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  Constitution – Up to 14 Members							
		nposition					
Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent				
9	3	0	2				
R. Cross	C.D. Evans		J. K Grange				
J. M. Eagland	S.G. Norman		A. M Little				
B. Gwilt	D.C. Robertson						
W-L. Ho							
D.J. Leytham							
J. Silvester-Hall	J. Silvester-Hall						
H. Tranter							
M.J. Wilcox							
A. Yeates							

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE  Constitution – Up to 10 Members  Composition						
Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent			
7	3	0	0			
B. Gwilt	S. W. Banevicius					
T. R. Matthews	R. J. Birch					
J. A. Parton-Hughes	D. C. Robertson					
J. P. Powell						
S. J. Tapper						
M. Warfield						
S. E. Wilcox						

PLANNING COMMITTEE Constitution – Up to 15 Members				
		osition		
Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent	
11	3	1	0	
D. F. Baker	J. Anketell	P. W. W. Ray		
S. A. Barnett	R. J. Birch			
J. Checkland	C. D. Evans			
D. Cross				
K. P. Humphreys				
T. Marshall				
T. Matthews				
J. Powell				
D. F. Salter				
S. J. Tapper				
S. E. Wilcox				

REGULATORY & LICENSING COMMITTEE  Constitution – Up to 13 Members  Composition							
Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent				
8	3	1	1				
S. A. Barnett	J. Anketell	P. W. W. Ray	A. M Little				
J. Checkland	L. J. Ennis						
D. Cross	C. D. Evans						
J. M Eagland							
D. F. Salter							
H. Tranter	H. Tranter						
M. Warfield							
B. W. Yeates							

AUDIT AND MEMBER STANDARDS COMMITTEE  Constitution – Up to 9 Members  Composition						
Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent			
6	2	0	1			
R. Cross	S. G Norman		J. K Grange			
W-L Ho	D. C. Robertson					
J. Silvester-Hall						
C J. Spruce						
A. G. White						
M.J. Wilcox						

## DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE APPEALS COMMITTEE Constitution – 7 Members to be appointed when required Composition

At least one Member to be from the Cabinet

\*Chairman is elected from those Members present

Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent
5	1	1	0
J. Checkland	D. M. O. Ennis	P. W. W. Ray	
J. M. Eagland			
K. P. Humphreys			
A. C. Lax			
M. A. Warfield			

## INVESTIGATORY AND DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE Constitution – 7 Members to be appointed when required Composition

At least one Member to be from the Cabinet No members from the Disciplinary and Grievance Appeals Committee

\*Chairman is elected from those Members present

Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat	Independent
5	1	0	1
S. A. Barnett	C. J. Ball		J. K. Grange
R. Cross			
I. M. Eadie			
C. Greatorex			
T. Marshall			

## APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE Constitution – 5 Members to be appointed when required Composition

Four Cabinet Members and Leader of the Principal Opposition Group

\*Chairman is elected from those Members present

## LICENSING & CONSENTS APPEALS COMMITTEE Constitution – 3 Members Composition

Any three from Regulatory & Licensing Committee but including the Chairman of Regulatory & Licensing Committee as standing Chairman

#### JOINT COMMITTEE FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT Constitution – 2 District Members Composition

The Leader of the Council or authorised deputy
The Portfolio Holder responsible for Waste or authorised deputy

FOR: ANNUAL COUNCIL 17 May 2022

### **CHAIRS AND VICE- CHAIRS 2022/23**

Meeting	Chair	Vice-Chair
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	To be elected at Annual Council	S. G. Norman
Planning Committee	T. Marshall	D. F Baker
Regulatory and Licensing Committee	B. W Yeates	J. Checkland
Audit and Member Standards Committee	C. J. Spruce	W-L. Ho
Employment Committee	T. R. Matthews	S. Wilcox
Disciplinary and Grievance Committee	To be elected from the Members present	
Investigatory and Disciplinary Committee		
Licensing and Consents Appeals Committee	To be elected from the Members present	



Outside Body	File	Notes	No. of Reps	Currently Appointed	Date Appointed	Appointment Ends	Approved Duty (Y/N)	Proposals - 2022/23
Cannock Chase AONB Joint Committee	A62		1	Eadie, I. M.	May, 2021	May, 2022	Υ	Eadie, I. M.
Greater Birmingham Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)			1	Pullen, D. R. Eadie, I. M. (alternative)	May, 2021	May, 2022	Υ	Pullen, D. R; Eadie, I.M.
GBSLEP Joint Scrutiny Committee			1	Leytham, D. J.	May, 2021	May, 2022	Υ	O&S Chair
Guild of St. Mary's Centre	A48		1	Chair of the Council	May, 2021	May, 2022	Υ	Chair of Council
Lichfield District Tourism Association - Executive Committee	A78		1	Eadie, I. M.	May, 2019	n/a	Υ	Eadie, I. M.
Local Government Association General Assembly	A59		1	Leader of the Council (or nominee)	May, 2021	May, 2022	Y	Leader of the Council (or nominee)
Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Waste Board	A98		1	Yeates. A	May, 2021	May, 2022	Y	Little, E
Staffordshire County Council Health Select Committee	A100		1	Leytham, D. J.	May, 2021	May, 2022	Y	O&S Chair
Staffordshire Police & Crime Panel	P1		1	Cox, R. E.	May, 2021	May, 2022		Cox, R. E.
Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)			1	Pullen, D. Eadie, I. M. (alternative)	May, 2021	May, 2022	Υ	Pullen, D. R. Eadie, I. M. (alternative)
Support West Midlands Employers			1	Pullen, D. R. Eadie, I. M. (alternative)	May, 2021	May, 2022		Pullen, D. R. Eadie, I. M. (alternative)
West Midlands Local Government Association - Leaders board			1	Pullen, D. R.	May, 2021	May, 2022		Pullen, D. R.

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Outside Body	File	Notes No. of Reps	Currently Appointed	Date Appointed	Appointment Ends	Approved Duty (Y/N)	Proposals - 2022/23
Corporate Parenting Panel		1	Silvester Hall, J	May, 2021	May, 2022		Silvester Hall, J

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