

Statement of the Leader of the Council

1. Staffordshire's People

1.1 Mid-Staffordshire Hospital

I wanted to inform members that the County Council's response to the Trust Special Administrators (TSA) recommendations for Mid-Staffordshire has been submitted.

Across Staffordshire there is real concern that the TSA's recommendations do not resolve the problems facing Stafford and Cannock Hospitals. The County Council believes that the TSA has failed to fulfil its remit primarily because the recommendations of the TSA still require a gap of £8.5m to be closed.

We believe that this gap is a risk that undermines the ability of Stafford Hospital to become a sustainable local hospital. A clear example of this is the ridiculous notion of closing a local Maternity Ward without having properly assessed alternatives that could keep the ward open, such as a Mid-Wife led unit.

It is also the county council's opinion that the TSA's recommendations are so narrow that they do not align with the strategy of the Health and Wellbeing board nor this councils approach to public health, community care and integrated social care.

To me the best solution comes from the development of a Single Integrated trust that brings together the trusts within Staffordshire into an arrangement which is not only clinically safe, and financially sound but that maintains local accountability through local control.

We will continue to push for this option, as it is in the best interests of Staffordshire, Stafford and our residents.

1.2 Achieving Excellence for Public Health

Public Health duties transferred to the County Council in April 2013. In the six months since then, a full review of how Public Health does business has been undertaken which has allowed a fresh look at ways of working.

As a result, the Cabinet have agreed upon the strategic direction for 2014/15 which will focus on:

- Prevention and early intervention to manage need in a more proactive way.
- Strong Leadership and partnership working where we can better influence the spending across the entire system of health and wellbeing.
- Directing more money to the community and providing more locally based solutions.
- Using innovation to benefit the people of Staffordshire.

- Using our resources differently and more flexibly.
- Spending money on what we know works well to get the maximum benefit for our communities.

The Cabinet have also given delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to agree and sign off the detail of the programme plans and commissioning delivery arrangements for the coming year 2014/2015.

(Cabinet – 18 September 2013)

2. Staffordshire's Communities

2.1 High Speed Rail 2 Phase One: Consultation Response

High Speed 2 (HS2) will be the UK's new high speed rail network, linking London and the West Midlands (Phase One) and expanding to connect Manchester and Leeds (Phase Two). In Staffordshire, Phase One will impact Lichfield District which will see approximately 16km of new railway and associated equipment built.

The Department for Transport/HS2 Ltd published the proposed route design changes and draft Environmental Statement for Phase One for public consultation on 16 May 2013. This consultation took place over an eight week period which ended on the 11 July 2013. County Council officers working with Lichfield District Council colleagues and the various local HS2 groups scrutinised the consultation proposals. The proposed response to both consultations was endorsed by the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure and was submitted to HS2 Ltd on the 11 July 2013.

The Cabinet have -

(i) endorsed the Cabinet Member's submission to the draft Environmental Statement (named Staffordshire Phase One Mitigation and Enhancement Plan) and Route Design Refinement Consultation;

(ii) agreed that the Mitigation and Enhancement Plan be endorsed as the basis for further discussions with HS2 Limited and a potential submission to the future Hybrid Bill;

(iii) given delegated authority to the Director for Place and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure, to develop a Mitigation and Enhancement Plan that may be used to prepare for the HS2 Hybrid Bill;

(d) given delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Economy and Infrastructure to take decisions around the scope of the Mitigation and Enhancement Plan; and

(e) agreed that the final decision on using the Mitigation and Enhancement Plan to petition the Hybrid Bill be decided by Cabinet.

(Cabinet – 21 August 2013)

3. Our Staffordshire

3.1 Achieving Excellence

The County Council has changed its way of working to become focused on what really matters for Staffordshire's people and communities. However, the challenges for the future are considerable and will require a co-ordinated approach from all stakeholders to ensure that we continue to make a real difference. A significant amount of cultural change and strong leadership will be required to ensure that the organisation is in a position to rise to this challenge.

Cabinet have agreed a vision, values, behaviours and outcomes for the Authority (presented in the graphic below) as the basis for business planning, strategy and policy development over the next four years.



**VISION
VALUES
BEHAVIOURS
& OUTCOMES**

VISION Connected Staffordshire, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy

VALUES	BEHAVIOURS
Put the people of Staffordshire first	Articulate COMMUNICATE COMPELLINGLY
Value each other	Ambitious SEEKING OUT IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION
Embrace doing things differently	Perceptive UNDERSTANDING THE WIDER PERSPECTIVE
Do the right thing	Strategic DRIVING FOR PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS
	Leadership LEADING SELF AND OTHERS
	Integrity INSIGHTFUL THINKING

OUTCOMES The people of Staffordshire will:

- Be able to access more good jobs and feel the benefits of economic growth
- Be healthier and more independent
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community

(Cabinet – 21 August 2013)

3.2 Keele University Science and Business Park - IC5

The IC5 scheme and business case was originally approved by Cabinet in April 2011. As could be expected, over the two years since the scheme's approval,

the capital costs have risen from £6.1M to £6.8M. This is primarily due to the following factors:

- Inflation in the construction sector
- An increase in the standard of construction of the ground floor of the Centre to match the standard of the previous four Innovation Centre buildings and do meet the expectations of prospective tenants
- The need to include a provision to interest and secure the anchor tenant (equivalent to a six month rent free period).
- The inclusion of the initial Marketing & Letting Management contract being undertaken by Keele University Science & Business Parks Ltd.

In view of this, Cabinet have approved an increase in investment in the IC5 scheme from the previously approved £6.1M to £6.8M. This will be subject to final negotiations with the building contractor and Keele University Science and Business Park Ltd regarding final costs and the Heads of Terms of the service contracts, with KUSBP being acceptable from a commercial perspective.

(Cabinet – 18 September 2013)

3.3 Treasury Management Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2013

The Cabinet have received details of the Council's investment and borrowing activity during 2012/13. They noted that, as at the 31 March 2013 the Council's overall debt level stood at £560 million, a fall from £574 million a year earlier. The Cabinet have also given their approval to the use of the Minimum Revenue Provision of £27.018 million for the repayment of debt

(Cabinet – 17 July 2013)

3.4 First Quarter Budget Monitoring Report 2013/14

The Cabinet have noted that the revenue forecast outturn at quarter 1 revealed a current projected overspend of £4 million against the council's original service budgets. This was equivalent to 0.8% of the council's overall service spending. The majority of this projected overspend was caused by the growth in demand for social care from adults and children – an issue shared by councils across the country. There were also pressures within the waste and sustainability budgets. The Cabinet have also given their approval to an additional £0.350m of capital funding being allocated to the Superfast Broadband project to cover increased project management costs.

(Cabinet – 17 July 2013)

3.5 Portfolio Holder Delegated Decisions

Portfolio holders have recently taken decisions in respect of the following matters:

- The review of Libraries and Arts Fees and Charges for 2013/14

LEADER'S STATEMENT

- A grant of £140,000 to Huntington Parish Council towards the build costs of a new village hall to complete the 'pit village regeneration'.
- The granting of a further lease to the 1st Chadsmoor Scout Group in respect of 1,430 square metres of land fronting Church Street, Chadsmoor.
- The sale of Green Hall, Lichfield Road, Stafford to McCarthy and Stone Retirement Lifestyles Limited following the identification of abnormal costs following a ground investigation survey.
- The adoption of *Green Shoots* (the third edition of the County Council's Corporate Climate Change Strategy).
- The award of the contract for the development of the Langbourn site in Cannock to Galliford Try PLC.
- A pensions agreement to underwrite future liabilities that may arise as a result of the TUPE transfer of childcare staff to private providers; and a lease agreement including a period of four years rent free, for private sector providers to develop their childcare business from Staffordshire Children's Centres.
- That following a process of social work review and care planning, service users attending the day care scheme at Stone (New Kitchener) be supported to move into alternative day care options and, once this has been completed, the Centre be closed.
- That following a process of social work review and care planning, service users attending the day care scheme at Stafford (Trinity) be supported to move into alternative day care options and, once this has been completed, the Centre be closed.
- That following a process of social work review and care planning, service users attending the day care scheme at Eccleshall be supported to move into alternative day care options and, once this has been completed, the Centre be closed.
- That following a process of social work review and care planning, service users attending the day care scheme at Meir Heath (St Francis) be supported to move into alternative day care options and, once this has been completed, the Centre be closed.
- In approving, as recommended by the Local Government Ombudsman, the payment of compensation of £9,250 to Mrs X for providing personal and social support during the residential college holidays to her daughter, Miss X, which should have been funded by the County Council; and the

payment of compensation of £1,000 to Miss X for the injustice this has caused her.

- The submission of the Staffordshire Phase One Mitigation and Enhancement Plan as part of the County Council's response to the consultation on the HS2 Phase One draft Environment Statement.
- The publication on 2 August 2013 of a specification for a new school to be established in the North of Stafford by September 2015.
- The commencement of consultation with stakeholders on options for the modernisation and improvement of the in-house day services for people with learning disabilities.
- The sale of 2.9 acres of land forming the northern site of Bishop Lonsdale Church of England (VC) Primary School.
- That the Tourism team in Place be authorised to sell packages of accommodation and attractions to consumers under the Enjoy Staffordshire brand and via www.enjoystaffordshire.com and the number of Staffordshire accommodation providers be increased to an agreed quality and financial standard by recruitment or application.

3.6 Forward Plan

The Cabinet have approved the Forward Plan for the period 16 October 2013 to 19 February 2014, which contains details of the decisions which the Cabinet are expected to take during that period.

P.E.B. Atkins
Leader of the County Council