

Minutes of the County Council Meeting held on 25 July 2013

Present:

Attendance		
Ben Adams	Brian Edwards	Mark Olszewski
George Adamson	Terry Finn	Ian Parry
Margaret Astle	John Francis	Sheree Peale
Charlotte Atkins	Bob Fraser	Kath Perry
Philip Atkins	Michael Greateorex	Trish Rowlands
Ann Beech	Sandra Hambleton	Jeff Sheriff
Len Bloomer	Gill Heath	David Smith
Frank Chapman	Derrick Huckfield	Mark Sutton
Ron Clarke	Kevin Jackson	Stephen Sweeney
Maureen Compton	Keith James	Simon Tagg
Chris Cooke	Brian Jenkins	John Taylor
Tim Corbett	Philip Jones	Martyn Tittley
Mike Davies	Mike Lawrence	Diane Todd
Peter Davies	Ian Lawson	Alan White
Derek Davis, OBE	David Loades	Conor Wileman
William Day	Robert Marshall	David Williams
Carol Dean	Geoff Martin	Mark Winnington
Mark Deaville	Shelagh McKiernan	Susan Woodward
Alan Dudson	Christine Mitchell	Caroline Wood
Janet England	Geoff Morrison	Mike Worthington

Apologies for absence: Ian Hollinshead and Alison Spicer

PART ONE

17. Confirmation of the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 May 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2013 be confirmed.

18. Chairman's Correspondence

Alderman Thomas Roger Wright

The Chairman informed the Council of the death, on 11 June 2013, of Alderman Thomas Roger Wright who represented the Burton Town County Electoral Division between 1981 and 2005.

During his 24 years as a Member of the County Council, Mr Wright had served on a number of Committees including Fire and Public Protection, Highways, Education (on which he was Chairman), Records and Museums, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Joint Archives, Police, County Farms and Agriculture, Policy and Resources, Enterprise and Economic Development, Libraries, Arts and Archives, Cultural and Recreational

Services Group, Planning and the Regulatory Committee (on which he also served as Chairman)

Mr Wright was also Chairman of the County Council between 1997 and 2001.

Members paid tribute to Alderman Wright and then stood in silence in his memory.

The 2013 Municipal Journal Achievement Awards

The Chairman informed Members that the County Council had won the “Innovation in Communications” and “Community Investor” categories in the 2013 Municipal Journal Achievement Awards. The County Council also received a “Highly Commended” in the “Best Achieving Council” category of the Awards.

The Innovation in Communication Award recognised the comprehensive communications approach that launched Families First – the Council’s early interventions services for children and young people that made sure that they received the right support at the right time so that children had the best start in life. The communications supported 1700 staff through a large scale restructure.

Queen’s Birthday Honours

The Council were informed that five people from Staffordshire had been honoured in this years’ Queen’s Birthday Honours. David Pearsall was to receive an MBE for his services to the community and the police; Margaret Stanhope was also to receive an MBE for her services to local government and the community of Lichfield; Eric Emery was to receive a British Empire Medal for services to health; and John Upton was also to receive a BEM for his voluntary service to St John Ambulance. Steve Thompson, a former Chief Inspector with Staffordshire Police was to receive a Queen’s Police Medal.

Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge

On behalf of Members, the Chairman extended the Council’s congratulations to Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on the birth of their son.

19. Statement of the Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council presented a Statement outlining his recent work and an overview of decisions taken by the Cabinet (and Portfolio Holders) since the previous meeting of the Council.

Replacement of Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) Contract Award and Site Leasing Arrangements

(Paragraph 2.1 of the Statement)

In response to a question by Mr Huckfield, Mr Winnington confirmed that under the new contract, all HWRCs in the County would offer enhanced “small trade waste disposal service” aimed at providing convenient waste disposal opportunities for small businesses in Staffordshire. Other key enhancements included:

- An additional 30 minutes opening (until 5pm) during Winter Months at all HWRCs (*Except at Biddulph, where winter opening hours would remain limited to 4.30pm due to the proximity of local residents) and 7 day opening at, Bilbrook, Cannock, Leek and Stafford sites (subject to appropriate planning permissions and agreement with SCC);
- Increased staffing levels on sites;
- Introduction of additional material streams for recycling, including carpets, hard plastics and mattresses;
- Reuse facilities on all sites;
- Use of the HWRCs for more effective and efficient handling of Waste Collection Authority (WCA) bulky and fly-tipped wastes;
- Initial site refurbishment works and refurbishment or replacement of plant and equipment where needed. All new mobile compacting equipment will be sourced from local firm JCB; and
- Provision of a Recycling and Education Officer, to undertake communication, education and promotional activities in conjunction with SCC and the WCAs.

Mr Winnington added that the new contract would also achieve annual savings of approximately £240,000.

In response to a question by Cooke concerning the possible provision of a HWRC in Tamworth, Mr Atkins indicated that the County Council looked at the location/relocation of sites as opportunities arose.

2012/13 Final Outturn Performance and Finance Report (Paragraph 3.2 of the Statement)

Mr Atkins and Mr Parry referred to savings which had been secured over the past four years whilst protecting frontline services; how the County Council worked with partners to the benefit of Staffordshire's communities; the growth of the national economy through Staffordshire based companies like JCB, Alstom, Steelite and Jaguar Landrover; how customer satisfaction in Staffordshire County Council had grown steadily over the past four years; and that Staffordshire had the lowest level of Council Tax in England.

Portfolio Holder Delegated Decisions – Superfast Broadband (Paragraph 3.3 of the Statement)

Mr Sutton welcomed the progress being made on the roll-out of Superfast Broadband in Staffordshire and the benefits this would bring to local small businesses. Mr Winnington thanked Mr Sutton for his comments and explained that this £90m investment in infrastructure would result in 97% of Staffordshire households being able to access high speed broadband. The project would be rolled-out in eight phases and Members would be informed as each phase commenced. It was anticipated that the roll-out would be completed by 2016.

Powerhouse Central

(Paragraph 3.4 of the Statement)

Mr Edwards extended his appreciation of the hard work of those Members and Officers involved in the negotiations with Central Government on the City Deal and requested the Leader if he could update the Council on the progress to date. In response, Mr Atkins indicated that representatives from the partnership presented their case to Government Ministers on 17 July and that he would update members as soon as the results of that meeting were known.

LGA Conference

(Paragraph 3.5 of the Statement)

In response to a question from Ms Woodward concerning the under-utilisation of Lichfield and Burntwood Vocational Centre due schools being less willing to send pupils there as the Centre did not offer GCSE qualifications, Mr Adams spoke about the need to raise the profile of vocational courses/qualifications. He added that it was important that young people were equipped with the right skills to enable them to secure employment and, in so doing, help to further develop the local economy.

The 2013 Municipal Journal Achievement Awards

(Paragraph 3.6 of the Statement)

Ms Woodward referred to the 1,400 jobs that were to be created at the Jaguar Landrover (JLR) plant on the i54 in South Staffordshire and enquired as to how many of those jobs would go to Staffordshire residents. In response, Mr Adams indicated that the County Council was working closely with JLR with a view to equipping local people with the necessary skills to get jobs at the new engine plant.

RESOLVED – That the Statement of the Leader of the Council be received.

20. Questions

Mrs S. People asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

“The recent Keogh report, which David Cameron described as excellent, identified poor communication with patients as a factor in the delivery of services by Burton Hospitals NHS Trust.

(i) What steps is the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing taking to monitor the necessary improvements in patient communication in the hospitals run by the Trust?

(ii) Does the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing have confidence in the management of the Burton Hospitals Trust, since poor patient communication was a failing identified at Stafford Hospital and should therefore have already been a key area for all NHS Trusts to be monitoring?

(iii) Two of the Keogh Report's findings relating to Burton Hospitals Trust relate to a practise of imposing 12 hour shifts and leaving junior doctors unsupported. Although the first was stopped once identified by the Keogh inspection team, what steps has the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing taken to identify how far the support for junior doctors has increased?

(iv) Since the Trust itself concludes 'A review of staffing needs to take place to ensure there are enough Nurses out of hours' ., what confidence does the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing have that Burton Hospitals Trust will be able to fund a more appropriate system in line with the actions agreed following the visit by the Keogh inspectors?

(v) Does the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing agree that it is right that the three governors of Burton NHS Trust representing Lichfield and Tamworth all live in Lichfield?"

Reply

"With regard to the Keogh Review generally, it is clear that changes need to be made not just at Burton, but in our whole approach to health and social care. Staffordshire's Health and Wellbeing strategy clearly sets out our plans with partners to create a sustainable and high quality NHS which delivers care in hospitals and increasingly in our communities.

Specifically on Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, in all areas of care it is essential to communicate well with patients and it will be the role of Staffordshire's Healthwatch and Engaging Communities Staffordshire to ensure the voice of residents is heard and acted on.

Our then health select committee acted swiftly ahead of this review when concerns were raised about mortality rates and called Chief Executive Helen Ashley to our health select committee. The chief executive certainly gave a candid account of the challenges the trust faced and I note in the review the trust was praised for its co-operation.

Issues such as shift patterns and staffing is a matter for management and clinicians, but clearly nobody benefits from working very long hours and I am pleased this was stopped immediately once identified by the review team. Support for junior doctors is also a matter for the trust.

I understand the trust has recently recruited more nurses which is encouraging and will hopefully address points raised in the review.

In terms of governors, the county council has no powers to insist who is appointed. I am sure if any Tamworth resident wishes to apply when a vacancy occurs they will be considered on their merits like everyone else."

Supplementary Question

Can the Cabinet Member specifically answer the questions that I raised, in particular with regard to what he is going to be doing on these issues? In a number of instances in his response he said that “that’s a matter for the Trust. With the greatest of respect I would like to remind him of this Council’s responsibility as the Health Watchdog that we make sure that the Trusts are behaving as they should.

Reply

I will explain specifically where I stand on each of the five questions:

We set up the independent organisation called “Engaging Communities Staffordshire” which is responsible for getting feedback from patients. This feedback will be fed into the Health and Wellbeing Board, of which I am co-chairman, and it will be discussed on a regular basis.

When a problem arises, as in the case of Burton Hospital, it first comes down to the Health Select Committee who can challenge those responsible on the issues raised such as asking the Chief Executive of the Trust to come and respond to the Committees questions. If the Committee were also to ask me to attend their meeting to give my views on the issues and the Trust’s responses, I would be happy to do so. I feel that it is my duty to improve the health and wellbeing of everybody here in Staffordshire and I firmly believe that I have a lead role in moving this authority and healthcare in Staffordshire from where it is at the moment, which is primarily hospital based, to prevention and community based treatment so that people lead healthier lives and are less likely to get ill.

As far as the number of nurses is concerned, this is a matter for the Trust. If we think that the Trust’s policy on staffing levels is wrong then we have the power to scrutinise their policy. With regard to Junior Doctors, there is an independent committee, chaired by Julia Bridgewater, which is responsible for looking how these trainees/junior doctors are looked after.

Mrs S. People asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

“Can the Cabinet Member explain why the decision was taken to abandon the consultation on parent’s contributions to the cost of travel to school before the published closing date, thus potentially depriving residents of the opportunity of giving their views on the issue?”

Reply

“The consultation was an opportunity to gather views on proposals for parents to share the cost of discretionary school travel. This was a genuine consultation and having considered the wealth of responses we received from head teachers,

governors and parents and the many valid points that they had raised, I decided to close the consultation early after 20 working days.

It was very clear from the responses that there were concerns over the impact the proposals could have in particular on rural schools and those living in rural areas. Whilst we have limited resources and need to ensure we spend taxpayer's money wisely, we need to balance this with the views of local people and ensure that the proposals would not have a significant impact on parents and our unique community of schools in Staffordshire. We are a 'listening council' and we take the views of local people into account which resulted in us looking again at the proposals. I therefore decided to stop the consultation early to prevent any further uncertainty and to ensure schools, pupils and parents were informed of the outcome before the end of the school year."

Supplementary Question

Does the Cabinet Member not agree that this was an abuse of process in that people who may have legitimately been planning to respond to the consultation, possibly in favour, were deprived of their voice? In addition, I would be very interested to know how much money, including staff time, was effectively wasted in this improperly constituted consultation?

Reply

You could suggest that the consultation process being cut short limited the potential for some people to contribute, and you are quite right in that we did get a number of people contributing who were in full support of the proposed changes. However, these were a small minority and the bulk of responses were from people very much engaged in the issue, not those that were solely potentially going to have to contribute to the transport costs, but also those from schools who thought that they would be impacted by the proposed policy.

I think that the alternative of continuing, just for the sake of process, was not in the interest of those schools, parents and children. An early decision that allowed them all to move on and essentially plan for next year in confidence ahead of the school holidays was the right thing to do. Since then we have received nothing but thanks for making that decision early. I haven't received one representation from someone saying that they felt that their voice had been removed.

I will come back to you with the material costs of the consultation as we have already gathered that information for Press Releases.

Mrs C. Atkins asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

"What plans has the County Council for the Kniveden Garden Project in Leek?"

Reply

“The ‘Kniveden Garden Project’ uses gardening and other activities to support people in mental health recovery to ‘enable people to regain self-esteem and confidence’.

The project is run by the Occupational Therapy Service from North Staffordshire Combined Health Care NHS Trust, commonly referred to as Combined Health Care. The project is based in a building on the site of the Springhill Learning Disability Care Home on the outskirts of Leek. In 2001 the Council and Combined Health Care entered into a 10 year agreement for Combined Health Care to use part of the Springhill site. This agreement has rolled over since 2011.

As the ‘Kniveden Gardening Project’ is not a County Council service, the Council has no plans for this service. However, the closure of the Springhill Care Home was agreed in 2007, as part of the Changing Lives project of the then Labour Administration. Both the public and the staff were consulted at the time. There are only 8 remaining residents in the Springhill Care Home and many of these people have places to move to in the near future.

Combined Health Care has known since 2007 of the plan to close Springhill Care Home. The Council still plans to close the Springhill Care Home. Combined Health Care is aware that they will need to find an alternative site in the near future. Clearly, when the time does come for Combined Health Care to vacate the site, the Council will endeavour to see that there is as little disruption to the project as is possible in the circumstances.”

Supplementary Question

Of course I recognise that the County Council does not run the service but it does own the site and there has been an agreement back to 2001. Since 2007 there has been a huge amount of uncertainty. What amazes me is that, given the plan is for a Dementia Centre of Excellence to be on that site, the Garden Project is not seen as a valuable part of that proposal. The County Council doesn’t run the service but we hear a lot from Members about partnership working so why isn’t there a continuing partnership with Combined Health Care to ensure that users of the proposed new facilities on that site can also make use of the Garden Project, which has been highly successful and encompasses about 100 users per week, helping to keep them out of acute mental health care.

Reply

First of all, I think that Members need to be aware of the make-up of this site. There are two sites, side by side. On one side is the Springhill Care Home site upon which this Garden Project is based. On the other side is the Kniveden site which used to accommodate an old people’s care home. The two sides of the site are separated by a public footpath. The site that is being looked at for the Dementia Centre of Excellence is the Kniveden site, not the Springhill side. Therefore, as part of the Garden Project is concerned, the Dementia Centre of Excellence will not affect the Project.

As far as the Garden project is concerned, I would reiterate that the decision was taken back in 2007 to close the Springhill Care Home. At the point when the Home closes, the Combined Health Care will need to relocate the Garden Project elsewhere. I am sure that Members will understand that keeping the site with just the Garden Project on it would not be a good use of the Council's money.

Mrs C. Atkins asked the following question of the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

"Who has been consulted and informed about the County Council's plans for the Kniveden Garden Project?"

Reply

"I refer you to the response I gave to your first question."

Supplementary Question

Given the lack of consultation with the people involved in the Project, do you think it appropriate that County Council employees should wander onto the Garden Project with clipboards without first checking in with the manager of the Project, upsetting the clients who use the Project. And can you ensure that this does not happen again and give the staff and clients of the project the respect they deserve?

Reply

The only information we have got would indicate that those people who came onto the site were meter readers, not County Council employees.

Ms C. Wood asked the following question of the Leader of the Council whose reply is set out below the question:-

Question

"Can the Leader give a guarantee that there will be no closures to Household Waste Recycling Centres under the new Site Leasing Arrangements?"

Reply

"The new Household Waste Recycling Centre Contract becomes operational on 19th August. FCC are the new contractors. We have commissioned an improved level of service at an annual saving of £240,000 compared to the previous contract, which in practical terms for residents means that the sites will be open for longer and will accept even more materials, including carpets, mattresses and hard plastics. Under the new service there are no planned site closures. New Environment Agency rules require that the operators of the service must hold the Waste Management License and lease for each site. This has meant that all existing arrangements for leases on

the sites have to be transferred from the County to FCC. This will not adversely affect the practical operation of the service.”

21. Notices of Motion

(a) Motion by Mr G Adamson

Mr Adamson moved, and Ms Atkins seconded, the following motion:-

“This Council notes and supports the campaign by Unite the Union to stamp out the deplorable practice of 'blacklisting' of individuals because of their affiliation and association to a trade union within the construction industry. Blacklisting is a national scandal and too many construction workers have had their lives ruined just because they had legitimate concerns over health and safety in one of Britain's most dangerous industries or just because they belonged to a trade union.

The Council expects our joint venture partners or any organisation or contractor working with or on behalf of the council to have a zero tolerance policy towards this practice and if applicable to be co-signatories to the Construction Industry Joint Council Working Rules Agreement which aims to ensure that this practice is not prevalent in the construction industry.

This Council will take every legitimate step necessary to ensure that the County Council never knowingly engages or contracts with a company that operates a blacklist or has been found to operate a blacklist.”

Mr Adamson indicated that blacklisting was a terrible practice that went against the Government’s policy of encouraging “whistle blowing” and that the County Council needed to follow the example set by other Authorities by taking action to stamp out this illegal practice.

Ms Atkins added that the safety of their employees should be the number one priority for firms in the construction industry. She also indicated and that the practice of blacklisting employees is to be condemned and that those who stand up for the rights of others should not be victimised.

Mr Edwards moved, and Mr Francis seconded, the following amendment:-

That all the words after the words “This Council” be deleted and be replaced with the following:

“deplores illegal and unethical behaviour in any organisation and reaffirms our commitment to work with responsible and considerate partners and encourage them to affirm appropriate codes of practice.”

Several Members spoke in support of the amendment whilst others expressed their support for the original motion. Following a debate, the Chairman put the amendment to the vote. Mr Adamson asked for a named vote on the amendment to his original motion, at which point 22 Members rose in support of the request to hold a named vote.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were as follows:

Ben Adams	John Francis	Ian Parry
Philip Atkins	Bob Fraser	Kath Perry
Len Bloomer	Michael Greatorex	David Smith
Frank Chapman	Gill Heath	Mark Sutton
Chris Cooke	Keith James	Stephen Sweeney
Tim Corbett	Philip Jones	Simon Tagg
Mike Davies	Mike Lawrence	Martyn Tittley
Bill Day	Ian Lawson	Alan White
Mark Deaville	David Loades	Conor Wileman
Janet Eagland	Robert Marshall	David Williams
Brian Edwards	Geoffrey Martin	Mark Winnington
Terry Finn	Geoff Morrison	Mike Worthington

The following Members voted against the amendment:

George Adamson	Carol Dean	Mark OLSzewski
Margaret Astle	Alan Dudson	Sheree People
Charlotte Atkins	Sandra Hambleton	Trish Rowlands
Ann Beech	Derrick Huckfield	Jeffrey Sheriff
Ron Clarke	Kevin Jackson	John Taylor
Maureen Compton	Brian Jenkins	Diane Todd
Peter Davis	Shelagh McKiernan	Caroline Wood
Derek Davis	Christine Mitchell	Susan Woodward

The Chairman declared the amendment agreed by 36 votes to 24.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting until 2.00 pm.

Present at 2.00 pm

Ben Adams	Terry Finn	Ian Parry
George Adamson	John Francis	Sheree People
Margaret Astle	Bob Fraser	Kath Perry
Charlotte Atkins	Michael Greatorex	Trish Rowlands
Philip Atkins	Sandra Hambleton	Jeff Sheriff
Ann Beech	Gill Heath	David Smith
Len Bloomer	Derrick Huckfield	Mark Sutton
Frank Chapman	Kevin Jackson	Stephen Sweeney
Ron Clarke	Keith James	Simon Tagg
Maureen Compton	Brian Jenkins	John Taylor
Chris Cooke	Philip Jones	Martyn Tittley
Tim Corbett	Mike Lawrence	Diane Todd
Mike Davies	Ian Lawson	Alan White
Peter Davies	David Loades	Conor Wileman
Derek Davis, OBE	Robert Marshall	David Williams
Carol Dean	Geoff Martin	Mark Winnington

Mark Deaville
Alan Dudson
Janet Eagland
Brian Edwards

Shelagh McKiernan
Christine Mitchell
Geoff Morrison
Mark Olszewski

Susan Woodward
Caroline Wood
Mike Worthington

Members then debated the substantive motion that:

“This Council deplores illegal and unethical behaviour in any organisation and reaffirms our commitment to work with responsible and considerate partners and encourage them to affirm appropriate codes of practice.”

Mr Adamson moved, and Ms Atkins seconded, that:

“The motion be amended by the addition of the following sentence after the word “practice”:

“This Council will take every legitimate step necessary to ensure that the County Council never knowingly engages or contracts with a company that operates a blacklist or has been found to operate a blacklist”.

Following a debate and a vote, the Chairman declared the amendment lost by 33 votes to 22.

Mr Atkins moved and Mr Parry seconded that:

“the substantive motion be amended by the addition of the words “including blacklisting” after the word “organisation”.

Following a further debate and a vote, the Chairman declared the amendment carried.

RESOLVED – That this Council deplores illegal and unethical behaviour in any organization, including blacklisting, and reaffirms our commitment to work with responsible and considerate partners and encourage them to affirm appropriate codes of practice.

(b) Motion by Mr G. Adamson

Mr Adamson moved, and Ms Woodward seconded, the following motion:-

“This Council condemns the forced academisation of Norton Canes Primary School & Heath Hayes Primary School and fully supports their campaign to avoid this process.”

Mr Adamson indicated that for the forced academisation of schools did not necessarily lead to an improvement in the standard of teaching etc. He also expressed the concern that Interim Executive Boards had been given a remit by Government to push through academisation rather than to examine other available options and that, often, the Boards did not include representatives of local people. Mr Adamson added that when a school

was experiencing difficulties, it did not need the added distraction of forced academisation.

Several Members spoke about all young people's right to a quality education and the roles that schools played in their local community. Members also discussed other ways of helping "failing" schools such as through the creation of a foundation with other local schools.

In response, Mr Adams indicated that he would prefer it if the Government did not have to take these steps but that, in the case of these two schools, Ofsted had judged some time ago that they were failing and, subsequently, that the proposed pace detailed in the improvement plans was not satisfactory. It was therefore important to avoid any further delay and to take action to improve the schools.

Members also discussed the role of the County Council in providing support to schools.

Following a vote via a show of hands, the Chairman declared the motion lost.

RESOLVED – That the motion submitted by Mr Adamson be not supported.

(c) Motion by Mr P. Atkins

Mr Atkins moved and Mr Marshall seconded, the following motion:-

“That we call upon all Staffordshire health organisations, through the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to join with us and all our other partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors by pooling our resources and maximising all our efforts and influence to achieve the County Council's shared vision for Staffordshire to be a place where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.”

Mr Taylor moved and Ms Peale seconded that the motion be amended so that the last line reads as follows: "... healthy, happy and well cared for.”

Following a debate and a vote, the Chairman declared the amendment carried.

RESOLVED – That That we call upon all Staffordshire health organisations, through the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to join with us and all our other partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors by pooling our resources and maximising all our efforts and influence to achieve the County Council's shared vision for Staffordshire to be a place where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy, happy and well cared for.

22. Recommendations to the Council

Independent Remuneration Panel - Addendum to Annual Report 2013/14 following County Council Elections on 2 May 2013

The Council considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (The Panel) who were asked to consider specific aspects of the members' allowance

scheme following the County Council Elections on 2 May 2013. The issues the Panel were asked to consider included: the level of special responsibility allowances (SRA) following the re-introduction of the role of Cabinet Support Members; reinstating the SRAs paid to Shadow Cabinet Members; and the allowances paid to the Leaders of the principal and minority opposition groups. The recommendations of The Panel were considered by the Audit and Standards Committee at their meeting on 24 June 2013 who resolved to recommend to the County Council that The Panel's recommendations be approved.

Mr Atkins moved and Mr Parry seconded that:

- (i) That the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for Cabinet Support Members allowance be set at a level of 33% of the Leader of the Council's SRA (£11,550); and
- (ii) That the number of SRAs for Shadow Cabinet be confirmed as five (plus the Leader of the Principle Opposition).

Mr Atkins indicated that the Cabinet Support Members had provided to him evidence of their work load at that the proposed new allowances, if approved, would result in savings of £13,511 compared with the 2012/13 Remuneration Scheme.

RESOLVED - (a) That the recommendations of the Audit and Standards Committee meeting on 24 June 2013 to approve the addendum report to the Annual Report 2013/14 of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted.

(b) That the following allowances be approved and backdated to the Annual Council meeting on 16 May 2013:-

- (i) **Cabinet Support Members** - the allowance be set at a level of 33% of the Leader of the Council's Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) (£11,550).
- (ii) **Leader of the Principal Opposition** - the allowance be set at a level of 50 % of the Leader of the Council's SRA (£17,500).
- (iii) **Leaders of the Minority Opposition Groups** - the allowance be set at a level of 5% of the Leader of the Council's SRA (£1,750).
- (iv) **Shadow Cabinet** - the allowance be set at 15% of the Leader of the Council's SRA (£5,250).

(c) That the number of SRAs for Shadow Cabinet be confirmed as five (plus the Leader of the Principle Opposition).

(Note by Clerk: Mr Huckfield asked that his name be recorded as having voted against the proposals).

23. Report of the Chairman of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority

RESOLVED – That the Periodic Report of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Authority be received.

24. Petitions

(a) Deer Park Road, Fazeley

Mr White presented a petition from residents of Deer Park Road, Fazeley, Tamworth requesting updated signage to restrict access to residents only.

(b) Dartmouth Avenue, Newcastle-under-Lyme

Mr Tagg presented a petition from residents of Newcastle-under-Lyme requesting a safer crossing point on Dartmouth Avenue, Westlands, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Chairman