

## **Briefing Note**

### **Continuation of Staffordshire and Stoke Business Rates Business Rates Pool into 2025-26**

#### **Purpose of Note**

To seek approval for the continuation of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Business Rates Pool into 2025-26 and to determine any changes, if any.

#### **Background**

On 18<sup>th</sup> September, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities emailed local authorities on the application process for the pooling of business rates in 2025-26.

There is therefore a requirement for each authority to determine whether they wish to be a member of the existing pool, revoke this pool, amend the lead authority or vary the membership.

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October, with **all** authorities required to respond via a DELTA data collection to confirm their intentions. The DELTA returns all require a S.151 officer to sign off.

The lead authority is further required to attach a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to its DELTA return and this MOU must be agreed and signed by **all** S.151 Officers of the pool beforehand.

Please note there is **no** opportunity to adjust membership after the October deadline, so once this DELTA return is submitted, either the planned pool goes ahead or there is no pool in the area.

Staffordshire and Stoke Business Rates Pool membership currently consists of

- Cannock Chase District Council (Lead Authority)
- Staffordshire County Council
- Newcastle Borough Council
- South Staffordshire District Council
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
- Stoke on Trent City Council

- Stafford Borough Council
- East Staffs Borough Council
- Lichfield District Council
- Tamworth Borough Council
- Staffordshire Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority

Set out below

- Table 1 the 2024-25 budgeted levy saved for authorities.

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Business Rates pool is forecast to retain an additional £7.511m for districts and boroughs, £4.697m for county and city and Police and Fire £0.3m of levy which would otherwise be paid to Government.

The levy position is likely to be similar for 2025-26.

Therefore, pooling of business rates, with the current membership, is financially advantageous.

<b>TABLE 1</b>	<b>Budget</b>
<b>Pool Budget Summary</b>	
<b>Levy Saved Statement 2024-25</b>	<b>£m</b>
Cannock Chase	1.206
East Staffordshire	1.138
Lichfield	0.556
Newcastle	0.837
South Staffordshire	0.937
Stafford	1.490
Staffordshire Moorlands	0.672
Tamworth	0.665
<b>District and Borough</b>	<b>7.511</b>
Stoke on Trent	1.493
Staffordshire County Council	3.205
Police and Fire	0.300
Lead Authority	0.010
<b>ALL</b>	<b>12.518</b>

The potential reset of Business Rates and Fair Funding review has been deferred by the Government and will not impact on this decision.

## **Recommendation**

That authorities determine if they wish to continue their membership Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Business Rates Pool. The 2024-25 monitoring position actual and forecast outturn results are awaited from LG Futures but not believed to be significantly different from budgeted levels.