

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
AT 4:00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 18 OCTOBER, 2017
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Dudson, A. (Chairman)	
Witton, P.T. (Vice-Chairman)	
Adamson, G.	Johnson, J.P.
Alcott, G.	Johnson, T.B.
Allen, F.W.C.	Lea, C.I.
Allt, Mrs. A.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Bennett, C.	Martin, Mrs. C.E.
Bowater, J.L.	Mitchell, Mrs. C.
Buttery, M.S.	Molineux, G.N.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Pearson, A.R.
Cooper, Miss J.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Crabtree, S.K.	Smith, C.D.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Snape, D.J.
Dean, A.	Snape, P.A.
Dudson, Miss M.J.	Stretton, Mrs. P.Z., M.B.E.
Foley, D.	Sutherland, M.
Freeman, Miss M.A.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Grice, Mrs. D.	Tait, Ms. L.
Grocott, M.R.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Hardman, W.T.A.	Whitehouse, Miss S.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Woodhead, P.E.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Councillors Stuart Crabtree and Ms. Linda Tait, who had been elected to the Hednesford South and Hednesford Green Heath Wards, respectively, at by-elections held in September.

39. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs. C.L. Peake.

40. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

No other Declarations of Interests were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

41. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting and the Council meeting held on 30 August, 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed.

42. The Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Chairman's Fundraising

The Chairman advised that a collection box was circulating for Members to donate to his fundraising. At the meeting held on 30 August, 2017, a total of £33.70 was collected, and he thanked all Members for their donations.

(ii) Civic Service

A number of Members commended the Chairman on his Civic Service and Reception, held on Sunday, 17 September at St. Michael's Church, Brereton. All those who had attended had had an enjoyable time and had also received positive feedback from others present.

43. Questions in Accordance with Rule 8

The following Question was submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 8 by Councillor D. Foley, Brereton and Ravenhill Ward Member:

"In recent years there has been an increasing awareness and appreciation of the vital contribution made by our armed forces personnel, and the impact their military service can have on the lives of them and their families.

Council the Leader of the Council please tell us what support this Council offers to both serving and ex-servicemen and women living in Cannock Chase District?

In addition, can he also tell us if there are any plans to increase this support in the near future?"

Response to Question

Councillor G. Adamson, Leader of the Council, provided the following response to Councillor Foley's question:

"In 2015 the Council re-signed up to support the Staffordshire Armed Forces Community Covenant, a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local armed forces community. This community covenant is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant which outlines the moral obligations between the nation, the Government and the Armed Forces at a local level.

A Staffordshire Armed Forces Working Group has been established to develop the aims of the Covenant by bringing together all relevant partners across the County and to oversee the development of the Covenant, and our own Managing Director sits on this Group.

Locally, the Council has a dedicated Armed Forces webpage which not only details the support we as a Council provide, but also gives a wealth of other information to support the armed forces community.

There are three key areas in particular where the Council provides support to Armed Forces, these are:

Leisure

The Council has a leisure concession scheme that applies to serving armed forces personnel including active TA reservists who are resident in the District. The scheme offers free membership to Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres for use of the fitness suites, swimming pools and group activities/fitness classes. This scheme has proved to be very popular and continues to receive the support from Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles.

It was reported to Cabinet in June 2017 that during 2016-17 there were 156 armed forces personnel who signed-up for the leisure concession; 98 at Chase Leisure Centre and 58 at Rugeley Leisure Centre. This is a 20% increase on the previous year.

In conjunction with Help a Squaddie, the Council is currently working with Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles to offer 10 free memberships at Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres for ex-servicemen and women who are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, for a 12-week trial period.

Housing

The Council gives members of the Armed and Reserve Forces additional preference when applying through the Choice Based Letting Scheme for housing, when they fall under one of the following groups:

- (a) Serving members of Armed Forces who are leaving Services Family Accommodation through no fault of their own and is a household with children or falls into another priority group.
- (b) Former members of the Armed Forces who meet the reasonable preference categories.
- (c) Serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.
- (d) Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following death of their spouse or partner.
- (e) Serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service.

Since signing the Armed Forces Covenant, this Council has received two applications in 2015-16 where priority status was given for housing and a further two applications were received in 2016-17.

We have also received since 2015 three applications which were given priority status in applying for the Government sponsored affordable housing scheme.

The average waiting time for a home, including application process was 1.5 months in 2015-16 and 1 month in 2016-17.

Employment

In relation to employment, the Council is committed to fair and equitable treatment of staff and applicants who are members of the Reserve Forces. Applications from Reservists are welcomed and in recognition of the need for ongoing training and development as a Reservist, the Council is committed to ensuring an employee can, where possible, have dates required for annual camp as paid time off over and above annual leave entitlement.

The Council has also joined the DWP's Veterans Interview Programme which guarantees an interview to ex-service personnel who are undergoing initial transition from military to civilian life and are able to meet the minimum essential requirements for the position they have applied for as outlined in the Person Specification.

On 17th November 2016 Cannock Chase Council was awarded the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award, in acknowledgment of the Council's support for the Armed Forces. The Council was nominated for this award by William Billington of the Personnel Recovery Unit at 11 Signal and West Midlands Brigade for a number of reasons, including its support for medically discharged service leavers in offering work attachments.

It goes without saying that this Council is committed to helping those who have or are serving in the armed forces and their families and we will continue to do all we can."

44. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet, Committees etc.

None received.

45. Motions Received under Rule 6

No Motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 6.

46. Comments and Questions on Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9

No Comments or Questions on Part 1 Minutes had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.

47. Amendments to the Memberships of Committees and Other Bodies

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 9.1 to 9.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The membership of the Council's Committees and Other Bodies, as previously agreed, be amended in accordance with the revised political balance calculation attached as Appendix 1 to the Report and as detailed in the Schedule of Memberships circulated in advance of the meeting.
- (B) Councillor A. Dean should fill the 'others' vacancy on the Audit and Governance Committee.

48. Policy for Commercial Use of the Highway

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Development (item 10.1 to 10.55 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

Following a wide ranging discussion, Councillor P. Snape moved an amendment to the recommendations, which was seconded, that:

Implementation be deferred for three months to:

- (i) Allow the policy to be rewritten to include the whole district and not just the Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley town centres.
- (ii) Restructure the charging schedule to a flat fee, rather than unit cost, basis.

The amendment was put to the vote and not carried.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Policy for Commercial Use of the Highway, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report, be approved and adopted.
- (B) The Head of Economic Development be authorised to:
 - (i) Administer and enforce all aspects of the Policy;
 - (ii) Determine the mechanisms and timescales for implementation of the Policy (subject to full implementation being no later than April 2018);
 - (iii) Make required amendments to the Policy due to changes in legislation or government guidance and minor variations to the Policy in the interests of operational efficiency / service improvement;
 - (iv) Carry out a review of the Policy 12 months after initial implementation, with a view to evaluating the impact and determining whether the application of the Policy should be extended beyond the largest town centres and/or District wide.

49. Amended Street Trading Policy 2017

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Development (Item 11.1 – 11.23 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The amended Street Trading Policy as detailed at Appendix 1 to the Report be approved and adopted.
- (B) The Head of Economic Development be authorised to administer and enforce all aspects of the Policy.
- (C) The Head of Economic Development be authorised to make required amendments to the Policy due to changes in legislation or government guidance and minor variations to the Policy in the interests of operational efficiency / service improvement.

50. Comments and Questions on Part 2 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9

No Comments or Questions on Part 2 Minutes had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.

The meeting closed at 5:05 p.m.

CHAIRMAN