

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 20 APRIL 2009 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Pearce, Mrs. L. J. (Chairman)
Bernard, J. (Vice-Chairman)

Alcott, G.	Mawle, D. L.
Ball, G. D.	Sutton, Mrs. H. M.
Bullock, L. W.	Williams, A.

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

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Bullock, L. W.	Verdant Greenstar is a customer of his employer	Personal
Bullock, L. W.	Member has dealings with street cleansing sister company of Greenstar	Personal

27. Minutes

AGREED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2009 be approved as a correct record.

28. Environmental Enforcement Action Plan – 2009/10

Consideration was given to the amended list of activities to be included in the 2009/10 Environmental Enforcement Action Plan programme.

The Environmental Protection Manager gave an overview of the list and explained that the main changes related to further initiatives introduced to reduce dog fouling problems. It was reported that the possibility of carrying out a name and shame scheme had been investigated and the legal section had advised that this should not be carried out unless an incident went to court and was in the public domain.

Concern was raised regarding recent press coverage relating to covert surveillance. The Committee was informed that hot spot areas where fly tipping occurred would be targeted and that

a proportionate approach was being taken. It was reported that it may be necessary to use specialist agency staff with regard to this matter.

With respect to the recycling collection and the littering issue it was explained that monitoring of certain areas prior to and following collections was being carried out. It was reported that from feedback received from those taking part in recycling wheelie bin trial it appeared that it was being well received and that littering had reduced in those areas. A manufacturing problem had been identified with the rims to the 190 litre black containers cracking and that it may be necessary to issue the larger 240 litre containers unless the problem was resolved.

The Environmental Protection Manager explained that further outcomes of the current year's Enforcement Action Plan would be reported to the Committee.

AGREED

That the Environment Policy Development Committee endorses the Environment Enforcement Action Plan 2009/10.

29. Urban Forestry Strategy

The Committee received a presentation from Mr. Tom Walsh, Parks & Open Spaces Manager and Mr. Alan Wallbank, Urban Forestry Officer on Cannock Chase Council's Urban Forestry Strategy 2008-2013.

It was explained that an Urban Forest was formed from all the trees in an urban area regardless of ownership i.e. including Council, Private trees etc. Urban trees were now therefore best managed as a whole unit, rather than individual units. The management of trees and woodland was governed by legal responsibilities and influenced by national, regional and local policies. The 2008-2013 Urban Forestry Strategy was a re-write of the 2003 Strategy which set out a plan of actions to develop the policies and priorities to ensure trees and woodland would continue to contribute to the benefit of those that live, work and visit Cannock Chase. The Strategy would also help in delivering the Government's agenda for cleaner, greener and sustainable communities. It had been recognised that trees were important as they:-

- Had a positive effect on property values
- Absorbed pollution and filtered the air
- Provided CO₂ buffering/sequestration
- Provided privacy and screening
- Promoted a sense of well being
- Provided acoustic buffering

Cannock Chase Council's Urban Forestry Strategy – Management of Assets contained a suite of twelve policies. The first six aimed to protect and maintain trees as an amenity, to resist their removal, to replant where appropriate and encourage awareness of trees and woodland. It was reported that many trees had been lost through industry use, storms and diseases. Policies 7-12 aimed to legally protect trees and woodlands and ensure work was only carried out to good arboricultural standards and legal redress would be sought through the courts for infringement of legal protection. It was considered that planning developments should be resisted where inadequate provision was made for the retention of trees and woodland.

Following a Health and Safety Executive visit in 2003 concerning trees an annual inspection of trees had since been being carried out. Problems were now being encountered with the current IT

equipment as it was becoming a capacity issue to hold the data,, data interrogation was limited , and long term import/export of data was difficult to access and information gathering was being missed. The equipment did not work with PDAs, having been originally designed in-house in 2004 as a one year stop gap. It was requested that the Committee recommend to Cabinet that a new computerised system be purchased which offered the capacity to not only manage trees but would be an integrated system that would allow Grounds Maintenance to be included, whose system was also now out of date.

AGREED

That the Environment Policy Development Committee recommends to Cabinet that:-

- (A) The Urban Forestry Strategy 2008-2013 be adopted.
- (B) Officers investigate the necessary costs of the Strategy and identify funding in either Revenue budgets, apply for a supplementary estimate, or include the scheme as part of the Policy Options 2010-2011 for the purchase of a new computerised system.

CHAIRMAN