

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BETTER JOBS AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 5 APRIL, 2016 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT:
Councillors

Cooper, Miss J. (Chairman)
Dudson, Miss M.J. (Vice-Chairman)

Allt, Mrs. A.	Hoare, M.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Johnson, T.B.
Freeman, Miss M.A.	Preece, J.T.
Gamble, B.	

Also in attendance:-

Councillor G. Alcott (Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader – observer)

20. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Burnett and G.N. Molineux.

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

No further declarations were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests.

22. Minutes

Glenn Watson, Planning and Economic Development Services Manager referred to Page 16, Minute 14. Town Centre Trader Issues and reported that the actions agreed were currently in various working stages and advised that he would be liaising with the Chairman to ensure all were completed.

The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager also referred to Page 17 (E) and reported that the “walk-about” had taken place today in Cannock Town Centre.

He advised that further planned walks would be taking place in both Hednesford and Rugeley Town Centres. However, he indicated that there was currently no date for the Rugeley Town Centre launch given that the “Purdah” period had now commenced, and with the forthcoming local elections, the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections and the Referendum in June it was highly likely that this would be delayed.

He then referred to Page 17, Minute 15. Quarter 3 Performance Report and noted that the wording for (C) should read “Better Jobs and Skills” and not “Better Health Outcomes”.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 March, 2016 be approved as a correct record subject to the change to Minute 15 as detailed above.

23. Preparing Young People for Employment

The importance of Careers Advice and Guidance in Schools

The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager reported that Harriet Allen, Cannock Chase High School would not be in attendance due to a family bereavement; however she would make a presentation to a future meeting of the Committee.

Local Delivery of Young Enterprise

The Chairman welcomed Frances Wright, Young Enterprise Manager, Young Enterprise to the meeting who gave a presentation to Members of the Committee.

Frances Wright explained that Young Enterprise was:-

- UK’s largest business and enterprise education charity working with over 370,000 young people
- Range of programmes for young people aged 4-24
- Programmes based on principle of ‘Learning by Doing’
- Programmes bring volunteers from business into the classroom to work with teachers and students.

The Young Enterprise enabled young people to understand and tackle the challenges of the business world in ways that were enjoyable, enlightening and energising, and completely relevant to potential employers.

Se explained that there were two programmes, the Primary Programme and the Secondary School Programme.

The Primary Programme was aimed at children between the ages of 4-12 and topics covered:

- Community awareness
- Private and Public Sectors
- Local and National government
- Decision making and the process of voting
- Distribution and the Supply Chain
- World Trade - Supply and Demand
- Concepts of Marketing
- The movement of Money.

Frances Wright provided details of the programmes which were available for Secondary schools and Colleges and discussed the company programme with Members.

She advised that the South Staffordshire Area Finals were held in March, 2015 at the Garrick Theatre, Lichfield where a group of students from King Edwards VI in Lichfield won the overall competition for setting up a business. She went on to discuss the journey of one student who had gained employment as a consequence of being involved with the programme. She commented that teachers and business advisors to the Young Enterprise were very positive of the Programmes offered.

She then provided slides which showed a variety of different events that had taken place where young people had been involved and gained awards. These included a trade fair and best business plan.

Members were then invited to ask questions.

In response to questions raised by Members, Frances Wright advised that information was available on the internet for schools to access with an email facility to make contact. She explained that in order to undertake any of the programmes a visit would be made to interested schools, however there was a cost associated with programmes being undertaken. She advised that there was currently some funding in place for both the Tamworth and Cannock areas and reported that there were no restrictions in place on making bids for funding.

She advised that there were a number of schools located in Cannock undertaking the Company Programme, however currently it was much more difficult to involve primary schools. However, she indicated that with regard to funding, Young enterprise needed to prove the value of providing the programmes to young people and having done this, Staffordshire County Council were in a position to continue funding for a second year and it was hoped that primary schools could be included in the programmes.

A Member was keen to know what advertising was undertaken by Young Enterprise.

Frances Wright advised that advertising could come from various sources including word of mouth, email, website and more recently a programme which would run for a month which acted as a taster for young students.

In response to a question raised by a Member, she advised that the company would usually be dissolved once the programme came to an end as the students undertaking the programmes were mainly year 12s who would either be continuing their education at school or going to University. However, it was possible that the company could still be run if they wished to do so.

The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager referred to the challenges that some students at Rugeley Sixth Form College had to overcome.

Frances Wright discussed with Members and provided an insight into the challenges that had faced some students on the Company Programme. This included roles, products and business plans changing and students leaving. There were two students left who were not confident about giving their presentation, however they were encouraged to do so and did well, therefore they were presented with an award at the end of the programme.

South Staffordshire College – Courses, Apprenticeships and Future Opportunities

The Chairman welcomed Trudie McGuinness, South Staffordshire College to the meeting who gave a presentation to Members of the Committee.

Trudie McGuinness provided an overview which detailed:

- Employability
- Study routes -
 - Level 2 = GCSE equivalent
 - Level 3 = A Level equivalent
 - Level 4 = Foundation degree/Higher Education Certificate or Diploma
- Benefits of further education
- Future opportunities

She reported that an emphasis had been placed on students attaining grade C or above at GCSE level in both English and Maths. Therefore, when students attended any provider of Further Education, they were still required to undertake those GCSEs if not attained at school.

She provided details on the various college based courses which included some of the following:

- Agriculture
- Animal care
- Art and design
- Beauty therapy
- Business
- Sport
- Music

- Public services
-

(Councillor T. Johnson left the meeting at 4.35pm).

The Planning and Economic Development Manager referred to this slide and was keen to know where areas of growth were seen in the future.

Trudie McGuinness advised that current significant areas of growth were seen in the travel, leisure and tourism industry, sport and leisure and warehousing and logistics industries. However there were also new entry points in certain areas.

She reported on inspections that would take place by OFSTED and the importance of delivering courses against Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas, whilst also considering what was required by potential employers.

She explained that all students at Level 2 or above on courses were required to undertake 30 hours compulsory work experience which would be done throughout the year.

She reported on the benefits of further education which included:

- Courses informed by Labour Market Information (LMI)
- Vocational relevance
- Employer links
- Work experience
- Fosters independence

A further slide was shown which provided information on Future Opportunities:

- Cannock Retail and Leisure Skills Academy which hoped to bring 1200 jobs and apprenticeship opportunities in construction, engineering and business

Trudie McGuinness referred to the future Mill Green development and explained that the Academy would provide not just entry level 2 students but also those with higher levels with different skills to fit into different employment types such as marketing, business and retail.

She then provided details of the state of the art AgriSTEM academy which would open in September at the Rodbaston campus and it was hoped that 600 new apprenticeships would be created including land-based engineering, manufacturing operations and higher apprenticeships in engineering and agriculture.

A Member commented on the good work the College was doing and the projects that were going on in Cannock.

A Member asked if the loss of the Educational Maintenance Allowance for 16-19 year olds had impacted upon the numbers of students applying for courses

at college.

Trudie McGuinness explained that all students classed as 'looked after children' would automatically receive £1200. However, all colleges had their own discretionary bursary fund which was up to them how they distributed it.

She commented that the biggest challenge for the College was attracting students and making sure courses being offered were viable. She explained that towards September prior to the intake of new students, each course would be assessed to make sure there were enough students to make the course viable. Unfortunately, she explained that on occasions courses would be cancelled and students disappointed.

The Planning and Economic Development Manager asked if it was likely that the college would liaise with any other colleges that faced a similar situation in order that the course could be provided.

In response to this she advised that this would not happen due to competition between colleges. However, she commented that funding was now tight and discussions would be had with many six form colleges on the future of further education.

24. Work Programme Update

Consideration was given to the Work Programme at Item 5.1 of the agenda.

The Planning and Economic Development Manager was keen for Members views on what should be placed on the next work programme.

Members requested that the following items be considered for the future work programme:

- Presentation from Harriet Allen, Cannock Chase High School on the importance of careers advice and guidance in schools.
- Referring to the presentations from Young Enterprise and South Staffordshire College – looking at how the Council could assist.
- Impact of the closure of Rugeley Power Station on people and how visitors will be attracted to visiting Rugeley.
(The Planning and Economic Development Manager reported that a task group had already been established with a number of organisations involved. He advised that the de-commissioning and closure would be a lengthy process and demolition of the site would take around 3 years).
- How the Mill Green development could influence and create opportunities for services such as the train and bus routes.
(The Planning and Economic Development Manager reported that discussions had been taking place with Staffordshire County Council, particularly with regard to the S106 Agreement which would be required before planning permission was finally released. He advised that a further meeting would be taking place this week).
- That the town centre Traders Associations be invited to attend a

meeting of the Committee once per year with a focus upon what issues they wished to discuss with the Committee.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting closed at 5.05).