

2f Correspondence from external bodies (3)

Summary of written consultation submissions, received by letter or email

General

- Concerns around the openness and transparency of the consultation. Concerns about due notice being given to inform residents of public consultation meetings. Requests information on when transitional funding was applied for. Raises the question of whether a reduction in the number of councillors per ward/move to 4 year elections should be considered.
- The reduction or deletion of Local Council Tax Support Grant to Parish Councils would hit efficient and contactable local councils severely; disadvantaging the parishes they serve, while the cut would not affect Cannock at all. There is a strong case for reducing support for Cannock's theatre- Rugeley residents have to pay to fund another town's theatre through district council tax where as Rugeley's has to be funded through the Parish precept.
- Objection to reduction in grant to Parish Councils (Brereton and Ravenhill, Rugeley Town and Brindley Heath). Loss of Christmas Illuminations 'would deprive local communities of a pleasure at a time of year when it is especially needed.'

Cannock Park

- Against the proposal to use in-house/mobile teams. Suggests savings could be made if planting was taken in-house and relied more heavily on perennials/shrubs and bulbs. 'The reputation of Cannock, and hence the Council, needs to include a well maintained, monitored park with staff on site that make the public feel safe and are happy to use it.'
- Concerns around the daily maintenance of Cannock Park if a mobile team is in place. 'I understand that everyone has a limited amount of funds, but I feel very strongly that replacing the park keepers is a big mistake and will cost more in the long run.'
- Against the delivery of staffed parks service in house and the withdrawal from the Green Flag application process. In principle no objections to the maintenance of the park being taken in house but strong objections to the proposal to remove permanent park staff. Concerns that the loss of the Green Flag status will mean standards will not be maintained.
- 'At present the park is well looked after and to reduce the maintenance, litter collection and safety etc. would be very detrimental to the area. The local residents are proud of the Green Flag Award and the park is well used by the children and parents''.
- Against the move to a mobile park keeping team. 'The park keeper (with the support of the local police) transformed the park from a drug haven to once again a safe park for the local community.'
- "I wish to state that I do not agree with removing the parks from the Green Flag awards, and the parks should remain staffed".
- Having a mobile team in theory sounds satisfactory only. 'In the days of financial difficulty ways need to be thought about to make local communities feel proud of their area. Cannock people are proud people, it's the heritage of this area, and to take the heart out of public open spaces would be a retrograde step.'

Cannock Market

- Additional opening days at the Market would not be beneficial to the Traders. It may have an adverse effect in the future. Existing Traders have voiced that the situation would force them to cease trading.
- It wouldn't be cost effective to business and would not be able to cope with the extra day. 'If you persist with this, a lot of stall holders will retire'.
- Can see the need for a small increase the rents but an extra day would be detrimental to the Market. Market customers only have a certain amount of money to spend and public spending and limited footfall to the Town Centre will not increase if the market opens for a fourth day.
- Chose Cannock market because it was three days a week, Traders have other commitments on non-trading days. Due to expensive parking fees, people are not coming to browse the market anymore.
- Should the Council go ahead with a 4th day in our market there are a number of traders who would be unable to sustain their business with the increase in rent. Revenue from the Market would therefore drastically decrease.
- Would not be able to afford another days rent on the stall and would have to give serious consideration to leaving the market should it come into force. Imperative to have days off to still deal with the stall (deliveries etc.). If the Council supports improving footfall and business, four days may be an option in the future.
- An extra day would 'ruin my business'. Would have to pay somebody to run the market on extra days and would not be financially viable. If the market was cleaned and made to look more appealing there may be more customers.
- Any further increases in rents would cause me to rethink my position and consider moving to a shop. A cut in parking charges would also encourage people to visit Cannock. Opening more than 3 days would not benefit anyone unless more people are drawn to the town as our customers would only have the same funds to spend.
- Concerned that they will not be able to sustain their business with the proposed extra day. More traders of the same opinion and could result in the loss of the market altogether.

CCTV

- Staffordshire Police response: Stoke-on-Trent went through the same process and no funding was provided. PCC in post since then and may be able to support it. It feels like a very backward step to consider not monitoring CCTV at all. The presence of CCTV is a deterrent but would suggest mainly because people know its there and that someone is monitoring it. Stafford operate a reduced rota- as long as the consultation understands when it should be staffed and when the system can be parked then reduced coverage is possibly a better option. Would require weekly contact with the Police to feed information on crime trends and intelligence hot spots.

Parish Councils

- The Town Council wish to ensure the continued provision of lighting in Hednesford Town Centre in the future but the Town Council possesses none of the expertise and does not have the facility to store Christmas lights nor the technical ability to produce a specification on which to invite officers from Contractors to provide the service.
- Members cost appears to be excessive and should be reviewed. The reduction in the Local Council Tax Support Grant may leave us with no option but to surrender the lease of the Rose Theatre back to CCDC as it is funded by Rugeley Town Council. The closure of Rugeley Area Office would be extremely detrimental and suggests 3 alternative- Staff move into the library/Offices should be shared with CAB in the town centre/spare offices within Rugeley Town Council could possibly be made available.

- Certain suggestions would impose a much greater burden on the north of the district than in other parts. BRPC is already saving the district considerable sums by leading on the installation of the lights. Green flag- a quarter of the District would bear three quarters of this cut. Cuts in respect of Members are minimal and there is no mention of the theatre in Cannock, despite BRPC having to fund their own. BRPC supports the cuts in Civic Centre running expenses, Members expenses, Charging to pre-app advice and increasing the trading days at Cannock Market.
- Unfair financial burden on the Council Tax payers of the area. Loss of Green Flag status may have a knock on affect for the Parish Hall which is located in the park and may affect bookings and therefore income. Agree with some proposals; reductions in Civic Centre running expenses, members NI, Super and equipment, charging for pre-application advice and an increase in trading days at the Market. Suggests more savings could be made by reductions in Members allowances and expenses for a short time until alternative funding can be found.
- Would the District Council consider phasing in the cut over a 3 year period which would reduce any major increase being passed onto the tax payer. Would accept the donation of the Christmas lights but would need to find the additional money to fund them

CAB

- Likely that one of the CAB offices would have to close, more likely to be the Rugeley office. CAB is considering a collaborative approach with the Council to provide front-line service from their offices in Rugeley and for the staff to support in verifying benefit claims etc. Cannot purely look at funding paid to Stafford and compare with Cannock (The CAB are only charged £300 fir the Stone office).

Chase Tenants and Residents Federation

- Concerned regarding the confidentiality of discussions whilst other users are in the premises. It is easily accessible and is possible to call in at the offices whilst in Cannock and whilst other errands are being carried out. The location of the new office is off the beaten track and does not lend itself to visiting occasionally whilst passing by or being in the area
- The current location provides members and representatives of the group with very good access when using public transport. Relocating to Hednesford will increase the number of public transport journeys for individuals wishing to access the offices, adding significantly to the voluntary time already provided. 'If the relocation goes ahead, the Federation will need to hold meetings at the premises and would need to have assurances regarding availability and priority use of the premises.'
- Currently take some of the work load of the Council. If the service was moved to Highfields this would not continue. Highfields is not suitable, it is not private, other groups use it regularly, not enough storage, nowhere for computers etc.
- A move to Highfield would inconvenience quite a few residents and must realise that a lot of people do not always have access to cars or private transport and have to rely on public transport.
- Move to Highfields would put the resource out of easy reach of many of the public. This, with the reduction of £50,000 in the grant to CAB 'makes it seem as if the Council is determined to get rid of any way for the public to get help with their problems.'