

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 8 July 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

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| Lyons, Miss O. | Leader of the Council |
| Jones, B. | Deputy Leader of the Council and Neighbourhood Safety & Partnerships Portfolio Leader |
| Jones, Mrs. V. | Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Leader |
| Sutherland, M | District Development Portfolio Leader |
| Johnson, J.P. | Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader |
| Fitzgerald, Mrs. A.A. | Housing, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Leader |
| Hewitt, P.M. | Innovation and High Streets Portfolio Leader |

13. Apologies

None received.

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

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

15. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

(i) Leader of the Council

The Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Covid-19 Vaccine Update**

The vaccine uptake had gone very well locally, but it was important to continue encouraging those who could be vaccinated to do so, especially given increasing case rates and easing of restrictions from 19 July. All Councillors were asked to reiterate this approach.

- **Celebration Days**

Flags had been / were being flown for Armed Forces Day and the 'Thankyou' Day for NHS and Frontline Workers. It was pleasing to note the flags had been raised and it was hoped that proper ceremonies could take place as normal again from next year.

(ii) Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Cannock Chase Hospital Minor Injuries Unit**

Concern had been raised about the continued closure of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) at Cannock Chase Hospital. It was noted this facility was a trusted and popular service locally. At the Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held in March 2021 the Chief Executive of the Royal Wolverhampton Trust (RWT) advised the had closed temporarily due to staffing resource being diverted for the Covid-19 pandemic response, with an indicative reopening date in June 2021. However, this had not yet happened and, locally, it was feared that this closure could become permanent. The matter had been raised at the Staffordshire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee, and SCC Councillor Johnny McMahon (who was also a District Councillor) had written to the RWT Chief Executive and a response was awaited.

(iii) Housing, Heritage & Leisure

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **First Homes Programme**

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick, came to the District on the afternoon of Friday 2 July to visit the First Homes scheme at Walkmill Lane and take part in a tree planting ceremony on site. This Council was one of the first in the country to be involved with the programme and he was delighted to see it progressing. The 10 homes allocated to the scheme would be available from September 2021.

- **Commonwealth Games 2022**

A meeting was held last week with Toyin Higgs, City Integration Manager for the Commonwealth Games 2022, and she was delighted with the Council's progress on the Mountain Biking event work so far.

- **New Cemetery**

The new Cannock Chase cemetery was now open, with burials and internments commencing from this week.

(iv) District Development

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Visit Cannock Chase Guide**

A new guide had been launched that would be a one-stop shop for letting people know what the District had to offer. It showcased what was available in the three town centres and surrounding areas, as well as including maps of the heritage trail and cycling routes.

(v) Deputy Leader and Neighbourhood Safety & Partnerships

The Deputy Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Public Spaces Protection Orders (Alcohol Restriction Zones)**

The report on this matter had been due for consideration by Cabinet at today's meeting but the Portfolio Leader had asked for it to be deferred to ensure Cabinet

had the correct data available to consider whether the Orders were right for the District. The Police, along with the Council's Community Safety team, had been requested to attend the next Cabinet Briefing meeting to talk through the data available.

- **Partnership Working**

The Council's Levelling Up Fund bid had been raised with the Secretary of State when he visited the District last week. The value of partnership working was understood by this Administration, including with Staffordshire County Council, the Cannock Chase M.P. and Local Enterprise Partnerships. Work started in this area by the previous Administration would be now owned by this one, and it was hoped the funding bid would be successful in the short or medium term.

- **Retirement of Interim Managing Director**

The upcoming retirement of Bob Kean, the Interim Managing Director was raised at that day's Staffordshire Chief Executives and Leaders meeting. On behalf of the Cabinet, Mr. Kean was thanked for how he had supported the new Administration in bedding in, and they appreciated his wisdom and guidance through the process. The Leader of the Council echoed these comments, noting that the support provided had been invaluable.

(vi) Environment & Climate Change

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Rejected Recycling Loads**

Since the previous Cabinet meeting held on 10 June, no dry mixed recycling full loads had been rejected, which was positive news.

(vii) Innovation and High Streets

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Car Parking Payback – Pilot Initiative**

So far 56 businesses had signed up to the initiative, with more due to do so. It was intended to write to the Chairman of the relevant Scrutiny Committee to ask that the pilot be scrutinised as Cabinet were keen for this to be done. The Portfolio Leader had attended a Rugeley Town Council meeting the previous night at which a positive and constructive discussion had been held, and it was hoped to cement relationships with all the parish and town councils in the District.

16. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2021 be approved.

17. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period July to September 2021 (Item 5.1 – 5.2) was considered:

Resolved

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period July to September 2021 be noted.

18. Enabling Digital / Paperless Meetings and Revised Start Times for Calendar of Meetings 2021-22

Consideration was given to the Report of the Interim Managing Director (Item 6.1 – 6.8).

Resolved:

That the following be recommended to Council at its meeting to be held on 8 September 2021:

- (A) All Members be provided with a Council laptop or tablet device during the current municipal year, and that in future, new equipment be provided upon election or re-election as a councillor.
- (B) Subject to recommendation (A) being agreed, Members will cease to be entitled to receive a communications allowance.
- (C) An assessment be made of the ongoing costs and practicalities of live streaming meetings and reported back to Members for further consideration.
- (D) The start times of Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Audit & Governance Committee and Standards Committee meetings, as detailed in the Calendar of Meetings 2021-22 approved by Council on 21 April 2021, be amended to 6:00p.m. with effect from the September / October cycle of meetings. Further, that the Chairs of these meetings be authorised, in consultation with the Joint Chief Executive, to start a meeting earlier where it is necessary to invite external representatives to attend the meeting.
- (E) The Chairmen, officers, and regular attendees at other Committees, such as Planning Control Committee and the Licensing & Public Protection Committee, be consulted on whether it is practicable to change the start times of these meetings.
- (F) The Joint Chief Executive, as appropriate, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, relevant Chairmen of Committees and / or Leader of the Council, as appropriate, be authorised to amend the Calendar of Meetings, through convening additional meetings, or the postponement / cancellation of meetings, if required.

Reasons for Recommendations

Digital / Paperless Meetings

Proposals were submitted as part of the budget setting process, and through the alternative budget submission, in respect of the provision of technology to support digital working. It was subsequently agreed as part of the budget for 2021-22 onwards that new and re-elected Members would be provided with a laptop or tablet device, together with appropriate training and would not receive the communications allowance. Existing Members would have the option to continue to receive the communications allowance if they so wished or they could opt to receive a new laptop or tablet device and surrender their communications allowance. This provided for a phased approach to providing Members with technology to support their role and digital meetings.

The Leader had expressed a preference for accelerating the rollout of new devices to all Members, whether it be a laptop or tablet device, in the current municipal year as part of a move towards paperless meetings.

Timings of Meetings

The Council moved the start time of its full Council meetings to 6.00p.m. with effect from February 2020. Members believe that this had improved accessibility for both Councillors and members of the public and wanted consideration to be given to moving the start times of other formal meetings, including Cabinet; Scrutiny Committees; Audit and Governance Committee; and Standards Committee similarly to 6.00p.m.

The Council was required by statute to determine the date and time of any meetings of its Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels. The Calendar of Meetings was agreed at the Council meeting on 21 April 2021; and Council would also be required to agree the proposed amended start times.

The previous resolution in respect of delegated authority to convene additional meetings, as well as postpone or cancel meetings as required, had been amended slightly to reflect the position regarding the subsequent appointment of a Joint Chief Executive.

19. Extension of Public Space Protection Order (Dog Control) 2018

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment & Healthy Lifestyles (Item 7.1 – 7.23).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) A three-year extension to the existing Dog Control Order (attached as Appendix A to the report) be approved.
- (B) The Interim Head of Environment & Healthy Lifestyles be instructed to carry out a further consultation on the varied Order (attached as Appendix B to the report), and report back to Cabinet once this was completed.

Reasons for Decisions

Unless it was extended, the current Order would cease to have effect after midnight on 26 July 2021.

As a result of the initial consultation, the existing Order had been amended to include fenced multi-use games areas and fenced tennis courts. The list of play areas had also been updated. Although these changes were relatively minor, legislation required that any proposed variation to the existing Order must be consulted on. Therefore, Cabinet approval was sought for a further, 14-day, consultation on the varied Order.

20. Private Sector Housing – Mobile Home Site Licensing ‘Fit and Proper Person’ Implementation

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment & Healthy Lifestyles (Item 8.1 – 8.24).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The Fit and Proper Person Fees Policy, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be endorsed.

- (B) The Fit and Proper Person Determination Policy, as set out in Appendix B of the report, be adopted.
- (C) The Interim Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles be instructed to implement all arrangements necessary to receive and determine applications and to create the Fit & Proper Person public register.
- (D) The Interim Head of Environment & Healthy Lifestyles be authorised to review and make any amendments to these arrangements in the interests of operational efficiency and / or due to changes in legislation or government guidance.

Reasons for Decisions

Approval of the recommendations in the report would provide Officers with the necessary framework for administration of these new statutory requirements. Upon the recommendations being approved, Officers would contact all site owners in the District to advise on the process for making and determining application and for inclusion in the register.

21. Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

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Part 2

22. Options for the Future Provision of the Council's Dry Mixed Recycling Service

Not for Publication Report of the Head of Environment & Healthy Lifestyles (Item 10.1 – 10.11) and Report Addendum (Item 10.12 – 10.14).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The contents of the report and the addendum report be noted.
- (B) The latest proposal from Staffordshire County Council, dated 1 July 2021, based on a 50/50 split of the additional revenue requirement for the move to a new dual stream Dry Mixed Recycling collection and disposal service be accepted.
- (C) The removal of approximately 20 no. co-mingled dry recycling euro bins at the Council's Bring Sites across the District be approved, regardless of any service provision change, to assist the Council with improving the quality of its mixed dry recycling.

Reasons for Decisions

Cabinet was asked to agree the options proposed to determine the future provision of the Council's Dry Mixed Recycling (DMR) service as set out in the report, in particular paragraphs 3.1 – 3.4.

Following the preparation of the initial report, the County Council, as the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) approached the Council with an improved offer towards the additional cost of moving to a new dual stream DMR collection system and continuing to dispose of its dry mixed recycling material.

The County Council's offer was for 2 years only and consisted of 2 no. lump sum payments. Further support from year 3 onwards would need to be negotiated nearer to that time.

Acceptance of the offer would mean that the current indexation on the recycling credit would drop from 3% to 1% per annum, which equated to a loss for the Council in recycling credit revenue of approximately £11k per annum.

The decisions were made based on the Council's current revenue and capital resource allocation, the legal responsibility for the disposal of the Council's DMR, the WDA capital support offer, the risks associated in the continued disposal of the waste stream, the Councils support of the County Council's Materials Recycling Facility project, improving the quality of dry recycling, and best value.

The meeting closed at 4:45 p.m.

LEADER