

**Cannock Chase Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the**  
**Cabinet**

**Held on Thursday 9 September 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

**In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock**

**Part 1**

**Present:**

**Councillors:**

Lyons, Mrs. 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

**33. Apologies**

None received.

**34. 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.

**35. Updates from Portfolio Leaders**

**(i) Leader of the Council**

The Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Covid-19 Transmission / Vaccine Update**

There had been a concerning increase in confirmed cases across Cannock Chase, with the District now having the highest case rates per 100,000 population in Staffordshire, as well as being above both the West Midlands and England averages. The majority of cases were amongst 11- to 17-year-olds.

There had also been a decrease in the number of people coming forward for testing, so Members were again asked to encourage residents to undertake regular lateral flow tests, or PCR tests if displaying Covid-19 symptoms.

- **National Emergency Services Day**

Today was 'national emergency services day'. A special flag had been raised outside the Civic Centre at 9am to celebrate the selfless work of emergency services workers, and importantly, volunteers from across the NHS and our emergency services – including police, fire and rescue, maritime, and search & rescue.

(ii) **Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Cannock Hospital Minor Injuries Unit**

At the last Cabinet meeting the Portfolio Leader reported that herself and the Leader of the Council had written to the Chief Executive of Cannock Hospital, Professor David Loughton, regarding the continued closure of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) at the hospital.

Professor Loughton had since replied to advise that he and the Commissioners for South West Staffordshire were in discussion around the new service models to be agreed post-Covid and hoped to be able to confirm them by the end of August. However, as Professor Loughton had not given any reassurances about the MIU reopening and no further update received, it was agreed a letter be sent to the Chief Executive of Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups, Marcus Warnes, to highlight the important of access to the MIU in the protection of the health of Cannock Chase residents.

A copy of the letter was then read out by the Portfolio Leader as follows:

"We write as Cannock Chase District Council's Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing, and the Leader of the Council to make you aware that we have written to Professor David Loughton, Chief Executive, to express our concern that as yet there has been no announcement of the reopening of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) in Cannock Chase. We fully appreciate that there was a need to close it last year as staff from the unit had to be redeployed to other critical areas of the hospital, due to the pressures of Covid. In his response Professor Loughton explained that Covid had led to a review of all commissioned services and that by the end of August the service model will have been agreed.

Many of our Members at the District Council are receiving a significant number of complaints from their residents about the lack of the facility now that society is reopening.

This unit provides a valuable service to local residents with minor injuries and ailments, who would otherwise have to travel to one of the A&E departments, where not only would they be taking up resources which are needed for those with more serious conditions and illnesses, they would probably have to endure long waits to be seen.

We understand that local hospitals are currently preparing for "winter pressures" which they usually do around this time in an effort to prevent a winter crisis. This year there will be additional pressures from Covid however residual and the backlog of those patients whose conditions have deteriorated during the Covid period.

The MIU is a trusted and well-respected service we believe plays a key role in our local urgent care pathway diverting people from A&E and reducing the pressure whilst providing a locally accessible service.

Professor Loughton was not able to give us any reassurances around the future of the MIU in Cannock. However, on behalf of Cannock Chase residents we hope that both the lead provider and the commissioners for South West Staffordshire will give due consideration to the reopening of the MIU.”

The Leader requested that further updates be provided once a response to the letter had been received.

### **(iii) District Development**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Staffordshire Back to Business**

Staffordshire Back to Business was a Countywide initiative where the nine councils had pooled resources utilising their Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) allocation to support businesses through the pandemic. This Council had invested in the following two initiatives using £302,000 worth of ARG funding:

1. Staffordshire 500 – a major incentive programme to support businesses to develop apprenticeship opportunities, contributing to the costs associated with recruiting and retaining an apprentice.
2. Free Training Top-Up for Employers – offers businesses with grants of up to £5,000 to top-up training or upskill employees.

Across all districts and boroughs in Staffordshire the total number of apprentices from approved applications was 147. From that number, Cannock Chase currently accounted for 38 approved applications, this being the highest number across all districts and boroughs in Staffordshire so far.

### **(iv) Environment & Climate Change**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Trial of New Larger Litter Bins**

Sadly, one of the three new bins at the Cross Keys, Hednesford, had been destroyed by fire. The cause of the fire was unknown at this time. It was planned to replace the bin with the same time again. The other two bins were however working well.

- **Rejected Loads**

There had only been one rejected recycling load for the month of August 2021, which was an improvement on the same month last year.

- **National HGV Driver Shortage**

The Council was aware of a national shortage of HGV drivers that was having some impact on refuse collections across the country. To date however Cannock Chase had not seen any such impact. The Council was working with its waste and recycling contractor, Biffa Municipal, to mitigate the risk of the shortage impacting upon collections in the District.

**(v) Neighbourhood Safety & Partnerships**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Community Safety Partnership Strategic Board**

The Portfolio Leader would be chairing his first Community Safety Partnership Strategic Board meeting on Wednesday 22 September. The Board would meet three times per year and it was an opportunity for all partners to send their strategic leads to discuss issues of community safety across Cannock Chase.

- Following the change in Administration and some Councillors leaving, the Portfolio Leader would be looking to refresh the list of attendees, explore who else might be represented and with a focus on all partners making a full contribution both in terms of attendance and submitting agenda items.

**36. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 August 2021 be approved.

**37. Forward Plan**

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

**Resolved**

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

**38. Quarter 1 Performance Report 2021/22**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 6.1 – 6.52).

**Resolved:**

That the first quarter progress and performance information relating to the delivery of the Council's priorities as detailed at report Appendices 1a-1c and 2a-2c, be noted.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

The performance information allowed Cabinet to monitor progress in delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities.

**39. Proposed Art Installations to Play Area and Open Space at Penny Cress Green, Norton Canes**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 7.1 – 7.8).

**Resolved:**

That:

- (A) Approval be granted to proceed with the proposed art installations and improvement to the play area and open space at Penny Cress Green, Norton

Canes, ('The CEMA') as set out in the report and the indicative plan attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

- (B) £15,088.45 from existing S106 funds be included into the Capital Programme for 2021-22, and £12,000 be accepted from the Forest of Mercia Community Interest Company for the project.
- (C) Permission to spend up to an additional £27,088.45 be granted, to deliver the arts and soft landscape proposals for this project as set out in the report.
- (D) Authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, in consultation with the Housing, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Leader, to agree the project detail and to take such actions as may be necessary to progress decisions (A) to (C), above, within the approved budgets.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

A contribution of £15,088.45 from the Council's S106 fund, collected following the Class A1 Store extension of Sainsburys Supermarket Ltd, situated at the Orbital Retail Centre, Voyager Drive had been identified that could be used "*for the built environment, arts and public realm improvements*".

The Forest of Mercia had identified funding to the value of £12,000 to contribute to the CEMA public open space project. These funds were from central Government to tackle Climate Pollution by planting native trees and shrubs around the Country.

The Council was keen to progress this proposed development and for it to be completed by the second quarter in 2021. To achieve this deadline, it would be necessary to include the estimated cost of the proposed scheme in the Council's Capital Programme for 2021-22 and to secure approval to spend the S106 funds to develop and deliver the scheme within the budget approved.

At this stage it was envisaged that any ongoing revenue costs associated with the maintenance of the installed art works would be met from the existing maintenance budgets. Should this position change as the details of the scheme were clarified, then a further report to Cabinet may be necessary.

The meeting closed at 4:25 p.m.

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LEADER