

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET

HELD ON THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER, 2015 AT 4:00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Adamson, G.	Leader of the Council
Alcott, G.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader
Bennett, C.	Crime and Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Mitchell, Mrs. C.	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader
Dudson, A.	Environment Portfolio Leader
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Allen, F.W.C.	Housing Portfolio Leader
Todd, Mrs. D.M.	Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader

59. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors G. Alcott, Deputy Leader of the Council and Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader, and A. Lovell, Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader. (Councillor G. Alcott, who had been attending a meeting on behalf of the Leader, arrived in time for Item 9 on the agenda.)

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

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
-	-	-

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

61. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

Crime and Partnerships

Police Transformation Project

The Portfolio Leader advised that at the Council's recent Community Safety

Scrutiny Committee he had reported that he had asked Inspector Geoff Knight to return to provide a further update on the Transformation project at the next Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9 March, 2016.

Child Sexual Exploitation / Child Sexual Abuse Outcome-led Framework

The Portfolio Leader reported that the Committee had also discussed the initiatives instigated by the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner, which had been added to the Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

Inspector Paul Cooke

The Leader advised that Inspector Cooke would be leaving the Chase Division on Monday, 14 December, 2015, and he wanted to wish him all the best on behalf of the Council.

Culture and Sport

Stadium Site

The Portfolio Leader reported that the next element of the works on the Stadium site was due to start in the New Year with the development and refurbishment of the existing floodlit Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), which was currently in a very poor condition.

The Contractor to undertake this work had been appointed and it was intended that the proposed design would be shown to local schools around the site before the Christmas break and, where possible, any suggested changes to the design (type of sports and colours only) be finalised in early 2016.

At the same time, quotes had been obtained for the installation of a CCTV camera on site and for the replacement of the items of play equipment damaged by the recent arson attack.

It was anticipated that the works on the MUGA, CCTV and Play Area would commence in early February and be completed by the end of March, 2016.

Following completion of these works, Contractors would be secured to commence the other works proposed during 2016-2017, including car parking, additional CCTV, walkways, cycle trails, allotments, Adventure Play Area and Green Gym equipment).

The Police investigation into the recent arson attack was ongoing and a number of people had been arrested.

Artificial Grass Pitch, Bradbury Lane

The Portfolio Leader advised that tenders had been received from six companies in respect of the AGP at Bradbury Lane and had been evaluated by the Council's Agent (Robinson Low Francis). It was anticipated that a decision would be made before Christmas and then arrangements made to start work next year.

Tenders were also being evaluated in respect of professional services support for the Stadium and Bradbury Lane projects.

Play Areas at Hednesford Park

The Portfolio Leader advised that she had been joined the previous week by other Members and local children, community groups and partners to officially open the play areas at Hednesford Park.

The two fully inclusive play areas for toddlers/juniors and teenagers had taken over two years to complete with costs in excess of over £250,000.

The work was made possible following a successful application for just over £2.2M Heritage Lottery Fund Grant, together with funding from the Council, Staffordshire Environmental Fund and St. Modwen. The design of the play areas was influenced by the local history of Hednesford, the natural environment and the way children play and develop. Local children had also contributed to the design through modelling and drawing. The designs were multi-functional and incorporated sensory play, water and sand.

62. Minutes of Cabinet Meeting of 12 November, 2015

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November, 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed.

63. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period December, 2015 to February, 2016 (Item 5.1 of the Official Minutes of the Council) was considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period December, 2015 to February, 2016 be noted.

64. Recommendations of Scrutiny Committees

None.

65. Interim Review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Head of Housing and Waste Management (Item 7.1 – 7.13 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The outcome of the interim review of the HRA Business Plan to Year 8 (2019-20) be noted:
 - (i) the impact of the Government's 1% rent reduction following interim review of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan is an overall cumulative deficit of £5.9 million.
 - (ii) a surplus of £2.4 million existed in the 2018-19 to 2019-20 Business Plan which although potentially earmarked for new house build will now be required to be forfeited, leaving a resultant deficit of £3.4 million.
 - (iii) that additional income pressures results in a net overall cumulative deficit to 2019-20 of £3.8 million
- (B) In order to mitigate this cumulative deficit; the following changes to the

HRA capital Programme Budgets to Year 8 (2019-20) be agreed:

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|-------|---|-----------|
| (i) | Deletion of the uncommitted element of the Council's new build programme Years 5 (2016 - 17) & Year 6 (2017-18) to provide an additional 16 Council dwellings. | 1,940,000 |
| (ii) | Deletion of the capital financing requirement set aside for £2m million of additional borrowing requirement to fund new council houses (2016-17 – 2019-20) of £200,00 per annum | 800,000 |
| (iii) | Capital Programme Contract Works savings | |
| | • Double glazing Year 6 (2017-18) | 250,000 |
| | • Kitchens upgrade Year 7 (2018-19) | 300,000 |
| (iv) | Deferment of planned expenditure arising from stock condition survey pending full Business Case review | |
| | • External Site Works Year 8 (2019-20) | 250,000 |
| | • External Fabric Work | 300,000 |
- (C) In light of a balanced HRA budget to 2019-20, the Managing Director be authorised to award a contract for the Redevelopment of Garage Sites and other Council Land Scheme following the successful conclusion of the tender procurement process.
- (D) Further reports be received on:
- (i) Disposal of Garage Sites and Other Council Owned Land for development.
- (ii) Housing and Planning Act 2015 and associated regulations.

Reasons for Decision

The Chancellor in his Summer Budget announced a 1% reduction in rents for 4 years commencing April 2016 which would result in a loss of £5.9 million in rental income 2019-20 and £2.3 million per annum ongoing thereafter.

The Council's approved HRA Revenue Budget and Capital Programme had been extended to cover the period of the rent reductions and an original surplus of £2.4 million to 31 March 2020 was now forecast to be a deficit of £3.8 million after taking into account revised stock figures and other cost pressures.

A balanced budget can be delivered to 2019-20 however this would entail the deletion of 55 new Council houses (70 if borrowing approval was obtained) and included the £1.94 million included in the 2016-17 to 2017-18 Capital Programme and the £2.5 million earmarked in the HRA Business Plan 2018-19 to 2019-20.

Contract savings were expected to arise in relation to the Double Glazing /Kitchen contracts however in order to address the remaining shortfall, savings would need to be made in relation to External Site and Fabric Works from 2019-20 onwards. The savings would be achieved through reductions in service standards; for example reducing the amount of work undertaken to each property or by extending the works programme e.g. moving from a 7 year programme to 10 years. Any such changes will be subject to a further report.

The recently published Housing and Planning Bill 2015 included two other changes in relation to Vacant High Value Properties and Pay to Stay which may impact on the HRA Business Plan in future years and will be subject of further review as part of the comprehensive long term HRA Business Plan review.

66. Financial Plan 2015-16 to 2018-19

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 8.1 – 8.21 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (a) The Financial Plan 2015-16 - 2018-19 be noted;
- (b) The forecast outturn for 2015-16 be approved ;
- (c) The General Fund working balance be determined as part of the Risk Analysis undertaken in finalising the preparation of the 2016-17 budget
- (d) The draft Capital Programme 2015-16 – 2018-19 and resources available be noted;
- (e) The principles set out in the Council's Financial Plan be adopted in finalising the preparation of the 2016-17 budget.
- (f) The level of Council tax for 2016-17 to be determined following the outcome of the Spending Review and settlement determinations; the level of Council Tax Compensation available and preparation of the detailed budgets for 2016-17 to 2018-19.
- (g) An updated Financial Plan be provided once details of the 2015 Spending Review and changes to Local Government Funding Regime become known.

Reasons for Decision

The report set out the Council's forecast financial position for the next three years incorporating anticipated spending pressures and savings already identified. Financial resources available to the Council over the three year period were also set out. The Financial Plan reflected the Government's current Funding Regime.

The Financial Plan presented a balanced budget for 2016-17 and 2017-18 however a great deal of uncertainty existed in relation to the level of government funding available over the next three years.

The Financial Plan represented only an interim statement since details of the actual Government's financial settlement for 2016-17, arising from the 2015

Spending Review, would not be known until mid to late December. In addition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced on the 5 October, and confirmed in the Spending Review, a fundamental change in the way in which Local Government was to be funded with 100% of Business Rates to be retained within the Local Government sector by 2019-20.

The Financial Plan therefore represented a refresh of the assumptions as contained in the Approved Financial Plan (Council 11 February 2015) taking into account the outturn for the last financial year and the first six months of the current financial year.

The details of the new regime and its implementation timetable were fundamental cornerstones for the validating of current assumptions and development of the Medium Term Financial Plan for the Authority. A preliminary analysis of the Spending Review and its implications for the Financial Plan were contained within the report, however, there was a lack of detail at this stage to effectively update the Financial Plan.

An updated Financial Plan would be provided once details of the 2015 Spending Review and changes to Local Government Funding Regime became known.

67. ESIF Match Funding Opportunities (Business Support Related)

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Development (Item 9.1 – 9.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Head of Economic Development, in consultation with the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader, be authorised to support the preparation and submission of applications to secure funding for appropriate business support and grant programmes, opportunities to support skills, develop the tourism sector and support Enterprise Belt activity, through the European Structural & Investment Funds (ESIF) programmes.
- (B) Subject to any financial implications being contained within existing budgets, the Head of Economic Development be authorised, in consultation with the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader, to enter into Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and other forms of legal agreement as required by the securing of funding support through ESIF and other forms of financial assistance.

Reasons for Decision

Many European funded programmes for business support and grants had been closed due to funds being depleted and the current round of funding (2007/2013) coming to an end. There was currently a lull in the availability of support for business, skills and innovation which would have a negative impact on local economic growth. Approving the recommendations would facilitate the availability of funds as and when the ESIF projects were launched.

New ESIF projects were under development. In order to ensure that the Council

could respond quickly to such opportunities it was recommended that the Head of Economic Development be authorised to pursue such opportunities in consultation with the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader.

There was only one project at present that had asked for cash match funding of £10,000 per annum over three years (2016/17, 2017/18 & 2018/19) which could be covered by Economic Development's existing reserves.

The ESIF allocation for the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership was £239m and for the Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership was £142m covering the period of 2014-2020.

68. The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environmental Health (Item 10.1 – 10.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The penalty charge levels as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.
- (B) The power to enforce the requirements of the Energy Act 2013 and any Regulations or Orders made thereunder be delegated to the Head of Environmental Health.

Reasons for Decision

The Council has a duty to respond to the discovery or suspicion of significant residential hazards. The regulations introduced a new requirement to serve a remedial notice where smoke or carbon monoxide alarms were absent or defective.

A local housing authority must prepare and publish a statement of principles which it proposes to follow in determining the amount of a penalty charge, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

69. Computer Storage Array Network Replacement

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Technology (Item 11.1 – 11.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That approval be given to spend the £70,000 profiled for the replacement of the Computer Storage Array Network.

Reasons for Decision

The Council holds most of its data and servers on a single device known as a SAN (Storage Array Network), which had a life expectancy of about 5 years after which time the maintenance and support became prohibitively expensive.

A tender exercise had been carried out to identify the best solution for the Council. The winning tender was for a replacement device (HP 3PAR StoreServ 7200 with a capacity of 40 Terabytes), which was similar to the previous one purchased 5 year ago; but offered the benefits of being more secure, larger and

faster.

In accordance with the Council's agreed capital expenditure control procedures, Cabinet's permission to spend was requested in relation to the proposed SAN replacement.

The use of the system and its replacement was critical to the working of the Council. All the key services such as Council Tax, Planning, Housing and Environmental Health were reliant on its operation. The system also held the corporate email system and served as the main filing system.

70. Quarter 1 and 2 Performance Report

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance (Item 12.1 – 12.50 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The performance information and the case studies relating to PDPs as detailed at Appendices 1-6 to the report be noted.
- (B) The actions and indicators rated Red or Amber be noted, and the remedial action or rescheduled delivery stated to address performance be confirmed.

Reasons for Decision

Information for performance actions and indicators for Quarter 1 (April – June, 2015) and Quarter 2 (July to September, 2015), was included in Appendices 1 – 6 of the report. The ratings provided for these items indicated that 79.7% of actions had been achieved or were on target for success.

The meeting closed at 4.15 p.m.

LEADER