

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**CABINET**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2020 AT 4:00 P.M.**

**VIA REMOTE ACCESS**

**PART 1**

PRESENT: Councillors:

Adamson, G.	Leader of the Council
Alcott, G.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.P.T.L.	Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader
Mitchell, Mrs. C.	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader
Johnson, T.B.	Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader (via telephone)
Newbury, J.A.A.	Environment and Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Martin, Mrs. C.E.	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Kraujalis, J.T.	Housing Portfolio Leader

**29. Apologies**

Apologies were submitted for Councillor A.R. Pearson, Community Safety and Partnerships Portfolio Leader, who was unable to join the meeting due to technical issues.

**30. 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.

**31. Updates from Portfolio Leaders**

**Leader**

The Leader reported concern over the rising number of positive Covid-19 cases being reported in the District, with the latest data indicating case numbers were now at 101 per 100,000 population, although this was lower than the reported cases for South Staffordshire district of 142 per 100,000. Officers had been asked to ensure the Council was ready to help those most in need and vulnerable when required to do so. Over 7,500 vulnerable people had been identified in the District during lockdown, and it had been confirmed by Officers that the database of vulnerable persons could be updated in two days and the Community Vulnerability Hub reinstated as soon as needed.

## Culture and Sport

- **Culture Recovery Funding:** The Portfolio Leader advised that in Cannock Chase we were proud to support our culture, heritage and arts, and so was delighted to report that Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL), the operators of the Council's leisure and culture services, had been awarded £342,000 out of the Government's 'Culture Recovery Fund'.

The grant would be used to support the Museum of Cannock Chase, Prince of Wales Theatre and the Arts Development programme run by IHL.

The Museum was currently open Thursdays to Saturdays and the Theatre was set to release details and a reopening plan in the next few weeks.

- **Green Flag Awards:** The Portfolio Leader was pleased to announce that the District had retained all six of its Green Flag awards this year, for Cannock park, Hednesford park, Ravenhill park Elmore park, Stile Cop cemetery and Castle Ring, which had also achieved the much coveted 'Green Heritage Site Accreditation' for its management of historic features.

Parks, open spaces and cemeteries had been open and staffed since the lockdown began and played an important role in contributing to peoples health and wellbeing. Thanks were given to the parks, grounds maintenance and cemetery staff that had continued to work throughout the pandemic and clearly contributed to these fantastic awards being retained by the Council.

## Economic Development and Planning

- **Economic Picture:** the Portfolio Leader advised that the UK economy, as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP), grew by 2.1% in August, largely thanks to the easing of lockdown restrictions and the 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme, which provided a boost to the hospitality industry. In terms of this scheme, the local impact was that 56 businesses in the District participated in it, with 60,000 meals claimed, with a total discount of £316,000.

The latest unemployment figures were released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 13 October. The September claimant count for the District was largely unchanged from August, with 3,700 claimants aged between 16 to 64, a reduction of 50 from the August figure. Whilst it was a relief that the local unemployment rate had not gone up further, there was a need to wait to see what the impact of the closure of the Government's Job Retention (furlough) scheme would mean for the District, and whether the replacement Job Support scheme, announced by the Chancellor in September, would have the desired effect in reducing job losses.

It was obviously key that there was a pipeline of employment opportunities available within the District and the wider travel-to-work area, in order to ensure that residents who had sadly lost their jobs could get back into employment as quickly as possible. Latest data as at August 2020 showed there were around 1,800 job vacancies available in the District, this being a 15% increase on the July figure, and as had been stated before, the Council would continue to work to support opportunities to create new jobs for the District.

- **McArthurGlen Designer Outlet West Midlands:** the Portfolio Leader reported positive progress in that practical completion had now been

achieved at the Designer Outlet site. McArthurGlen had announced the first brands that had signed up, and the scheme was moving ever closer to its 2021 opening. The Designer Outlet would set the bar high with quality retailers coming to the District, and as had been stated many times before, the scheme was even more key now with 1,000 jobs set to be created. The Council was working closely with McArthurGlen to promote job opportunities to local people, and the company had set up a portal for brands to post job vacancies. There were already 1,500 applications registered on the portal. Officers were working with McArthurGlen and Walsall College to organise and deliver a series of 'virtual jobs fairs' that would start in November.

- **Planning:** the Portfolio Leader advised that the Council would be formally responding to the Government's consultation on the proposed reform of the planning system, which was due to close at the end of October. The proposals were extensive and would result in massive changes to the way in which the Council planned for the future of the District through its Local Plan.

Key factors in the document included proposals to reduce the time taken for local plan production from five years to thirty months, and how sites would be allocated for development. There were concerns though regarding some of the proposals, particularly in relation to the way in which the District's housing need numbers were calculated by the Government and the impact this could have on sensitive areas such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Green Belt; proposed changes to affordable housing; reducing the time for consultation with local residents / communities; and changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) / Section 106 regime, which could result in less timely receipt of funds to pay for infrastructure and impact on local planning authorities in terms of capacity and resources.

In respect of house building, the current average for the District was 410 units per annum (pa), with a current target figure of between 246 to 270pa. The proposed target under the Government's calculation was up to 470pa, which was not practical to deliver in the District. It appeared the area was being punished for having built more homes than the existing target numbers.

The Council would be providing a robust response to the consultation and happy to publish its response for Members to read.

### **Environment and Climate Change**

- **Pay By Phone:** the Portfolio Leader was pleased to announce that during November the Council would be rolling out a new, more convenient 'pay by phone' option for residents and visitors using the pay and display car parks.

Users would simply need to register on the Pay By Phone website and once registered, they would be taken to an online form where they could enter their address, car registration number, mobile phone number and payment details. After registering, they would receive an email and text message confirmation.

Once registered, they could visit any of the car parks listed on the Council's website and follow the instructions on the signs next to the pay and display ticket machines to be able to pay for parking using their phone.

The service was completely free to sign up to and the system fully compliant

with the payment card industry. However, it was important to note that an additional, but optional, 10p could be added to bookings if users registered for the reminder text option. If users did register for this service, then they would be charged an extra 10p for each reminder message received.

Pay By Phone was also available in other car parks nationwide, including airports and major shopping centres. Further information was available on the Pay By Phone website.

The rollout of this service was part of a number of improvements Cabinet approved for the Council's pay and display car parks in the District. Plans were also underway to replace the existing coin-only pay and display car park ticketing machines with new contactless ones that would accept coins, debit and credit cards.

- **Illegal Puppy Farm:** the Portfolio Leader advised that as Members would recall that last year, the Council was successful in prosecuting a Rugeley based man for operating an illegal puppy farm in the District. As a result, and following particular public interest, the BBC 'Defenders' programme filmed and interviewed the Council's Environmental Health Officers. The programme was due to air on BBC1 on Friday 23 October at 11am.

### Health and Wellbeing

- **Covid-19 cases update:** the Portfolio Leader advised that as of 11 October, the seven-day case rate for Cannock Chase, 101.2 cases per 100,000. This compared with 156 cases per 100,000 for England and 126 cases per 100,000 for the West Midlands.

There were currently 49 open incidents in the District, 11 of which were associated with adult care settings, 26 with education, 2 in community healthcare and 10 with workplaces.

Environmental Health had responded to a number of Covid-related incidents in recent weeks, including the outbreak at Arriva, and were working closing with public health to effectively manage these situations.

Discussions were ongoing over management of case numbers and transmission within Staffordshire, including Incident Management Team meetings for various authorities, including Cannock Chase, to review trends and local contact tracing requirements.

- **Covid-19 Compliance and Enforcement:** the Portfolio Leader advised that, as Members were aware, this Council, along with all other Boroughs and Districts in Staffordshire, had recently received Government funding to be allocated for Covid-19 compliance and enforcement. Officers were currently developing proposals, in consultation with the Police, to take this forward.
- **Test & Trace Payments:** the Portfolio Leader advised that in respect of the £500 payment for those required to self-isolate via the national test and trace system and were allocated a 'CTAS' number, confirmation had been received yesterday that people contacted via local test and trace systems would now also be eligible to receive this payment as the CTAS number could now be allocated at a local level too.
- **Licensing:** the Portfolio Leader reassured Members that general levels of Covid-19 compliance in licensed premises in the District was good, though there were occasional issues that had to be dealt with.

There would be efforts made to ensure all local taxi and private hire drivers were aware of the importance of compliance and were, wherever possible, obtaining contact tracing information from customers.

- **Food and Safety:** the Portfolio Leader advised that food hygiene inspections had resumed, and Officers were carrying out a combination of remote assessments and on site inspections, based on risk. There had been some Covid-19 compliance issues with barber premises that were being dealt with.
- **Cannock Chase Can:** the Portfolio Leader advised that Officers were in the process of finalising the joint working arrangements and procurement for the project, details of which it was hoped would be shared with Members in the near future.

## Housing

- **Hawks Green Depot Site Housing Scheme:** the Portfolio Leader provided an update on progress with this scheme, reminding Members that the Depot site layout had been rearranged to enable the building of 44 homes on site, half of which would be for sale, and the other half designated as Council housing. The Council homes would mostly be two-bedroom starter homes, with two blocks of flats and a few three-bedroom properties also being built.

Two photographs showing the progress of building work on the site were then displayed. The first photograph showed the site looking to the back of Old Hednesford Road, which is where the main site access would be located once completed, along with sections of the internal road layout and the foundation levels for some of the house builds. The second photo showed the main access route through the site being developed, and once this was completed then house building works could commence on both sides of the road.

Completion of the scheme was currently expected during autumn / winter 2021. Delays had in the scheme had been experienced due to the need to ensure safe working on site and the affects of the lockdown earlier in the year.

## Town Centre Regeneration

- **Markets:** the Portfolio Leader provided the following updates regarding the status of the various markets operating in Cannock and Rugeley:
  - Cannock Street Market – the contract had been re-tendered and the tender period closed on 18 September. Officers were currently undertaking the evaluation process. The contract would be for a period of up to three years, with an opportunity to extend for up to a further two years. The new contract would start on 19 November 2020 and would require the chosen operator to run a street market in Cannock on both a Tuesday and Friday.
  - Rugeley Outdoor Market – this continued to trade as normal with regular traders and customers.
  - Cannock Indoor Market – following the announcement of the closure of the market hall in November 2020, three traders remained on site on they were expected to continue to trade up to the closing date.
  - Prince of Wales Market – there was currently only the flower seller operating at this market, occupying a significant area within it. There

did however remain a small number of available stalls should the Council receive any interest in the market from potential new traders.

- Rugeley Indoor Market – trader numbers and footfall remained low (partly due to the Local Taxation and Benefits Office still being closed), however adverts for new traders had been placed in the ‘Market Trade News’ and on social media. In addition, the Markets Officer was continuing to explore marketing and promotion ideas to attract both new traders and customers in the run up to Christmas.
- **‘ShopAppy’:** The Portfolio Leader advised that ShopAppy had been launched in Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley and would have a full launch date in November, which was to be confirmed.

Cannock was up and running on the platform, with one business fully loaded. Four more businesses had fully completed and were just waiting for the ShopAppy system to load them in. Around a further twenty businesses had shown a keen interest and these were currently being followed up ready to be loaded onto the platform.

Hednesford had had no sign ups or enquiries, whilst Rugeley had one trader show an interest, but this had not been followed up by the business.

Unfortunately, due to data protection, ShopAppy were unable to advise the Council which businesses were actually in the system or had made enquiries.

It was requested that Communications team promote the app via the Council’s social media channels to encourage more businesses to sign up.

- **Town Centre improvements:** the Portfolio Leader advised that painting was underway of street furniture, signs etc. and weather permitting, this should be completed by the end of October. New maps would be placed on the notice boards once the painting work had finished.

### **32. Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September, 2020, be approved as a correct record.

### **33. Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period October to December 2020 (Item 5.1 – 5.2 of the Official Minutes of the Council) was considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period October to December 2020 be noted.

### **34. Covid-19 Recovery Strategy**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 6.1 – 6.65 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The proposed Covid-19 Recovery Strategy be approved.
- (B) The progress made to date in delivering the actions set out in the Strategy be noted.

Reasons for Decisions

Effective planning would be essential to aiding the recovery of the District and the Council over the coming months.

The lockdown had changed the way the Council, residents and businesses were operating and this needed to be considered in planning for the future. The Council's priorities and plans made before the pandemic would need to be reviewed in light of these changes and the impact that Covid-19 had had on the District.

**35. New Corporate Plan for 2021-2024**

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 7.1 – 7.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The proposed priorities / objectives and the commencement of public engagement on these in preparation for a new Corporate Plan for 2021-2024 be approved.
- (B) The timetable for the development of a new Corporate Plan be noted.

Reasons for Decisions

Producing a new Corporate Plan allowed the Council to reflect on the impact that Covid-19 had had on Cannock Chase District. It would help frame a longer-term approach to economic and social recovery and consolidate all planning into one comprehensive document.

**36. 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).



**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**CABINET**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2020 AT 4:00 P.M.**

**VIA REMOTE ACCESS**

**PART 2**

**37. Approach and Options for the Future of the Council's Dry Mixed Recycling Service**

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 9.1 – 9.10 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the approach taken and options proposed to determine the future provision of the Council's Dry Mixed Recycling Service, as set out in the report, be agreed.

Reasons for Decision

Cabinet was asked to agree the approach taken and options proposed to determine the future provision of the Council's Dry Mixed Recycling Service, as set out in the report, in particular paragraphs 4.4 and 6.23.

The meeting closed at 5:00 p.m.

---

LEADER