

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2020 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 Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader
Pearson, A.R.	Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader
Bennett, C.	Crime and Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Johnson, T.B.	Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.P.T.L.	Environment Portfolio Leader
Kraujalis, J.T.	Housing Portfolio Leader
Woodhead, P.E.	<i>Invitee (non-voting Observer)</i>

Councillor Mrs. C. Mitchell, Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader, also participated via telephone.

115. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillor Mrs. C.E. Martin, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader.

116. 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.

117. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

Crime and Partnerships

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner Panel

The Portfolio Leader advised that he had been in touch with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner's office, which had confirmed that, following the postponement of elections, PFCC Panel meetings were to be rescheduled for the remainder of the extended term of office. (Subject to any restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus situation.)

Culture and Sport (via telephone)

COVID-19: Use of Leisure Facilities

The Portfolio Leader advised that the Council and its provider IHL were awaiting guidance from the Government with regard to the operation of the Council's leisure facilities. At the present time:

- The Prince of Wales Centre had cancelled all shows / bookings until the end of April (box office to remain open to deal with enquiries);
- Museum of Cannock Chase remained open to visitors, but were not organising any further events, and schools had begun to cancel bookings;
- Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres were open but had reduced the size of some classes to increase social distancing; health related programmes had been cancelled as these served 'at risk' groups; an increased cleaning regime had been introduced; alternate items of gym equipment had been taken out of service to increase spacing in the facility.
- Golf Course remained open at the present time.

COVID-19

The Managing Director advised that senior officers had met that morning to work on identifying priority services. Once these had been confirmed, decisions could be made about service delivery and any alternative means of doing so.

Around 80 staff had been identified as being in the vulnerable or at risk category and they would be asked to work from home if practicable to do so.

Once priorities and methods of service delivery had been determined, decisions could be made about the practicalities of other members of staff potentially working from home, which would not be practical for all.

The Council was actively participating in the Staffordshire LRF work aimed at identifying and supporting vulnerable people in the community.

Members had a number of questions but recognised that the situation was fluid and constantly evolving and that much of the required guidance from Government was not yet forthcoming.

118. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February, 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed.

119. West Midlands Ambulance Service – Changes to Community First Responders Service

Consideration was given to the Item from the Leader of the Council.

The Leader brought to Members' attention proposals agreed by the the West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) Board to make changes to the Community First Responders (CFR) service in Staffordshire, in particular by no longer allowing blue lights to be used on their vehicles, and reducing the range of drugs they could carry on board.

The Leader noted that this would create problems for the level of support that could be provided by the CFRs, especially in rural areas, and that a number of

Staffordshire MPs had raised objections to the proposals. Members considered this to be an essential and potentially life saving service in areas where it might take longer for an ambulance to reach a patient and that the changes should be objected to in the strongest terms.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) A letter be sent to the West Midlands Ambulance Service detailing this Council's formal objections to its plans to remove 'blue lights' provision and reduced on-board drugs carrying capacity from the Staffordshire based Community First Responders.
- (B) A letter be sent to the Chairman of the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee requesting that an urgent meeting of the Committee be arranged to discuss the above issues, with representatives from the WMAS and local MPs invited along.

Reasons for Decisions

Cabinet had significant concerns that the proposed changes would negatively impact the good work carried out by the CFRs, and increase the risk to those in need of urgent medical care, especially in rural areas.

120. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period March to May 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 March to May 2020 be noted.

121. Priority Delivery Plans 2020/21

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 7.1 – 7.20 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That Council, at its meeting to be held on 22 April, 2020, be recommended to approved the Priority Delivery Plans for 2020-21, as set out in Appendices 1 to 4 of the report.

Reasons for Decisions

The Corporate Plan 2018-23, approved by Cabinet in April 2018, set out the revised aims, priorities and strategic objectives of Cannock Chase District Council.

The supporting Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) were the annual documents that set out how the Council would achieve progress against its strategic objectives. These plans established the actions, performance measures and timetables for delivery, that were the basis of the Council's quarterly and annual reporting framework.

122. Communications Strategy 2020-23

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 8.1 – 8.29 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Council's new Communications Strategy for 2020-2023 be approved.
- (B) Provision of the 'Chase Matters' magazine be retained, with a financial contribution made to its production costs.

Reasons for Decisions

A new communications strategy was needed to help direct the Council's communications activities, particularly at a corporate level. This would help ensure that available resources were used effectively and efficiently, especially to ensure that the Council's corporate priorities were communicated at all available opportunities.

A decision on the future of the 'Chase Matters' magazine was required to enable future planning, and the strategy, to be finalised.

123. Cannock Chase Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Allocations Protocol Update

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 9.1 – 9.9 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The amended Cannock Chase Community Infrastructure Levy Allocations Protocol, as shown at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and adopted for use by the Council.
- (B) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation with the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader, to make minor changes to the Protocol necessitated by changes to Community Infrastructure Levy related legislation.

Reasons for Decisions

The Council approved the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule and CIL Infrastructure List (formerly Regulation 123 List) of infrastructure projects eligible to receive funding at its meeting held on 15 April, 2015. At its meeting on 23 July, 2015, Cabinet approved a Protocol for the allocation of CIL.

CIL was intended to provide a funding stream for infrastructure needed to support the housing and commercial growth policies and proposals in the adopted Local Plan. It partly replaced funding previously obtained via Section 106 Planning Obligations.

Considering the amount of CIL receipts retained, the Council decided to carry out its first CIL allocations process in 2019. During this process, it became apparent that slight amendments were needed to the Protocol to clarify the

Council's position on allocation of CIL funds to projects that had already been funded / delivered.

In September 2019, the Government made changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the CIL Regulations), regarding Regulation 123 and the use of multiple planning obligations and CIL (pooling restriction) to enable more flexible infrastructure delivery. The update to the Protocol reflected these changes.

124. Housing Investment Fund Programme

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 10.1 – 10.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The three site phased Housing Improvement Programme, which would deliver a minimum of 100 social housing units (subject to planning consents), be approved.
- (B) Authority be delegated to the Head of Housing and Partnerships to explore and consider additional and alternative sites as circumstances dictated.

Reasons for Decisions

There were no decisions required to progress the three priority schemes, but Cabinet was asked to approve the three site programme as set out in the report.

The programme would be subject to amendment for a variety of reasons and therefore Cabinet was asked to delegate authority to the Head of Housing and Partnerships to explore and consider additional and alternative sites as circumstances dictated.

125. Revenues and Benefits Collection Report – Quarter 3

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 11.1 – 1.6 + Not for Publication Appendices 1, 2 and 3 (Item 11.7 – 11.23) of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The information regarding collections be noted.
- (B) The arrears listed in the confidential appendices be written off.

Reasons for Decisions

Efficient collection of the Council's revenues was of major importance to the funding of Council services and those provided by our preceptors.

Council Tax due for the current year amounted to £52.4m, of which, some 82.1% had been collected by the end of December 2019.

Business Rates due for the current year amounted to £33.6m, of which, some 79.7% had been collected by the end of December 2019.

Whilst the collection rates were good, regrettably not all of the monies owed to

the Council could be collected. As such, it was recommended to write-off bad debts that could not be recovered.

126. 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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HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2020 AT 4:00 P.M.

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PART 2

127. Application for Permission to Spend: Artificial Grass Pitch and Associated Car Parking at Rugeley Leisure Centre

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 13.1 – 13.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The project outline and submission of a bid to the Football Foundation, as set out in the report, be approved.
- (B) Permission to spend capital expenditure of up to £843,600 be granted, subject to obtaining a successful planning application and securing the required balance funding from the Football Foundation and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles to deliver the project.
- (C) Authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, in consultation with the Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader, to enter into the required contractual arrangements to secure the funding toward the proposed scheme, and to take such action as necessary to progress the scheme within existing budgets.
- (D) A further report be received for consideration should the funding bid to the Football Foundation be unsuccessful, or legal / contractual agreements could not be reached.

Reasons for Decisions

The project would establish the third full-size Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) in the District, as identified in the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, adopted by Cabinet on 13 June 2019. This development was also identified as a key project for the District in the Football Association's (FA) 'Local Football Facility Plan' 2018.

A number of meetings to discuss the development of the project had been held with representatives from the Staffordshire FA, Football Foundation and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL). These discussions had identified an opportunity for the Council to submit a bid to the Football Foundation for a grant funding contribution toward this project by April 2020.

The total estimated cost of the project was £843,600, and the Council together with IHL, had identified £354,480 (42%) toward developing the scheme. It was

proposed to submit a bid for the balance of the funding required, £489,120 (58%), to the Football Foundation.

Subject to a successful planning application for the scheme and a successful funding application to the Football Foundation, approvals were requested for permission to spend in relation to the delivery of the project, and, for the authority to enter into a Deed of Agreement with the Football Foundation.

In the event that the planning application or the funding bid to the Football Foundation was unsuccessful, a further report would be submitted to Cabinet for consideration, if required.

128. Estimated Capital and Revenue Costs for Phase 2 Development of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub-Stadium Site

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 14.1 – 14.12 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Phase 2 of the development be commenced, identifying the key improvements that could be delivered within the current level of capital and revenue funding available.
- (B) On the basis of decision (A), above, the following be approved:
 - (i) An additional £124,570 be included in the Capital Programme, making a total of up to £400,570 to be allocated toward Phase 2 improvements.
 - (ii) Permission to spend up to £400,570 to deliver the project improvements outlined in report paragraph 6.22.
 - (iii) The investigation and submission of any appropriate funding bids where possible to support the Phase 2 improvements.
- (C) Authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, in consultation with the Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader, to enter into the required contractual arrangements to explore and secure funding toward the proposed scheme, and to take such actions as necessary to progress the identified improvements within existing budgets.

Reasons for decisions

Phase 1 of the Community Sport and Recreation Hub facility had now been completed, and in accordance with Cabinet's request, the report outlined the indicative capital and revenue costs associated with the delivery and operation of the improvements proposed in Phase 2.

Currently, there was insufficient capital to deliver all of the proposed improvements included in Phase 2, and it was not possible to accurately identify all of the associated revenue costs associated with some of the facilities proposed, without further financial and usage analysis. Consequently, in order to minimise the pressure on capital and revenue budgets, two options were suggested for consideration by Cabinet.

It was noted that given the level of information at this stage of the Phase 2

project, the estimated costs provided must be viewed as indicative only. They would need to be subject to further scrutiny at each element of the design and tender submission stage, and may be subject to re-engineering to ensure the final expenditure was within the approved budget.

129. Cannock Town Centre

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 15.1 – 15.50 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The 'call-in' procedure shall not apply to this item as the Leader of each Political Group has given their agreement that any delay likely to be caused by call-in would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interest.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) A surrender of the head leasehold interest in a property in Cannock town centre be accepted.
- (B) As a result of decision (A), above, authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation with the Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader, to submit an unconditional offer to acquire the head leasehold interest, and subject to the offer being accepted, to agree terms and conditions and all other actions required to implement the decision.
- (C) Council, at its meeting to be held on 22 April, 2020, be recommended to:
 - (i) Approve a capital allocation in the Council's Capital Programme 2020/21 to cover the purchase costs outlined in the report, funded from the Council's District Investment Fund capital allocation and a Supplementary revenue estimate of £205,730 (to be funded from the Budget Support Reserve); and
 - (ii) Note that the revenue costs for future years would need to be reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan of the Council, pending redevelopment.
- (D) It be noted that the purchase of the property in Cannock town centre would enable the Council to include the site as part of a re-development opportunity for the town centre.
- (E) A competitive procurement process for the appointment of a preferred developer for the redevelopment of Cannock town centre be commenced.
- (F) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation with the Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader, on the detail of the preferred procurement route.

Reasons for Decisions

Cabinet needed to consider whether it was appropriate to have more direct control of specific assets in Cannock town centre in order to increase the possibility of being able to deliver a cinema/leisure led scheme in the future. This was in the absence of a detailed and costed scheme, and no developer selected. Therefore Cabinet would make these decisions 'at risk'.

Authority needed to be provided to Officers to commence a competitive procurement process to select a development partner for a re-development

scheme in Cannock town centre, and enable Officers to have flexibility in determining the best course of action for the Council.

The meeting closed at 4:50 p.m.

LEADER