

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET

HELD ON THURSDAY 23 APRIL 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
Pearson, A.R.	Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader
Bennett, C.	Crime and Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Mitchell, Mrs. C.	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader
Johnson, T.B.	Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader
Preece, J.P.T.L.	Environment Portfolio Leader
Martin, Mrs. C.E.	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Kraujalis, J.T.	Housing Portfolio Leader
Woodhead, P.E.	<i>Invitee (non-voting Observer)</i>
Muckley, Mrs. A.M.	<i>Invitee (non-voting Observer)</i>

Prior to the commencement of the formal business of the meeting, the Leader advised that this was the first 'remote' meeting of the Cabinet held under the 'Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020' ('The Regulations').

The meeting was being held in public, and as such, Members and Officers were reminded that members of the public may be watching or listening in. The Regulations required that the meeting be broadcast live; and that it may be recorded or replayed at some future date. Therefore, Members were asked to be mindful of the Council's Rules of Conduct and Debate.

The Leader then provided the following welcome and introduction:

"Welcome to our first virtual Cabinet meeting. A different way of doing things but necessary to ensure democratic scrutiny and approval of any actions taken in the current crisis.

Before I go any further, I would like to record my thanks, and I am sure, those of the whole Cabinet, to our staff who have been working tirelessly, in very different circumstances as we will hear, to ensure that as many of our services to the public as possible have continued.

Homeworking has become the norm for many people, and this will have a lasting impact on how we carry out our jobs in the future I am sure.

Other colleagues have had to go into work such as our refuse collectors, park staff etc.

I know that people do appreciate what they are doing – our bins are emptied as normal, our parks look wonderful and the extra jobs placed on our staff such as paying out business grants, have been carried out brilliantly.

Up to yesterday, nearly 60% of grants had been paid out. This morning I heard of one authority that had only paid out 10% by last Monday.

It has been difficult, but our staff and colleagues have stepped up to the mark and are doing a great job.

Many other colleagues, such as Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL) staff on furlough have been volunteering to help our community.

Also, a big thank you to the public of Cannock Chase, the vast majority of whom are following the guidelines to Stay Safe and Protect the NHS.

We are also looking forward to the recovery phase for when the crisis is over. Working with our partners, we want to try to get things back to as normal as we can. It will not be easy, some businesses will not survive, others will struggle, and, sadly, a lot of people will not survive, but as a Council, we'll be here to help.”

130. Apologies

None.

131. 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.

132. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March, 2020, be approved as a correct record and signed.

133. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period June to August 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 June to August 2020 be noted.

134. Covid-19: Response of Cannock Chase District Council and Partners

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 5.1 – 5.31 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Leader moved the following amendment to the report recommendations, which was duly seconded:

At the end of recommendation 3.3, insert the following wording – ‘in conjunction with the Leader of the Council, the Head of Housing & Partnerships, and the Managing Director.’

The Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader then moved a further amendment to the report recommendations, as follows, which was duly seconded:

Insert new recommendation 3.4 – ‘To improve democratic oversight, the Managing Director or his Deputy must liaise with the Leader of the Council, or his Deputy, on a daily basis, as to actions taken and decisions made, in light of democracy.’

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The current position regarding service delivery and the actions taken by Officers to ensure the delivery of critical services and compliance with Government guidance be noted.
- (B) The following Urgent Decisions made be noted:
 - (i) Financial assistance to Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles following the closure of Leisure and Cultural Facilities;
 - (ii) Consideration of requests from Biffa in relation to the review and payment of invoices for the waste collection contract;
 - (iii) The suspension of Pay and Display requirements at Brunswick Road Car Park to support NHS staff, patients and visitors using Cannock Chase Hospital.
- (C) A budget of £5,000 be approved to cover the costs of additional referrals being made to the various Foodbanks, in conjunction with the Leader of the Council, Head of Housing & Partnerships and the Managing Director.
- (D) To improve democratic oversight, the Managing Director or his Deputy must liaise with the Leader of the Council, or his Deputy, on a daily basis, as to actions taken and decisions made, in light of democracy.

Reason for Decisions

Cabinet noted: the Council’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the details of decisions made by Officers under the Urgency procedure rules since the last meeting of Cabinet held on 18 March, 2020, and considered providing grant support for the District’s two food banks.

It was further requested that the Managing Director or his Deputy liaise with the Leader of the Council or Deputy Leader on a daily basis to improve democratic oversight of any decisions made or actions taken in relation to the pandemic.

The meeting closed at 5:10 p.m.

LEADER