

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET

HELD ON THURSDAY 30 JANUARY 2020 AT 4:00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Alcott, G.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader
Pearson, A.R.	Corporate Improvement 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>

85. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors G. Adamson, Leader of the Council, and C. Bennett, Crime & Partnerships Portfolio Leader.

In the Leader's absence the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Leader.

The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader reported that Councillor Bennett was recovering well following his hospital stay in December 2019, and would be returning home at the weekend. The Deputy Leader requested that a letter be sent to Councillor Bennett sending Members' best wishes for a full recovery.

86. 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.

87. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

Culture and Sport

'Quest' Quality Scheme for Sport & Leisure

The Portfolio Leader advised that Chase and Rugeley Leisure Centres had been ranked in the top five leisure centres in the country under the 'Quest' Quality Scheme for Sport & Leisure, with the final ranking positions due to be announced on 27 February 2020.

Environment

Environmental Awareness Sessions

The Portfolio Leader advised that the Council's Environment team had been delivering environmental awareness sessions in primary schools across the District as part of a new engagement programme addressing environmental issues. This work formed part of a wider environmental project, 'Binworld – 10 years on'.

The Council had commissioned 'Split Mask Theatre', a local drama group, to adapt and update the original Binworld script. Working closely with the group, the production would be rolled out across theatres in Cannock and Rugeley. Participating schools would be attending performances on the below dates, to which all Members were invited to attend.

- 23 March, 10am to 12noon – Prince of Wales Theatre;
- 24 March, 10am to 12noon and 1pm to 3pm – Prince of Wales Theatre;
- 30 March, 10am to 12noon and 1pm to 3pm – Rugeley Rose Theatre.

The environmental awareness sessions were a great way of educating young children about the importance of the environment as well as encouraging them to spread the message among their family and friends.

The special musical would also enforce these messages with characters MC Crisp Rapper and Professor Poop taking the nine to 11-year-olds on a musical journey where they would learn more about issues like recycling, fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling.

88. Minutes of Cabinet Meeting of 19 December, 2019

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 December, 2019, be approved as a correct record and signed.

89. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period January to March 2020 (Item 5.1 – 5.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council) was considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period January to March 2020 be noted.

90. General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2022/23

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 6.1 – 6.75 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the following be recommended to Council, at its meeting to be held on 12 February 2020, as part of the formal budget setting process:
- (i) The level of net spending for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2020-21 be set at £13.476 million; with indicative net spending for 2021-22 and 2022-23 of £13.709 million and £13.584 million,

respectively.

- (ii) The detailed portfolio budgets as set out in report Appendix 2.
 - (iii) The forecast outturn net budget of £13.295 million be approved.
 - (iv) The use of Government Grants in 2020-21 of £1.575 million.
 - (v) To note that although indicative figures exist for the use of Government Grants for 2021-22 and 2022-23, they could not be accurately determined at this stage with each element of Government funding being subject to review.
 - (vi) The working balances be set at £1.0 million; £1.007 million and £1.257 million for 2020-21 to 2022-23 respectively.
 - (vii) A Council Tax of £221.32 for 2020-21, with indicative increases of 1.95% to the level of Council Tax for 2021-22 and 2022-23.
 - (viii) The Council's Tax Base be set at 29,242.54.
 - (ix) The revised Capital Programme, including new schemes and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Allocations, as set out in report Appendices 3, 4 and 5.
- (B) It be noted that the Recommended Budget reflected the Financial Implications arising from other Reports included elsewhere on the meeting agenda, and hence may be subject to change, subject to Cabinet's recommendation differing from that as included in the report.

Reasons for Decisions

The Council was required to set a balanced budget for 2020-21, set in the context of a sustainable medium term financial plan. Detailed figures were only available for 2020-21, nevertheless, the level of Working Balances maintained by the Council would enable a Balanced Budget to be set for the duration of the Financial Plan.

91. Rent Setting Policy – April 2020

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 7.1 – 7.9 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the revised housing rent setting policy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed and implemented with effect from 1 April, 2020.

Reasons for Decision

A revised rent setting policy for social landlords beyond 2020 was announced by the then Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 4 October 2017, whereby increases to social housing rents would be limited up to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), plus 1%, for five years from 2020. The CPI rate used would be the rate for September of the previous financial year as set out in the rent standard.

The report confirmed the details provided in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) report dated 7 February 2019, and three-year Business Plan approval for HRA budgets 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22, which had been formulated within

the framework set out in the Government formulated rent policy.

Approval was sought to follow the formulated social rent policy and be implemented from 1 April 2020.

The Regulator was proposing to replace the existing 2015 Rent Standard with a new Rent Standard for registered providers of social housing from 1 April 2020, and local authorities would be included. Also from 2020, all local authorities with housing stock would be required to submit stock and rents information to the Regulator for Social Housing.

92. Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2019/20 to 2022/23

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Head of Housing & Partnerships (Item 8.1 – 8.8 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The revised position with regard to estimated income and expenditure in respect of the 2019-20 Housing Revenue Account Budget, and Housing Revenue Account Budgets for the period 2020-21 to 2022-23, as summarised in Appendix 1, be noted.

That Council, at its meeting to be held on 12 February 2020, be recommended to:

- (B) Determine a minimum level of working balances of £1.796 million for 2020-21, and indicative working balances of £1.817 million and £1.859 million for 2021-22 and 2022-23, respectively.
- (C) Approve the Housing Revenue Account Budgets for 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 (and note the estimated outturn for 2019-20) as summarised in Appendix 1 of the report.

Reason for Decisions

Cabinet was required to propose a budget in relation to the Housing Revenue Account for submission to Council on 12 February 2020.

93. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2019/20 to 2022/23

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Head of Housing & Partnerships (Item 9.1 – 9.8 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The estimated availability of Housing Revenue Account capital resources for the period 2019-20 to 2022-23, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 12 February 2020, be recommended to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for the period 2019-20 to 2022-23, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

Reason for Decisions

Cabinet was required to propose a budget in relation to the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for submission to Council on 12 February 2020.

94. Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy 2020/21

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 10.1 – 10.35 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Council, at its meeting to be held on 12 February 2020, be recommended to approve:
 - (i) The Prudential and Treasury Indicators;
 - (ii) The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement;
 - (iii) The Treasury Management Policy; and
 - (iv) The Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21.
- (B) It be noted that indicators may change in accordance with the final recommendations from Cabinet to Council in relation to both the General Fund / Housing Revenue Account Budgets and Capital Programmes.

Reason for Decisions

The Council was required to approve its treasury management, investment and capital strategies to ensure that cash flow was adequately planned and surplus monies invested appropriately.

95. Local Council Tax Reduction

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 11.1 – 11.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That Council, at its meeting to be held on 12 February 2020, be recommended to formally approve the 'Banded Reduction Scheme' that was available in full on the Council's website and summarised in this report.

Reasons for Decision

The scheme that was adopted in 2013 had worked well and remained largely unchanged. However, it was accepted that changes may be needed to it, particularly as Universal Credit rules were clarified and the number of residents claiming it increased.

The full Universal Credit system was introduced in the Cannock Chase area in November 2018, and the number of residents moving onto that system was increasing.

96. Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal in Respect of Toilet Facilities Located in Elmore Park, Rugeley

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 12.1 – 12.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the Motion and Petition be accepted, the cost of which was to be met from existing budgets.

Reasons for Decision

The estimated £10,000 cost for the study, options appraisal and surveys identified in the report could be met from existing budgets.

97. Health In All Policies

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 13.1 – 13.16 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) A 'Health in All Policies' approach be introduced in line with the suggestions given in the report.
- (B) As a result of decision (A), above, this be taken forward within the relevant Priority Delivery Plan, and authority delegated to the Head of Environment & Healthy Lifestyles, in consultation with the Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Leader, to implement all necessary actions.

Reason for Decisions

Adopting a 'Health in All Policies' approach would help the Council identify how best to tackle the health inequalities in the District, and would ensure all the Council's policies and services included consideration of the health impact that could be made.

98. New Health Improvement Programme 'Cannock Chase Can'

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 14.1 – 14.32 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Implementation of a District-wide Health Improvement Programme, 'Cannock Chase Can' be approved.
- (B) The resource implications that would be submitted to Cabinet for consideration as part of the 2020/21 budget process be noted.

Reasons for Decisions

A District-wide Health Improvement Programme, 'Cannock Chase Can', would focus local efforts on supporting the Government's Child Obesity Action Plan by working collaboratively with the Community Wellbeing team at Inspiring Healthy

Lifestyles, and supporting partners to develop a five-year health improvement / prevention plan. The plan would include various methods of promotion and engagement to encourage participation and behaviour change.

There would be no costs incurred in the first year (2019/20) as this would be a planning and developmental period. Estimated costs for year 2 would reach £21,500, with a further annual commitment of £10,000 for four consecutive years. This would equate to a total financial commitment over five years of £61,500.

99. Economic Prosperity Strategy

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 15.1 – 15.36 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Economic Prosperity Strategy, as presented at Appendix 2 of the report, be approved.
- (B) It be noted that the adoption of the Economic Prosperity Strategy represented a significant commitment, and it be further noted that the resource implications of implementing the Strategy over the period 2020-21 to 2022-23 would need to be considered as part of the budget setting process.

Reasons for Decisions

The Council had a commitment in its Corporate Plan 2018-2023 to develop a new Economic Prosperity Strategy.

The Economic Prosperity Strategy set out an economic vision for the period 2020-2030 and included a number of projects and activities that were designed to improve the prosperity of local residents, increase economic growth and productivity, whilst supporting the Council's goal to achieve carbon neutrality. The Strategy set out a number of key economic indicators that would need to be monitored, and would identify the District's progress toward achieving the vision.

100. Cannock Indoor Market Consultation Results

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 16.1 – 16.13 + Not for Publication Appendix 3 (Item 16.14 – 16.19 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The 'Street Markets' option be approved, and it be noted that a market operator would need to be procured in order to facilitate a street market on Tuesdays and Fridays, potentially in Littleton Square, and that the existing Prince of Wales market would continue to operate in its current format.
- (B) All necessary steps be taken to secure the closure of the current Cannock Indoor Market Hall during 2020 to:
- (C) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation

with the Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader, to take all necessary steps to implement the 'Street Markets' option for future delivery.

- (D) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity in order to assist any market traders that wished to relocate to either Rugeley Market Hall, the Prince of Wales Market in its existing form, or the street markets, in order to continue to trade.

Reasons for Decisions

The indoor market as it stood was unviable in the long-term and would require financial investment in order to continue to be fit for purpose. Therefore, the Council needed to decide on the future market provision for Cannock town centre. Furthermore, the Council also decided in taking forward a Cannock town centre redevelopment scheme that it should include the footprint of the Indoor Market Hall. This in-principle decision was taken by Cabinet in April 2019. The Prince of Wales Market was not required as part of any re-development scheme.

There were various commercial and legal issues that could arise should the Council seek to alter or extinguish the market provision currently enjoyed in any redevelopment of Cannock town centre. The report proposed options that met the Council's legal market obligations and looked to maintain some market presence, albeit potentially in a different manner.

In September 2019, the Council decided to run a public consultation process to consult with both the indoor market stall holders and members of the public before making any decisions on the future of the market. The Council agreed it would consider the views, particularly those directly affected by any proposed changes. A report back to Cabinet following the outcome to the consultation process would follow before any final decisions were taken. This report was the follow-up to that consultation process.

101. 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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PART 2

102. Housing Investment Fund – Aelfgar Site

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 18.1 – 18.9 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Prosperity to acquire the freehold interest in the site of the former Aelfgar School, Taylors Lane, Rugeley, from Staffordshire County Council for the agreed sum of £1,570,000, for development of approximately 60 mixed-tenure homes, of which 50% would be Council housing, subject to planning consent being granted.
- (B) It be agreed in-principle that the specification of new Council housing would be based on a standard to achieve carbon neutrality, or maximise carbon reduction, as far as was practicably possible, as set out in option 3 of the report (paragraph 6.11), and the standard to be followed would be selected on the criteria set out in report paragraph 6.13.
- (C) It be noted that following assessment of available zero-carbon housing standards, the Head of Housing and Partnerships, in consultation with the Housing Portfolio Leader, would determine the standard on which the Council's housing specification would be designed to comply.
- (D) The proposal to appoint a consultant for the zero-carbon standard to assist the Council's Development Team and Development Partner to comply with the standard, be noted.
- (E) It be noted a Development Partner was to be procured under a recognised framework, where possible.
- (F) A scheme be developed and a further report received for scheme approval and permission to spend.

Reasons for Decisions

Former Aelfgar School Development Site – Purchase

The former Aelfgar School, consisting of 3.42 acres, was in the ownership of Staffordshire County Council (SCC), and together with the Cannock Chase

Council owned Former Squash Courts, formed a housing development site of some 4.29 hectares at Taylors Lane, Rugeley. The combined site was in the Local Plan as Policy RTC4. SCC had undertaken land remediation and placed the Aelfgar School site on the market.

Based on a scheme to provide at least 50% Council homes and 50% for market sale, an offer of £1,570,000 was made to SCC, which had been accepted. The offer was subject to the grant of planning permission. It was recommended that Cabinet approve this offer as made.

Corporate Objective – Carbon Neutrality

Following purchase of the former Aelfgar School site, a specification for the homes to be built would need to be decided upon. It was considered that there were three broad options for the site, as referred to below:

- Option 1 – continue to build homes on the existing specification and in line with current building regulations.
- Option 2 – revise the existing specifications to the proposals for the revised Building Regulations – ‘The Future Homes Standard’.
- Option 3 – adopt one of the available alternative standards to achieve carbon neutrality or maximise the amount of carbon reduction as is practicably possible.

Option 1 would only provide an improvement in carbon reduction if the 2020 Building Regulation uplift had come into force before the scheme had commenced. As the uplift proposals were not yet confirmed, subject to consultation and maybe amended or delayed, it was likely that under this option the Aelfgar site would be built to current building regulations. Similarly, with option 2, the proposals were not fully developed, still subject to consultation and amendment, and therefore would be difficult to adopt before the standards were approved.

Option 3 would enable a step-change in carbon reduction, and would likely meet or exceed any reductions to be achieved through changes to Building Regulations. A standard could be selected that had been tried and tested and under which, issues such as overheating had been rectified.

Therefore, Cabinet was recommended to agree option 3. It was also recommended that the alternative low carbon / zero carbon standard for new Council homes would meet the criteria set out in report paragraph 6.13.

The meeting closed at 4:36 p.m.

LEADER