

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

AT 4.00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 4 JULY, 2012

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Todd, R. (Chairman)
Grice, Mrs. D. (Vice-Chairman)

Alcott, G.	Holder, M.J.
Allen, F.W.C.	Johnson, J.
Allt, Mrs. A.	Jones, R.
Anslow, C.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Ball, G.D.	Lovell, A.
Bennett, C.	Mitchell, Mrs. C.
Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Molineux, G.N.
Bernard, J.D.	Morgan, C.W.J.
Bottomer, B.	Pearson, A.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.	Rowley, J.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Stretton, Mrs. Z.
Dixon, D.I.	Sutherland, M.
Dudson, A.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Fisher, P.A.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Freeman, Miss M.	Toth, J.
Gamble, B.	Whitehouse, Mrs. L.
Grocott, M.R.	

16. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G. Adamson; D.N. Davies; P. Gilbert; Ms. J.L. Jones; P. Snape; and Mrs. A. Spicer.

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

The following Interests already declared were confirmed by Members in respect of Item 8 on the Agenda:

Alcott, G.	Member of Unison	Personal
Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Member of Unison	Personal
Davies, Mrs. M.A.	Member of N.U.T.	Personal

Grice, Mrs. D.	Member of Unison	Personal
Toth, J.	Member of Unison	Personal

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

18. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May, 2012 be approved as a correct record.

19. The Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Armed Forces Day / Flag Raising Ceremony

The Chairman reported that he had been pleased to attend the flag raising ceremony on Monday, 25 June, which he had found to be very moving. He had also attended a march past.

(ii) Chairman's Charity Box

The Chairman reported that the charity collection box was circulating for Members to make a donation to support his chosen charities. He advised that at the Meeting held on 23 May, 2012 a total of £34.35 was collected, and he thanked Members for their donations.

(iii) Chairman's Civic Sunday

The Chairman advised Members that his Civic Sunday would be held on Sunday, 9 September, at 4.00 p.m. at St. Peter's Church, Hednesford. Invitations would be sent to all Members in due course.

(iv) Rugeley Charter Fair

Councillor Ray Jones thanked the Chairman for attending Rugeley Charter Fair. He said he felt that the Chairman's presence had added a further dimension to the day.

20. Questions in Accordance with Rule 8

No questions had been submitted in accordance with Rule 8.

21. Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees and Panels

RESOLVED:

That the Part 1 Minutes of the following Cabinet, Committees and Panels be adopted and any recommendations be approved and decisions implemented following the expiry of any call-in period:-

(a) Cabinet – 15 March and 19 April, 2012

Update from Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader (part Minute 184) – The Portfolio Leader advised that the pool was nearing completion and was being filled. There had been an official opening ceremony for the ATP on Sunday, 1 July, 2012, and she thanked those Members that had attended.

Members then discussed reported Government proposals to charge VAT on the hire of sports facilities. It was agreed that the matter should be the subject of a report in due course.

- (b) Planning Control Committee – 14 and 28 March; 18 April; 9 and 30 May, 2012
- (c) Licensing and Public Protection – 16 February; 29 March; and 10 May, 2012
- (d) Health Scrutiny Committee – 6 March, 2012
- (e) Standards Committee – 14 April, 2011 and 5 March, 2012
- (f) Audit and Governance – 24 November, 2011
- (g) Appeals and Complaints Panel – 17 and 29 May; and 13 June, 2012
- (h) Joint Parking Committee – 17 January, 2012
- (i) Cannock Community Forum – 6 March, 2011
- (j) Heath Hayes, Norton Canes and Rawnsley Community Forum – 15 November, 2011; and 5 March, 2012
- (k) Hednesford Community forum – 26 March, 2012
- (l) Rugeley and Brereton Community Forum – 21 March, 2012

22. Recommendation(s) Referred from Cabinet

Consideration was given to the following recommendation(s) referred from Cabinet on:

- (A) 19 April, 2012, in respect of:

Tenancy Strategy

“The proposed Tenancy Strategy be agreed and submitted for approval by Council on 4 July, 2012.”

- (B) 21 June, 2012, in respect of:

Proposals for Town Centre Developments – Community Toilet Scheme

“Council be recommended to approve a supplementary estimate of £10,000 to pilot the introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme across the District during 2012/13.”

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Tenancy Strategy be approved.
- (B) A supplementary estimate of £10,000 be approved to pilot the introduction of a Community Toilet Scheme across the District during 2012/13.

23. Recommendation(s) Referred from Planning Control Committee

Consideration was given to the following recommendation(s) referred from Planning Control Committee on 30 May, 2012 in respect of:

Proposals to Change the Local Protocol for Planning Decision Making in relation to public and Member speaking and dealing with cases where a Parish Council objects to an application

“That:

- (A) Council be recommended to amend the Local Protocol for Planning Decision Making which forms part of the Constitution in order to extend the time allowed for speakers to address the Planning Control Committee from 5 minutes to 10 minutes on a permanent basis.
- (B) In response to requests from the public to allow equal numbers of supporters to speak on an application as objectors, Council be recommended to amend the Local Protocol for Planning Decision Making which forms part of the Constitution so that one supporter is permitted to speak in addition to the applicant or applicant’s agent.”

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Local Protocol for Planning Decision Making which formed part of the Constitution be amended in order to extend the time allowed for speakers to address the Planning Control Committee from 5 minutes to 10 minutes on a permanent basis.
- (B) In response to requests from the public to allow equal numbers of supporters to speak on an application as objectors, the Local Protocol for Planning Decision Making which forms part of the Constitution be amended so that one supporter is permitted to speak in addition to the applicant or applicant’s agent.

24. Motion(s) Received Under Rule 6

Consider was given to the following motion submitted under Rule 6 by Councillor J. Toth, Deputy Leader of the Council and Environment Portfolio Leader:

Regional and local public sector pay

“Council notes:

- The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the 2012 Budget the Government's desire to introduce 'more market facing' public sector pay. This could mean regional or local public sector pay.
- This recommendation has come in advance of the Pay Review Bodies reporting on the issue in July and September 2012.
- There has been no independent assessment of the impact and consequences this policy could have for public services or the economies of low pay regions.

Council believes:

- The Government's case is based on the claim that public sector pay is 'crowding out' the private sector. This is not supported by evidence, particularly at a time of high unemployment. There are currently 4 JSA claimants for every job vacancy across Cannock Chase.
- This approach also ignores the real reasons for the differences between public and private sector pay. For instance, there are more high skilled workers in the public sector (such as teachers and nurses), and a smaller pay gap between top and bottom earners and a smaller gender pay gap.
- Public sector employers already have some flexibility to adjust pay in response to local conditions, and higher rates are paid in London and the South East
- All other English regions and devolved nations stand to be affected by this, with the possibility of years of pay falling behind the cost of living.
- Full-time workers in Cannock Chase are paid £33 less per week than the national average.
- 65% of public sector workers are female.

Council further believes:

- Regional or local public sector pay would have a harmful effect on Cannock Chase and the West Midlands.
- It will make it harder for schools and other public services to recruit and retain good quality professionals who could earn more for doing the same job elsewhere.
- There are 7,400 public sector workers across Cannock Chase and reducing their real terms pay each and every year will dramatically reduce spending power and have a negative impact on the private sector.
- This policy will not improve the pay of private sector workers but instead could encourage further depression of wages in all sectors.
- We do not want to be forever defined as a 'low pay' region.
- This policy is therefore counter to our area's vision and ambitions for the future.

Council resolves:

- To write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Chief Secretary to the Treasury stating this council's opposition to plans for regional and localised public sector pay.
- To write to all local MPs within the next month outlining concerns about the impact that this policy would have on services and the local economy.
- To sign up to the Pay Fair campaign and raise awareness of the implications and risks of this policy locally, regionally and nationally. "

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Council would write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Chief Secretary to the Treasury stating the Council's opposition to plans for regional and localised public sector pay.
- (B) Council would write to all local MPs within the next month outlining concerns about the impact that the policy would have on services and the local economy.
- (C) Council would sign up to the Pay Fair campaign and raise awareness of the implications and risks of the policy locally, regionally and nationally.

(The meeting adjourned at 5.05pm and reconvened at 5.15pm.)

25. New Standards Regime

Consideration was given to the Report of the Monitoring Officer (Enclosure 9.1 – 9.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The following be approved:
 - (i) The Code of Conduct for Members
 - (ii) The Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee
 - (iii) The Standards Committee Complaints Procedure
 - (iv) The Dispensations Process
 - (v) A new Council Procedure Rule 11A

As set out in the Annexes to the report.

- (B) Council appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee.
- (C) Council should invite the Town and Parish Councils in the District to form a joint Standards Committee with the Council.
- (D) That the new Standards Regime be reviewed in 12 months, or sooner, if required.

26. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing and the Head of Financial Management (Enclosure 10.1 – 10.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The revised HRA Business Plan (attached as Annex 1 to the report) and the associated programme of capital expenditure (attached as Annex 2) be approved.
- (B) The revised Business Plan assumptions (attached as Annex 3 to the report) be noted including the provision of 15 further Council houses as part of the Capital Expenditure Programme.

27. Homelessness Funding, 2012-13

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

RESOLVED:

That the following supplementary estimates be approved following the receipt of additional Government grants for 2012-13:-

(a)	Homelessness Prevention Initiatives	£42,000
(b)	Preventing Repossessions Fund	£89,210
(c)	Homelessness Prevention Work in Schools -	£6,680

28. 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 Local Government Act 1972.

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PART 2

29. Part 2 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Select Committees and Panels

RESOLVED:

That the Part 2 Minutes of the following Cabinet, Committees, Select Committees and Panels be adopted and any recommendations be approved and decisions implemented following the expiry of any call-in period:-

- (a) Cabinet – 15 March; and 19 April, 2012
- (b) Licensing and Public Protection Committee – 16 February; 29 March; and 10 May, 2012
- (c) Health Scrutiny Committee – 6 March, 2012
- (d) Standards Committee – 14 April, 2011
- (e) Appeals and Complaints Panel – 17 and 29 May; and 13 June, 2012
- (f) Joint Parking Committee – 17 January, 2012

30. Growing Places Fund (GPF) – Mill Green

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Joint Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Head of Financial Management (Enclosure 14.1 – 14.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Mill Green Capital scheme, as included in the Capital Programme, be increased to £4,360,000, the additional costs to be underpinned by interim prudential borrowing.
- (B) The Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Holder, be authorised to acquire the land owned by Morston Lakeside Limited at Mill Green as described in the report in accordance with the Financial Implications as detailed in the report.

- (C) The Head of Financial Management in consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to extend the interim prudential borrowing to acquire additional land owned by Morston Lakeside Limited adjacent to the Mill Green site provided it is considered in the best interests of the Council to do so.

- (D) The Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Holder, be authorised to acquire the additional land adjacent to the Mill Green Site owned by Morston Lakeside Limited provided it is considered in the best interests of the Council to do so.

(The meeting closed at 6.00 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN