

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK**  
**AT 4:00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 5 JULY, 2017**  
**PART 1**

PRESENT: Councillors:

Dudson, A. (Chairman)	
Witton, P.T. (Vice-Chairman)	
Adamson, G.	Johnson, T.B.
Alcott, G.	Lea, C.I.
Allen, F.W.C.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Allt, Mrs. A.	Martin, Mrs. C.E.
Bennett, C.	Mitchell, Mrs. C.
Bowater, J.L.	Peake, Mrs. C.L.
Buttery, M.S.	Pearson, A.R.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Cooper, Miss J.	Smith, C.D.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Snape, D.J.
Dean, A.	Snape, P.A.
Dudson, Miss M.J.	Sutherland, M.
Foley, D.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Freeman, Miss M.A.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Grice, Mrs. D.	Whitehouse, Miss S.
Grocott, M.R.	Witton, P.T.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Woodhead, P.E.
Johnson, J.P.	

Prior to the commencement of formal business, the Chairman paid tribute on behalf of all Members to Councillor Graham Burnett who had passed away suddenly on 29 June, 2017. Other Members also paid personal tributes to Councillor Burnett. Members then observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

**14. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors Miss J. Christian; W.T.A. Hardman; and G.N. Molineux.

## 15. Change of Group Membership

The Leader of the Opposition advised the meeting that, following discussions with the UKIP Group Leader, Councillors M.S. Buttery and Miss S. Whitehouse had resigned from the UKIP Group and requested membership of the Conservative Group, which had been accepted.

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

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Nature</u>
P.E. Woodhead	Minute 15 of Cabinet (Draft) – 15 June, 2017 - Civic Centre Roof Aerial – Cannock Chase Radio	Personal – hosts a show on Cannock Radio

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

## 17. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the annual meeting held on 24 May, 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed.

## 18. The Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

### (i) Chairman's Fundraising

The Chairman advised that a collection box was circulating for Members to donate to his fundraising. At the meeting held on 24 May, 2017, a total of £43.00 was collected, and he thanked all Members for their donations.

The Chairman advised that the organisations he would be supporting during his term of Office would be the 2nd Brereton Brownies, 1st Brereton Scouts and Rugeley Physically Handicapped Association.

### (ii) Local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Organisations

The Chairman referred to a document listing local organisations, copies of which had been left for Members. He advised that he had received this in his capacity as a County Councillor, but hoped that others Members might also find it to be of use.

### (iii) Minute's Silence

The Chairman asked Members to observe a minute's silence to pay respect to the victims and give their thoughts to the grieving families of three terrible incidents that had occurred since the Council last met:

- 3 June, terror attack on London Bridge;
- 14 June, fire at Grenfell Tower, Kensington; and
- 19 June, terror attack at Finsbury Park.

**19. Question(s) in Accordance with Rule 8**

- (i) The following Question had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 8 by Councillor P.E. Woodhead, Hednesford South Ward:

“If the Portfolio Leader could please inform Members of the strategy and resources employed by the Council to address the ongoing and increasing problem of litter within the District with particular reference to Hednesford Park as well as District-wide. Please include the number of fixed penalty notices issued in the last 12 months.”

Response to Question

In response to Councillor Woodhead’s question, the Environment Portfolio Leader said that he would like to:

Offer his thanks for the work already done by the Council’s Environmental, Waste and Engineering, Parks and Open Spaces, Housing, Partnerships and PR & Marketing teams and the many volunteers and community groups in cleaning up litter across the district.

“Litter is an avoidable problem but we all have a responsibility to help tackle this problem and the Council cannot do it on its own.

In participating in such campaigns as Clean for the Queen, Love your street and Love Parks council officers, Members and local residents have already made great efforts to clean up areas of our district and to enforce the message that littering in our district is not acceptable. These initiatives and campaigns have also engaged partner agencies such as Fire and Rescue Service (FARS) and local businesses (McDonalds).

That said, and despite all these efforts, littering is a problem not only for this Council but for all Councils in England and I welcome that this Government has, from April 2017, introduced the first ever Litter Strategy for England.

In summary, this strategy aims to educate, enforce and establish the infrastructure necessary to deliver a reduction in litter and in the longer term to change the behaviour of the minority who currently feel it is acceptable to drop litter.

Whilst I welcome this new strategy, and as most Members are aware Council officers have already been actively applying the relevant principles set out in this document for a number of years.

## **Education and Awareness**

The Council's Environmental Health Team has been engaging with local schools since 2012 through its Litter Awareness and Anti-Social Behaviour packages which were developed for Primary, Junior and High Schools. Its popular Junior Good Citizen and Environmental Citizen Award Schemes have recognised the contribution of over 100 children and young people to tackling littering in the district.

Banners promoting responsible dog ownership have been deployed in known "hotspots" areas to supplement "no fouling" signs and the re-launch £100 reward for information leading to a successful conviction of a person involved in fly tipping has resulted in 2 convictions.

The Council has been involved in two primary school initiatives – a Dog Fouling poster competition (Burns Street Primary School) the winning designs have been incorporated in the latest responsible dog ownership banners and Express and Star Design an Ad competition (Sherbrook Primary School) is due to be presented tomorrow.

## **Enforcement**

It can be particularly difficult to take enforcement action against those who commit such crimes and the Council's officers can only take action when they have sufficient evidence to a criminal standard of proof ("beyond reasonable doubt").

For a significant part of last year the Teams resources were directed to Oak Tree Farm and also preparing for administering Disabled Facilities Grants in-house from April 2017. This resulted in no fixed penalty notices being issued. That said Environmental Health Protection Officers have been actively involved in taking appropriate enforcement action wherever possible and 48 Fixed Penalty notices have been served and 5 prosecutions for littering have been enforced, since 2014.

Since 2014, the Team has also successfully prosecuted 4 individuals for fly tipping and waste-related offences. As a deterrent the team have also adopted the new stronger enforcement power to issue £400 FPNs for fly tipping offences.

## **Cleaning and Infrastructure**

As a Council we are committed to making sure our District is clean and to make it as easy as possible for residents and visitors to put their rubbish in the right bins. The Council's street cleansing team litter pick all town centres and empty 110 litter bins daily, 7 days per week. The remaining 450 litter bins situated across the district are emptied between once and twice per week depending upon known demand

All new litter bins are dual purpose (general litter and dog waste).

The district's 42 play areas are cleansed at least once per week with a number being served twice per week, based on demand.

Main and sub-roads (including estate roads) are litter picked 5 days per week, on an up to fortnightly basis and trunk and rural roads are picked monthly.

With regard to keeping our roads clean the team operate a 13 week road channel sweeping programme, which effectively means all district road channels are swept 4 times per year with the main roads being swept on a monthly basis.

Our town centres are mechanically swept 6 days per week with district shopping areas being swept once a week. Town centre car parks are swept once per week, with district car parks being swept once a month.

Our aim is to remove fly tipping on Council land within 24 hours, similarly animal road kills and needle sticks are collected within the same time frame (Mon – Fri).

Graffiti on Council owned property is removed within 24 hours or within the same day if considered offensive.

In respect of our parks and open spaces 5 Green Flag accreditations is testament to the Council's commitment to having a clean and litter free environment. The Green Flag Award scheme supported by Keep Britain Tidy recognises well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the Country.

The managed Parks Contract including Hednesford Park requires litter to be picked and removed twice per day or as and when required if more often. In respect of Hednesford Park it is fair to say that since its transformation in 2012-13 there has been a steady increase in footfall with a resultant increase in littering, particularly in areas of high activity such as the skate plaza and multi-use games area. The consequences associated with having a true destination park in Hednesford was recognised and catered for early in the HLF bid process and as such additional maintenance costs were allowed for in the successful grant award.

All of the existing bins were replaced and new ones added in Hednesford Park and the War Memorial as part of the development and there are now 20 bins strategically placed to encourage use.

As I have already made reference to earlier in my response, local authorities will never have enough resources in place to tackle this problem on their own and this Council is no different. Hednesford Park has benefited from the assistance of a number of volunteers and partners in litter picking and in raising awareness with our children and young people of the consequences of dropping litter and this work will be invaluable in changing behaviour over time.

Councillor Woodhead can rest assured that as Portfolio Leader I am keen to ensure that we continue to support local community groups and volunteers in assisting the Council in tackling littering in Hednesford Park and across our district and to continually look at innovative ways of addressing the littering problem. For instance, the recent restructuring of the Council's services has brought the range of "environmental" services together under a single Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles. This in time will provide an opportunity for the services to work more closely together in developing and improving its response to environmental issues such as littering, dog fouling and fly tipping.

I trust this response answers Councillor Woodhead's question. I also think that it clearly demonstrates the significant amount of work and actions that are currently being undertaken by this council and its officers to address, what is a national problem. Whilst we can always do more with more resources, the current level of work and activity is a considerable achievement given that this Council has had to deliver £1.6 million of savings last year as part of its 3 year Financial Recovery Plan."

- (ii) The following Question had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 8 by Councillor P.E. Woodhead, Hednesford South Ward:

"In light of the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in Kensington it brings in to sharp relief the responsibilities, obligations and consequences of the decisions we make as a council on behalf of our community. Whilst we do not have high rise towers within the District we do have homes and buildings for which we bear the responsibility of landlord. Indeed we make many decisions which affect the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents. Can the portfolio leader please detail the processes we have established to demonstrably assess the risk of decisions in respect to fire in particular but more generally towards the health, safety and wellbeing of our residents and how these are balanced against the financial pressures of decision-making?"

#### Response to Question

In response to Councillor Woodhead's question, the Housing Portfolio Leader advised that:

"Although Cannock Chase Council doesn't own any high-rise dwellings over 18 metres/ 6-storeys high and we haven't used the type of composite aluminium panel found on Grenfell Tower, we have undertaken various insulating render cladding schemes using a Wetherby system with a phenolic insulation board and an Epsicon system with a polystyrene slab insulation. Whilst neither of these systems is suitable for high-rise buildings, both are acceptable for low-rise dwellings (according to the latest BRE Agrément Certificate). For information, the tallest Council dwelling is 3-storey, circa 8m to eaves level.

Although the insulation element is not inert, these clad properties are only one or two storey and the majority are either bungalows or houses. There are no communal areas and the properties all have their own front door allowing escape in the event of a fire. The external render has a class 0 spread of fire and insulation is fixed onto either a brick or concrete shell which also has class 0 fire spread from inside the dwelling.

There are a few cladded flats on the Springfields Estate in Rugeley which have an insulating render cladding system installed about 20 years ago. These flats also have their own front entrance door for escape in the event of fire with the first floor flats leading out onto an external concrete staircase. We are due to start the external envelope programme in this area September 2017 and will carry out some intrusive spot checks to ensure the correct fire breaks are in place between dwellings.

Where we have upgraded infill panels on timber frame buildings, the existing layer of Rockwool insulation has been retained as Rockwool is inert and provides a fire break. Also, where in the last 10-15 years we have upgraded loft insulation, this has also been with Rockwool.

With regard fire risk assessments, where these have recommended remedial works, we have carried out these works. In 2013, we undertook improvement works to the communal areas of a number of blocks including the provision of new fire rated flat entrance doors and a full replacement of the fire alarm systems within the 4 sheltered schemes.

Each individual dwelling now has its own smoke detector linked to the warden call system. The Sheltered Scheme Managers have been trained to undertake the weekly test of the fire alarm systems and monitor the communal areas plus there is a maintenance programme in place for the new fire alarm systems.

The majority of flat-blocks with communal areas also benefit from a fire alarm system, which is maintained on quarterly and any identified remedial works are carried out. The Estate Caretakers also undertake monthly visual inspections of these communal areas, checking for damage, graffiti, rubbish, items abandoned or being stored in the communal areas, fly tipping, the cigarette bins, clean the carpets and test the fire alarms. Some of the blocks have been designated a 'higher risk' and in these blocks the Caretaker's inspection is carried out twice each month. We also have "resident champions" in some blocks, who also keep an eye on what is happening there and report issues. Electrical safety checks are undertaken in every void property or when a mutual exchange takes place. As part of our planned maintenance electrical upgrade programme, every 7-8 years we carry out essential electrical maintenance in each property including the installation of new mains powered trickle-charge smoke detectors to alert the occupants should a fire start within their property. Carbon monoxide detectors are also fitted in all properties with gas or solid fuel appliances. For those people who are hard of hearing, we install a specialist smoke alarm with a strobe light and vibrating pad for under the pillow.

We have regular consultation with the local fire safety officer from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue and have referred new tenants to them for a fire safety check, or if we feel one is necessary we will arrange it either at sign-up, following a tenancy audit or via one of the Sheltered Scheme Managers. We have consulted with them regarding proposed works and undertaken additional works highlighted from their fire safety checks including the installation of additional smoke detectors and a sprinkler system for a designated high-risk tenant.

All properties with a gas supply benefit from an annual gas safety check which is undertaken by PH Jones.

In the past we have also included fire safety articles in the tenants' magazine, Hometalk. This has included articles regarding testing your smoke alarm, the risks of electric blankets, chip pans and general trips and falls. Leaseholders are offered a free gas check as part of this process. We are in the process of getting legal advice on making the gas check compulsory for Leaseholders and obtaining a copy of the gas certification.

That said, we are not being complacent and in the light of the events at Grenfell Tower we are in the process of obtaining new fire risk assessments and following this will be carrying out any remedial works identified within an agreed period of time. As part of this process we will also review all of our signage within the blocks, the provision of information leaflets for tenants and leaseholders plus a full review of our fire evacuation procedures for the blocks.

The Council has also sent a letter to over 300 Private Estate Agents; Lettings Agents & Property Management Agents to raise awareness of the Governments response to the Grenfell Tower Incident.

The “Stay Put Policy” has come under media scrutiny, however, we are being advised to ensure that residents fully understand the emergency fire procedures in the building that they occupy and in particular the meaning of “stay put”.

## **20. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet, Committees etc.**

Consideration was given to the following recommendation to Council agreed by the Audit & Governance Committee at its meeting held on 27 June, 2017, in respect of:

### Code of Governance (Minute No. 7)

“That Council, at its meeting to be held on 5 July, 2017, approves the Code of Governance.”

RESOLVED:

That the Code of Governance be approved.

## **21. Motion(s) Received under Rule 6**

- (i) Consideration was given to the following Motion submitted under Council Procedure Rule 6 by Councillor P.E. Woodhead, Cannock South Ward, which was seconded and debated:

“Council believes that a Parliament that more accurately reflects the views of the nation, enabling people to feel that their votes count, is more likely to develop an economic, social and environmental agenda that benefits the residents of Cannock Chase.

Following the recent general election, this Council agrees that the ‘First Past the Post’ voting system:

- has again failed to live up to its reputation to provide strong and stable government;
- has again yielded a wildly disproportionate allocation of seats, for example, the Democratic Unionist Party gaining 10 seats from 292,316 votes compared with 12 seats from 2.4 million votes for the Liberal Democrats;
- has spectacularly failed to match votes to seats with 27,930 votes required to elect one MP from the Scottish National Party compared with 525,371 votes to elect one Green Party MP.

This Council:

- (A) recognises that a robust democracy must include a fair voting system and that nobody should be disenfranchised because of where they live;
- (B) applauds the many groups and organisations campaigning for fair votes including the Electoral Reform Society, Make Votes Matter and the Labour Campaign for PR;
- (C) notes that the Single Transferable Vote system is already used for local elections in Scotland and in both Northern Irish local elections and the Northern Ireland Assembly while proportional electoral systems are used to elect the devolved parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales and London;
- (D) therefore calls for the introduction of a proportional voting system
  - (i) for local elections in England and Wales;
  - (ii) for Westminster elections; and
- (E) directs that a copy of this motion be forwarded to the Leaders of all political parties represented in the UK Parliament.”

(In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.(5), a named vote was requested. The Chairman directed that a five minute break should be taken at this point and the meeting reconvened at 5.05 p.m., when the named vote was held.)

**For**

Dean, A.  
Foley, D.  
Johnson, T.B.  
Preece, J.P.T.L.  
Woodhead, P.E.

**Against**

Adamson, G.  
Alcott, G.  
Allen, F.W.C.  
Allt, Mrs. A.  
Bennett, C.  
Bowater, J.L.  
Buttery, M.S.  
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.  
Cooper, Miss J.  
Dudson, A.  
Dudson, M.J.  
Grice, Mrs. D.  
Grocott, M.R.  
Hoare, M.W.A.  
Johnson, J.P.  
Kraujalis, J.T.  
Lea, C.I.

**Abstain**

Davis, Mrs. M.A.  
Freeman, Miss M.A.

**For**

**Against**

**Abstain**

Martin, Mrs. C.E.  
Mitchell, Mrs. C.  
Peake, Mrs. C.L.  
Pearson, A.R.  
Smith, C.D.  
Snape, D.J.  
Snape, P.A.  
Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.  
Sutherland, M.  
Sutton, Mrs. H.M.  
Todd, Mrs. D.M.  
Whitehouse, Miss S.  
Witton, P.T.

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In addition, Councillors Miss J. Christian; W.T.A. Hardman; and G.N. Molineux were absent from the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Motion be not supported.

**22. Comments and Questions on Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9**

Following a debate by Members on the process for dealing with comments or questions on Minutes in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9, Councillors Woodhead and Snape withdrew their questions.

Members requested that Council Procedure Rule 9 be referred back to the Constitution Working Group for further review.

The Managing Director advised that he would ensure that copies of the comments or questions received under Rule 9 and the responses that had been drafted would be circulated to all Members by e-mail.

RESOLVED:

That the process for dealing with comments or questions on Minutes in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9, be referred back to the Constitution Working Group for further review.

**23. Annual Treasury Management Report 2016/17**

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

RESOLVED:

That

- (A) The annual treasury management report 2016/17 be noted.
- (B) The actual 2016/17 prudential and treasury indicators as set out in appendix 1 of the report be approved.



**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**  
**HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK**  
**AT 4:00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 5 JULY, 2017**

**PART 2**

**23. Comments and Questions on Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9**

No comments or questions on Part 2 Minutes had been submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.

The meeting closed at 5.25 p.m.

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CHAIRMAN