

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 OCTOBER, 2016
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Stretton, Mrs. P.Z., M.B.E. (Chairman)
Dudson, A. (Vice Chairman)

Alcott, G.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Allen, F.W.C.	Lea, C.I.
Bennett, C.	Martin, Mrs. C.E.
Bowater, J.L.	Mitchell, Mrs. C.
Burnett, G.	Molineux, G.N.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Peake, Mrs. C.L.
Christian, Miss J.	Pearson, A.R.
Cooper, Miss J.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Smith, C.D.
Dean, A.	Snape, D.J.
Dudson, Miss M.J.	Snape, P.A.
Freeman, Miss M.A.	Sutherland, M.
Grice, Mrs. D.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Grocott, M.R.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Witton, P.T.
Johnson, J.P.	Woodhead, P.E.
Johnson, T.B.	

41. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors G. Adamson; Mrs. A. Allt; M.S. Buttery; D. Foley; W.T.A. Hardman and Miss S. Whitehouse.

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

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

43. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 August, 2016, be approved as a correct record and signed.

44. The Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Chairman's Charity Collection Box

The Chairman advised that a collection box was circulating for Members to donate to her fundraising. At the meeting held on 24 August a total of £40.00 was received, and she thanked all Members for their donations.

(ii) Fundraising Night

The Chairman reminded Members that she would be hosting an Irish Night on Friday, 28 October in aid of her chosen charities, Birmingham Children's Hospital and the Royal Voluntary Service, Norton Canes.

Tickets could be purchased from the Managing Director's office for £27.00 per person, including entertainment and a two course meal.

45. Question(s) in Accordance with Rule 8

No questions had been submitted in accordance with Rule 8.

46. Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees and Panels

RESOLVED:

That the Part 1 Minutes of the following Cabinet, Committees and Panels be received for information:-

(a) Cabinet – 21 July and 25 August, 2016

Better Care Fund (BCF) (Leader's Update – Minute 18)

Members commented that they were disappointed to note the County Council's confirmed position in respect of funding cuts. The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader and the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee advised that SCC Cllr. Alan White, Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing, had been invited on several occasions to speak to Cabinet and / or the Health Scrutiny Committee, but had declined to do so.

2016-17 to 2018-19 Budget Update and Financial Recovery Plan (Minute 24)

In response to a question, the Deputy Leader confirmed that an e-mail had been sent to Members with a press release attached advising of the dates and venues for upcoming public consultation events in respect of the Council's Financial Recovery Plan.

Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Governance Structures (Minute 29)

Clarification was sought as to whether or not the revised structure would mean that the Council effectively lost representation on the AONB Advisory Partnership. This was a position appointed at Annual Council and the representative had to be a Councillor for a Ward within the AONB area.

The Environment Portfolio Leader advised that he would seek clarification and Members would be advised.

Application for Permission to Spend – Let's Grow (Minute 30)

Members commented that it was pleasing to note the positive steps being taken to encourage and assist existing businesses to grow and expand within the Cannock Chase District through the award of capital grants up to £5,000.

Future Use of Garage Sites (Minute 37(D) - Reducing Build Costs Through the use of Alternative Construction Methods)

In response to a question, the Housing Portfolio Leader advised that he and the Leader of the Council, along with the Head of Housing and Waste Management, had visited a development in Telford that utilised alternative construction methods, some of which might be suitable for adoption in Cannock Chase. Officers would be undertaking further detailed investigation of the benefits and shortcomings of these and other alternative methods of construction, taking account of various factors, such as cost; carbon emissions / impact; long term sustainability; lifespan etc., and would report back to Cabinet in due course.

- (b) Planning Control Committee – 10 August, 2016
- (c) Better Jobs and Skills Scrutiny Committee – 13 July, 2016

Impact of Closure of Rugeley Power Station (part-Minute 2)

In response to a question, the Managing Director gave a summary of the current position following the closure of Rugeley Power Station.

- As reported to Council on 16 February, 2016, the closure of the power station in June, 2016, resulted in an immediate loss in income to the Council of approximately £750,000 in the current financial year and £1 million annually, thereafter.
- A task force including Officers of the Council and the local MP had been established to consider the future of the site, including future development opportunities.
- An application by Engie for a battery farm to be developed on the site had been unsuccessful
- Decommissioning of the site would continue until March, 2017, when demolition of the stacks etc would commence.
- A number of structures on the site would remain operational, including 2 electricity transformers; pylons; and rail tracks.

Preparing Young People for Employment (Minute 5)

In response to a question about whether the Council could give further support to local schools in identifying potential employment opportunities for young people, the Managing Director reminded Members that this was not a direct responsibility of the Council. However, there was already regular contact with Cannock Job Centre advising of any forthcoming developments in the District which could result in job opportunities, and it should also be possible to liaise with schools careers' officers to provide an idea of what would be likely to happen in terms of growth areas / industries in the District in the next few years. For example the Mill Green Designer Village would bring potential for growth in the retail; customer service; distribution; and construction industries.

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) (Minute 6)

The Deputy Leader and Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader was asked to provide a general update on the WMCA and particularly with regard to funding streams that the Council might be receiving for developing Kingswood Lakeside. The Deputy Leader advised that due to issues of commercial confidentiality, he was not in a position to speak in detail at that time about Kingswood Lakeside; however, Members were advised to watch the press for an upcoming announcement.

With regard to the WMCA itself, the Managing Director advised that he understood the necessary Mayoral Order was proceeding through Parliament, and there were two declared candidates so far: Andy Street (Conservative) and Sion Simon (Labour).

The Midland Metro Alliance was to apply on behalf of the West WMCA for a Transport and Works Act Order to build and operate the Birmingham Eastside extension from Bull Street to Digbeth. Once granted, the order would allow work to start on the extension which would serve the proposed HS2 station at Curzon Street, offering connections to New Street, Moor Street and Snow Hill train stations.

- (d) Community Safety Scrutiny Committee – 25 July, 2016

Police Performance Report (Minute 5)

Members reiterated concerns expressed in the meeting at the apparent increase in most categories of crime across the district.

- (e) Environment Scrutiny Committee – 19 July, 2016

End of Year Performance Report 2015/16 (Minute 4)

In response to questions, the Environment Portfolio Leader advised that the Council's recycling contractor had taken a zero tolerance approach to inappropriate waste in the blue and brown bins, as it was facing a high volume of rejected loads. This was a situation that was reflected across the country with an 84% increase in loads being rejected at recycling facilities.

Food waste was now required to go in green bins, with brown bins reserved for organic garden waste for processing into compost.

Only materials that the recycling facility was capable of sorting could be accepted; all recyclables in the blue bins should be put in loose not in bags. Any blue bins found to contain bagged waste would be tagged and rejected and not emptied until its next collection date provided the recycling was loose and not in bags. Since tagging began, early indications were that the number of rejected loads had started to fall.

The Portfolio Leader also confirmed that there were no plans to alter the cycle of collections over the Winter period and 'living' Christmas trees could be disposed of in the brown bins.

The Portfolio Leader also wished to place on record the Council's thanks to the Fire and Rescue Service for attending and dealing with the waste fire at Oak Tree Farm, Slitting Mill.

(f) Health Scrutiny Committee – 26 July, 2016

Page 32, Minute 54. Work Programme – Defibrillator (part-Minute 3)

Member reiterated concerns in respect of the need for additional defibrillators. The Managing Director said that he would speak to Officers about it.

(g) Housing Scrutiny Committee – 12 July, 2016

Housing Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016-17 (Minute 5)

The Housing Portfolio Leader was asked a detailed question relating to the changing legislation of payments for housing benefits and whether or not the Council had a strategy for dealing with it. Specifically:

- How many single people under the age of 35 were claiming housing benefit and how the changes would affect them when payments were restricted to a room with access to a shared bathroom and kitchen?
- How many houses of multiple occupancy were in the District?
- How many people lived in them altogether?
- Did this leave a gap between those currently housed and the available tenancies for those affected?
- How many individuals aged between 18 and 21 would not receive any housing benefit, and would this have an impact on homelessness in Cannock Chase?

The Housing Portfolio Leader said that he did not have an answer to hand, but he would speak to relevant Officers and an answer would be provided to Members.

(h) Audit & Governance Committee – 28 June, 2016

47. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet, Committees etc.

None received.

48. Motion(s) Received under Rule 6

No Motions had been submitted in accordance with Rule 6.

49. Allocation of Seats to Political Groups to Committees and Other Bodies

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 9.1 to 9.13 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The allocation of seats to the different Political Groups to the Council's Committees and Other Bodies as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be confirmed.
- (B) The revised Schedule of Memberships of Cabinet, Shadow Cabinet, Committees and Other Bodies as set out in Appendix 2 of the same report, be agreed.

50. Redundancy and Restructure Policy

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Human Resources (Item 10.1 – 10.22 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the Redundancy and Restructure Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

51. 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.

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PART 2

52. Part 2 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees and Panels

RESOLVED:

That the Part 2 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 – 25 August, 2016

Capital and Revenue Costs for Development of New Cemetery (Minute 41)

Members were reminded that the matter had already been called-in and discussed.

In response to a question about the term of any arrangement with a third party, the Managing Director advised that an operator with whom the Council had held an informal, non-committal meeting had indicated that typically such arrangements tended to be long term partnerships. The Council as landowner would grant a lease to the operator, who would bring in capital investment as well as managing, maintaining and operating the cemetery and crematoria, if appropriate. Accordingly, the length of such arrangements tended to be long and, typically, might reflect the lifespan of the site, i.e. the available burial space, which for the site in question could be in the region of 70 years.

The Managing Director stressed that no conclusions had been reached at that stage about the details of the arrangements.

The meeting closed at 5:50 p.m.

CHAIRMAN