

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
AT 4.00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 13 JANUARY, 2016
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Freeman, Miss M.A. (Chairman)
Stretton, Mrs. P.Z. (Vice Chairman)

Alcott, G.	Grice, Mrs. D.
Adamson, G.	Grocott, M.R.
Allen, F.W.C.	Hoare, M.
Allt, Mrs. A.	Johnson, J.P.
Bennett, C.	Johnson, T.B.
Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Bowater, J.L.	Lea, C.I.
Burnett, G.	Lovell, A.
Buttery, M.	Mitchell, Mrs. C.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Molineux, G.N.
Christian, Miss J.	Peake, Mrs. C.
Cooper, Miss J.	Pearson, A.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Preece, J.T.
Dean, A.	Snape, P.A.
Dudson, A.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Dudson, Miss M.J.	Whitehouse, Miss S.
Foley, D.	Witton, P.
Gamble, B.	

Minute's Silence

Prior to commencement of the meeting, the Chairman spoke of the sad loss on 10 December of Councillor Chris Anslow following a battle with illness. Councillor Anslow had served in the Cannock West Ward since 2012, and had been a Shadow Cabinet Member and Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The Chairman extended sympathies on behalf of the Council to Councillor Anslow's family and friends and then read out a note from Councillor M. Sutherland, who had submitted apologies. Members were then

asked to stand and join in observing a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Anslow.

68. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors W. Hardman; M. Sutherland; and Mrs. H.M. Sutton.

69. 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.

(The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Members were not required to declare an interest in respect of Item 11., Review of Members' Allowances Scheme.)

70. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18 November, 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed.

71. The Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Chairman's Charity Collection Box

The Chairman advised that the charity collection box was circulating for Members to make a donation and monies raised would be donated to the Chemotherapy Unit at Cannock Hospital.

The Chairman reported that at the meeting held on 18 November, 2015, a total of £34.31 was collected, and she thanked Members for their donations.

72. Question(s) in Accordance with Rule 8

No questions had been submitted in accordance with Rule 8.

73. Part 1 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Panels and Forums

RESOLVED:

That the Part 1 Minutes and Notes 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 – 24 September and 12 November, 2015

The Government's Devolution Agenda – Proposals for a West Midlands Combined Authority (Minute 44)

In response to a request from the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader provided Council with a general update in respect of the WMCA.

- The Leader and the Managing Director regularly attended meetings of the Shadow Board of the WMCA.

- The WMCA only had ‘shadow’ status currently, and would probably not become a legal entity in its own right until the summer.
- A meeting of the non-constituent member district authorities was due to be held in February.
- Other local authorities, who had previously determined to not pursue non-constituent member status, were to be given further opportunities to join in future.
- While the Department for Communities and Local Government was insistent that an elected Mayor was fundamental to the Combined Authority, the requirement would apply only to the principal member authorities’ conurbation.

Proposed Reduction in Rents in Social Housing in England (Minute 46)

The Housing Portfolio Leader commented that the Government’s proposals were being implemented without any consideration for the detrimental effect on local authorities and housing associations who had all produced long term business plans. Locally, it was estimated that a reduction of £6.1 million in Housing Revenue Account resources; an ongoing rent reduction from 2019/20 of £2.5 million per annum; and the removal of £75.8 million of resources from the 30 year HRA Business Plan.

The Portfolio Leader also advised that he was unaware of any responses to lobbying against the proposals from the local MP; the Housing and Planning Minister; the Shadow Housing and Planning Minister; the District Council’s Network; or the Local Government Association.

- (b) Planning Control Committee – 28 October, 11 and 25 November, 2015

Application CH/15/0048 – Mill Green, Eastern Way (Minute 90)

The Leader of the Council advised that, while it was good news that the Secretary of State had decided not to call-in the planning application for the Mill Green Designer Outlet Village, the matter remained subject to the completion of various agreements, and there remained the potential for further judicial review. However, all being well, it was anticipated that there would be a start on site in early 2017, with opening of the first phase targeted for October, 2018.

- (c) Better Jobs and Skills Scrutiny Committee – 8 September, 2015
- (d) Community Safety Scrutiny Committee – 15 September, 2015
- (e) Customers and Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 1 September, 2015
- (f) Environment Scrutiny Committee – 2 September, 2015
- (g) Health Scrutiny Committee – 22 September and 3 November, 2015

Members commented that it was pleasing to note that the Royal Wolverhampton Trust intended to make significant investments at Cannock Hospital.

- (h) Housing Scrutiny Committee – 7 September, 2015
- (i) Audit and Governance Committee – 17 September, 2015

External Audit of the Statement of Accounts 2014-15 (Minute 15)

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Finance confirmed that the Council did not undertake a full annual review of the valuation of property, plant and equipment in accordance with CIPFA guidance, as the cost would be around £60,000 per annum, which did not represent value for money.

In response to Members' comments about Minutes, the Democratic Services Manager advised that he would take steps to ensure greater consistency in presentation. Best practice dictated that meeting Minutes should not be a verbatim record of the meeting, but should represent a summary of the key points of discussion and decisions arising as a result. To this end, while it was acceptable to include references to Offices (Chair; Portfolio Leader etc.), as necessary, individual Members' names should not be included, unless there was a specific reason for doing so, e.g. a tabled (agenda) question, or for clarification purposes.

74. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet, Committees etc.

None.

75. Motion(s) Received under Rule 6

No Motions had been submitted in accordance with Rule 6.

76. Amendments to Memberships of Committees and Other Bodies

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 9.1 – 9.4 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the membership of the Council's Planning Control Committee, as previously agreed, be amended as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the Report.

77. Calendar of Meetings 2016-17

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 10.1 – 10.11 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Calendar of Meetings 2016-17, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the Report, be approved.
- (B) The Managing Director, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, the relevant Chairmen of Committees and / or Leader of the Council, as appropriate, be authorised to amend the Calendar of Meetings, through convening additional meetings, or the postponement or cancellation of meetings, if required.

78. Review of the Members' Allowances Scheme

Consideration was given to the Report of the Monitoring Officer (Item 11.1 – 11.69 of the Official Minutes of the Council). The Leader of the Council moved an amendment which was seconded and carried that:

““The scheme be as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel except that Basic; Special Responsibility; and Civic Allowances be frozen at current levels for the duration of the scheme (2 years).”

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The length of the Members' Allowances Scheme be set at 2 years (1 April, 2016 to 31 March, 2018).
- (B) The Basic, Special Responsibility and Civic Allowances be frozen at current levels for the duration of the Scheme (2 years).
- (C) The Special Responsibility Allowances for the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee and Chairmen of the Policy Development Committees be removed from the Scheme.
- (D) There be no change to the monetary values of the Computer Allowance.
- (E) The Broadband Allowance be re-named 'Communications Allowance'.
- (F) The option for Councillors to be issued with 'thin-client' computer terminals be removed from the Scheme.
- (G) No change be made to the Carers' Allowance.
- (H) Travel and Subsistence Allowances continue to be paid at the same rates as those paid to Officers.
- (I) A new Special Responsibility Allowance be established for the Chairmen of the new Scrutiny Committees, set at an initial figure of £1,853, and frozen at current levels for the duration of the Scheme (2 years).

79. Treasury Management – Mid Year Report 2015/16

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 12.1 – 12.14 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Report, treasury activity and prudential indicators for 2015/16 be noted.
- (B) The changes to the credit methodology whereby viability, financial strength and support ratings will not be considered as key criteria in the choice of creditworthy investment counterparties, be approved.

80. 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(s) 1; 2; and 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972.

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
AT 4.00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 13 JANUARY, 2016
PART 2

81. 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 – 24 September and 12 November, 2015

The meeting closed at 4.55 p.m.

CHAIRMAN