

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
AT 4.00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER, 2015
PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

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

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

Minute's Silence

Prior to commencement of the meeting, the Chairman asked Members to join in observing a minute's silence to pay respects to the victims of recent terrorist attacks in Paris and Beirut and the Russian airliner over the Sinai desert.

Members' Conduct

The Chairman reminded Members to be mindful of their conduct and language in the Council Chamber and during the course of other meetings.

While recognising that it was right and proper that Members had the fullest opportunity to

debate and challenge each other on items on the agenda, the Chairman reminded them that it was also the case that they should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and not use language that was ill advised. The Chairman warned that, in the event of this happening, she would pause the meeting and take advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer on how the matter should be dealt with.

58. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors G. Alcott; Mrs. A. Allt; C. Anslow; Miss J. Christian; and G. Molineux.

59. 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.

60. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 October, 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed.

61. 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. She reported that at the meeting held on 12 October, 2015, a total of £30.83 was collected, and she thanked Members for their donations.

(ii) Presentation to Council by Staffordshire Regimental Association

The Chairman advised that representatives from the Staffordshire Regimental Association were present to donate two silver cups to the care of the Council.

Lieutenant Colonel Bridges came forward and reminded Members that the former Staffordshire Regiments now formed part of the Mercian Regiment. The two cups that were being presented into the Council's care on permanent loan were trophies that had previously been awarded by the North Staffordshire Regiment and South Staffordshire Regiment respectively.

The Chairman thanked the association on behalf of the Council for the presentation of the trophies, and advised that they would be displayed in the cabinets opposite the Ballroom.

(iii) Additional Item

The Chairman advised that she had agreed to receive an additional item for consideration at the meeting. This was a report from the Head of Environmental Health on the Review of the Licensing Policy which would be taken at item 9 on the agenda.

62. Question(s) in Accordance with Rule 8

No questions had been submitted in accordance with Rule 8.

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

RESOLVED:

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

- (a) Planning Control Committee – 26 August; 16 September; and 7 October, 2015

CH/15/0241, Skip Storage, Dunford A & Son, Brindley Heath Road, Hednesford, Cannock (Minute 38 – part)

A Member advised that the previously highlighted issues remained a problem and he requested that enforcement action be taken.

64. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet, Committees etc.

The Leader advised that Cabinet at its meeting on 12 November, 2015, had agreed a recommendation to Council. Although the Minutes of the meeting had been circulated to Members, none had them with them. Therefore, the Leader requested, through the Chair, that the matter be deferred until later on the agenda while copies were made and circulated to the Members present.

The Chairman agreed to the Leader's request and moved on to Item 8 on the agenda.

65. Motion(s) Received under Rule 6

Consideration was given to the following Motion submitted under Rule 6 by Councillor J. Preece, which was seconded and debated:

This Council notes:

- In July 2015 the government announced its trade union bill - a wide-ranging set of proposals which will undermine the basic right to strike and make it harder for workers to organise effectively in trade unions.
- The proposals include ending the ban on employers bringing in agency workers to cover for permanent staff during industrial action - which fundamentally undermines the right to strike.
- The proposals will bring in new restrictions on pickets and protests during strikes. Unions will have to give the details of a lead picketer on every picket line to the police and employers. The union will be required to

submit a campaign plan to the police and employers two weeks in advance - setting out what they intend to do, whether they will use a loudspeaker or carry a banner and even what strikers intend to put on social media, such as Facebook or Twitter.

- The government have also proposed new thresholds for turnout in strike ballots, plus additional thresholds for those working in "important public services".
- The government want to grant ministers the power to unilaterally cut so-called "facilities time" in the public sector. This is paid time-off mutually agreed between employers and unions for union reps to represent their members and negotiate with their employer.
- The government also proposes to prohibit public sector employers assisting unions to collect their membership subscriptions through payrolls - even though this is used for a variety of other staff benefits such as cycle-to-work schemes and childcare vouchers.

Council further notes:

- The human rights organisations Liberty, Amnesty International and the British Institute of Human Rights have said that the government's proposals "would hamper people's basic rights to protest and shift even more power from the employee to the employer".
- The government refuses to allow trade unions to ballot their members electronically, which could help increase engagement.
- Trade unions take industrial action for a wide range of reasons including defending wages and pensions, conditions at work and safety.
- Strikes in the UK are at historically low levels.

Council believes:

- No worker ever wants to go on strike - but it is a crucial last resort for workers when their employer refuses to listen to their views, negotiate with them or compromise
- The right to strike and protest are fundamental rights which should be valued and respected in a free and democratic society.
- Without the right to strike, workers will be unable to defend their jobs or pay, stand up for decent services and achieve fairness and safety at work.
- The government's proposals will undermine constructive employment relations in Cannock Chase District Council. We believe harmonious industrial relations are achieved by meaningful engagement with trade unions and their members.
- That, in the spirit of localism, councils should be free to build positive industrial relations that work for their communities without central government interference.

Council resolves:

- To support the TUC's campaign to protect the right to strike.
- To write to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills stating the council's opposition to the government's proposals on trade unions.
- To write to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government stating the opposition to the interference of central government in local industrial relations as it is against the spirit of localism.
- Write to our MP, Amanda Milling, informing her of our position and encouraging her to oppose the trade union bill.
- Continue to value the importance of meaningful workforce engagement and representation through trade unions in Cannock Chase District Council.
- In the event that the government's proposals become law, in so far as is lawful for the council as an employer:
 - to continue to allow recognised trade unions to use subscriptions through payroll, or otherwise support trade unions' efforts to move members onto direct debit subscriptions, through allowing access to workers and as much notice as possible of any changed arrangements.
 - to maintain current arrangements on "facility time" for trade union reps to represent their members.
 - to commit not to use agency workers to break strikes.

RESOLVED:

That Council will:

- (A) Support the TUC's campaign to protect the right to strike.
- (B) Write to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills stating the council's opposition to the government's proposals on trade unions.
- (C) Write to the local MP, Amanda Milling, informing her of our position and encouraging her to oppose the trade union bill.
- (D) Continue to value the importance of meaningful workforce engagement and representation through trade unions in Cannock Chase District Council.
- (E) In the event that the government's proposals become law, in so far as is lawful for the council as an employer:
 - (i) to continue to allow recognised trade unions to use subscriptions through payroll, or otherwise support trade unions' efforts to move members onto direct debit subscriptions, through allowing access to workers and as much notice as possible of any changed arrangements.
 - (ii) to maintain current arrangements on "facility time" for trade union reps to represent their members.

(iii) to commit not to use agency workers to break strikes.

5.10 pm - The Chairman moved a five minute recess.

5.15 pm - The meeting reconvened.

66. Recommendation Referred from Cabinet (Refer to Minute 64)

Consideration was given to the following recommendation to Council considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 12 November, 2015, in respect of:

Waste Collection Service and Treatment of Organic Waste (Minute 57)

“(D) Council at its meeting on 18 November be requested to approve a Supplementary Estimate of £50,000, to be funded from Working Balances, to enable the necessary Communication and Education campaigns to be undertaken for the proposed change in service in the run up to the new contracts commencing in April 2016.”

RESOLVED:

That a Supplementary Estimate of £50,000 be approved, to be funded from Working Balances, to enable the necessary Communication and Education campaigns to be undertaken for the proposed change in service in the run up to the new contracts commencing in April, 2016.

67. Review of Licensing Policy

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environmental Health (Item 9.1 – 9.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The revised Licensing Policy included as Appendix 1 to the report be approved and adopted.
- (B) The Head of Environmental Health be authorised to make any amendments to the Policy required due to changes in legislation or government guidance and minor variations to the Policy in the interests of operational efficiency.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

CHAIRMAN