

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BETTER JOBS AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 13 JULY, 2016 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 1

PRESENT:
Councillors

Sutherland, M. (Vice-Chairman - in the Chair)

Buttery, M.S.	Johnson, T.B.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Martin, Mrs. C.E.
Freeman, Miss M.A.	Peake, Mrs. C.L.
Grice, Mrs. D.	Snape, P.A.
Hoare, M. (substitute for Burnett, G.)	

Also in attendance:-

Councillor G. Alcott (Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader – observer)

Todd, Mrs. D.M. (Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader – observer)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Miss J. Cooper (Chairman), G. Burnett, W.M.A. Hardman and G. Molineux.

Councillor M. Hoare was in attendance as substitute for Councillor G. Burnett.

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

The following declaration was made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Peake, Mrs. C.L.	Members employment involves working on a NEET contract	Personal

3. Minutes

A Member asked for an update on Minute 22. The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager advised that the Rugeley Town Centre walkabout had taken place and the launch date of the Rugeley Town Deal was awaited. The walkabout in Hednesford Town Centre had still to be arranged. He further advised that at the meeting held on 8 March 2016 representatives from the Town Centre Traders Associations had attended. The representative from Cannock Town Centre Traders Association had raised a number of policing issues and these had been echoed by both Hednesford and Rugeley Traders Association representatives. The Committee had requested that a letter be sent to Staffordshire Police and a response had been received from the Police. This was circulated to Members and it was agreed that it would also be sent to all three Traders Associations and circulated to all Members of the Committee.

A Member commented that some of the issues raised by the Traders Association representatives had been raised at the Community Safety Scrutiny Committee. He would ensure that the Community Safety Scrutiny Committee was made aware of these issues.

The Chairman asked for an update in relation to the Mill Green Designer Village development. The Head of Economic Development advised that a resolution to grant planning permission had been secured in November 2015 and on 22 December, 2015 the Secretary of State decided that the application could be determined locally. Work was ongoing with the Applicant to finalise the Section 106 Agreement with the aim of having a final draft available next week. As the site was Cannock Chase Council owned a Section 111 Agreement would be produced with the Section 106 attached and it was anticipated this would be signed off next week. Once signed consent could be issued. There would then be a period of challenge for 6 weeks, following this period there would be no further risk of challenge. He confirmed that there were 9 obligations in the Section 106 Agreement with the critical obligation being the one that sets the nature of the retail offer and to maintain this offer into the future.

The Chairman asked the Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader to confirm whether Rugeley Power Station would be generating electricity as he had seen an article in the Express and Star which gave this impression. The Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader advised that he no knowledge of this and confirmed that the Power Station had closed down. A Working Group had been established to look at all aspects for the future use of the land once the site had been demolished.

The Head of Economic Development added that the aspiration of the Working Group was to retain some form of power generation (gas) on the site. This would be on a smaller footprint of the existing site and would allow for the other part of the site to be redeveloped. Additionally he confirmed that an application for a battery farm to be operated on the site had been received as part of the tender for funding for National Grid.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 April, 2016 be approved as a correct record.

3. End of Year Performance Report 2015-16 – Better Jobs and Skills Priority Delivery Plan

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance (Item 4.1 - 4.17 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Economic Development led Members through the report highlighting the headlines of the performance during 2015-16. With regard to employment land (Item 4.9) he advised that the Kingswood Lakeside site had been very successful with a lot of development taking place. It was encouraging to note that a speculative development was proposed on part of the site. However, there would be a need to look at the availability of employment land within the District as the majority of employment land identified in the Local Plan had now been used.

With regard to the LSP “Lets Grow Programme” he commented that additional funding had been secured via a project with the County Council. In relation to the development of Cannock Town Centre he confirmed there had been a lot of activity and the Area Action Plan would be included in the next PDP.

RESOLVED:

That the performance information relating to the Better Jobs and Skills PDP as detailed at Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

4. Better Jobs and Skills Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2016-17

Consideration was given to the Appendices in relation to the Work Programme, in particular the provisional Work Programme at Appendix 2.

The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager advised that the provisional Work Programme was a suggestion of potential issues for discussion and the decision of what to include would be for the Committee to determine.

There was a view that the Scrutiny Committees should focus on a single issue this year; however, as the Portfolio for Better Jobs and Skills was fairly large this was considered to be inappropriate. The Chairman had been in discussion with Officers and it had been suggested that each meeting should focus on a specific theme. It was suggested that the 7 September meeting focus on town centres with the Traders Associations being invited to attend and the Cannock Town Centre Area Action Plan be considered. The meeting on 8 December would focus on transport issues and the meeting on 12 April would have an education theme.

Members were in agreement with the themed meetings as suggested subject

to the Street Trading Policy being included on the Work Programme for the meeting on 12 April.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme as detailed at Appendix 2 be approved subject to the Street Trading Policy being added to the Work Programme for the meeting on 12 April, 2017.

5. Preparing Young People for Employment

The Chairman welcomed Harriet Allen, the Careers, Raising Participation Age (RPA) and Information, Advice and Guidance Manager (IAG) from Cannock Chase High School to the meeting. She gave a presentation to Members of the Committee which informed them about how the school prepared young people for employment.

The Committee noted that funding for Careers Information, Advice and Guidance had now been issued to schools. Cannock Chase High School had opted to have an in house CEIAG Manager to ensure Careers delivery was consistent and readily available. Ms. Allen confirmed that Ofsted are now looking at Careers as part of their inspection framework.

Her role was to help students with a number of things, namely:

- Options after Year 11
- Part time work, volunteering and work experience
- Visits to employers
- Post 18 applications
- Careers days
- Options at Year 8
- CV writing
- Mock interviews

She outlined her role as follows:

- Strategic planning of age appropriate careers activities throughout the academic year
- Building networks of local employers, colleges, FE providers, HE providers to support our work
- To ensure every year 11 and every year 13 has a careers interview
- Tracking destination data, minimising those students not in Employment, Education or Training

Members noted that Cannock Chase High School had links with a number of local organisations and businesses. These included:-

- Francesco Hair Group
- Walsall College/South Staffordshire College

- Land Rover/Jaguar
- Severn Trent Water
- Asda
- Dunelm
- University of Birmingham
- Staffordshire County Council
- Rolls Royce
- Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce

The Committee were shown slides indicating the Year 11 destinations for the 2015 cohort. The majority of students either went on to college (55%) or CCHS 6th form (35%). The second slide indicated the Year 13 destinations for the 2014/15 cohort. The majority of students went on to attend University (72%).

Members were offered the opportunity to ask questions and a number of issues were raised.

A Member asked what the Council could do to assist Ms Allen in her role. She explained that the Council could provide an indication of the likely growth industries in the District, provide information on how and what employers want from students to make them employable and specify what recruiters required.

A Member sought information on how NEET's were dealt with in the school. Ms. Allen advised that there was a focus from Year 10 and Year 11 on potential NEET's. There were currently 2 students in Year 11 and 3 students in Year 13 who had the potential to become NEET. She undertook targeted work with these students; looking at their aspirations, any barriers and their home life to ensure that a personal package was in place for each student.

A Member made reference to the (Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card. She considered that the cost of this card could be seen as a barrier for potential employees wishing to enter the construction industry. She commented that if funding for this was available it would help considerably.

A Member asked whether the Council had the capacity or ability to identify future employers. The Head of Economic Development commented that capacity within the Economic Development team would be an issue as the team was small. However, the team should be more focussed on physical regeneration and would work with schools and businesses. There was a variety of things that could be done (depending on resources) and he welcomed the opportunity for discussion with the school.

The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager added there was regular contact with the Manager of Cannock Job Centre who was provided with information on any forthcoming developments in the District which could result in job opportunities. He confirmed that he would be willing to liaise with Ms. Allen and CCHS 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 the potential for growth in

the retail, customer service, distribution and construction industries.

A Member highlighted that the lack of public transport was an issue as it stopped people getting to jobs and therefore a lot of job opportunities were lost.

The Planning and Economic Development Services Manager asked whether CCHS provided information to parents regarding the costs of attending University given that a high proportion of their students went on to study at University after finishing school. Ms. Allen confirmed that the school engaged with parents regarding University costs and parents evenings were held to talk about these issues. In addition student finance representatives visited to school to talk to Year 12 and 13 students. She confirmed that students were often influenced by their parents and students were encouraged to make their own decisions regarding their future.

The Chairman thanked Harriet Allen for her presentation which the Committee found extremely useful.

7. West Midlands Combined Authority

The Head of Economic Development advised the Managing Director had provided a briefing note to Members on the latest position. He confirmed that Economic Development was a large part of the WMCA agenda.

The Chairman considered that it was important for regular updates to be provided to Members regarding the WMCA.

A Member sought information regarding potential funding streams that were available via the WMCA. The Head of Economic Development advised that the Managing Director was in a central position within the WMCA. CCDC was a non constituent Member and was therefore not under the remit of a Mayor. Managing Directors of non constituent Members had been asked to lead on two pieces of work and he regularly attended meetings most Fridays. He confirmed that Cannock was likely to receive significant funding to develop a site at Kingswood Lakeside.

CHAIRMAN

(The meeting closed at 5.20pm).