

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Council
Held in the Ballroom, Civic Centre, Cannock
On Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Part 1

Present: Councillors:

Smith, C.D. (Chairman)

Buttery, M.S. (Vice-Chairman)

Adamson, G.	Jones, Mrs. V.
Allen, F.W.C.	Kruskonjic, P.
Arduino, L.	Lyons, N.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.M.	Lyons, Mrs. O. (Leader)
Crabtree, S.K.	McMahon, J.B.
Dunnett, Ms. A.J.	Molineux, G.N.
Fisher, P.A.	Newbury, J.A.A.
Fitzgerald, Mrs. A.A.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Frew, C.L.	Startin, P.D.
Haden, Mrs. P.K.	Sutherland, M.
Hewitt, P.M.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Thompson, Mrs. S.L.
Hughes, R.J.	Wilson, Mrs. L.J.
Johnson, T.B.	Witton, P.T.
Jones, B.	Woodhead, P.E.
Jones, P.G.C.	

52. Apologies

Apologies were submitted for Councillors A. Beach, A.S. Boucker, Mrs. M.A. Davis, J.P. Johnson, J.T. Kraujalis, M. McCall, A.M. Muckley, and Ms. C.L. Wilkinson.

53. 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.

54. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2021 be approved.

55. Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Former Councillor John Beddows

The Chairman reported that as Members were aware, on Thursday, 9 December, 2021, former Councillor John Beddows passed away aged 86. He had served as a District Councillor from 2004-2012 and during this time held office of Chairman of the Council twice in 2009-10 and 2011-12. He was also a Norton Canes Parish Councillor and former parish Chairman. The Council's thoughts were with former Councillor Beddows' family and friends at this sad and difficult time.

Members were then invited to stand and join the Chairman in a minute's silence to pay their respects. Several Members then spoke to pay tribute to former Councillor Beddows.

The Leader echoed the tributes made, noting that former Councillor Beddows was an incredible gentleman and would be missed.

56. Leader's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Covid-19 Update

The Leader advised that in the latest seven-day period up to 11 December, the case rate for Cannock Chase District was 454.3 per 100,000 population. There was a lag in collecting the data, so the Omicron variant was not yet reflected in the figures. There had been community spread of the new variant and cases detected in Staffordshire. It was therefore important for everyone to take care and heed the additional instructions given.

In terms of the vaccination programme, there had been a big push for people to receive their vaccinations and boosters. By way of example, the vaccination centre at the Roman Way hotel had increased its sessions from 4 / 5 per week to 9 / 10 per week.

From today, anyone aged 18 and over would be eligible to register for a booster as long as it had been at least 3 months since their previous vaccine.

Thanks were again given to the NHS and volunteers involved for making the vaccination and booster programme possible. Anybody with spare time was encouraged to volunteer to help with the rollout of the programme.

(ii) Chase Leisure Centre Swimming Pool

The Leader advised that unfortunately, the swimming pool at Chase leisure centre had to be closed from midday yesterday owing to a national shortage of carbon dioxide. A delivery was however expected at 7pm today, therefore all being well (and the delivery arriving on time) the pool should reopen tomorrow.

Moving forward, the provision of a different filtration system was being looked at to move away from using carbon dioxide in the future.

(iii) Tree Planting Scheme

The Leader advised that a mass tree planting scheme was underway in conjunction with the Forest of Mercia and had been incredibly successful so far. Members, residents, and community and voluntary groups had all taken part. Thanks were given to all involved with the scheme.

Over 3,000 native trees had now been planted at Bradbury Lane, Hednesford, and circa 480 in Norton Canes. Thousands more would be planted in the coming weeks.

(iv) Christmas Wishes

The Leader wished everyone and their families a very merry Christmas and to keep safe, so that all could enjoy a happy and healthy Christmas period and all the best for the new year.

57. Questions Received under Council Procedure Rule 8

None received.

58. Recommendations Referred from Cabinet, Committees etc.

Consideration was given to the following recommendations to Council, made by Cabinet at its meetings held on 14 October and 11 November 2021, and the Audit & Governance Committee at its meeting held on 6 December 2021, in respect of:

(i) Climate Emergency – Consultation and Community Engagement (Cabinet 14/10/21, Minute No. 48)

“That Council be recommended to set up stakeholder panels and undertake wider consultation and community engagement on the costed action plan within the approved £30,000 budget.”

Resolved:

That stakeholder panels be set up and wider consultation and community engagement be undertaken on the costed action plan, within the £30,000 approved budget.

(ii) 2020/21 Infrastructure Funding Statement (Cabinet 11/11/21, Minute No. 56)

“That Council be recommended to adopt and approve for publication on the Council’s website the annual Infrastructure Funding Statement for the financial year 2020/21, as included at Appendix 1 of the report.”

Resolved:

That the Council’s annual Infrastructure Funding Statement for the financial year 2021/22, as included at Appendix 1 of the 11 November 2021 Cabinet report, be adopted, and approved for publication on the Council’s website.

(iii) Appointment of External Auditors (Audit & Governance Committee 06/12/21, Draft Minute No. 13)

“That Council be recommended to approve the opting-in to the national scheme for external auditor appointments from April 2023.”

Resolved:

That the opting-in to the national scheme for external auditor appointments from April 2023 be approved.

59. Motions Received under Council Procedure Rule 6

(i) Consideration was given to the following Motion, submitted in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 6 by Councillor J.A.A. Newbury, Environment and Climate Change Shadow Portfolio Leader:

“This Council notes that:

- The first ever Chase Pride event is due to be held in Hednesford Park on Saturday 3rd September 2022 with additional associated events taking place throughout next year.
- For a number of years, we have supported the annual LGBT History Month every February, including the flying of the Rainbow Flag over the Civic Centre.
- Since 2016, the levels of hate crime experienced by the LGBT+ community in Cannock Chase have more than doubled.

This Council believes that:

- Chase Pride could provide significant benefits for our District, both in terms of the visibility of the LGBT+ community, as well as our local economy.
- Chase Pride could spearhead efforts to challenge stigma, stamp out hatred, educate the community on all things LGBT+ and create a safe place for people to be themselves without fear of prejudice.

This Council resolves to:

- Affirm its support for the first Chase Pride event in 2022.
- Work constructively with the trustees of Chase Pride to ensure the efficient organisation and smooth running of the festival.
- Request that Cabinet considers making a financial contribution to Chase Pride which could potentially take the form of:
 - Waived or reduced hire fees for Hednesford Park.
 - A portion of the proceeds from the planned funfair.
 - A direct grant towards the festival's running costs."

Councillor C.L. Frew moved the following Amendment to the Motion, which was accepted by Cllr. Newbury:

"At the end of the Motion, insert the following wording:

"People will attend this exciting and inclusive event from all over Cannock Chase, and indeed, further afield. This Council would encourage all our parish and town councils to support this celebration and get involved in whatever way they can."

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The Council affirms its support for the first Chase Pride event in 2022.
- (B) The Council would work constructively with the trustees of Chase Pride to ensure the efficient organisation and smooth running of the festival.
- (C) Cabinet should consider making a financial contribution to Chase Pride which could be directly or in kind along the lines suggested.
- (D) Furthermore, the Council would encourage all local Parish and Town Councils to support this celebration and get involved in whatever way they can.

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

None received.

61. Gambling Act 2005 – Review of Statement of Principles

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 10.1 – 10.35).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The revised Gambling Act 2005 Policy Statement 2022-24, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved, adopted, and published.
- (B) The Head of Economic Prosperity 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.

62. Comments and Questions on Part 2 Minutes of Cabinet, Committees, Sub-Committees and Panels under Rule 9

None received.

The meeting closed at 6:53 p.m.

Chairman