

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
AT 4.00 P.M., WEDNESDAY, 22 MAY, 2013

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Todd, R. (Chairman)
Grice, Mrs. D. (Vice Chairman)

Adamson, G.	Gilbert, P.
Alcott, G.	Grocott, M.R.
Allen, F.W.C.	Holder, M.J.
Allt, Mrs. A.	Johnson, J.
Anslow, C.	Jones, R.
Ball, G.D.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Bennett, C.	Lovell, A.
Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Mitchell, Mrs. C.
Bernard, J.D.	Molineux, G.N.
Bottomer, B.	Morgan, C.W.J.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.	Pearson, A.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Snape, P.A.
Dixon, D.I.	Spicer, Mrs. A.
Dudson, A.	Sutton, Mrs. H.
Fisher, P.A.	Todd, Mrs. D.M.
Freeman, Miss M.	Toth, J.
Gamble, B.	

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman made his valedictory speech thanking all those who had supported him during his year as Chairman. He commented that it had been a really interesting and memorable year, containing as it did, the Olympic and Paralympic Games; along with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee; and the worst Winter in living memory. He also expressed concern for the local socio-economic situation, which could be summarised by three H's: Hospital; Hardship; and Homelessness, which was very sad to see. On a more positive note, the Chairman advised that during his term of office, he had raised a total of £3,278.55, which had been donated to Cancer Research and Mencap.

The Chairman mentioned that he had attended a variety of functions with his wife, Diane, as Consort, and had met some great people, many of whom they now considered to be friends. He also extended thanks to the Vice Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Doris Grice, and to Officers of the Council who had supported him during his term of office.

Youth Endeavour Award

The Chairman then advised that the year's Youth Endeavour Award was to be presented to Lacey Stevens, who had been nominated by Mr, Broomhall of Kingsmead Technology College, for her extensive fundraising efforts for Katherine House Hospice. Over the last two years, Lacey had participated in the Hospice's five mile Winter Walk and had raised £700. The Chairman then asked Lacey forward to collect her award.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Davies; Ms. J.L. Jones; J. Rowley; Mrs. Z. Stretton; M. Sutherland; and Mrs. L. Whitehouse.

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

Lovell, A.	Employed by a company that supplies Personal artificial turf pitches to local authorities and others.
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No other Declarations of Interests were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

3. Election of Chairman of the Council

Councillor F.W.C. Allen nominated Councillor Mrs. D. Grice to be the Chairman of the Council, which was seconded.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Mrs. D. Grice be elected Chairman of the Council to hold office for the ensuing Municipal year.

(Councillor Mrs. Grice thereupon declared and signed her acceptance of office and was invested with the badge of office).

Councillor Mrs. Grice, the newly appointed Chairman, thanked Members for electing her to office and reported that her nominated charities for the year would be Newlife Foundation for Disabled Children and Trinity Church Drop-in Centre and Food Distribution.

(Councillor Mrs. Grice in the Chair)

4. Election of Vice Chairman of the Council

Councillor B. Bottomer nominated Councillor A. Pearson to be Vice Chairman of the Council, which was seconded.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor A. Pearson be appointed Vice Chairman of the Council to hold office for the ensuing Municipal year.

(Councillor Pearson thereupon declared and signed his acceptance of office and was invested with the badge of office).

5. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 April, 2013, be approved as a correct record and signed.

6. Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Exchange of Civic Chains of Office

The Chairman advised that, to facilitate the annual exchange of Civic Chains of Office, arrangements had been made for a small ceremony to take place in the Jack Holston Room, for those Members involved.

(ii) Chairman's Charity Collection

The Chairman advised that a charity collection box was circulating for Members to make a donation to support her chosen charities.

7. Form and Composition of the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G. Adamson, notified the Council of the form and composition of the Cabinet, which included two new Members – Councillors Bennett and Lovell – as a result of Councillors Dixon and Toth leaving Cabinet; the first for personal reasons and the second to enable him to concentrate on his responsibilities as a prospective Parliamentary candidate in the next General election.

Cllr. G. Adamson	Leader of the Council
Cllr. M.J. Holder	Deputy Leader of the Council and Crime and Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Cllr. A. Lovell	Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader

Cllr. Mrs. C. Mitchell.	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader
Cllr. G. Alcott	Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader
Cllr. C. Bennett	Environment Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Mrs. M.A. Davis	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Cllr. F.W.C. Allen	Housing Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Mrs. D.M. Todd	Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader

8. Leader of the Opposition

The Chairman called upon the Leader of the largest opposition group to confirm the acceptance of office as the Leader of the Opposition.

Councillor P. Snape confirmed his acceptance of office as Leader of the Opposition.

9. Form and Composition of the Shadow Cabinet

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor P. Snape, notified the Council of the form and composition of the Shadow Cabinet and of the lead Members for each of the Shadow Portfolios.

There would be 8 Members of Shadow Cabinet who would be responsible for speaking on the respective portfolios.

Cllr. P.A. Snape	Leader of the Opposition and Crime and Partnerships Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. J.D. Bernard	Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Corporate Improvement Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Mrs. H. M. Sutton	Culture and Sport Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Mrs. L. Whitehouse	Economic Development and Planning Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. M. Sutherland	Environment Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Mrs. A.F. Bernard	Health and Wellbeing Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. Ms. J.L. Jones	Housing Shadow Portfolio Leader
Cllr. C. Anslow	Town Centre Regeneration Shadow Portfolio Leader

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

Consideration was given to the Report of the Chief Executive (Item 10.1 – 10.4 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the allocation of seats to the different Political Groups to the Council's Committees and Other Bodies as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be confirmed, in order that the appointment of Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Members to Committees and Other Bodies could be considered subsequently on the agenda of the meeting.

11. Appointment of Members, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Other Bodies

A schedule setting out the nominations provided by each of the Political Group Leaders for Members to be appointed to the Council's Committees, Sub Committees and Other Bodies, together with nominations for the appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman was circulated at the meeting.

The position of Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny had received two nominations, which were voted on.

RESOLVED:

That the membership, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Council's Committees, Sub Committees and other Bodies for the 2013-14 Municipal Year, as set out on the schedule circulated, be agreed, with Councillor R. Todd confirmed as the Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

12. Question(s) in Accordance with Rule 8

The following question had been submitted under Rule 8, and was read out by Councillor M.R. Grocott.

Question submitted by Councillor D.N. Davies, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, for the Leader of the Council:

"The Rugeley Town Traders have asked the Cabinet on the 21st March to consider allow parking for two hours for £1.10 on St Joseph's Church car park, Rugeley, this was approved by the Cabinet.

In the light of more shop closures, would the Cabinet now consider making free car parking on all the Council owned car parks from 3.00pm on week days, as car parks use tends to tail off in the late afternoons and this will encourage shoppers to come into our towns when they are least used.

This action would lead to added commercial benefits to the town centres and stimulate trade, in this tough economic climate."

The Leader of the Council provided the following response to the question:

“Can I thank the Councillor for his question.

First of all, I would like to emphasise the commitment this administration has shown in regenerating our town centres. The regeneration of Hednesford town centre is almost complete with the Aldi store on the Rugeley Rd in the final stage of construction. A Town Centre Improvement Fund of £300,000 was set up in the 2012/13 Budget. This has delivered a range of environmental improvements such as replacing street furniture and planting in Cannock town centre; two major building conservation improvements in Anson Street as part of the Rugeley Town Centre Partnership scheme and safety improvements for people using Cannock and Rugeley bus stations. In the most recent Budget, this administration has allocated a further £200,000 for 2013/14 for an additional programme of town centre improvements. Cllr Davies will also see later on today’s agenda a proposal for a further £100,000 investment to be made in Rugeley Town Centre as part of a Joint Investment Programme between this Council and Staffordshire County Council. This in total represents £600,000 additional investment in our town centres in two financial years.

Secondly, in recognition of the pressures facing small businesses and families in the District, this administration has frozen all car parking charges across the District in the 2013/14 Budget. Councillor Davies will also be aware that the District Council and Hednesford Town Council work in partnership to maintain no car parking charges in Hednesford. More recently, we have also revised town centre parking charges in Rugeley Town centre at St Joseph’s car park, in consultation with and at the request of the local traders association. So this administration is already taking many active steps to mitigate car parking prices whilst balancing this issue against other financial pressures that the Council faces now and into the future.

The proposal of introducing free car parking after 3pm has been considered by other Councils and it is not clear whether there are true benefits from the option.

The incentive has been piloted by Councils for some of their car parks with mixed success and I note that Stafford Borough Council is still undecided on this matter.

In particular there are concerns that the proposal could simply change the pattern of shopping, rather than increase footfall, with a resultant loss of car park income and potentially increased Traffic at a peak time.

The Council currently collects over £700,000 from its off street car parks and hence any reduction would require compensating savings to be identified particularly at a time when Government support for local authorities continues to diminish. With further reductions expected from the next funding review in June.

Members will be aware that our budget of 2012-13 recognised the difficult economic context for residents and businesses. It provided for the ongoing suspension of car parking charges in all town centres for the two Saturdays before Christmas; the Budget also established a new Town Centre Investment Fund to improve the attractiveness of our Town Centre environments so they will attract more local shoppers.

I will naturally look into the suggestion of introducing free parking after 3pm each day, as he has suggested. The current hours of payment for parking on our pay and display car parks are 7.30am to 6.30pm Monday to Saturday with parking charges suspended on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

In considering the proposal I will need to consider the potential impact upon footfall in the town centres whilst balancing the issues of set up costs and lost revenue to the Council's budget, which was agreed by Council in February 2013. Therefore, I have requested Council officers to examine the implications in more detail and provide a report to Cabinet on this matter in due course for consideration."

A written copy of the response was given to Councillor Grocott to pass on to Councillor Davies.

13. Representatives on Outside Bodies

Consideration was given to the Report of the Chief Executive (Item 13.1 – 13.4 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

A schedule of outside bodies, together with the nominations received by each of the Political Groups, was circulated at the meeting.

The Chairman reported that although some of the nominations to outside bodies could be approved on block, the majority of the bodies were over-subscribed and required the Council to vote upon the nominations. Those bodies were highlighted within the schedule.

Members agreed to suspend Rule 15 (8) of the Council Procedure Rules for voting purposes, and then determined the appointment of representatives to outside bodies. Following a vote on each of the nominations requiring determination, it was

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Council's representatives on the following Outside Bodies, as set out on the schedule circulated at the meeting, for the forthcoming municipal year should be:

<u>Outside body</u>	<u>Representative(s)</u>	
	<u>Councillor(s)</u>	<u>Other</u>
Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Advisory Partnership (Must be Councillor for Ward within the AONB area)	A Pearson	
Beaudesert Sports Field and Recreation Ground Charity Management Committee (Under terms of Charity Commission's appointment, representative must reside in Gentleshaw and Cannock Wood area)		Mrs. S. Halliday 14 Bradwell Lane, Cannock Wood, WS15 4RW
Cannock Bowling Green Trust	Miss M. Freeman J. Kraujalis Mrs. H. Sutton J. Toth	
Cannock Chase Arts Council	G. Adamson Mrs. D. Grice Mrs. C. Mitchell	
Chase Council for Voluntary Service (Must be Councillors)	Mrs. S. Cartwright Mrs. M. Davis	
Chase Sports Council	G. Ball B. Bottomer Mrs. S. Cartwright P. Fisher Mrs. C. Mitchell Mrs. H. Sutton	
Cannock Conduit Trust (Longest serving Members for Cannock East, Cannock West, Cannock North, Cannock South and the second longest serving Member from the Ward that has the largest number of voters, currently Cannock South)	G. Alcott Mrs. M. Davis J. Kraujalis C.W.J. Morgan Mrs. H. Sutton	
Cannock TUC Advice Centre	G. Adamson G. Ball Miss M. Freeman	
Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee	J. Toth	
Charity for the Provision of a Recreation Ground	A Dudson A Lovell	

Allotments for the Ancient Parish of Rugeley	B. Bottomer	N. Walker 26 The Laurels, Rugeley, Staffs.
Chetwynd Charity	A Dudson (to 2016) C. Bennett (to 2014) A Lovell (to 2016)	Mr. T. Anderson 54, Hagley Road, Rugeley, Staffs.
Community Council of Staffordshire (Councillor or Officer)	B. Gamble	
Etching Hill Village Hall Committee	C. Bennett	
Family Focus	J. Rowley	
Foundation of Clara and Caroline Walhouse	J. Kraujalis	
Hopkins & Sneyd Almshouse Charity (Combined with Hopkins & Sneyd)	M. Grocott	
The John Wood and Walhouse Church of England School Foundation		Mrs. V. Bagguley
Landor Society	A Lovell	Mr. G. Martin 39, West Butts Road, Rugeley, Staffs.
Longdon (Cotton) Almshouses	J. Rowley	Ms. M. Dudson The Woodlands, The Pingle, Rugeley, Staffs.
National Association of Councillors	A Lovell	
Norton Canes Community Centre	M. Holder	
Poplars Landfill Site Liaison Committee	Environment Leader Chair of Environment PDC Holder, M. Morgan, C. Kraujalis, J. Sutherland, M. Bernard, Mrs. A. Gilbert, P.	
Rugeley Physically Handicapped Association	A Dudson	
Rugeley and District Senior Citizens' Committee	B. Bottomer	Mr. G. Martin 39, West Butts Road, Rugeley, Staffs.

Shoal Hill Common Joint Committee (Must be Councillors)	Miss M. Freeman J. Kraujalis	
Slitting Mill Village Hall Committee	A Dudson	
St. Giles Hospice (Whittington) – 'Local Government Friends Group'	Mrs. S. Cartwright	
Staffordshire Playing Fields Association	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader A Pearson	
Staffordshire County Council – Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee – Co-opted Member	Chairman of Health Scrutiny Committee to attend first County meeting if held before appointment made at first meeting of Health Scrutiny Committee	
University of Birmingham	A Lovell	
West Midlands Councils Member Development Steering Group	G. Adamson	
West Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association	Mrs. A. Spicer	

- (B) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Political Group Leaders, be authorised to make additional appointments at any Outside Bodies, as necessary, throughout the Municipal year.
- (C) That, in the event of the Political Group Leaders failing to agree on a nomination(s) to an Outside Body (as referred to in (B) above) the appointment be a matter for determination by the Council.
- (D) That, subject to (B) above, the Chief Executive when appointing representatives to Outside Bodies, be authorised to determine which of the appointments should be classed as an 'approved duty' for the purposes of claiming travelling and subsistence expenses.

14. Joint Investment in Cannock Chase

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Item 14.1 – 14.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The transfer of £3m from Staffordshire County Council into a joint account as part of a programme of joint investment between the two Councils be noted.
- (B) The following additions to the General Fund Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2015/16 be approved:
- £1.5m allocated to the Stadium Development Fund for the development of a community sports and recreation hub.
 - £1m allocated to the construction of a full size artificial turf pitch at Hednesford Park as part of the continuing regeneration of the Hednesford area.
 - £400,000 is allocated to an Economic Development and Physical Asset Reserve for joint determination with Staffordshire County Council on specific projects.
 - £50,000 is invested into the Rugeley Conservation Area in addition to all other funds already committed.
 - £50,000 is invested in a programme of environmental improvements in Rugeley Town Centre.
- (C) The £3m will be used to match fund other sources of funding that may be available for the above projects from national and local bodies.
- (D) The Economic Growth and Governance Forum should be the joint co-ordinating body for this investment programme.

(The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.)

CHAIRMAN