

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET

HELD ON MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY, 2016 AT 4:00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Adamson, G.	Leader of the Council
Alcott, G.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader
Mitchell, Mrs. C.	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader
Dudson, A.	Environment Portfolio Leader
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Allen, F.W.C.	Housing Portfolio Leader

71. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors C. Bennett, Crime and Partnerships Portfolio Leader; A. Lovell, Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader; and Mrs. D. Todd, Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader

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

<u>Member</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
-	-	-

No other Declarations of Interest were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

73. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

Leader of the Council

Former Councillors Keith Bennett and John Desmond – The Leader noted, with sadness, the recent deaths of two former Councillors, which was in addition to the death in December of serving Councillor Chris Anslow.

Culture and Sport

Hednesford Park Facilities / Pavilion Upgrade – The Portfolio Leader advised that the updated amenities in the park were up and running, and works had

commenced on the upgrade and extension of the pavilion.

Play Areas Equipment Replacement – The Portfolio Leader advised that contractors had been appointed to replace damaged play equipment at the former Stadium site and Hayes Way play areas. (This matter would also be considered later on the agenda.)

Bradbury Lane Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) – The Portfolio Leader advised that tenders had been received from contractors for provision of an ATP at Bradbury Lane.

74. Minutes of Cabinet Meeting of 10 December, 2015

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December, 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed.

75. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period February to April, 2016 (Item 5.1 – 5.2 of the Official Minutes of the Council) was considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period February to April, 2016 be noted.

76. Recommendations of Scrutiny Committees

None.

77. Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management (Item 7.1 – 7.22 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Progress made in respect of Staffordshire's response to the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme be noted.
- (B) Participation in the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme be confirmed.
- (C) The Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to:
 - (i) undertake the rehousing of refugees within the Cannock Chase District through one or more of the housing options as set out in paragraph 5.14 of the report;
 - (ii) determine the Council's future participation within the Staffordshire-wide Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme.

Reasons for Decisions

On 7 September 2015, the Prime Minister announced that the UK would expand the existing Syrian Vulnerable Persons (VP) Scheme to resettle 20,000 Syrians

over the course of the current Parliament.

Staffordshire Authorities had worked closely together via the Staffordshire CEO group to respond to the Government's request and as a result had made an offer to the Home Office to accept 50 Syrian refugees in the first tranche of relocation. Cannock Chase Council offered to accept 10 refugees, preferably families as a contribution to the first tranche.

Staffordshire's operational response, co-ordinated at County level, was being led by Janene Cox, Commissioner for Tourism and the Cultural County. County-wide project meetings were now well established and were working in conjunction with the Home Office, West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (WMSMP), District / Borough representatives, and other stakeholders to develop a coherent resettlement plan. Staffordshire would participate in Phase 2 (Phase 1 commenced Autumn/Winter 2015; Phase 2 to follow in 2016) and seek to accept Syrian refugees at some point in 2016.

To progress the resettlement plan a service specification had been produced by SCC for a 'Staffordshire Refugee Integration & Independence Service' utilising Central Government funds.

Details of Central Government funding for the first year were attached as Appendix 3 to the report. It was anticipated that the funding would cover all costs incurred by local authorities and other agencies.

Confirmation of funding for Year two to five was attached as Appendix 4 to the report. This would be allocated on a tariff basis over four years, tapering from £5,000 per person in year two to £1,000 per person in year five. The Government also stated they intended to keep the general level of funding under review. SCC was working with District / Borough representatives and other partners to develop a financial model for the scheme.

In addition, a 'service provision hotspots matrix', had been drawn up and was being used to aid decision-making to where specific refugees will be resettled. A services directory and Syrian VP welcome handbook were also in draft.

Staffordshire's current pledge to the Home Office was 50 refugees. The Home Office had confirmed that Syrian VP family sizes would be between 3 to 6 individuals. Pledges of support received have been confirmed by the 7 participating Staffordshire's Districts and Boroughs and range from 10 refugees (2-3 families) to 6 families (18-36 refugees) .and as a result total pledges add up to 91 (lowest estimate).

Based on a pledge of 50 refugees, each district / borough could expect to resettle between 6-8 refugees (or 1-2 families) in the first tranche. Locating such a small number of refugees in each major town across Staffordshire, did not fit with 'best practice' advice around locating refugees in locality clusters and could be culturally isolating for the VP. It was, therefore, proposed that the first 50 refugees be allocated to 2 or 3 districts or boroughs, and then to allocate any future tranches to the other districts / boroughs. In consultation with the Council's Leader, Cannock Chase agreed to this proposal and although the Council was prepared to participate in the first tranche of refugees to Staffordshire, Cannock Chase was not selected for the first tranche.

78. Prevent Action Plan

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environmental Health

(Item 8.1 – 8.9 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Prevent Action Plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
- (B) Further development of the Action Plan as a result of activity undertaken and in response to emerging issues and guidance at both national and local level be approved.

Reasons for Decisions

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a duty on certain bodies (which includes District Councils) when exercising their functions to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” Statutory guidance has been issued to assist in identifying what this means in practice.

Staffordshire County Council had produced a Staffordshire Prevent Delivery Plan, and the Cannock Chase Action Plan complemented that document by setting out the actions to be delivered locally by this Council.

The Home Office had provided funding of £10,000 for the 2015/16 financial year to support the Council in delivering its Prevent duties. This funding would be paid in respect of claims submitted for expenditure incurred. It was not a lump sum grant.

79. Fees and Charges for the Licensing and Inspection of Mobile Home Sites

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Environmental Health (Item 9.1 – 9.15).

RESOLVED:

That the Policy on the new scheme of fees and charges for the application, amendment and transfer of mobile homes site licences, an annual inspection fee, fees for the deposit of Site Rules and enforcement costs be approved.

Reasons for Decision

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 had been amended to allow local authorities to make reasonable charges for licencing of mobile homes sites. The changes only applied to sites where the provisions of the Mobile Homes Act 1983 applied. There were currently 6 sites in Cannock Chase District ranging from sites with two units to a single site with 100 park homes.

In accordance with other areas where the authority charged for licensing activities, it was considered reasonable to recover the costs of the regulatory activities undertaken. The report recommended that the relevant fees and charges be included in the register of Fees and Charges for 2016/17.

The Policy included the introduction of fees to applicants for a new caravan site licence, the amendment or transfer of existing licence, an annual site licence, and for the depositing site rules with the Council, along with enforcement costs in respect of any offences.

80. Membership of the Dementia Action Alliance

Consideration was given to the Report of the Managing Director (Item 10.1 – 10.5).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The progress across Cannock Chase District on the issue of dementia to date be noted.
- (B) Membership of the Dementia Action Alliance and the further actions associated with membership, especially in relation to developing plans for Cannock be approved.

Reasons for Decisions

Dementia Friendly societies were part of a national initiative which originated from the Prime Minister's Dementia Challenge in 2012. Their development was supported by the Dementia Action Alliance and they aimed to raise awareness of dementia, reduce stigma, and also to try to reduce the loneliness and isolation experienced by both people with dementia and their carers.

There were approximately 1,184 people living with dementia in Cannock Chase and this figure was expected to increase to just over 2000 by 2030.

Significant activity had already taken place across most parts of the District to establish a supporting infrastructure for people with dementia and this now needed to be rolled out to include Cannock.

Cabinet was requested to join the Dementia Action Alliance and to approve officer time to work in partnership with Staffordshire County Council and the voluntary sector to further this agenda.

81. General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2016-17 to 2018-19

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 11.1 – 11.73).

RESOLVED:

That the following be recommended to Council on 16 February, 2016, as part of the formal budget setting process:-

- (A) The level of net spending for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2016-17 be set at £12.383 million; with indicative net spending for 2017-18 and 2018-19 of £11.996 million and £12.771 million respectively.
- (B) The detailed portfolio budgets as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
- (C) The forecast outturn net budget of £12.717 million including a Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay of £0.252 million be approved.
- (D) The use of Government Grants in 2016-17 of £1.443 million with indicative figures of £1.457 million and £1.148 million for 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively.
- (E) The working balances be set at £0.681 million; £1.032 million and £1.010 million respectively.

million for 2016-17 to 2018-19 respectively.

- (F) That a Council Tax of £204.87 be recommended for 2016-17; with indicative increases of 1.95% to the level of Council Tax for 2017-18 and 2018-19.
- (G) The Council's Tax Base be set at 27,148.87.
- (H) The revised Capital Programme, including new schemes, as set out in Appendices 3 and 4 of the report.

Reason for Decisions

The report set out a draft standstill budget for 2016-17 as well as indicative budgets for 2017-18 and 2018-19 and associated issues and also included current indications of the impact this would have on Council Tax. It also set out the updated Capital Programme and the capital resources available to the Authority to finance the Capital Programme.

82. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2015-16 to 2018-19

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management and Head of Finance (Item 12.1 – 12.7).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The estimated availability of Housing Revenue Account capital resources for the period 2016-17 to 2018-19 (as set out in Appendix 1 to the report) be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 16 February, 2016, be recommended to approve the three year Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for the period 2016-17 to 2018-19 (as set out in Appendix 2 to the report).

Reasons for Decisions

The report considered the draft proposed three year HRA Capital Programme for the period 2016-17 to 2018-19, together with the forecast outturn for 2015-16, compiled within the financial framework provided by the revised HRA Business Plan.

Details of the estimated availability of HRA capital resources during the three year period were set out in Appendix 1 to the report, whilst a three year HRA Capital Programme was set out in Appendix 2.

A comparison of estimated resource availability with the proposed HRA capital expenditure programmes was also set out:

	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Net Resources Brought Forward	3,270	2,158	565	655
New Resources	12,202	9,634	9,551	5,578
Total Resources:	15,472	11,792	10,116	6,233
Less:				
Expenditure Programme	(13,314)	(11,227)	(9,461)	(4,973)
Resources carried forward to future years	2,158	565	655	1,260

83. Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2016-17 to 2018-19

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management and Head of Finance (Item 13.1 – 13.9).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The revised position with regard to estimated income and expenditure in respect of the 2015-16 Housing Revenue Account Budget and base Housing Revenue Account budgets for the period 2016-17 to 2018-19 as summarised in Appendix 1 to the report be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting on 16 February, 2016, be recommended to:-
- (i) Determine a minimum level of working balances of £1,546,310 for 2016-17 and indicative working balances of £1,710,770 and £1,767,810 for 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively;
 - (ii) Note the 1% reduction in rents for 2016-17 in accordance with the Government's Social Rent Policy;
 - (iii) Approve the HRA Revenue Budgets for 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 (and note the estimated outturn for 2015-16) as summarised in Appendix 1 of the report.

Reasons for Decisions

The report considered proposed three-year HRA budgets for 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19, which were formulated within the framework provided by the Interim Review of Housing Revenue Account Business Plan considered by Cabinet on 10 December, 2015.

A review of the 2015-16 HRA budget, together with base HRA budgets for the period 2016-17 to 2018-19 was attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The base budgets were formulated in accordance with the assumptions set out in the HRA

Business Plan, with projected levels of income and expenditure as summarised below.

Table 1: HRA Summary Budget 2016-17 to 2018-19			
	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>
Income	(19,838)	(19,718)	(19,520)
Expenditure	15,463	17,108	17,678
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay	4,353	2,446	1,785
Surplus in Year/ Working Balances	(22)	(164)	(57)
Deficit in Year			

In considering the HRA Revenue Account, consideration needed to be given to the HRA Capital Programme and the level of Working Balances. A key consideration of the Capital Programme was the Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO). In accordance with the Interim Business Plan the RCCO represented the net surplus on the Revenue Account after determining the level of Working Balances.

In view of the risks associated with the management of the HRA under self-financing, minimum working balances of 10% of net operating expenditure were assumed throughout the three-year budget period.

The Working Balances position can be summarised as follows :

Table 2 : Working Balances Summary 2015-16 to 2018-19				
	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>	<u>2017-18</u>	<u>2018-19</u>
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Balance B/fwd.	3,626	1,524	1,546	1,711
Minimum Amount required	1,524	1,540	1,711	1,768
Transfer to RCCO in year	(2,102)			
Amount of Surplus to be retained		22	165	57
Balance C/fwd.	1,524	1,546	1,711	1,768

84. Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy 2016-17

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 14.1 – 14.26 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That Council, at its meeting to be held on 16 February, 2016, be recommended to approve:

- (A) The Prudential and Treasury indicators;
- (B) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement;
- (C) The Treasury Management Policy;
- (D) The Annual Investment Strategy for 2016/17.

Reason for Decisions

The Council is required to approve its treasury management and investment strategies to ensure that cash flow is adequately planned and that surplus monies are invested appropriately.

85. Application for Permission to Spend – Re-Provision of Damaged Equipment at the Former Stadium Site and Hayes Way Play Areas

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Commissioning (Item 15.1 – 15.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That permission to spend £36,500 to replace and install damaged play equipment at the two play areas located at the former Stadium Site and Hayes Way be approved.

Reasons for Decision

On 3 October, 2015 and 21 November, 2015 play equipment was damaged beyond repair by two unrelated arson attacks at the former Stadium and Hayes Way play areas.

The type and extent of the damage caused by the attacks was unprecedented, the likes of which had not been seen by the Council previously in any of its 42 play areas across the district.

Quotes were obtained from the two play equipment manufacturers and installers to install and replace the equipment either like for like or similar in design and provisional arrangements made, subject to approval for the permission to spend, to install the equipment before the end of this financial year.

Costs were £17,000 for the Stadium site and £19,500 for Hayes Way and could be met from the Playground Refurbishment Budget contained within the approved Capital Programme.

86. Quarter 2 Performance Review of Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust 2015-16

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Commissioning (Item 16.1 – 16.85 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That Wigan and Leisure Culture Trust's (WLCT) performance in delivering the Culture and Leisure Services for the period 1 July, 2015 to 30 September, 2015 and the year to date be noted.

Reasons for Decision

The performance review was an integral part of the Council's contract monitoring arrangements with WLCT, enabling the Council to review the Trust's

performance and commitments set out in the contract and method statements.

Appendix 1 to the report provided a detailed breakdown of WLCT's performance against performance targets for the second quarter of the financial year, 1 July, 2015 to 30 September, 2015 and year to date.

During the quarter and for the year to date (April, 2015 to September, 2015) there were a number of key highlights:-

- WLCT had met or exceeded performance in 42 (68%) of its targets and not met target in 20 (32%), albeit that 2 (3%) were within the 5% tolerance threshold. The other 18 (29%) were considered red. Performance for the year to date was better with 79% of targets being met or exceeded and only 21% of its targets not being met.
- The Council's culture and leisure facilities and services were being used more this quarter than they were during the same period last year. (223,038 visits compared to 208,553 visits).
- The total number of junior visits to facilities and services was also marginally above the number achieved for the same period last year (+1.5%) (67,769 visits/66,757).
- Leisure Centre Memberships had increased by 6% from quarter 1 to quarter 2 and Concessionary card holders were currently showing a 8% increase above target with 4,158 live card holders.
- Swimming lesson usage at both centres continued to grow with 23,361 attendances this quarter. Swimming lesson usage had increased at Chase by 8% and by 6% at Rugeley when compared to the same quarter last year. Over 1,089 people were enrolled at Chase and 717 at Rugeley. When compared to the first six months of last year usage had increased by 20% at Chase and 50% at Rugeley.
- Golf course performance for the year to date at 16,271 rounds represented the highest performance since the start of the contract and was 4%.above that achieved during the same period last year.
- The theatre continued to perform well with the total number of visits and attendances being above target for the second quarter of the year and for the period to date. Overall the total number of visits this year demonstrated a 13% increase above target. (22,612 visits compared to a target of 19,978). Occupancy levels remain consistently high at 78.6%.
- Over 10,000 personal visits were made to the Museum during the second quarter of this year representing a 3.2% increase against target and a 7% increase on the level achieved during the same quarter last year.
- The Arts have used £2k of funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner to deliver the "Streets Ahead" art project aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour during the school summer holidays.
- Attendances at all activities delivered by the Sports Team remained strong with Back to Netball, No Strings Badminton and the "Chase it" programme continuing to attract high levels of participation. Highlights during the quarter included the total visits by females which had exceeded target by 40% and the number of visits to disabled activity sessions which had exceeded its quarterly target by 756 visits (63%).

- Although there were no contracted investments required during this year, WLCT had committed to bringing forward investment in a new boiler at Chase Leisure Centre from 2017-18 and were looking to potentially provide outdoor gym equipment at Rugeley Leisure.
- There were no default notices issued and the contract was delivered within budget.

However, the aim of the report was also to present a balanced picture of achievements and performance against the targets set, including where performance needed to be improved.

- This quarter there were (20) 32% of targets that had not been met and where improvement was required. 18 (29%) were rated Red and 2 (3%) were rated Amber (within 5% tolerance threshold of the target set).
- In summary, the red indicators related to health and fitness usage, dry side activities and health based activities at both leisure centres, junior visits at Cannock Park Golf Course and the Museum and the total number of visits and school visits at the Museum.
- Results against these measures would continue to be monitored over the coming months and WLCT will develop Performance Graphs for future reports showing trends for those indicators that are red and amber.

Key issues this year included the following:

- WLCT will need to ensure that the culture and leisure facilities and services continue to:-
 - be in line with the Council's Priorities and objectives,
 - be evidence driven and aligned to the needs of the community,
 - contribute to meeting the health needs of the District,
 - influence decision makers and fund holders (LSP, Health and Well Being Boards, CCG's, Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund etc), and
 - demonstrate where and how culture and leisure services can make an impact on a range of outcomes (e.g. Preventative – role of physical activity in health prevention).
- Greater use needed to be made of geographic data and information in order to target and promote culture and leisure facilities to under represented groups (young people, people with disabilities, over 60's etc).

Generally performance achieved to date continued to be good, particularly in respect of attendances to the Council's culture and leisure facilities when compared to the same period last year and for the year to date period.

87. 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 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
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HELD ON MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY, 2016 AT 4:00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK
PART 2

88. Debt Recovery

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Finance (Item 18.1 – 18.18).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The amounts detailed in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report be written off..
- (B) The actions of the Head of Finance in writing of the irrecoverable debts, below £1,000, be noted.

Reasons for Decisions

Council Tax

Appendix 1 listed Council Tax arrears over £1,000 not collected for the reasons stated. There were 36 cases with arrears totalling £69,183.46.

All of the amounts written off would be charged against the provision for bad debts.

Non-Domestic Rates

Appendix 2 listed Non-Domestic arrears over £1,000 not collected for the reasons stated. There were 32 cases with arrears totalling £65,539.90.

Some of the Business Rates debts were being recommended for write-off on the grounds of insolvency of the companies that previously occupied properties. It was not uncommon, in these circumstances for the properties concerned to be re-occupied, fairly quickly, by new companies often with similar names to the insolvent organisation. It often therefore appeared that the company had continued to trade, though this was not the case. Where this situation occurred, the new occupier was an entirely separate legal entity to the previous occupant and could not be held liable for rates due from the insolvent company.

Debts were only submitted for write-off when it was assured that they could not be recovered.

Housing Benefit Overpayments

Appendix 3 listed Housing Benefit Overpayments with arrears over £1,000 not collected for the reasons stated. There were 14 cases with arrears totalling £44,470.12.

The meeting closed at 4.45 p.m.

LEADER