

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

CABINET

HELD ON THURSDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER, 2013 AT 4:00 P.M.

IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Adamson, G.	Leader of the Council
Lovell, A.	Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader
Mitchell, Mrs C.	Culture & Sport Portfolio Leader
Alcott, G.	Economic Development & Planning Portfolio Leader
Bennett, C.	Environment Portfolio Leader
Davis, Mrs M.A.	Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Allen, F.W.C.	Housing Portfolio Leader
Todd, Mrs. D.M.	Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader

49. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M. Holder, Deputy Leader of the Council and Crime & Partnerships Portfolio Leader.

50. 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.

51. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

Leader

Hednesford Rail Signal Box

The Leader advised that £20,000 had been secured from the Pye Green Valley Fund to save the Hednesford Rail Signal Box, and move it to a new location in Hednesford Park.

Corporate Improvement

Civic Centre Office Moves

The Portfolio Leader reported that the first phase of office moves in the Civic Centre were due to be completed by the weekend of 5/6/7 October, with floors four and five being cleared to allow the Partnership Trust to move in. He then further advised that discussions were still ongoing with regards to provision of

additional parking spaces, and that the Police were still scheduled to move into the building in January, 2014.

The Chief Executive thanked those officers and the caretakers who had helped to co-ordinate the recent moves, and advised that a 'welcome day' was planned for 23 October to allow Council staff to meet with the external staff moving into the building.

Culture and Sport

Chase Leisure Centre Official Opening

The Portfolio Leader advised that the official opening of Chase Leisure Centre would be taking place on 28 September, with a day of free taster sessions, and appearances from local swimmer Emma Wilkins, and Olympic Gold medallist Rebecca Adlington.

Museum of Cannock Chase

The Portfolio Leader advised that funding had been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the provision of a public gallery at the Museum of Cannock Chase, as part of a 'Mining Memories' project.

Cannock Stadium Site

The Portfolio Leader advised that the feasibility study for the future development of the former Cannock Stadium site was still ongoing, and further updates would be provided as necessary.

Economic Development Planning

Growing Places Fund

The Portfolio Leader reported the Growing Places fund had approved two further bids in Cannock.

He then further advised that JCB had shown an interest in acquiring a piece of land in the District in the Lakeside area, however this would be at the expense of them moving out of their current site in Rugeley.

Environment

Public Insurance Liabilities

The Portfolio Leader reported that the Council was looking into what were the responsibilities of the Council in respect of street traders/performance who used Council owned land.

Housing

Moss Road, Cannock

The Portfolio Leader reported that the work to upgrade Council houses along Moss Road in Cannock had almost reached completion, with work being completed to a high standard.

Town Centre Regeneration

Beecroft Road Underpass

The Portfolio Leader reported that the project to redevelop the Beecroft Road underpass was well underway, with a project completion date of 04 October.

The Leader then advised that agenda item 17 'Development of the Mill Green Site', had been withdrawn from the agenda, and would be deferred to the 17 October meeting of Cabinet instead.

52. Minutes of Cabinet Meeting of 22 August 2013

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 August, 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed.

53. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period September – November, 2013 (Item 5.1 – 5.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council), was considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period September – November 2013, be noted.

54. Recommendations and References for Determination and Minutes of Policy Development and Other Committees

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the following Policy Development Committees be received for information:

- (i) Environment, 12 March, 2013.
- (ii) Town Centre Regeneration, 5 March, 2013

Recommendation from the Environment Policy Development Committee held on 22 August 2013

Consideration was given to the recommendation received from the Environment Policy Development Committee held on 22 August, 2013, in respect of:

Urban Forestry Strategy 2013-18 (Minute 6)

“That Cabinet be recommended to adopt the Urban Forestry Strategy 2013-18,

as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.”

RESOLVED:

That the Urban Forestry Strategy 2013-18, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Commissioning presented to the Environment PDC held on 22 August 2013, be approved.

55. Update on Partnership Activity

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Policy (Item 7.1 – 7.17 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the update on Partnership activity and allocation of LSP funds be noted.

Reasons for the Decision

This report is the regular quarterly report to update Cabinet on key areas of partnership work following the LSP cycle of meetings in May and July 2013. The report includes an update on the three priority themes for the Partnership (Improved Health, Increased Economic Opportunity and Community Safety), together with detailed information and case studies on specific initiatives.

Cabinet will recall that the LSP has adopted its own governance structure and Terms of Reference, and therefore the quarterly update reports are intended to provide a summary of Partnership work for information. Any particular areas of interest to Cabinet can be reported in more detail in future Partnership update reports, hence the recommendation that Cabinet identify specific areas of interest in respect of Partnership working.

56. Quarter 1 Performance Report 2013-14

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Policy (Item 8.1 – 8.44 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The performance information and case studies relating to Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs), as detailed at Appendices 1 to 8 of the report, be noted.
- (B) The actions and indicators which are rated Red or Amber be noted, and that the remedial action or rescheduled delivery stated to address performance be confirmed.

Reason for the Decisions

Information for performance actions, indicators and case studies 2013/14 is included for relevant items in Appendices 1 to 8. The overall rankings for each Portfolio area are detailed in Section 5 of the report, indicating that 70.6% of targets have been achieved during the first quarter of 2013/14. The recommendations reflect that this performance and any subsequent rescheduling are noted.

57. Housing Services 2012-13 Annual Report

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management (Item 9.1 – 9.30 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The draft 2012-13 Housing Services Annual Report (attached at Appendix 1 to the main report) be agreed for circulation to all the Council's tenants.
- (B) If required, the Head of Housing and Waste Management, following consultation with Housing Portfolio Leader, be authorised to make amendments to the draft 2012-13 Housing Services Annual Report prior to circulation.

Reasons for the Decisions

The Council is required to publish the 2012-13 Annual Housing Report by 1 October, 2013.

The Annual Report must be circulated to all tenants.

58. Social Sector Size Criteria

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management and Head of Finance (Item 10.1 – 10.47 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Social housing tenants with rent arrears are eligible for a transfer or mutual exchange to smaller accommodation provided that:-
 - (i) County Court action has not commenced in respect of their current tenancy and

- (a) the household had a clear rent account prior to 01 April 2013 or
 - (b) had been making the required rent arrears payments in accordance with an agreed payment plan.
 - (ii) A current arrears payment plan is in place.
 - (iii) The transfer or mutual exchange is to a size of property to which the household is eligible under the social sector size criteria.
 - (iv) A direct nomination to the resultant vacant dwelling is received in cases where a housing association tenant is re-housed by the Council.
- (B) Housing applicants are limited to the following offers of accommodation:
- (i) Homeless applicants and social housing tenants with arrears who are eligible for a transfer – one direct offer of accommodation where the applicant has not expressed an interest in all suitable properties within two months of acceptance or registration;
 - (ii) All other housing applicants and transferring tenants – three offers of accommodation;
- and in cases where the above offers have been refused, the applicant loses their priority status for a period of 12 months.
- (C) The proposed amendments detailed in (A) and (B) above are incorporated into the Council's Allocations Policy as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, and are implemented from 07 October 2013.
- (D) Council on 25 September, 2013 be requested to approve a supplementary estimate to increase the 2013-14 Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme budget by £125,374, funded from Housing Revenue Account working balances.
- (E) Subject to Council approval of (D) above, that:-
- (i) Discretionary Housing Payments are made to social housing tenants affected by the social sector size criteria, provided that they have a clear rent account or meet the proposed criteria (as set out in (A) above) and have registered a transfer request for a size of property to which they are eligible under the social sector size criteria.

- (ii) Such payments are made for the period 07 October 2013 until 31 March 2014, unless the household accepts or refuses alternative accommodation, withdraws their transfer request or defaults (where appropriate) on their agreed current arrears payment plan.
 - (iii) The proposed amendments detailed in (i) and (ii) above are incorporated into the Council's Discretionary Housing Payments Policy as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
- (F) Consideration be given to continuing Discretionary Housing Payments to tenants who are affected by the social sector size criteria and are eligible to transfer, for a further period as part of the Council's 2014-15 Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme.
- (G) Where tenants transfer to alternative accommodation and fail to make the necessary payments plan arrears payments in respect of their previous tenancy, action be taken to recover the debt in accordance with the Council's Former Tenants' Rent Recovery Procedure.
- (H) Where tenants affected by the social sector size criteria fail to register a transfer to smaller accommodation, action to recover any arrears continues to be taken in accordance with the Council's current Tenants' Rent Arrears Recovery Procedure.
- (I) The Void Properties (Decent Homes) budget within the 2013-14 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme be increased by £100,000, funded by virement from uncommitted capital resources.
- (J) The Housing Revenue Account Responsive Repairs budget continues to be closely monitored and that any required increase as a result of additional mutual exchanges be considered when the 2013-14 is reviewed as part of the budget process for 2014-15 and future years.
- (K) The 2013-14 "Place" Priority Delivery Plan targets regarding the average re-let time for void dwellings and the percentage of dwellings that are vacant be revised to 30 days and 2% respectively.
- (L) The effectiveness of the above measures be reviewed through a further Cabinet report after a six month operational period.

Reasons for the Decisions

The social sector size criteria was implemented on 1 April, 2013 and is impacting on current rent arrears, transfer and mutual exchange requests and the number of voids.

As a result of this factor, current rent arrears have increased by £22,770 since 01 April 2013. However, whilst households who have a clear rent account are able to be considered for a transfer or mutual exchange to smaller

accommodation, current policy prevents consideration of a household with rent arrears.

A number of households affected by the social sector size criteria are therefore in a "catch 22" situation, in that they cannot now afford their rent payment but cannot (because of their rent arrears) move to smaller accommodation where Housing Benefit would cover all their rent payments.

In order to address this situation, it is proposed that in certain defined circumstances, social housing tenants with arrears should be allowed to move to smaller accommodation through a transfer or mutual exchange and that the Council's Allocations Policy is amended accordingly.

Discretionary Housing Payments enable benefit payments to be 'topped up' in exceptional circumstances. It is proposed that the Council's Discretionary Housing Payments Policy is extended in order that payments made are made to social housing tenants who are affected by the social sector size criteria and have registered for a transfer to smaller accommodation. Such payments would be made with effect from 07 October 2013 until 31 March 2014, unless the household accepts or refuses alternative accommodation, or defaults on their agreed arrears payments plan.

The proposed extension to the Council's Discretionary Housing Payments Policy cannot be accommodated within the existing budget. It is therefore proposed that Council be requested to grant a supplementary estimate of £125,374 funded from the Housing Revenue Account working balances. That would increase the 2013-14 Discretionary Housing Payments Policy to the Government set ceiling of £286,388.

The continuation of any payments in 2014-15 is dependent upon any Discretionary Housing Payment allocation which is made by the Government next year. It is therefore proposed that consideration is given to continuing payments to tenants who are affected by the social sector size criteria and are eligible to transfer for a further period, when the Council's 2014-15 Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme is determined.

In cases where tenants fail to keep to their agreed payment plan, or adopt a 'do nothing approach', action to recover the arrears will be taken in accordance with the Council's Rent Arrears Recovery Procedure.

The proposals to allow tenants with rent arrears to transfer to smaller properties will increase the number of dwellings which become vacant. Many of these require major works to bring them to decent homes standard before re-letting, and the costs cannot be met from the existing budget. It is therefore proposed that the 2013-14 Void Properties (Decent Homes) budget is increased by £100,000, from uncommitted capital resources.

The increase in void properties will also impact on two of the agreed 2013-14 'Place' Priority Development Plan performance indicators, which are now considered to be unrealistic. It is therefore proposed that these are revised.

It is also proposed that the effectiveness of measures set out in this report are reviewed after a six month operational period.

59. Weekday Car Parking After 3:00pm

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Housing and Waste Management and the Head of Planning and Regeneration (Item 11.1 – 11.10 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED

That:

- (A) Subject to consultation with Cannock and Rugeley Traders Associations, through the Town Centre Regeneration Policy Development Committee, a pilot scheme to provide after 3:00pm weekday car parking at a 10 pence nominal charge be introduced on the Avon Road (Cannock) and Forge Road (Rugeley) car parks for the six month period 2 January to 30 June, 2014.
- (B) The Heads of Housing and Waste Management and Planning and Regeneration, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the relevant Portfolio Leaders, be authorised to amend the pilot scheme to take into account comments received from the Cannock and Rugeley Traders Associations.
- (C) A further report be received by Cabinet on the evaluation of the pilot scheme.
- (D) A supplementary estimate of £4,000 is requested from the Council for the loss of car parking income during January to March of the pilot scheme, with the implications for April to June, 2014 to be addressed as part of the budget process for 2014-15.

Reasons for Decisions

A question regarding the introduction of free after 3:00pm weekday car parking was asked at the Council meeting of 22 May, 2013. In response, the Leader of the Council stated that following further examination of the implications, the proposal would be considered by Cabinet.

A total of £89,077 of car park income was generated from the Council's town centre car parks in Cannock and Rugeley after 3:00pm on weekdays during 2012-13. This comprises 12.2% of the £732,254 which was generated.

The approved 2013-14 General Fund budget includes estimated car park income of £740,050. Income has, however, reduced during the first four months of the year, and an estimated £30,000 shortfall is now projected. This shortfall would be further increased by the introduction of free weekday after

3:00pm parking.

A range of car parking initiatives are offered by other councils. Whilst none of the councils contacted offer free car parking after 3:00pm on weekdays only, two councils (Braintree and Cheshire West) offer free or heavily discounted parking after 3:00pm all week.

The impact of this initiative varies. Braintree reported a 44,433 increase in usage, whilst Cheshire West reported no increase in footfall as a result of shoppers delaying their visit until parking is free. No conclusion can therefore be drawn from the experience of other local authorities as it is considered likely that local circumstances account for these wide variations.

It is therefore considered that the impact can only be measured through a specific pilot scheme in Cannock Chase and a 6 month scheme, (between 02 January to 30 June 2014) involving the Avon Road (Cannock) and Forge Road (Rugeley) car parks is proposed. The proposed scheme would provide 'after 3:00pm weekday' car parking, for a 'nominal flat rate charge of 10 pence', to enable the scheme to be fully evaluated (in accordance with the number of tickets issued) prior to a further Cabinet report).

It is also proposed that the pilot scheme is the subject of consultation with the Cannock and Rugeley Traders Associations and authority is sought to enable to the pilot scheme to be amended in response to this.

The proposed pilot scheme would result in an estimated income loss of £8,000 during 2013-14 and 2014-15 in total. A supplementary estimate will be required for 2013-14 with the impact in 2014-15 to be addressed as part of the budget process for 2014-15.

60. Chase Line Rail Service – Revenue Support

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration (Item 12.1 – 12.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) A request from Centro, for Cannock Chase Council to provide a funding contribution as detailed in section 5.5 of the report, to maintain the Chase Line incremental rail services between Birmingham-Walsall-Cannock-Hednesford-Rugeley for Year 4, from December, 2013 – December, 2014, be agreed to.
- (B) The Council's existing Rail Revenue Support and Rail Revenue Reserve Budgets be used to provide financial support for the incremented rail services.
- (C) The Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the

Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader, be authorised to enter into agreements with Centro and Staffordshire County Council for the continued operation of the existing incremental rail services, subject to agreement for contributions being secured from Centro and Staffordshire County Council.

- (D) The Council engage in further discussions with Centro, Staffordshire County Council, the Department for Transport, London Midland, Network Rail, the Office of Rail Regulation, the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP), and the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP), with the aim of achieving the continued operation of existing Chase Line rail services until September, 2015, and if possible their increase, for the remainder of the West Midlands rail franchise until March 2016/June 2017 and beyond, in a future franchise.

Reasons for Decisions

Improving Chase Line rail services is a Council transport priority and it has previously agreed to provide funding to maintain services to Rugeley. The Council's short term priority is to identify a package that would allow retention of existing service levels, for the remainder of the West Midlands franchise to March, 2016 and to secure their inclusion in a future franchise funded by the Department for Transport (DfT). The application of the Council's Rail Revenue Support budget of approximately £9,500 per annum, to support the Chase Line services is both appropriate and value for money and recommended.

In February 2011, the DfT announced it will consider funding new or enhanced rail services from April, 2015, subject to local authorities sponsoring these for an initial three year period and establishing a positive business case. If short term funding for three years can be found to reinstate and maintain the incremental Chase Line services, longer term funding would be picked up by the DfT, in the next franchise after the existing West Midlands franchise ends, subject to affordability being demonstrated through a Benefit Cost Ratio of 1.5. The DfT have now indicated that the franchise is now likely to run for its full period until March 2016, with a possible extension until June 2017. Centro have already started work to develop a business case (from 2012-2015) to satisfy the DfT on their agreement to fund these services on a permanent basis in any renegotiated contract from 2015 or 2016.

The financial business case for restoring the withdrawn services will be enhanced by the Government announcements of capital investment in the Chase Line. This includes the announcement of in Autumn 2011 of the £5.4m linespeed upgrade that will increase the linespeed from 45mph to 75mph, and more significantly, the Government's July 2012 announcement of the £30m Walsall-Rugeley electrification for implementation by December 2017.

The Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) latest figures for 2011/12, show that Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley Town, now generate nearly 600,000 passenger journeys p.a. in total, with 91,000 additional passengers, and

counting Rugeley Trent Valley, nearly 700,000 passenger journeys p.a. in total.

	Footfall 2010/11	Footfall 2011/12	Annual Growth
Cannock	224,584	253,484	12.86%
Hednesford	150,532	178,112	18.32%
Rugeley Town	117,104	151,106	29.03%
Rugeley TV*	76,790	113,816	48.21%

Source: ORR Estimates of station usage, May 2013. The ORR methodology for estimating station footfall changed between 2010/11 and 2011/12.

*Rugeley TV is in Lichfield District but serves Rugeley residents.

61. Update on Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Areas Partnership Scheme

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director (Item 13.1 – 13.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Cabinet recommend to Council an amendment to the Capital Programme to provide for the expenditure of an additional £100,000 on the Rugeley Conservation Areas Partnership Scheme.
- (B) Expenditure on the same Scheme of £100,000 Cannock Chase District Council/Staffordshire County Council (CCDC/SCC) funds rolled forward from the 2012-13 Capital Programme to match £100,000 allocated by English Heritage for 2013-14, together with £50,000 from the Joint Investment in Cannock Chase fund and £50,000 already offered by SCC for the Scheme in Year 3, making a total of £300,000 be approved, subject to a variation in the agreed grant rate as described in part 5 of the report.
- (C) The Head of Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Council's Heritage Champion/Portfolio Leader for Economic Development and Planning and the Portfolio Leader for Town Centre Regeneration, be authorised to approve any future expenditure and payments associated with the Partnership Scheme, subject to securing appropriate funding.

Reasons for Decisions

Cabinet may recall from previous reports that Cannock Chase Council has entered into a partnership agreement with English Heritage to establish a successful 3 year scheme working with owners of properties in the Rugeley Town Centre Conservation Areas to carry out conservation area compliant repairs to historic commercial buildings and so enhance the attractiveness of

the town centre. Match funding of £50,000 in 2011-12 from English Heritage was secured, and in 2012-13 the Scheme was continued with assistance from Staffordshire County Council to enable £100,000 English Heritage funding to be matched.

In Year 2 2012-13, despite continuing interest in the Scheme from several owners, the costs of projects proved beyond these owner's budgets and no grant applications were ultimately received.

The unspent Year 2 CCDC/SCC funds included in the Council's Capital Programme for 2012-13 may be rolled forward to the third and final year 2013-14 to match the new English Heritage offer of £100,000, and added to £50,000 Joint Investment in Cannock Chase funds, and £50,000 already offered by SCC for the Scheme in Year 3 to make an overall potential Scheme fund of £300,000. Interest has already been expressed in grant take-up.

The reason for this report is to seek an amendment to the Capital Programme for 2013-14 and to request Permission to Spend the funds available so that progress can be made in delivering this Scheme.

62. Proposed Land Exchange, Ivy Close, Cannock

(A revised version of this report was circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.)

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration (Item 14.1 – 14.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The objection received to the Council's advertisement regarding its intention to dispose of public open space at Ivy (and which is summarised in section 5 of the report), be noted.
- (B) Having given due consideration to the objection received and referred to in (A) above, the Head of Planning and Regeneration be authorised to agree terms with Staffordshire County Council for an exchange of land to facilitate the provision of an Extra Care facility on the site of Langbourn House, on terms to be agreed in general accordance with section 5 of the report, on the basis that Cabinet is satisfied that the proposal strikes a balance between contributing to the social and environmental wellbeing of the users of the facility and maintaining open space in the locality.

Reasons for Decisions

At its meeting on 31st January, 2013, Cabinet approved a land exchange with Staffordshire County Council subject to planning consent to help facilitate the provision of an Extra Care facility on the Langbourn House site, Longford

Road, Cannock.

Since the January Cabinet meeting the design of the proposed car park serving the Extra Care facility has changed and it is therefore necessary to alter the previously agreed areas of land to be exchanged.

Staffordshire County Council are currently procuring a new build development of 63 Extra Care units for over 55's, a Learning Disabilities Respite Unit, GP Surgery, Pharmacy and Community Hub on the Langbourn House Site and have obtained planning permission for their proposals.

Adjacent to the development site is an area of public open space in the ownership of the Council, comprising a small play area and open space land. Whilst the scheme could be built on the County Council's land alone, a better design solution can be achieved by incorporating part of the open space into the development and entering into a land exchange with the County Council.

The land that the County Council now wishes to transfer to the District Council is shown crosshatched black on the plan attached to the report, and extends to 465 sq metres or thereabouts, whilst the District Council's land required by the County Council as shown hatched black on the plan has now been increased from 805 sq metres to 899 sq metres or thereabouts. The difference in area between the two parcels of land is now 454 sq metres. It is normal practice where there is a difference in areas for there to be an equality of exchange payment, but in this instance, given the fact that the proposed land exchange will assist in providing a better design solution for the Extra Care facility, it is proposed that the Council enter into a land exchange at nil consideration, subject to the County Council entering into a S106 agreement with the District Council to provide acceptable compensation for the loss of the play area.

63. Quarter 1 – Performance Review of Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust 2013-14

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Commissioning (Item 15.1 – 15.64 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust (WLCT) performance in delivering the Culture and Leisure Services for the period 1st April to 30th June 2013 be noted.

Reasons for Decision

This performance review is 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 of the report provides a detailed breakdown of WLCT's performance against performance targets for the first quarter of this financial

year, 1st April, 2013 to 30th June, 2013.

During this quarter there have been a number of key highlights:

- Of a total of 63 performance measures and targets, WLCT have met or exceeded performance in 45 (71%) of its targets and not met target in 18 (29%), albeit that 8 (13%) are within the 5% tolerance threshold. The other 10 (16%) are considered red;
- The Council's culture and leisure facilities and service are being used significantly more this quarter than they were during the same period last year (214,000 visits compared with 147,000 visits);
- Combined Health and Fitness usage at the two leisure centres has increased by over 43% when compared to the same quarter last year (77,000 visits/53,594 visits);
- The total number of junior visits to all culture and leisure services and facilities has increased to over 77,000, representing a 42% increase on the levels achieved during the first quarter last year;
- The new Structured Exercise Programme (SEP) is continuing to develop with 935 visits recorded during the first quarter of this year. This is marginally above the target of 900 visits (4%), and when compared to the same period last year, performance has increased by over 70% (387 visits);
- Leisure Centre Memberships have increased by a further 15% during this quarter, and Concessionary card holders by 10%;
- Combined education usage at the two leisure centres and the Museum of Cannock Chase has increased by 9,556 visits when compared to the same period last year;
- Swimming usage at both centres totalled over 73,000 for this quarter, and equivalent to over 6,500 visits per week;
- Completion of the £693k extension and refurbishment of the Fitness Suite at Rugeley Leisure Centre;
- Development of the Sensory Room at Chase Leisure Centre. The room was formally opened in August 2013;
- Successful delivery of the Festival of Sport event which attracted 12 local primary schools and over 360 children. The event is now to be held annually as part of our Olympic legacy commitment;
- Submission of a funding application in partnership with the Council to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), to develop and modernise the coal mining gallery at the Museum of Cannock Chase;

- There have been no default notices issued, and the contract has been delivered within budget.

However, the aim of the report is also to present a balance picture of achievements and performance against the targets set, including where performance needs to be improved:

- There are 18 (29%) of targets which have not been met and where improvement will be required. 10 (16%) are rated red, and relate to particular elements of usage at Rugeley Leisure Centre, the Museum of Cannock Chase, Prince of Wales Theatre and Cannock Park Golf Course. The remaining 8 (13%) are rated amber (within 5% tolerance threshold of the target set). 4 are related to visits at Chase Leisure Centre and result from the very ambitious targets set for the quarter/year, 3 are in respect of usage at Rugeley Leisure Centre and 1 at the Prince of Wales Theatre. Results against these measures will continue to be monitored over the coming months.

Key issues to be monitored this year include the following:

- The decision by Rugeley Academy (Hagley Park) not to use the swimming pool at Rugeley Leisure Centre for the academic year September, 2013 to August, 2014. This is a significant change from the original contract agreed with WLCT and also has a wider consequential impact upon the provision of swimming for students in Rugeley. WLCT and the Council will continue to work with the Academy and Staffordshire County Council on the level of the future education use of the facility;
- Exploring and securing funding opportunities to support the Community Wellbeing Play Team beyond March, 2014;
- Determining and agreeing the level of financial recompense with WLCT resulting from the delay and impact upon the contract in the opening of the swimming pool at Chase Leisure Centre.

Performance achieved to date is generally good, particularly in respect of attendances at Chase Leisure Centre when compared to the previous year. However, this performance must be viewed in the context that areas of the Centre have been closed and some activities reduced. Consequently, some attendances were abnormally low prior to and during the construction and modernisation project. This will be the first year that Chase Leisure Centre has been fully open since 2010-11.

The meeting closed at 4:45 p.m.

LEADER