

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

CABINET

HELD ON THURSDAY, 23 JUNE, 2011 AT 5.45 P.M.

IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Adamson, G.	Leader of the Council
Toth, J.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Environment Portfolio Leader
Dixon, D.I.	Corporate Improvement Portfolio Leader
Mitchell, Mrs. C.	Culture and Sport Portfolio Leader
Alcott, G.	Economic Development and Planning Portfolio Leader
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Allen, F.W.C.	Housing Portfolio Leader
Todd, Mrs. D.M.	Town Centre Regeneration Portfolio Leader

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of the Chief Executive.

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

No declarations of interest in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests were made.

3. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

Leader of the Council

The Leader reported that he had attended a meeting of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), of which Cannock Chase Council was a full member. The Leader also advised that it had been 4 weeks since the new Administration took over, during which he, personally, had been very busy. It was recognised that the Council was working in tough times and he had given a voluntary instruction to Payrolls to reduce his Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance by 10%.

Culture and Sport

The Portfolio Leader reported that she had recently attended the Chase Leisure Centre for the launch of this year's "Chase It" scheme.

Environment Portfolio

The Portfolio Leader reported that he had recently attended the first meeting of the Cannock Chase AONB Joint Management Committee, at which a number of seasonal activities were discussed, including aerial spraying of bracken on Shoal Hill.

Housing

The Portfolio Leader reported that the Council was working with a new contractor to try and recover lost ground in the programme of installation of showers in Council properties, which had previously fallen behind schedule.

Town Centre Regeneration

The Portfolio Leader advised of a partnership scheme with English Heritage to help businesses make important repairs to historic commercial buildings in Rugeley. The scheme covered three conservation areas in the town – the Rugeley Town Centre, Talbot Street/Lichfield Street and Trent and Mersey Canal conservation areas, and aimed to help preserve and enhance Rugeley's unique character and appearance. The intention was to assist owners and businesses in tackling a selection of historic buildings in most need by focusing on repairs which would secure their long-term future. Funding worth up to £100,000 was available until March 2012 and it was hoped that further funding might be available in the following two years. Grants of 50% may be available under the scheme towards repairs and 65% towards architectural reinstatement. Eligible works would include repairs to roofs, roof features and external walls, replacement of lost or damaged architectural features, historic shop-front repairs or improvements and window repairs to upper floors. However, the scheme could not fund work which had already started, minor repairs and maintenance, substitute materials or conversions.

4. Establishment of a Cabinet Committee

Consideration was given to the Draft Terms of Reference for a Pay Adjustment and Staff Structure Review Cabinet Committee.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) Councillors D.I. Dixon; C. Mitchell; and J. Toth be appointed to The Pay Adjustment and Staff Structure Review Cabinet Committee.
- (B) Councillor J. Toth be appointed as Chairman of the cabinet Committee.
- (C) The first meeting of the Cabinet Committee be held on 8 July, 2011.

5. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 April, 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed.

6. Forward Plan

Consideration was given to the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period June – August, 2011 (Enclosure 5.1 – 5.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period June - August, 2011, be noted.

7. Part 1 Minutes of Policy Development Committees

RESOLVED:

That the Part 1 Minutes of the following Policy Development Committees be received for information:

- (i) Culture and Sport – 25 January, 2011
- (ii) Health and Wellbeing – 24 March, 2011

8. Blue Badge Holder Car Parking Charges

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 7.1 – 7.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That, having considered the contents of the report, Cabinet determined its preference was for Option 2 (Status Quo), i.e. no implementation of car parking charges for blue badge holders, allowing free and unlimited parking in line with the Council's existing policy, provided that a valid blue badge was displayed.

Reason(s) for the Decision

Option 2 presented a standstill position offering no additional income, but substantial savings on initial set up costs.

9. Vulnerable Tenants Grass Cutting and Internal Decoration Scheme

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 8.1 – 8.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The proposed amended "Vulnerable Tenants Grass Cutting and Internal Decoration" Scheme attached as Annex 1 to the report be agreed.
- (B) The number of tenants who receive the grass cutting service be "capped" at 1,300.

Reason(s) for the Decision

A review of the Vulnerable Tenants Grass Cutting and Internal Decoration Scheme identified a number of issues regarding the eligibility criteria. These issues had been addressed in the proposed amended scheme which would increase the number of tenants eligible for the service.

10. Grace Moore Court Sheltered Housing Scheme – Lift Refurbishment

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 9.1 – 9.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) A budget of £21,000 be established within the 2011-2012 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for the refurbishment of the lift at the Grace Moore Court sheltered housing scheme, met through the virement of existing resources.
- (B) Scheme approval and permission to spend be granted for the Grace Moore Court lift refurbishment.

Reason(s) for the Decision

The lift at the Grace Moore Court sheltered housing scheme has been subject to frequent breakdowns and, due to its age, components had proved difficult to source. It was, therefore, suggested that the lift be subject to comprehensive refurbishment and that a budget be established within the 2012 HRA Capital Programme, through the virement of existing resources.

11. Future Partnership Funding Arrangements for Cannock Chase AONB

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 10.1 – 10.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That commitment be given to a four year budget, in support of the Council's continued membership of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership, enabling core grant to be provided from Defra via a Memorandum of Agreement, thereafter to continue to provide annual budget support as identified in the AONB Partnership Agreement.

Reason(s) for the Decision

Cannock Chase Council and other members of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership are being invited to sign a Memorandum of Agreement with Defra to provide some certainty of core funding for the partnership over a four year period. Commitment to funding over three years was already in place, and Members agreed to commit to a further year to provide the required certainty.

12. High Speed Rail Network (HS2)

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 11.1 – 11.8 of the Official Minutes of the Council). The Deputy Leader of the Council and Environment Portfolio Leader proposed an amendment to the recommendations in order to clarify that the Council's support for the proposals was conditional on the upgrade of the Chase Line rail service.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Department for Transport be advised that Cannock Chase Council:
- (i) Gave conditional support to the proposals to construct HS2 (Phase 1) between London and the West Midlands, including the latest route plans detailed in the February 2011 consultation Documents and note the Response in Annex 2 of the report.
 - (ii) Recognised the potential economic and regeneration benefits to the District from the proposal. However, these were entirely dependent on improved rail connectivity between Cannock Chase District and Birmingham through the upgrade of the Chase Line, including increased linespeed, route electrification, reduced journey time, and improved frequency of four trains per hour, on the Chase Line service between Birmingham-Walsall-Cannock-Rugeley.
 - (iii) Wish to be fully involved in future consultations on the proposed HS2 (Phase 2) route extension from the Lichfield area to the north-west/north-east.
- (B) Centro, Staffordshire County Council, Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, Stoke and Staffordshire LEP, Greengauge21, Birmingham City Council, Chiltern Railways and other organisations as appropriate, be informed of this Council's conditional support for HS2.

Reason(s) for the Decision

The High Speed 2 proposal presents an opportunity to provide long term and economic growth to the District through attracting inward investment from the south-east as well as freeing up capacity on the existing rail network to facilitate the introduction of additional and new rail services serving Cannock, Hednesford and Rugeley.

The proposals are welcomed by the District Council, provided they benefit residents, and will result in service improvements to the existing rail network, such as the Chase Line, which provides rail access between the District and Birmingham to provide good connections with HS2.

13. Chase Line Rail Service – Revenue Support

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 12.1 – 12.9 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The Council's existing Rail Revenue Support Budget together with such external funding as may be considered appropriate including developer contributions received

under the terms of planning obligations entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) towards improving or facilitating the operation of transport services, be made available to provide financial support for the incremented rail services.

- (B) The Corporate Director in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Leader be authorised to negotiate and agree terms with any of the stakeholders in the Chase Line with the aim of securing the retention of as many of the existing incremented rail services as possible, and that agreements for contributions be secured from CENTRO and Staffordshire County Council.
- (C) The Council engage in further discussions with Centro, Staffordshire County Council, the Department for Transport, London Midland, Network Rail, the Office of Rail Regulation and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), with the aim of achieving the continued operation of existing Chase Line rail services and if possible their expansion, for the remainder of the West Midlands rail franchise until September 2015 and beyond in future franchise, including supporting funding bids to secure the Chase Line linespeed upgrade.
- (D) The co-operation of Centro would be welcomed in facilitating agreements with London Midland for the existing and proposed continued operation of the incremental Chase Line services, together with their planned work on preparing a business case for the services continued operation for the next three years, and the proposed bid for Regional Growth Funds for the Chase Line linespeed upgrade.

Reason(s) for the Decision

The Council in partnership with Centro and Staffordshire County Council, was being offered the opportunity to secure the retention of as many of the incremented rail services that they can afford, with particular reference to the weekday evening and the Saturday incremented service between Birmingham and Rugeley. The use of S106 funding might represent the only other opportunity to retain some or all of the incremented Chase Line rail services.

It was also recommended that the Council, through its membership of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP, support the submission of a bid by Centro for the 2nd round of the Regional Growth Fund for the Chase Line linespeed upgrade, which could potentially reduce the costs of securing the reinstatement of the withdrawn off-peak service and retention of the sponsored evening service extension to Rugeley, in a future franchise when the existing one expired in September 2015.

14. Annual Performance Report

Consideration was given to the Report of the Chief Executive (Enclosure 13.1 – 13.15 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The 2010/11 annual performance outturn for the Council as detailed at Annexes 1 to 9 of the report be noted and approved.

- (B) In accordance with the Council's Performance Management Framework, the annual outturn report and annexes be provided to Scrutiny Committee on 11 July, 2011 and Council on 17 August, 2011.

Reason(s) for the Decision

The recommendations were made in accordance with the Council's Performance Management Framework in order that the Council was able to understand its performance during 2010/11, and use this information in its future decision making processes.

15. Representatives on Outside Bodies, 2011-12

Consideration was given to the Report of the Chief Executive (Enclosure 14.1 – 14.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The appointment of representatives to outside bodies for 2011-12, as set out in the schedule circulated as an annex to the report, be as detailed below:

<u>Body</u>	<u>Representative</u>
Cannock Park Golf club Committee	Culture & Sport Leader (or nominee)
Cannock Chase AONB Joint Management Committee	Environment Leader
Commission for Architectural and the Built Environment (CABE)	Economic Development and Planning Leader (or nominee)
Heritage Champion appointment to English Heritage	Economic Development and Planning Leader (or nominee)
Housing and Support Partnership Board	Health and Wellbeing Leader (or nominee)
In Staffs	Economic Development and Planning Leader (or nominee)
Joint Staffordshire Parking Board	Environment Leader Chairman of Environment PDC (as named substitute)
Local Government Association (Urban Commission) <i>NB Appointed in own right</i>	Leader of Council (or nominee) + <i>Chief Executive (or nominee)</i>
Local Government Association (Rural Commission) <i>NB Appointed in own right</i>	Deputy Leader of the Council (or nominee) + <i>Head of Regeneration & Planning (or</i>

	<i>nominee)</i>
Local Government Association General Assembly	Leader of the Council (or nominee)
Local Strategic Partnership (aka the Chase Community Partnership)	Leader of the Council Deputy Leader Leader of the Opposition (or nominees)
Midlands Association for Design and the Environment	Economic Development and Planning Leader
Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader (or nominee) For info – 3 yr term commencing 2010
Norton Canes Community Partnership	Economic Development and Planning Leader (or nominee)
Poplars Landfill Site Liaison Committee	Environment Leader (or nominee) +
<i>NB Appointed at Annual Council</i>	<i>(Chairman of the Environment PDC (2 Hawks Green Ward Members (2 Norton Canes Ward Members (2 Cannock South Ward Members (or nominees)</i>
Southern Staffordshire Partnership (AGM) <i>NB Appointed in own right</i>	Leader of Council (or nominee) + Chief Executive (or nominee)
Staffordshire Strategic Partnership <i>NB Appointed in own right</i>	Leader of Council (or nominee) + Chief Executive (or nominee)
Staffordshire Connects (Formerly E-Government Champion)	Corporate Improvement Leader (or nominee)
Staffordshire County Council Pensions Services Joint Scheme (Must be Councillor)	Leader of the Council (or nominee)
Staffordshire Destination Management Partnership	Economic Development and Planning Leader (or Head of Planning & Regeneration as nominee)
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Planning Forum	Economic Development and Planning Leader
Staffordshire Playing Fields Association <i>NB Appointed at Annual Council</i>	Culture and Sport Leader (or nominee) <i>1 Other (Cllr. Ms. J.L. Jones)</i>

Staffordshire and Stoke Waste Management Board	Environment Leader (or nominee)
Chase 3 Management Board	Economic Development and Planning Leader (or nominee) Town Centre Regeneration Leader (or nominee) Corporate Director (or nominee)
West Midlands Association of Leisure Chairpersons	Culture and Sport Leader (or nominee)
West Midlands Councils	Leader of the Council (or named substitute)

- (B) The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make appointments to any additional outside bodies, as necessary, throughout the municipal year that would normally be determined by Cabinet.

Reason(s) for the Decision

Appointments of representatives to outside bodies enable the Council to have greater participation in working with organisations of the Community to inform their decision making processes.

16. Grant Application – Chase Advice Centre

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Financial Management (Enclosure 15.1 – 15.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That the application be supported with a one off grant in 2011-12, in the sum of £10,000, pending a review of Voluntary Sector Grant Aid provision and funding for future years.

Reason(s) for the Decision

The application related to funding of £10,000 in relation to a potential shortfall in funding in the current year, together with provision to enable the service to expand based upon predicted client and inquiry workload. In particular the centre wished to review its premises requirements in light of the increased workload and there may be scope for the Council to assist with this. A one-off under spend was anticipated to exist in relation to the 2010-11 accounts enabling a one off grant for 2011-12 to be contained within existing resources.

17. Toilet Provision: Hednesford Town Centre

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 16.1 – 16.8 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (A) The provision of temporary public toilets in Hednesford town centre be supported pending the completion of Phase 2 of the town Centre Regeneration proposals.
- (B) In supporting the provision of temporary public toilets, Option 1, as outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report was the preferred option.
- (C) In the event that Option 1 not proving to be deliverable in a reasonable period of time, to proceed with Option 2, as outlined in the report.
- (C) The Corporate Director be authorised to secure any necessary approvals and agreements required to implement the preferred option.
- (D) Hednesford Town Council should be approached to establish if they would be willing to consider providing financial or other forms of assistance to the preferred option.

Reason(s) for the Decision

The report presented three options for the temporary provision of toilets in Hednesford town centre. Option 1 had cost and speed advantages. A sum of £10,000 for the current year as well as 2012-13 is required, reflecting the costings identified in paragraph 4.3 of the report, and an allowance for contingencies such as minor repairs and the provision and removal of external signage etc. Option 2 was the lowest of the two 'new' facility options closest to the site of the old toilets. Option 3 was the highest quality and highest cost option, which may have merit if the Council intended to retain a separate public toilet in Hednesford post opening of the new Tesco store.

18. Staff / Members Car Parking Scheme

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 17.1 – 17.7 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

RESOLVED:

- (A) To defer the introduction of the Staff Parking Permit Scheme but implement the Elected Members Parking Permit Scheme from 1st August 2011. (Option 6.3)
- (B) That a supplementary estimate request be submitted to Council in respect of the resultant variation to budget.

Reason(s) for the Decision

Implementation of the scheme in full was deferred pending further consideration.

19. 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 Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

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PART 2

20. Former Tenants' Arrears Recommended for Write-Off

Consideration was given to the Report of the Corporate Director (Enclosure 19.1 – 19.5 of the Official Minutes of the Council)

RESOLVED:

That the former tenant arrears as detailed in Annex 1 to the report be approved for write off.

Reason(s) for the Decision

There was no reasonable prospect of the Council recovering the debts and so writing them off was the best course of action.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

LEADER