

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
DELIVERING CHANGE PANEL
MONDAY, 28 JANUARY, 2008 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors

Allen, F.W.C.	Freeman, M.P.
Ansell, Mrs. P.A.	Holder, M.J.
Beddows, J.	Jones, R.
Carr, I.R.	Mawle, D.L.
Easton, R.	Mitchell, C.
Faulkner, B.J.	Thomas, D.

Officers:	Lloyd-Williams, P.	Director of Governance
	Kean, R.	Head of Financial Management
	Tunncliffe, J.	Senior Committee Officer

1. Delivering Change

The Head of Financial Management outlined the format of the meeting and reported that Cabinet on Thursday 21 February, 2008 would consider the Panel's recommendations as part of the budget setting process.

He stated that there would be two meetings of the Panel. The initial meeting would focus on a prioritisation exercise of the growth and saving issues subject to consultation. The second meeting would be held on Thursday 31 January, 2008 and this would review the feedback from the first meeting and then determine recommendations on the level of Council Tax and consider whether any other options should be proposed to Cabinet for consideration in determining the budget.

Members of the Panel were then provided with information which contained the growth and savings options being considered for 2008-09. The Director of Governance explained that they could either score the options at the meeting, or return the forms prior to the meeting being held on 31 January 2008.

The Director of Governance and Head of Financial Management provided a brief summary in relation to each of the savings and growth options which were required to be scored by Members accordingly.

Members were then asked to rank the options into the following categories:

Growth – Essential; Desirable or not supported.
Savings – Definite Saving; Potential saving or not supported

The Head of Financial Management reported that he would analyse Members responses and provide feedback to the next meeting for Member approval. Members would then be provided with background information on the financial position and the Council tax level at the next meeting on 31 January 2008.

Those present at the meeting on 31 January 2008:

PRESENT: Councillors

Allen, F.W.C.	Holder, M.J.
Beddows, J.	Jones, R.
Carr, I.R.	Mawle, D.L.
Easton, R.	Mitchell, C.
Faulkner, B.J.	Thomas, D.
Freeman, M.P.	

Officers	Lloyd-Williams, P.	Director of Governance
	Kean, R.	Head of Financial Management
	Rowe, W.	Senior Committee Officer

(An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. P.A. Ansell).

2. Delivering Change

The Head of Financial Management explained that Members would be provided with the feedback from the previous meeting where Members had given consideration to the growth and savings options that were subject to budget consultation. Members would also be asked to determine the level of Council Tax to recommend to Cabinet as part of the consultation process. In addition, the Panel would be asked to consider additional options for growth and savings which had not been subject to budget consultation.

Members were then provided with information outlining the feedback on the prioritisation of growth and savings options subject to consultation. The Panel had considered the options submitted by Cabinet for consultation and, although individual preferences did exist, the Panel had concluded that the following options were not supported:

Growth

Appointment of Sustainability Officer
Implementation of Equality and Diversity Action Plan

Savings

Closure of two Bowling Greens – Hednesford and Cannock Park

Members had asked for further information with regard to the savings option to close the bowling greens. The Head of Financial Management explained that there were currently

two bowling greens in both Cannock and Hednesford Parks. However, the savings proposal was to close one bowling green in each of the parks and for one to remain open in each park.

He outlined the usage at Cannock and Hednesford bowling greens during the season April to September and explained that the cost to maintain two bowling greens was £14,000.

Following the further information that had been provided Members concluded that the savings options to close two bowling greens at Hednesford and Cannock Park was still not supported and should remain as a recommendation to Cabinet.

The Panel noted that although some support had existed for the individual growth and savings options listed below, the Panel in total did not support their implementation:

Growth

- Promotion and Education for Recycling and Waste Minimisation
- Provision of in house advice service – Housing Needs
- Provision of streetscene Response Team
- Enhanced Maintenance of Street Furniture
- Improved Planning Application Processing Timescales
- Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour

Savings

- Air Pollution
- Hednesford Public Toilet
- Rationalisation of Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Major
- Reduction in Grants to Voluntary Organisations – Other
- Reduction in Museum Visitors Services

The Panel noted that the following growth and savings options were considered to be essential for implementation:

Growth

- Continuation of xmas lights service

Savings

- Deletion – Press Cutting Collation Service
- Cease Production of State of Cannock Chase
- Remove Subsidy – Catering

- Extend Car Parking Charging – Station Car Parks
- Promotion of Local Economy

The Head of Financial Management then provided Members with a handout which outlined further information regarding the recommended Council Tax levels including

background information and any risk factors which Members needed to consider.

The Panel was requested to determine the level of Council Tax they would recommend to Cabinet as part of the consultation process.

Following a discussion, the Panel considered that a 3.5% increase in the level of Council Tax for 2008-09 should be recommended to Cabinet with an indicative increase of 3.5% for 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively.

The 3.5% increase was based upon the feedback on the prioritisation exercise and included all essential growth and supported growth (ranked 19-9 in the Growth League table - Appendix A) and savings (ranked 19-11 Savings League Table – Appendix B) and hence excluding non supported options.

Members wished to re-consider the Council Tax following consideration of other potential options.

Members were then provided with a further handout which outlined additional growth and savings options not subject to budget consultation. The Panel was advised that the growth option relating to the "Chase It Programme" had been removed as external funding had now been provided.

Members were asked to consider whether any of the additional growth and savings options should be referred to Cabinet for consideration as part of the budget setting process. Following consideration being given to these additional growth and savings options, the Head of Financial Management advised that there was no overall support for any of the growth options but there was clear support for the savings option to cease the Arts Development Service. This option would therefore be referred to Cabinet as a saving.

Members ratified a 3.5% increase in Council Tax as the recommendation of the Panel.

Members were advised that Cabinet on 21 February 2008 would be informed of the comments of the Panel as outlined above.

Appendix A**DELIVERING CHANGE PANEL - GROWTH OPTIONS - LEAGUE TABLE**

Option	3 Year £	Scrutiny Panel Member												TOTAL	Summary			
		12	3	4	4a	6	9	8	1	2	7	10	11		Essential	Desirable	Not Supp.	
Continuation of xmas lights service	24,000	0	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	19	2	1	0
Provide Recycling Facilities – Town	5,000	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	2	1	2	2	1	13	5	3	4	
Tackling fuel poverty – Decent Homes	8,000	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	13	3	7	2	
Staffs and Stoke on Trent 2012	5,000	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	1	0	13	4	5	3	
Business Continuity and Emergency	19,000	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	1	11	2	7	3	
Licensing and Enforcement of Houses	18,000	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	10	3	4	5	
Health & Safety – Cemeteries	21,000	1	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	9	2	5	5	
Tackling Anti – Social Behaviour	27,000	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	8	3	2	7	
Improved Planning Application	31,000	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	2	8	2	2	8	
Enhanced Maintenance of Street	17,000	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	8	1	6	5	
Provision of streetscene Response	59,000	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	0	7	1	5	6	
Provision of in house advice service –	11,000	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	7	2	3	7	
Promotion and Education for	22,000	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	6	1	4	7	
Appointment of Sustainability Officer	28,000	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	1	1	10	
Implementation of Equality and	20,000	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2		2	10	
Total		7	11	4	5	17	7	14	13	19	15	14	11	137	38	59	83	

KEY	
Essential	2
Desirable	1
Not Supported	0

Appendix B

DELIVERING CHANGE PANEL - SAVINGS OPTIONS - LEAGUE TABLE

Summary

SAVING OPTION	3 Year	Scrutiny Panel Member													TOTAL	Summary			
		12	3	4	4a	6	9	8	1	2	7	10	11	Essential 2		Desirable 1	Not Supp. 0	No Pref	
Deletion – Press Cutting Collation	-7,000	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	19	8	3	1		
Cease Production of State of Cannock	-9,000	0	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	19	8	3	1		
Remove Subsidy – Catering	-50,000	0	2	2	0	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	18	8	2	2		
Extend Car Parking Charging – Station	-20,000	2	1	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	17	6	5	1		
Promotion of Local Economy	-21,000	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2		1	1	17	6	5			
Rationalisation of Bus Shelter Provision	-22,000	2	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	1	1	1	15	5	5	2		
Private Sector Housing – Enforcement	-6,000	1	1	0	1	2	1	2	0	2	2	2	1	15	5	5	2		
Rationalisation of Inspections Food	-4,000	2	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	1	2	1	14	6	2	4	1	
Reduction in Partnership Activities	-6,000	0	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	2	14	5	4	3		
Amended Opening Hours – Contact	-1,000	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	2	2	1	13	6	1	5		
Reduce Subsidy - Allotments	-6,000	2	1	0	0	1	2	0	2	0	2	2	1	13	5	3	4		
Removal of Subsidy – Shrub Beds	-15,000	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	13	3	7	3		
Reduce Maintenance – Non pay and	-14,000	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	13	4	5	3		
Reduce Grounds Maintenance Closed	-8,000	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	2	2	1	11	3	5	4		
Home Security Grants	-9,000	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	11	2	7	3		
Reduction in Discretionary Rate Relief	-8,000	2		0	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	1	1	11	4	3	4		
Reduction in Museum Visitors Services	-6,000	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	8	3	2	7		
Reduction in Grants to Voluntary	-3,000	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	2	7	2	3	7		
Rationalisation of Grants to Voluntary	-13,000	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	7	1	5	6		
Hednesford Public Toilet	-14,000	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	7	1	5	6	1	
Air Pollution	-4,000	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	7	2	3	7		
Closure of 2 Bowling Greens –	-28,000	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1	1	4	1	2	8	1	
Total		24	22	20	8	16	21	27	21	30	25	33	26	273					

KEY	
Definite	2
Potential	1
Not Supported	0