

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 JULY, 2012 AT 4.00 P.M.

IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Kraujalis, J. T. (Chairman)
Bernard, J. D. (Vice-Chairman)

Bernard, Mrs. A. F.	Jones, Ms. J. L.
Cartwright, Mrs. S.	Lovell, A.
Davies, D. N.	Morgan, C.W.J.
Freeman, Miss M.	Pearson, A.
Grice, Mrs. D.	Spicer, Mrs. A.
Grocott, M. R.	Sutherland, M.

(The Chairman advised that he had agreed to the order of the agenda being changed in order for Chief Inspector Ratcliffe to leave earlier to allow him to attend another commitment)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. P. Z. Stretton.

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
Kraujalis, J. T.	Member works as a volunteer advisor at Cannock Chase Advice Centre	Personal
Freeman, Miss. M.	Member has been appointed to the Trust Board of the Cannock Chase Advice Centre	Personal
Grocott, M. R.	Wife works at a school in Rugeley	Personal

3. Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February, 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. Update on Cannock Park Issues

Chief Inspector Carl Ratcliffe from Staffordshire Police and the Corporate Director provided updates on Cannock Park Issues.

Chief Inspector Ratcliffe advised that he would cover the main issues that had been raised at a recent meeting of the Cannock Community Forum where concerns had been raised with regard to the unacceptable behaviour of people in Cannock Park and the town centre. A police operation had been put in place to specifically target these areas the day following the meeting of the Forum. A Police Officer working 30 hours per week was now patrolling the park and town centre in addition to the normal police response to any incidents. It was explained that the resource had been made available due to an Officer returning from maternity leave. The issues were reported as being a priority when police internal briefings were held and the Community Safety Partnership also considered it to be a priority, with other partner agencies assisting.

The police were engaging with a group of youths, aged between 16-19, that had been identified as causing problems in the park and town centre to endeavour to address issues. The youths considered that there was a lack of opportunities for them with regard to employment and activities, and had commented that they were bored. One of the youths had expressed an interest in a bricklaying course and another in a tree surgery course and the police were endeavouring to get them on these courses as referrals made by them to colleges could be free of charge. The police had relayed the message to the youths that those committing offences would be robustly dealt with.

The police had met with the Head of Environmental Services to try and address operational issues. Problems had been identified with regard to signage around the bowling green area at the park, notifying that it was for that purpose only and appropriate actions were being taken.

The Corporate Director explained that a key issue was to gain greater clarity with respect to which issues park attendants could deal with and those to be dealt with by the police and appropriate training was being undertaken with the assistance of the Community Safety Partnership.

Concern was raised that those doing wrong were being helped to get on courses. Chief Inspector Ratcliffe reported that Cannock Chase currently had a relatively high number of young people reoffending and the police had a responsibility to reduce this level. Meetings were being held with partner agencies including South Staffs. College and Job Centre Plus, to address issues for everyone in the district.

A Member reported that she had met many times with the police and serious incidents had been happening in the park since March, 2012 and the group identified had been served with an harassment order. She had feared for the welfare of residents, PCSOs and park attendants, but was encouraged that partners were taking actions to address the issues raised.

A Member expressed concern in relation to people drinking alcohol in the town centre, particularly in Church Street and that only one notice was sited near to the Prince of Wales Centre.

It was reported that the park attendants recorded incidents of alcohol being drunk in the park and that two young people had been turned away that had tried to enter with bottles of vodka, PCSOs had also been seen emptying bottles of brandy at the park. Chief Inspector Ratcliffe advised that parents had a responsibility with respect to those underage drinking alcohol, but some parents were turning a blind eye to what was taking place. In response to a query relating to CCTV in the park it was explained that a camera had formerly been sited on the roof of the leisure centre and had primarily covered the car park and a small part of the golf course. Where it was to be relocated was being discussed.

It was considered that the signage for alcohol restriction zones could be made clearer and a review was being carried out by Council Officers.

Chief Inspector Ratcliffe advised that financial assistance had been gained and an option to exclude people from certain areas may be possible. Opportunities to tackle anti social behaviour were continuing to be explored through the Joint Operations Groups (JOGs). It was reported that anti social behaviour last year was down by 20% and was continuing to decrease and that incidents of violence were also down.

The Chairman thanked Chief Inspector Ratcliffe for his attendance.

5. Review of Shared Services

Consideration was given to the Report of the Council / Chair of the Member Working Group (Enclosure 4.1 -4.6) of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Financial Management explained that the purpose of the report was to outline the work and findings of the Working Group which had been set up to review the progress of Shared Services with Stafford Borough Council. He advised that the main savings would be delivered in the current year, 2012-13. A Member raised concern that the potential of sharing other services was not currently being further explored.

The Head of Financial Management advised that the Audit Commission had produced a report on Shared Services which could be presented to the Scrutiny Committee at the appropriate time.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the outcome of the review of Shared Services be noted.
- (B) That six monthly updates on Shared Services including delivery of savings, performance levels and progress on transformation be received.
- (C) That the Audit Commission's report on Shared Services be received in due course.

6. Annual Performance Report 2011/12

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Policy (Enclosure 5.1 -5.14 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Policy and Performance Manager explained that the purpose of the report was to advise Members on the progress of the Council during 2011/12 in respect of the Priority Outcomes as set out in the Corporate Plan 2011-14 and the supporting Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) for 2011/12. Case studies were included as annexes to the report.

The Chairman requested that for ease of reference in future the annex pages be numbered. The Committee considered that all Heads of Service should attend future meetings to answer question raised.

The Corporate Director went through the annexes detailing the actions that had been or would be taken to meet the targets and with respect to the following it was noted that:-

Complete handover of full sized ATP at Cardinal Griffin High School

The full sized ATP at Cardinal Griffin High School had been completed and had been handed over on 1 July, 2012. Schools would have use of the facility until 5 pm and then could be used by others.

Implement the District Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy Action Plan

The draft Strategy and Action Plan was currently being finalised with partners.

Regulate local food businesses to protect Public Health

There had not been a drop in the standard criteria but a slight reduction in compliant premises had occurred due to stricter Food Standards Agency guidance on risk rating being implemented in January, 2011.

With regard to the Priority Outcome: People Active and Healthy Lifestyles case study, it was requested that further information be provided on other users of the SportStar Scheme.

Support the delivery of 55 additional affordable housing units by March 2012

Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)

The key issue for this target not being met was that the Highways Authority had needed to undertake major road reinstatement works in respect of the Elizabeth Road scheme which were not envisaged when the scheme was programmed. As a result the remaining 38 dwellings would be completed in 2012-13.

A Member requested information on where the 5 properties were located that fell within Lichfield District Council but to which Cannock Chase Council could receive nomination rights. Another Member advised that they were near the border of Brereton and Lichfield.

Undertaking 2 Stop and Search exercises with Staffordshire Police to determine correct documentation on the carrying of waste

The delay, as noted in the report, was due to the police involvement with civil disorder in summer 2011.

Deliver the ASB Strategy Improvement Plan as agreed by the CSP

Following the Council's restructure in May 2012 the resources identified in the plan no longer existed. A revised plan was being developed and the Local Strategic Partnership had appointed an Anti Social Behaviour Prevention Officer last year to ensure the ASB Strategy was delivered through the JOGs and ASB Case Conference.

Prosperity – Economic Resilience

The Corporate Director reported that the Hednesford Bus Station/Victoria Street scheme had been achieved and it was envisaged that the Tesco store would open by the end of 2012.

He advised that with respect to Cannock Town Centre, Lambert Smith Hampton were market testing the potential for any development.

With respect to the Tesco development at Rugeley, a bat survey was being carried out on the site in accordance with habitat regulations. It was anticipated that demolition of the industrial buildings would commence in September, 2012 and that construction would commence shortly afterwards, with completion expected towards the end of 2013. Some of the funding provided would be used to link the store and the town centre.

Cabinet had raised concerns with regard to the Local Transport Strategy and it was proposed that the Economic Development & Planning Policy Development Committee would consider the issues as part of their work programme.

Following the relocation of the ATP Factory from Hednesford to Cannock Wood, agreement had been reached for a bus service to be provided to enable workers to access the site. A Member asked if the bus would stop on the Rawnsley Road. The Corporate Director explained that he was unsure, but would check the exact route.

Concern was raised with regard to youth unemployment (18-24 age group) and that the figures would be likely to rise with less people being able to afford to enter into higher education. It was agreed that the issue would be added to the work programme, including a review of the apprenticeship scheme and whether people were gaining employment through that avenue.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the 2011/12 annual performance outturn for the Council as detailed in Annexes 1 to 5 of the report be noted and approved.
- (B) That the actions and indicators which are rated Red or Amber and the associated commentary by the Lead Officer be noted.
- (C) That Heads of Service attend future meetings to answer questions raised.
- (D) Further information be provided on those using the SportStar Scheme.

7. Determination of the Work Programme, 2012-13

Discussion took place on the determination of the Work Programme for 2012-13. The Chairman explained that he intended to email a list of items to Members of the Committee which could be included on the work programme for the next two years. Members were requested to indicate which they considered to be of priority. The Chairman advised that he had met with the Chief Executive with respect to additional meetings being held, although it was appreciated that this would have an impact on resources.

The items listed were:-

- Cannock Library
- Contribution to external and voluntary organisations
- How the district allocated funding to town centres and villages
- Train services to Stafford
- Chase policing review
- Review of Scrutiny functions
- State of roads in Cannock Chase
- Waste collection and recycling
- Review working relationship with Parish Councils
- Air pollution from factories
- Youth Unemployment
- Grounds Maintenance contract
- Energy usage, how costs could be reduced
- Scrutinising the role of Cabinet Portfolio Leaders

8. Determination of the Membership of the Delivering Change Panel

Consideration was given to determination of the membership of the Delivering Change Panel. It was noted that in accordance with the current political balance, the Panel would be made up as follows:-

- 4 – Labour
- 2 – Conservatives
- 1 – Liberal Democrat

RESOLVED:

That the Membership of the Delivering Change Panel be noted and that the Labour and Conservative Group Leaders be contacted accordingly. Councillor D. Davies be appointed to the Panel from the Liberal Democrat Group.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 6.20 pm