

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CANNOCK COMMUNITY FORUM
WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2011 AT 7.00 P.M.
AT CIVIC CENTRE, CANNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors:

Alcott, G. (Chairman)
Kraujalis, J.T. (Vice-Chairman)

Bennett, Mrs. D.J.	Morgan, C.W.J.
Davis, Mrs. M.A.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Green, M.R.	Thomas, D.
Mitchell, C.	

Staffordshire County Councillors:

County Councillor P. Corfield

Cannock Chase District Councillors:

Councillor M. Sutherland
Councillor G. Adamson
Councillor Mrs. A. Bernard

Cannock Chase Council Officers:

Mr. S. Brown, Chief Executive
Mrs. W. Rowe, Senior Committee Officer

Also Present

Representative from the Press
Local Residents (approximately 24)

31. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F.W.C. Allen and D.I. Dixon.

32. Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 24 November 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

33. Questions for Staffordshire Police

Concern was expressed that there was no Police representative present at the meeting. The Chief

Executive advised that he would liaise with the Police regarding this matter. There were no questions raised for Staffordshire Police.

34. Update on Council's current position on Town Centre Street Trading

This question had been requested by Mrs. P. Haywood. The Chief Executive read out the following statement which had been provided by Sean O'Meara, Senior Licensing Officer:

"I have been asked to provide this Forum with an update in respect of the Council's draft street trading policy.

I can inform you that following consideration and subsequent appraisal of comments received from the first consultation period, the document has been revised and was sent out for a second consultation period on Monday 14 March 2011.

The document is currently available for comment on the Council's website and the closing date for comments is Friday 6 May 2011.

Once the consultation period closes, any comments received will be considered accordingly and the street trading policy will be amended where appropriate. It will then be referred to Members for adoption as Council policy if they so agree".

A Member asked whether the consultation was limited to the website or had it been circulated more widely, for example, had it been placed in the Libraries. Additionally, a Member advised that the Street Trading Policy had been considered by the Licensing and Public Protection Committee and the Committee had requested that full consultation take place as website consultation was not considered to be sufficient. The Chief Executive agreed to liaise with Sean O'Meara regarding this matter.

Mrs. Haywood expressed her thanks to Sean O'Meara as the situation regarding street trading around the war memorial had now improved. She explained that she had undertaken research at Staffordshire County Council Archives which had revealed that in 1988 the Council had adopted the provisions of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1982 Act which allowed the Council to control Street Trading. She understood that the street trading policy may require updating but questioned the need for consultation. The Chief Executive explained that he would raise this matter with Sean O'Meara and provide Mrs. Haywood with a response.

Mrs. Haywood expressed her disappointment that Mr. O'Meara was not present at the Forum to respond.

35. Questions submitted by Mr. A. Haywood:

- a) **The Council has decided to re-allocate £305,000 of s106 funding towards the cost of providing an Artificial Turf Pitch at Cardinal Griffin School:**
 - i) **for which projects were these funds originally intended?**
 - ii) **what criteria were used for diverting the funds?**

The Chief Executive read out the following response which had been provided by Mike Edmonds, Head of Culture, Leisure and Major Projects:

- i) **for which projects were these funds originally intended?**

“The Section 106 (S106) agreement referred to initially proposed that the funds be used as “a contribution towards providing a minimum 2 team, changing pavilion and providing a grass playing pitch as part of the Council’s Playing Pitch Strategy”

ii) what criteria were used for diverting the funds?

In determining that the S106 funds referred to should be added to the 2010-11 Capital Programme, consideration was given to a number of factors:-

- the evidence supporting the need for a community ATP facility,
- the financial need for funds to support the delivery of the project,
- the wider benefits to the community of providing such a facility, and
- how the provision of the facility would contribute to the Council’s priorities and objectives.

Facility Need – During 2009 the Council worked closely with Sport England as part of the national Facilities Improvement Service (FIS) and the purpose of this work was to assist the Council in developing a robust needs and evidence base in respect of its current leisure provision so that it could be used to inform the future strategic planning for sport and recreation in the district.

The evidence generated by this work with Sport England and Edinburgh University acknowledged that there are no full sized ATPs within the district and that currently all the residents of Cannock Chase rely on using facilities outside the district, all of which are operating at full capacity.

The study looked at current population figures and future population projections up to 2019 and based on those findings the report identified that the Council would need to provide a minimum of 1 full size ATP now and at least 2 and possibly 3 such facilities in order to meet the future demand. These projections took account of proposed future commitments to provide ATP facilities in neighbouring areas, such as the new ATP in Cheslyn Hay and other schemes proposed in Walsall and Wolverhampton.

98% of Cannock Chase residents live outside a 20 minute walking catchment of any full size ATP (These findings do not include Rugeley ATP as this is only half size pitch). This percentage would reduce significantly to 58% if 2 ATPs were provided in the district, (Cannock/Rugeley)

Financial Need – The successful delivery of this project has always been dependant upon the provision of additional external partner funding and considerable efforts have been made by the Cardinal Griffin Catholic High School and the Council in securing an opportunity to bid for a Football Foundation grant. This application process is subject to a rigid timeframe and in order to provide the School and the Council with the best opportunity of submitting a successful grant application for £250,000 the S106 funds referred to were proposed as an alternative investment option to support this project”.

Mr. Haywood stated that although the £305,000 was earmarked for changing facilities and a grass playing pitch he sought confirmation from the Chief Executive as to where these were to be provided. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Section 106 agreement did not specify a particular location for the provision of these facilities or a time limit for their delivery. He also confirmed that the Council had agreed that these funds be added to the Capital Programme to deliver an ATP at Cardinal Griffin School.

Mr. Haywood considered that the response did not provide him with the answers he required. Mr. Haywood along with the Chairman, Members and residents at the Forum expressed their concern that an appropriate Officer was not present to respond to the further questions that were arising from the response provided. The Chief Executive confirmed that Mike Edmonds was on leave and was therefore unable to attend the Forum. He explained that further information was contained in the response provided by Mike Edmonds which he hadn't read out but it did not appear to answer Mr. Taylor's questions. He agreed that an appropriate Officer should always if possible be present at the meeting and stated that he would raise the concerns with the appropriate Officers.

The Chairman proposed that the questions be deferred and placed on the agenda for the next meeting in June to ensure that an appropriate Officer was present to answer any questions. A resident considered that it would be too late to express their concerns in June as the ATP at Cardinal Griffin School would be confirmed by then.

It was confirmed however, that the Council had already agreed to locate the ATP at Cardinal Griffin School.

A resident asked whether the s106 monies from Asda were intended to provide an ATP at Cannock Stadium. The Chairman confirmed that this was correct; however, the ruling party at the Council at that time had taken a decision to demolish the Stadium site. Asda had agreed to change the location of ATP but there was still an ongoing issue with them regarding this matter.

A Member considered that the Council was accumulating large sums of money through s106 agreements. The money was not being used to benefit the community as it was sitting in the Council's bank for many years.

A resident sought clarification regarding the deadline for the spending s106 monies in relation to the Asda development. The Chief Executive confirmed that Lawyers from both the Council and Asda were in discussions at the moment regarding the future of the s106 money from the Asda development and therefore it was inappropriate to comment. He confirmed however, that Asda were able to claw back their contribution should the Council not spend the money within 5 years. The 5 years had now passed but Asda had agreed, in the past to extend the time limit.

A Member stated that Asda had been open for 7 years now and he was concerned that they could ask for their contribution of £500,000 back. He considered it very sad that the ruling party at the Council had decided to demolish the Stadium. The ATP at Cardinal Griffin was being provided by using money from other sources.

Mr. Haywood was then invited to ask his second question:

(b) I understand that as part of the Asda store planning application there was a commitment from them to fund an Artificial Turf Pitch to the value of £500,000. This was to be located at the Stadium site. What has happened to that funding?

The Chief Executive read out the response provided by Mike Edmonds:

“ Under the terms of the Section 106 agreement relating to the Asda store in Cannock part of the contributions were received by the Council towards “the construction of an All Weather Pitch including associated floodlighting”, fencing and car parking at Cannock Stadium”.

As a result of Council policy decisions, there is no current intention to establish an ATP at the ex

Stadium site.

The Council has been and is still in dialogue with the developer's legal representatives in respect of varying the content and requirements of this agreement".

A number of Members expressed their concern regarding the time it was taking to resolve the long standing dispute with Asda regarding the s106 contribution. Members were disappointed that no progress had been made in resolving the issues and had concern that Asda now had no obligation to legally contribute the money.

The Chief Executive confirmed that there were specific issues that were still ongoing. He commented that Councillors were aware of the risks involved with regard to the £500,000 s106 contribution when they took the decision to demolish the Stadium but at the time Asda had agreed to an extension.

A resident raised concern that Planning permission had been granted for the ATP at Cardinal Griffin School prior to the Football Foundation making a decision on the funding application. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council could only apply for Football Foundation funding if Planning permission had been granted. It was expected that the Council would be made aware in June if the application for funding had been successful.

Following a lengthy debate the Chief Executive advised the Forum that Mr. Haywood's questions would be placed on the agenda for the next meeting and he would ensure that the Director or an appropriate Officer was present to respond to any questions.

36. Forward Agenda for Future Meetings

The Chairman explained that a form was available for any issues to be discussed at future meetings of the Forum. Appropriate representatives would be invited to attend and debate the issues and answer any questions.

Councillor Sutherland congratulated Hednesford Town Traders on their proposals to hold a street party to celebrate the Royal Wedding in April.

37. Date of Future Meetings

The Forum noted that meetings of the Cannock Community Forum had provisionally been arranged as follows and these dates would be subject to Council approval:

- Wednesday 15 June 2011
- Tuesday 20 September 2011
- Tuesday 22 November 2011
- Tuesday 20 March 2012

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.10 pm.