

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Cabinet

Held on Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

Lyons, Mrs. O.	Leader of the Council
Jones, B.	Deputy Leader of the Council and Neighbourhood Safety & Partnerships Portfolio Leader
Jones, Mrs. V.	Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
Sutherland, M.	District Development Portfolio Leader
Johnson, J.P.	Environment and Climate change Portfolio Leader
Fitzgerald, Mrs. A.A.	Housing, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Leader
Hewitt, P.M.	Innovation & High Street Portfolio Leader

Invitee - Councillor T.B. Johnson (for agenda item 6).

69. Apologies

None.

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

No other Declarations of Interest were made in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members' Interests.

71. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

(i) Leader of the Council

The Leader updated in respect of the following:

• **Covid-19 Cases**

As at 30 January, the Staffordshire average case was 1,069 cases per 100,000 population, with Cannock Chase being slightly lower at 971.6 per 100,000. *(Updated figures.)*

The majority of cases were in care settings and education with the return of schools after the Christmas and new year break.

- **Correspondence with the Right Honourable Amanda Milling MP**

A letter from the Leader was sent in the New Year to the local MP, Amanda Milling, to highlight the priorities for local authorities and to outline the need for a collaborative approach toward tackling climate change. A reply had since been received in agreement that confirmed the MP had passed the points raised on to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, the Right Honourable Michael Gove MP.

(ii) **Neighbourhood Safety & Partnerships**

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

Following the recent appointment of Rob Barber as the new Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Services Chief, he had expressed a desire to create closer links between local councillors and their respective fire station personnel. It was pleasing to be able to facilitate a recent visit on Monday 17 January, between the majority of Rugeley Councillors and the Fire & Rescue Team in Rugeley. The Leader and others had reported that it was an excellent visit, with a tour of the station and greater links being forged. Plans were already afoot for the Councillors and Fire & Rescue Service to work together on fire safety and prevention measures within the community.

- **Cannock Chase Pride**

On Friday 28 January a meeting was attended at Cannock Police Station to discuss safety arrangements and planning for the inaugural Cannock Chase Pride event to be held in Hednesford Park on Saturday 3 September. The meeting was attended by several key partners and was extremely productive. All involved were very excited about the event, which was predicted to have more than 8,000 visitors.

- **Police, Fire and Crime Panel**

At the meeting of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel attended on 31 January, the Staffordshire Commissioner outlined some of his plans for addressing concerns around lack of police visibility and call handling times within the contact centre. Under the new police operating model, it was pleasing to report that the uplift of Staffordshire police numbers continued from a low of 1,567 in March 2019, to an anticipated figure of 1,942 by March 2023. This equated to an extra 375 police officers. Furthermore, an additional 15 support staff had been recruited to the contact centre, with more to follow. This was excellent news for the people of Cannock Chase and across Staffordshire as a whole. It would see increased visibility of police officers within our communities and hopefully a better service from the contact centre.

- **Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)**

On Tuesday 1 February, the PSPO Alcohol Free Zone for Cannock Chase went live across five areas in the District, these being:

- (a) Cannock town centre and Cannock park
- (b) Hednesford town centre and Hednesford park
- (c) Rugeley town centre

(d) Fernwood area (Rugeley), and

(e) Ravenhill Park

The PSPO would last for up to three years and allow police officers and PCSOs to request a person to stop drinking alcohol and / or surrender their drink if they were causing, or likely to cause, alcohol related anti-social behaviour or disorder. This was not a total ban on drinking within these areas and the powers were not intended to disrupt peaceful activities.

- **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Strategic Community Safety Forum**

A meeting of this new Forum, set up by the Staffordshire Commissioner, would be taking place on Friday 4 February and attended by the Portfolio Leader. It was intended to bring together political leaders and senior officers with responsibility for community safety, to address issues that affected the whole of Staffordshire. The Forum's introduction was welcomed, as it would help to maximise resources and ensure that the people of Cannock Chase and Staffordshire felt safer, and were safer, within their communities.

(iii) Environment and Climate Change

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Dry Mixed Waste Recycling**

There had been no rejected loads since August, 2021.

- **Draft Costed Climate Change Action Plan**

The Council's consultants had advised that a draft plan should be forthcoming over the next couple of weeks. Work was ongoing on a complex spreadsheet that formed the basis of the data behind the report, and this was contributing to the delay. Weekly meetings continued to be held with the consultants.

(iv) Housing, Heritage & Leisure

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Rugeley Leisure Centre**

Work had been completed on the squash court, where the floor was damaged, and the maintenance team had taken the opportunity to refresh the walls with a new coat of paint and finalising any snagging that needed to be done. The court would be open and ready for use by 10 February.

Additionally, works were continuing with the swimming pool, which we looked forward to seeing open again soon.

- **National Finals of the British Shooting Championships**

The finals would be taking place on Tuesday, 8 and Wednesday, 9 February, with over 100 competitors expected each day to descend on Cannock Chase from all over the country, where the championships would come to a fantastic climax and competitors have the chance to be crowned national champions.

- **'CEMA' in Norton Canes**

The opening of the CEMA would be taking place on Thursday, 3 February, and everyone was welcome to attend the ceremony at 1pm.

The CEMA was awarded £120,000 to improve the play area and CEMA site. The money was allocated from Section 106 funding from the new housing developments in the area. The Council had worked closely with Norton Canes Parish Council, Forest of Mercia (who donated £12,000 for trees and greenery), Planet Art (for the art works), and the wider community to design the play area and other improvements on site.

A short video had been made that showed how the site had developed from a bleak, dull area, into a fabulous community place for everyone to enjoy.

(v) Innovation and High Streets

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Cannock Town Centre Regeneration**

Staffordshire County Council's Deputy Leader, and Cabinet member for Economy and Skills, Councillor Philip White, visited Cannock on 24 January to understand 'first-hand' Cannock Chase Council's plan to regenerate the town centre.

During the visit, Councillor White was also able to see Cannock rail station, for which a feasibility study was being completed by the County Council, to improve a station recognised as wholly inadequate for a town of Cannock's size. Connecting the rail station and the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet West Midlands to the town centre was seen as critical to the success of the whole regeneration scheme.

The County Council would be a key partner in the regeneration of Cannock town centre as it progressed.

Councillor White brought experience of having been involved in other projects across the county, which was invaluable to appreciating what lay ahead for the District Council and how we could be supported by the County Council.

Also on the visit were Councillor Bryan Jones, Deputy Leader of Cannock Chase Council, and County Councillor Paul Snape, councillor for the Cannock Town division and current Chairman of the County Council.

(vi) Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Health in All Policies (HiAP)**

As referred to at the previous Cabinet meeting, a part-time Health Improvement Officer had been appointed to work on 'Health in All Policies'. It was pleasing to report that progress on this work was now being made and a report would be submitted to Cabinet shortly. The report would set out options to assist Members in determining a way forward without undue bureaucracy, to ensure that all policies agreed by the Council considered the impact on, and promotion of health and wellbeing.

Examples of where the District could have an influence included: housing conditions, spatial planning, economic growth, leisure, culture and recreation, green spaces, environmental health and licensing, community safety, and benefits services.

At this stage, research was being done to look at what the Council could learn from authorities nationally that had already implemented HiAP. Establishing a robust and evidence-based approach was likely to increase the chance of successful implementation and long-term adoption.

- **Cannock Chase Can Programme**

As per previous updates, this programme, which consisted of both an interactive mobile app and community engagement activities, was designed to support and encourage individuals to make healthier lifestyle choices, and to improve their personal wellbeing. The programme was being taken forward together with the Council's leisure and culture partner, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL), who had committed to assist with a series of incentives for app users.

The mobile app had now been approved by Apple and Google and was available to download for free from the App Store and Google Play. The app would provide residents with the tools needed to start making healthier lifestyle choices. It was hoped the approach of involving the community in the creation of the app would make it more accessible and meaningful and help people tailor their own wellbeing journeys.

Officers from the Council and IHL would be touring the District throughout February to speak to people and find out more about individuals' wellness worries. The team would be visiting supermarkets, town centres, community venues and schools.

The coming weeks would see the app promoted through a dedicated Facebook page and website, a four-week radio campaign on Cannock Chase radio, banners in community venues, parks and Council vehicles, and plasma screens in GP's surgeries.

In addition to the app, the programme would explore wider engagement projects.

Workshops for the interactive 'Wellbeing Trail' at Wimblebury Mound were underway, and content was being created for each of the wooden sculptures on the site. The residents of Caxton Court would also be involved in this project with the creation of a 'Feel Well' song. This was due to be completed by April, ready for the Easter holidays.

Thanks were given to all involved in the project, in particular the Council's Marketing & Campaigns Officer, Katie McBey, and Lisa Shephard of IHL, both of whom had worked tirelessly to make the project a success.

- **Cannock Minor Injuries Unit (MIU)**

After several letters to the Chief Executive and senior Officers of the Royal Wolverhampton Hospital Trust, regarding the ongoing closure and future plans for the Cannock MIU, a reply had received from Marcus Warnes, Accountable Officer for the Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Briefly, the letter stated that, despite plans to have a partial reopening of the MIU, supported by GP surgery services, ongoing clinical safety and staffing issues arising from the ongoing Covid-19 situation, meant that this was unlikely to occur in the near future. Unfortunately, it was impossible to say with any certainty when this might happen.

(vii) District Development

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Universal Credit Claimant Count**

The latest data showed a continued reduction in claimants again this month to 3.7% of the workforce. This trend was encouraging, with the total number of claimants now 2,320. A proportion of these claimants were in work but claiming Universal Credit due to being a low income.

- **Covid-19 (Omicron Variant) Hospitality and Leisure Grant and Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)**

A new, short-term grant of up to £10,500 was available to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses that were most seriously affected by the Omicron variant of Covid-19.

Businesses would not need to approach the Council for this grant as all those eligible would be identified from Business Rates records and contacted directly. Any businesses wishing to apply after being contacted would need to return the completed application form by 21 February, 2022.

Limited funds remained available under the ARG fund for other businesses that were severely affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

Anybody who believed they met the Government's criteria and had not been contacted by the Revenues and Benefits team during this week should email businessrates@cannockchasedc.gov.uk if they wished to make a further enquiry regarding their eligibility.

The Council was working toward full defrayal of all monies linked to both sources of grant funding by 31 March 2022.

The workload involved in the process for the grants could not be underestimated, and so tributes and thanks were paid to both the Revenues staff and the Economic Development team for making it happen.

- **Local Business Engagement**

In November 2021, the Cannock Chase Chamber of Commerce AGM and networking event was attended along with the Leader of the Council and the Head of Economic Prosperity. The Leader, on behalf of the Council, presented on the theme "building an ambitious future for our district." The presentation was well received, and subsequent conversations with some of the attendees alerted the opportunity that the Council needed to get closer to local businesses so when working on the Local Plan there would be a closer understanding of employment needs for the future, as an example.

A follow-up meeting with Chris Plant (Divisional Director of the Birmingham Chamber Group) took place at the Civic Centre on 27 January, at which he advised he had taken up a new role with Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce as Deputy Managing Director. He was keen to work with the Council on various areas, including growth and skills, and working with the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

To help engage and establish links with local businesses across the District and encourage and support a sustainable economic future, a meeting had been set

up for next week for the Portfolio Leader and the Head of Economic Prosperity to visit the Halsall Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Group, founded in Cannock in 1997 as a family business. The company now operated from a premises on Progress Drive, comprised of 45,000 square feet office space and 120 employees. It worked across a range of sectors, including business, distribution and manufacturing, retail, offices and workspace hospitality, and offered complete engineering solution from start to finish with its skilled designers, engineers and support network. Customers included Sainsburys, Morrisons, Ocado, Gulfstream Jets, DHL, and many others.

72. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2021 be approved.

73. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period February to April 2022 (Item 5.1 – 5.2) was considered:

Resolved

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period February to April 2022 be noted.

74. Recommendations from Scrutiny Committees

Consideration was given to the recommendations referred from the Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee held on 1 December 2021 in respect of the Committee's 'Local Plan Consultation' review (Item 6.1) (*presented by Councillor T.B. Johnson, Chairman of the review working group*).

Resolved:

That Cabinet note the recommendations and determine how best to take them forward.

(Councillor T.B. Johnson left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.)

75. General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2022-2025

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 7.1 – 7.59).

Resolved:

That the following be recommended to Council, at its meeting to be held on 16 February 2022, as part of the formal budget setting process:

- (A) The Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget 2022-23 be set at £13.237 million.
- (B) The indicative General Fund Revenue Budgets be set at £15.173 million for 2023-24 and £15.891 million for 2024-25.
- (C) The detailed portfolio budgets as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.
- (D) The General Fund working balance be set at a minimum of £1.0 million.

- (E) The detailed Capital Programme, as set out in report Appendices 2 and 3, be approved, along with Community Infrastructure Levy allocations as set out in report Appendix 4.
- (F) The Council Tax for 2022-23 be increased by 1.95% to £230.04.
- (G) The Council's Tax Base be set at 29,458.15.
- (H) Further to recommendation (E), above, a full review be undertaken of the Capital Programme commencing immediately.

Reasons for Decisions

The report set out the current position on the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2022-23 and indicative budgets for 2023-24 to 2024-25. It also set out the position on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2022-23, New Homes Bonus Grant allocation, the position on the Council's Collection Fund, the Council's Tax Base for 2022-23 and the consequential Council Tax for 2022-23.

The budget for 2022-23 was based on the indicative budget set last year, which had been updated to reflect known changes and estimates.

Indicative budgets had been set out for 2023-24 and 2024-25 that included the key issues that were anticipated would have a potential impact on the Council's finances. However, it should be noted that a new funding regime for local government was to be introduced, potentially for 2023-24, but there was no further information at the current time.

Undertaking a full review of the Capital Programme would have the purpose of ensuring the projects / schemes listed reflected the priorities of the Council as detailed in the Corporate Plan.

76. Rent Setting Policy – April 2022

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 8.1 – 8.12).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The revised Housing Rent Setting Policy as set out in report Appendix 1 be agreed and implemented with effect from 1 April 2022.
- (B) It be noted that as per the decision of Cabinet held on 28 January 2021, consultation had taken place with tenants on the proposed rent increase for 2022/23, with a copy of the consultation responses being included at report Appendix 4.

Reasons for Decisions

The report confirmed the details provided in the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2021-22 to 2024-25 report included under item 9 of the meeting agenda. Rent proposals had been formulated within the framework set out in the Government formulated rent policy.

It was proposed to continue to follow the formulated social rent policy implemented from 1 April 2020 and to continue with year 3 of the 5-year national rent setting policy.

77. Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2021-22 to 2024-25

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Head of Housing & Partnerships (Item 9.1 – 9.6).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The revised position with regard to estimated income and expenditure for the 2021-22 Housing Revenue Account and budgets for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25 as summarised in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 16 February 2022, be recommended to:
 - (i) Determine a minimum level of working balances of £1.929 million for 31 March 2023, and indicative working balances of £1.975 million and £2.030 million for 31 March 2024 and 2025, respectively.
 - (ii) Approve the Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budgets for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 (and note the forecast outturn for 2021-22) as summarised in report Appendix 1.

Reasons for Decisions

Cabinet was required to propose a budget in relation to the Housing Revenue Account for submission to Council on 16 February 2022.

78. Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2021-22 to 2024-25

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Head of Housing & Partnerships (Item 10.1 – 10.6).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The estimated availability of Housing Revenue Account capital resources for the period 2021-22 to 2024-25, as set out in report Appendix 1, be noted.
- (B) Council, at its meeting to be held on 16 February 2022, be recommended to approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for the period 2021-22 to 2024-25, as set out in report Appendix 2.

Reasons for Decisions

Cabinet was required to propose a budget in relation to the Housing Revenue Account for submission to Council on 16 February 2022.

79. Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Finance (Item 11.1 – 11.34).

Resolved:

- (A) That Council, at its meeting to be held on 16 February 2022, be recommended to approve:
 - (i) The Prudential and Treasury Indicators.

- (ii) The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.
 - (iii) The Treasury Management Strategy.
 - (iv) The Annual Investment Strategy for 2022/23.
- (B) That it be noted indicators may change in accordance with the final recommendations from Cabinet to Council in relation to both the General Fund / Housing Revenue Accounts Budgets and Capital Programmes.

Reasons for Decisions

The Council was required to approve its treasury management, investment and capital strategies to ensure that cash flow was adequately planned and that surplus monies were invested appropriately.

80. Housing Services Annual Report 2020-21

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 12.1 – 12.20).

Resolved:

That the action taken by the Head of Housing and Partnerships following consultation with the Housing, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Leader to approve the 2020-21 Housing Services Annual Report (as attached at report Appendix 1) and publish it on the Council's website, be confirmed.

Reasons for Decisions

The Annual Report must be made available to all tenants and a copy of the final document had been placed on the Council's website. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the publication, and subsequent delivery to tenants, of the Hometalk magazine had been paused. When it was safe to resume delivery arrangements a copy of the Annual Report would be circulated to tenants with the next edition of Hometalk.

81. 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 Paragraph 3, Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
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Held on Wednesday 2 February 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 2

82. Kerbside Waste Collection Contract - Post-2023

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles (Item 14.1 – 14.16).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The content of the report and the impact of the increased revenue requirement post-2023 be noted.
- (B) A two-year extension to the kerbside waste collection contract with the incumbent contractor be agreed, with the following variations included:
 - Inclusion of dual-stream mixed recycling.
 - Fee increases of £569,000 per annum, plus original contract indexation rate.
- (C) Authority be delegated to the Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Environment & Climate Change Portfolio Leader to enable decision (B), above.

Reasons for Decisions

The Council had a statutory obligation to collect domestic waste and recycling and it could not be in a situation where it did not have a provision to do so; however, alongside this it also had a statutory requirement to provide best value.

There was currently a high level of uncertainty regarding the outcome of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Resources and Waste Strategy 2018 and now was not considered the best time to go out to the market, due to that and other factors, such as the national HGV driver shortage etc.

The current contract allowed for an extension period of up to seven years in duration. However, the contractors request for a seven-year extension at an additional £577,000 per annum was not considered best value as it made no allowance for expected changes via the Resources and Waste Strategy, nor did it allow for flexibility or development of the service, or for the move towards the Council's Net Carbon Zero ambition.

It was considered that a two-year extension option offered, better value for money, more flexibility, and a reduced risk of legal / procurement challenge, in comparison with other options, including a full seven-year extension.

83. Levelling Up Fund - Cannock Town Centre

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 15.1 – 15.76).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) Council be recommended to amend the current Capital Programme to accommodate a sum of up to £44 million to ensure delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project in Cannock Town Centre, with the funding package for the project to be comprised of £20 million of Levelling Up Fund funding from the UK Government, £17.2 million of Cannock Chase Council investment and the balance to be met from unsecured private sector funding linked to the delivery of a proposed retirement/residential development.

Note: this funding requirement was included in the recommendations regarding the General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2022-25 to be considered by Council on 16 February 2022 (see Minute No. 75, recommendation (E), above).

- (B) Authority be delegated:

- (i) To the Chief Executive and Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer to sign the Memorandum of Understanding as necessary to progress the project.
- (ii) To the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Innovation & High Streets Portfolio Leader, to establish the required governance arrangements set out in the report to oversee delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project.
- (iii) To the Head of Economic Prosperity, in consultation with the Head of Finance and the Innovation & High Streets Portfolio Leader to take any associated decisions as required to ensure the Levelling Up Fund Project is delivered on time and on budget, including, but not limited to:
 - a) The Council appointment and contract award for any specialist advisers and consultants (in accordance with the Council's Procurement / contract regulations).
 - b) To enter into any necessary negotiations with relevant landowners and/or third parties regarding the acquisition of Property /land interests as deemed necessary for delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project, this will include the agreement of any financial compensation measures for owners/tenants/occupiers affected by the proposed development.
 - c) To investigate, determine and secure the most appropriate way in which to provide additional Specialist Project Management Services, (subject to the availability of resources) to assist with delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project. This will be necessary to safeguard the Council's interests and to provide sufficient delivery capacity in the Economic Development Team.
- (iv) To the Head of Economic Prosperity and Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles to identify the likely car parking needs arising from the proposed

Levelling Up Fund project and undertake any feasibility work as necessary to inform a future business case.

- (C) In-principle agreement be given to initiating Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) processes to secure any third party land interests that pertain to the successful delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project, with further information to be provided by Officers on land to be included in a CPO; costs and timetable before a final decision is taken.
- (D) Officers produce a detailed business case within the next 12 months; setting out the case for the Council to relocate the Civic Centre and Civic offices into the proposed Levelling Up Fund new scheme in Cannock Town Centre, and also outline potential opportunities for public sector partners to co-locate/co-invest in any such facility.

Reasons for Decisions

To enable the Council to proceed with the Levelling Up project, to make the necessary amendments to the Council's budget and capital programme and to establish the appropriate governance arrangements required to monitor and oversee delivery of the project.

To seek from Cabinet the necessary officer delegations and consents in order to make progress with implementation and delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project.

The meeting closed at 7:35 p.m.

Leader