

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the

Cabinet

Held on Thursday 5 August 2021 at 4:00 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 & Climate Change Portfolio Leader
Fitzgerald, Mrs. A.A.	Housing, Heritage & Leisure Portfolio Leader
Hewitt, P.M.	Innovation and High Streets Portfolio Leader

23. Apologies

None received.

24. 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.

25. Updates from Portfolio Leaders

(i) Leader of the Council

The Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Covid-19 Transmission / Vaccine Update**

All legal restrictions were now lifted, and more people socialising as the weather had improved. Case numbers continue to fall, with Cannock Chase and Staffordshire being below the regional and national averages. Hospitalisations were also going down, and although the highest rates amongst 18- to 24-year-olds, these were also reducing.

Vaccine uptake locally was good, and residents were still encouraged to accept them when offered. Several local GPs and the Cannock Chase Clinical Alliance (operating clinics at the Roman Way hotel) now offered 'walk-in' sessions. Yesterday, the Joint Committee and Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI)

advised that all 16- and 17-year-olds should receive their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine, so clinics in the District, and nationally, would begin preparations in the coming weeks.

- **Joint Chief Executive**

Thanks were given to the Joint Chief Executive for having spent a lot of time with Members in recent weeks meeting them and understanding their respective wards.

(ii) Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Cannock Hospital Minor Injuries Unit**

A letter had been sent from the Portfolio Leader and the Leader of the Council to Professor David Loughton, Chief Executive of the Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, concerning the continued closure of the Minor Injuries Unit at Cannock Hospital. The letter read:

“We write as Cannock Chase District Council’s Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, and the Leader of the Council. We are concerned that, as yet there appears to be no announcement of the opening of the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) in Cannock Chase. We fully appreciate the need for closing it last year as staff from the unit had to be redeployed to other critical areas of the hospital due to the pressures of Covid.

Many of our Members at the District Council are receiving a significant number of complaints from their residents about the lack of the facility now that society is reopening.

The Cannock Chase MIU has an excellent reputation locally and it has served many in our community very well. Its reopening will likely reduce the traffic of minor ailments that the trust sees in the main A&E Department in Wolverhampton.

We would wish to hear from you the timescale you have in mind as regards its reopening.

We look forward to hearing from you.”

The Leader requested that further updates on this matter be given at future Cabinet meetings once a response had been received.

(iii) District Development

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Walsall College Cannock Campus**

A visit to Walsall College’s Cannock Campus located on Mill Street in Cannock was undertaken with Officers. The campus had been established as a local training centre to enable a wider range of support services and employer-led courses for job seekers aged 19+. Large numbers of young people from across the District had previously travelled to the College’s Walsall campus, therefore it was expected the new campus would be well used.

The College's plan was to work on a long-term basis with employers to ensure that courses were tailored to local needs and requirements, such as their partnership with the West Midlands Designer Outlet.

(iv) Environment & Climate Change

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Trial of New Larger Litter Bins**

Three 240 litre litter bins had been installed at three high-volume locations across the District – Mount Road, Etching Hill; Bideford Way, Cannock; and the Trocadero, Sharon Way, Hednesford. The trial was designed to increase litter bin capacity in the areas identified, reduce frequency of collection requirements (and therefore vehicle emissions), increase street cleansing efficiency, and improve public health and safety.

- **Dry Recycling**

For June 2021, the amount of dry recycling that could not be recycled was 9%, this being below the Council's threshold of 14%.

- **Rejected Recycling Loads**

The last time a recycling load was rejected was on 17 May. Whilst this was positive news, it was understood the reason for this was the tipping space used for checking loads had been full recently. The backlog was now being cleared, and as a result, an increase in rejected loads may occur. The cost to the Council for each rejection was circa £250 to £500 (this being on a shared 50/50 split with the contractor).

(v) Housing, Heritage & Leisure

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Rugeley Swimming Pool**

The Council's sub-contractors had installed a new filtration, heating, hot water and energy system, and restoration works on the pool were now gathering pace. The Council was working with all parties to reopen the facility for public use as soon as practicable, with the works scheduled to complete at the end of September. This would be followed by commissioning, testing, and preparation for a formal opening in October.

Whilst these costly and time-consuming repairs were unexpected in a 12-year-old pool, they were not uncommon, and the situation had presented an opportunity to invest and future proof a much-loved facility for the District's wonderful communities and for generations to come.

The pool was a major part of a £1.25m investment to improve and increase the superb facilities at Rugeley Leisure Centre.

- **All-Weather Sports Pitch**

In partnership with Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles and the Football Foundation, the Council would in September be unveiling a full sized, state-of-the-art 3G all-weather pitch, with low energy LED floodlights and extended parking facilities with electronic vehicle charging points.

This fantastic footballing venue would be available for 11, 7, 9, and 5-a-side teams, and would foster and encourage an inclusive spirit from a wide range of abilities and community groups that were often under-represented in the sport.

- **British Schools Shooting Championships**

The Council and Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles would be hosting the British Schools Air Pistol & Air Rifle Shooting Championships in the District on 8 and 9 February 2022, in the indoor sports hall at Chase Leisure Centre.

240 competitors were expected to take part, and school children from across the District would be invited to attend and spectate during the event with the hope of encouraging them into the sport.

It was also hoped to host a Commonwealth Games roadshow at Chase Leisure Centre at the same time as the event.

- **Vandalism in Hednesford Park**

Sadly, there had been a spate of recent vandalism of an avenue of trees in Hednesford Park, along with anti-social behaviour.

The Council was working with the police to identify the culprits from CCTV footage, and patrols were being stepped up around the park. The Council was also partnering with a targeted youth work team to tackle some of the issues within the park.

- **Forestry England Bike and Play & New Blue Mountain Bike Trail**

As previously reported, the brand-new Junior Bike and Play Area was being created at Birches Valley as part of the Commonwealth Games legacy. Officers had visited the site and reported that work was going well. The new area was due to open along with the new blue mountain bike trail in September 2021, and its opening would form part of the Commonwealth Games celebrations.

The Council would also be supporting Forestry England and other partners in extending the initial 12-month engagement period for a further 6 months for a Cycling Coach, from within its existing financial commitment.

- **New Cannock Chase Cemetery**

The new cemetery was now operational, with several bookings having been taken and the Council had received compliments about the site, facilities, and staff.

(vi) Innovation and High Streets

The Portfolio Leader updated in respect of the following:

- **Town Centre Car Parking Initiative**

There were currently 49 businesses signed up across Cannock and Rugeley for this scheme.

The Hednesford Town Centre manager had been contacted, and their input was awaited on how the Council could help businesses using the 'Welcome Back' fund.

Norton Canes Parish Council had also been contacted, and Heath Hayes & Wimblebury Parish Council was being written to, with some interesting ideas

already received from their Members on how the village centre could be supported.

It was intended to ask the relevant Scrutiny Committee to review this scheme once it was complete.

26. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2021 be approved.

27. Forward Plan

The Forward Plan of Decisions for the period August to October 2021 (Item 5.1) was considered:

Resolved

That the Forward Plan of Decisions for the period August to October 2021 be noted.

28. Public Space Protection Orders (Alcohol Restriction Zones)

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 6.1 – 6.10).

Resolved:

That proposals for the implementation of five Public Space Protection Orders (Alcohol Restriction Zones) in the District, as set out in Appendices 1 to 5 of the report, for the full three-year period, be approved.

Reasons for Recommendations

The proposal aimed to re-introduce five Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) to reduce alcohol consumption in town centres and parks across the District where current and historic behaviours had led to anti-social behaviour, crime, and disorder. It would also help to protect vulnerable individuals.

The PSPOs would cover areas (outside of licensed premises, as described in report paragraph 5.4) in Cannock town centre and park, Hednesford town centre and park, Rugeley town centre, Fernwood area, and Ravenhill park. Initial proposed maps, which mirrored previous Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) / PSPOs, were set out in report Appendices 1 to 5.

29. UK Afghan Locally Employed Interpreter Relocation Scheme

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 7.1 – 7.5).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The progress made in respect of Staffordshire's response to the UK Afghan Locally Employed Interpreter Relocation Scheme be noted.
- (B) Participation in the UK Afghan Locally Employed Interpreter Relocation Scheme be confirmed.

- (C) The Joint Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to:
- (i) Undertake the rehousing of UK Afghan Locally Employed Interpreter households within Cannock Chase District Council through one of the housing options set out in report paragraph 5.7, and
 - (ii) Determine the Council's future participation within the Staffordshire-wide UK Afghan Locally Employed Interpreter Relocation Scheme.

Reasons for Decisions

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire had now confirmed to the Home Office an offer of a joint programme, with commitments to participate in the scheme to a level of 15 interpreters or families within the first cohort, with a total of 25 overall across the City and County. Whilst an initial offer to support one interpreter and their family had been made, it was proposed that the Joint Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to agree the Council's future participation in the scheme.

The key role of the Council would be to provide for the rehousing of family within its area. Options included: rehousing within the private rented sector or by registered housing providers; other stock holding organisations; or the Council's housing stock. As further consideration would need to be given to rehousing options following receipt of details of the households to be rehoused, it was recommended that the Joint Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to undertake the rehousing within Cannock Chase District Council through one of the available housing options.

30. 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).

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Part 2

31. Corporate Property Maintenance Plan 2021-24

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 9.1 – 9.14).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) For 2021-22, only essential maintenance works are prioritised, specifically anything related to:
 - Statutory compliance,
 - Works to prevent a health and safety risk to people,
 - Works to prevent the deterioration of a building structure,
 - General day-to-day responsive maintenance.
- (B) The key projects for 2021-22, as outlined in report paragraph 6.21, be agreed in principle.
- (C) The Head of Economic Prosperity be delegated authority, in consultation with the Innovation and High Streets Portfolio Leader, to reassess the list in report paragraph 6.21, for any changed circumstances in accordance with the priorities listed in decision (A), above.
- (D) A new Asset Strategy be developed to reflect the Corporate Plan and post-Covid working arrangements, thus enabling a longer-term planning of maintenance projects over the life cycle of each property.

Reasons for Decisions

A new Council Corporate Plan had been developed, which had reviewed the Council's priorities for 2021-24.

The development of a new Asset Strategy was proposed, which would determine the Council's future priority for property.

The full maintenance requirements identified exceeded the available budget, and hence works had to be prioritised.

Not undertaking the property works identified in the report could lead to an incident or accident, which would put the Council at risk of receiving a financial penalty.

Not undertaking works that could lead to the degradation of the building structures could reduce the value of the building assets, cause temporary closure of a building or impact on the Council's ability to continue to deliver its services.

Not undertaking general day to day maintenance could impact on the daily usability of a building.

Bridges and boardwalks improved the public enjoyment of the open spaces.

32. Review of Bridges and Boardwalks

Consideration was given to the Not for Publication Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity (Item 10.1 – 10.27).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) For 2021-22, the priority works as set out in report paragraph 6.6 be undertaken from the budget allocated.
- (B) Provision of £61,500 and £48,000 be included in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 budgets for bridges and boardwalks as part of the 2022/23 budget process.
- (C) The bridge replacements highlighted within the report at Rugeley boardwalk, Anglesey Nature Reserve and Rawnsley Woods be prioritised for 2021-22, with the anticipated completion of the schemes running into 2022-23.
- (D) The Head of Economic Prosperity be delegated authority, in consultation with the Innovation and High Streets Portfolio Leader, to reassess the priority for expenditure on bridges for any changed circumstances in accordance with the priorities included in the report.
- (E) Bridges and boardwalks form part of the new Asset Strategy, being developed through quarters 3 and 4 of 2021-22, thus allowing longer-term planning of bridge and boardwalk maintenance projects over the life cycle of each structure.
- (F) Provision of £110,000 for the works be included within the capital budget for 2021-22 to reflect the schemes above £20,000 as set out in report paragraph 6.7.

Reasons for Decisions

The bridges and boardwalks were beneficial to the public enjoyment of the parks and open spaces.

Not undertaking regular maintenance works could lead to the degradation of other bridges and boardwalks, reducing the life expectancy of those structures and potentially leading to higher maintenance costs.

An incident or accident could put the Council at risk of receiving a financial penalty in the form of a claim, a fine, or both. Existing structures with tripping hazards and rotting boarding were a greater health and safety risk to the Council than a structure that had been removed.

Replacing bridges and bridge decking using a composite material in lieu of timber, whilst in the short-term was more expensive, the composite material had a much longer life span and hence over many years would be the overall cheaper solution to the Council.

The meeting closed at 4:53 p.m.

LEADER