

Cannock Chase Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council

Held in the Ballroom, Civic Centre, Cannock

On Wednesday 16 February 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Part 1

Present: Councillors:

Smith, C.D. (Chairman)

Adamson, G.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Allen, F.W.C.	Kruskonjic, P.
Arduino, L.	Lyons, N.
Boucker, A.S.	Lyons, Mrs. O. (Leader)
Dunnett, Ms. A.J.	McCall, M.
Fitzgerald, Mrs. A.A.	McMahon, J.B.
Frew, C.L.	Molineux, G.N.
Haden, Mrs. P.K.	Newbury, J.A.A.
Hewitt, P.M.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Startin, P.D.
Hughes, R.J.	Sutherland, M.
Johnson, J.P.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.
Johnson, T.B.	Thompson, Mrs. S.L.
Jones, B.	Wilkinson, Ms. C.L.
Jones, P.G.C.	Wilson, Mrs. L.J.
Jones, Mrs. V.	Woodhead, P.E.

63. Apologies

Apologies were submitted for Councillors A. Beach; M.S. BATTERY (Vice-Chairman); Mrs. S.M. Cartwright; S.K. Crabtree; Mrs. M.A. Davis; P.A. Fisher; and A.M. Muckley. Councillor P.T. Witton was also absent.

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

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

65. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2021 be approved.

66. Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Former Councillors Bob Todd and Colin Lea

The Chairman advised that as Members were aware, on 7 January, former Councillor Bob Todd passed away. Bob had served as a District Councillor for 15 years in total (1986-1991, 1998-2004, and 2011-2015) and held office of Chairman of the Council in 2000-2001 and 2012-2013. Furthermore, he was awarded the title of Honorary Alderman in 2019.

On 21 January, former Councillor Colin Lea passed away. Colin had served as a District Councillor for 4 years (2015-2019).

The Council's thoughts were with both former Councillors' family and friends at this sad time, and condolences had been sent to both families.

Members were then asked to stand and join the Chairman in observing a minutes silence to pay respects to their former colleagues.

(ii) Presentation of a Petition

The Chairman received a petition from Councillor J.B. McMahon on behalf of residents regarding future proposals for the Pye Green Community Centre.

The Chairman advised the petition would be referred to Councillor P.M. Hewitt, Innovation and High Streets Portfolio Leader, and the Head of Economic Prosperity for review.

67. Leader's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Covid-19

The Leader advised that the case rate across Cannock Chase as of this morning was 444.4 per 100,000, this being below the Staffordshire, West Midlands, and national averages. Rates across Staffordshire were continuing to fall, and outbreaks were primarily in care settings and education, with the highest number of cases being among 5- to 17-year-olds. Hospitalisations across Staffordshire were slightly decreasing.

(ii) Visit from Councillor Philip White, Deputy Leader of Staffordshire County Council

The Leader advised she had spoken previously of the importance of strengthen links with Staffordshire Council County, and with this in mind, on Monday, 24 January, Councillor Philip White, Deputy Leader of Staffordshire County Council and Cabinet member for Economy and Skills visited Cannock Chase. It was an opportunity to share this Council's plans and discuss post-pandemic economic recovery and local regeneration.

(iii) 'Cema' Play Area, Norton Canes

The Leader advised that the official opening of the Cema play area in Norton Canes took place on 3 February following £120,000 of investment. The Council worked with Norton Canes Parish Council, Forest of Mercia, and Planet Art on the project, and the end result looked great.

(iv) 'Cannock Chase Can'

The Leader advised that earlier this month, the long awaited 'Cannock Chase Can' app was launched to encourage individuals to make healthier lifestyle choices and improve personal wellbeing. The mobile app had now been approved by Apple and Google and was available to download for free.

Officers, along with the Council's leisure & culture partners, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles, were touring the area throughout February to chat to people and discuss wellness worries. The team were visiting supermarkets, town centres, community centres and schools.

In addition to this, workshops for an interactive 'Wellbeing Trail' at Wimblebury Mound were underway and residents of Caxton Court were being encouraged to get involved. This was due to be completed by April, ready for the Easter holidays.

(v) British Shooting Schools National Finals

The Leader advised that on 8 and 9 February, 2022, the District had the pleasure of hosting the national finals of the British Shooting Schools Air Rifle and Air Pistol Championships. Young people, sporting professionals and Olympians from across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland were welcomed to Cannock Leisure Centre. It was a great event, and the Council would love the opportunity to welcome them back again in the future.

(vi) Rugeley Swimming Pool

The Leader reported that Rugeley swimming pool would be reopening week commencing 28 February. It would open for local swimming clubs and members between 28 February and 6 March, and then from 7 March onwards to everyone with a full programme.

68. Appointment of Interim Section 151 Officer

Consideration was given to the Report of the Leader of the Council (Item 6.1 - 6.3). (The Interim Head of Finance who was present, left the meeting while this matter was considered.)

Resolved:

That Tim Willis, Interim Head of Finance, be appointed as the Section 151 Officer for Cannock Chase District Council.

69. Housing Revenue Account Budgets and Capital Programmes 2021/22 to 2024/25: Cabinet Resolutions

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs. O. Lyons, introduced and moved the Housing Revenue Account Budgets and Capital Programmes 2021/22 to 2024/25, which were duly seconded.

Consideration was then given to the recommendations referred from Cabinet held on 2 February 2022, in respect of:

- (i) Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2021/22 to 2024/25.
- (ii) Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2021/22 to 2024/25.

Resolved:

That, in respect of:

(A) Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2021/22 to 2024/25

- (i) 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, be determined.
- (ii) The Housing Revenue Account Revenue Budgets for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 (as summarised in Appendix 1 of the 2 February 2022 Cabinet report) be approved, and the forecast outturn for 2021/22 (as summarised in the same Appendix) be noted.

(B) Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes 2021/22 to 2024/25

The Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes for the period 2021-22 to 2024-25, as set out in Appendix 2 of the 2 February 2022 Cabinet report, be approved.

70. 2022/23 to 2024/25 Budget Process Procedural Rules

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Finance and the Council Solicitor (Item 8.1 - 8.6).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The timetable for the setting of the budget for 2022-23 be noted.
- (B) The overall level of Council Tax would be set at Council's meeting on 2 March 2022, following determination of Cannock Chase's Council Tax requirement, in accordance with the procedural requirements as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

71. Budgets 2022 to 2025: Cabinet Resolutions

The Leader of the Council introduced and moved the Budget for 2022/23 to 2024/25, which was duly seconded.

Consideration was then given to the recommendations referred from Cabinet held on 2 February 2022, in respect of:

- (i) General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2022-25.
- (ii) Levelling Up Fund - Cannock Town Centre
- (iii) Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23.

Resolved:

That, in respect of:

(A) General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2022-2025

- (i) The Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget 2022-23 be set at £13.237 million.
- (ii) The indicative General Fund Revenue Budgets be set at £15.173 million for 2023-24 and £15.891 million for 2024-25.

- (iii) The detailed portfolio budgets as set out in Appendix 1 of the 2 February 2022 Cabinet report be approved.
- (iv) The General Fund working balance be set at a minimum of £1.0 million.
- (v) The detailed Capital Programme, as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 of the 2 February 2022 Cabinet report, be approved, along with the Community Infrastructure Levy Allocations as set out in Appendix 4 of the same report.
- (vi) The Council Tax be increased by 1.95% to £230.04.
- (vii) The Council's Tax Base be set 29,458.15.
- (viii) Further to decision (A)(v), above, a full review be undertaken of the Capital Programme, commencing immediately.

(B) Levelling Up Fund - Cannock Town Centre

A sum of £44 million be included in the Capital Programme 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 decision (A)(v), above.

(C) Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Annual Investment Strategy 2022/23

The Prudential and Treasury Indicators, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, Treasury Management Strategy, and Annual Investment Strategy for 2022/23 be approved.

The meeting closed at 7:48 p.m.

Chairman