

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee
Held on Wednesday 29 June 2021 at 4:00pm
In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Thompson, Mrs. S.L. (Chairman)
Kraujalis, J.T. (Vice-Chairman)

Dunnett, Ms. A.J. (arrived at 16:10)	Johnson, T.B. Lyons, N.
Frew, C.L.	Startin, P.D.
Haden, Mrs. P.K.	Sutton, Mrs. H.M.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted for Councillors Ms. C.L. Wilkinson, Mrs. L.J. Wilson and P.T. Witton.

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

No other declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the Promoting Prosperity Scrutiny Committee held on 17 March, 2021 were noted.

4. Introduction to the Role of the Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Housing and Partnerships that covered the following:

- Support for the Committee
- Background
- The Purpose of Scrutiny
- The Committee's Role and Remit
- Work Programme
- Undertaking a Review

She explained the role of Scrutiny to Members and how it should work effectively. The role of the Committee was then outlined, and it was explained that, whilst the Committee would not be able to make decisions, it could advise and give recommendations to Cabinet, Council and other Committees as appropriate.

The Committee could review and scrutinise current policies, decide if the policies were delivering the intended outcomes and develop new policies – influencing policy decisions before they were implemented. They could hold the ‘Executive’ to account and invoke the ‘call-in’ procedure prior to a decision being implemented, or review it afterwards.

Further information was provided on the monitoring, reviewing, and scrutinising the performance of the Council in relation to the discharge of the Council’s functions.

She outlined how the work programme would be developed along with information on how Members should determine which Scrutiny reviews should be undertaken.

5. End of Year PDP & Recovery Performance Information

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Governance and Corporate Services (Item 5.1 – 5.27 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Economic Prosperity led Members through the report that advised on the position at the end of 2020/21 in respect of the progress of the Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) and the Recovery Plans. He explained that the Committee would receive quarterly performance reports at each meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That the year-end performance information relating to PDP’s as detailed in Appendices 1a-1d be noted.
- (B) That the year-end position relating to the Recovery Plans as detailed at Appendices 2a-2d be noted.
- (C) To note that the actions flagged with a yellow circle or an amber triangle at year-end will roll forward into the Priority Delivery Plans for 2021/22.

6. Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021-22

Consideration was given to the Joint Report of the Head of Economic Prosperity and Head of Housing and Partnerships (Item 6.1 – 6.5 plus appendices of the Official Minutes of the Council).

The Head of Economic Prosperity outlined the report and referred Members to Appendix 3. He asked them to note that Corporate Property did not fall within the remit of the Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee. This came under the remit of the Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee.

He then referred Members to Appendix 5 – the proposed Work Programme for 2021/22. He explained that there were 3 further meetings of the Committee during 2021/22 along with any Working Groups that would be set up to undertake the reviews that were agreed. Officers would provide support to Members in relation to these Working Groups.

The Committee was then asked to consider the following suggestions for reviews that could be undertaken. The Head of Economic Prosperity explained that they should choose 1 or 2 items or alternatively, Members may wish to put forward any further suggestions.

- (i) Affordable Housing Delivery
- (ii) Cannock Town Centre Partnership
- (iii) Covid-19 Business Support grant support
- (iv) Car parking pilot initiative in Cannock and Rugeley Town Centres

The Head of Housing and Partnerships provided information in respect of the suggested review in relation to Affordable Housing Delivery and the Head of Economic Prosperity provided further information in relation to the other 3 suggestions.

Members discussed the possible review topics. In relation to Affordable Housing Delivery a Member stated that developers often produced viability assessments and did not meet the current 20% affordable housing contribution, so he had concern about increasing this to 30%. Other Members considered that it would be beneficial to undertake a review in relation to Affordable Housing Delivery at this time, as there were several major development schemes in the District and there would be a greater demand for affordable housing given the increase in unemployment rates due to the pandemic.

In relation to the Cannock Town Centre Partnership review a Member considered it sensible to allow the new administration to build up a relationship with the Partnership before undertaking a review. He also considered that, as the car parking pilot initiative had only been running for 2 weeks, it was premature to undertake a review at this time and it may be more appropriate to review this in September, if time allowed, when the pilot was coming to an end.

Another Member suggested that a review could be undertaken in respect of the consultation with regards to the Local Plan. Due to the pandemic the Council was not able to engage in traditional consultation methods. Work was on-going in relation to the review of the Local Plan and he suggested it may be beneficial to look at how consultation was being undertaken during the current Covid-19 restrictions and consider how consultation could be improved for the future.

Following a discussion, it was agreed that the two Scrutiny reviews for 2021/22 would be:

- Affordable Housing Delivery
- Review of consultation in respect of the Local Plan

It was agreed that the membership of the review to look at Affordable Housing Delivery would be made up of Councillors J.K. Kraujalis, N. Lyons, Mrs. P.K. Haden, C. Frew, Ms. A. Dunnett, Ms. C. Wilkinson and Mrs. L Wilson.

The membership of the review of consultation in respect of the Local Plan would be made up of Councillors T. Johnson, P. Startin, Mrs. H. Sutton, M. McCall, Mrs. S. Thompson and P. Witton.

Resolved:

(A) That the two Scrutiny reviews undertaken during 2021/22 would be as follows:-

- (i) Affordable Housing Delivery (Councillors J.K. Kraujalis, N. Lyons, Mrs. P.K. Haden, C. Frew, Ms. A. Dunnett, Ms. C. Wilkinson and Mrs. L Wilson).
- (ii) Review of consultation in respect of the Local Plan (Councillors T. Johnson, P. Startin, Mrs. H. Sutton, M. McCall, Mrs. S. Thompson and P. Witton).

The meeting closed at 16:34 pm.

CHAIRMAN