

Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council
Held in the Ballroom, Civic Centre, Cannock
On Wednesday 19 May 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Part 1

PRESENT: Councillors:

Dudson, A. (Outgoing Chairman) (former Councillor)
Witton, P.T. (Outgoing Vice-Chairman)

Adamson, G.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Allen, F.W.C.	Kruskonjic, P.
Arduino, L.	Layton, A.
Boucker, A.S.	Lyons, N.
Buttery, M.S.	Lyons, Miss O.
Cartwright, Mrs.S.M.	McCall, M.
Crabtree, S.K.	McMahon, J.B.
Fisher, P.A.	Molineux, G.N.
Fitzgerald, Mrs. A.A.	Muckley, A.M.
Frew, C.L.	Newbury, J.A.A.
Haden, Mrs. P.K.	Preece, J.P.T.L.
Hewitt, P.M.	Smith, C.D.
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.	Wilson, Mrs. L.J.
Jones, P.G.C.	Woodhead, P.E.
Jones, Mrs. V.	

Outgoing Chairman's Remarks

New Members

The Chairman welcomed the newly elected Members to the Council, these being:

- Councillor L. Arduino, Brereton and Ravenhill ward.
- Councillor J.B. McMahon, Cannock East ward.
- Councillor P.G.C. Jones, Cannock North ward.
- Councillor P. Kruskonjic, Cannock South ward.

- Councillor N. Lyons, Hagley ward.
- Councillor Mrs. P.K. Haden, Hawks Green ward.
- Councillor Mrs. L.J. Wilson, Heath Hayes East and Wimblebury ward.
- Councillor M. McCall, Hednesford North ward.
- Councillor M.W.A. Hoare, Norton Canes ward.
- Councillor C.L. Frew, Western Springs ward.

Former Members

The Chairman then offered his thanks and gratitude to the following former Members of the Council for their service and dedication to the residents of Cannock Chase and to this Council.

- Gordon Alcott - for 51 years' service as elected Member for Cannock North.
- Carl Bennett - for 9 years' service as elected Member for Western Springs.
- Alan Dudson - for 9 years' service as elected Member for Brereton and Ravenhill.
- Maureen Freeman - for 9 years' service as elected Member for Cannock South.
- Christine Martin - for 17 years' service as elected Member for Hagley.
- Christine Mitchell - for 27 years' service as elected Member for Cannock East.
- Alan Pearson - for 9 years' service as elected Member for Hednesford North.
- Zaphne Stretton M.B.E. - for 26 years' service as elected Member for Norton Canes.
- Diane Todd - for 15 years' service as elected Member for Heath Hayes East and Wimblebury.

All former Members would be sent a certificate of recognition with thanks from the Council.

Before commencing the formal business of the meeting, the Chairman advised it had been a pleasure to hold office of Chairman of the Council for the second time, albeit not the year that anyone could have envisaged. He thanked Officers and Members for their support over the last twelve months in what had been a difficult year.

4. Apologies

Apologies were submitted for Councillors Mrs M.A. Davis; Ms. A.J. Dunnett; and Ms. C.L. Wilkinson.

5. 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.

6. Election of Chairman of the Council

Councillor Miss O. Lyons nominated Councillor C.D. Smith to be Chairman of the Council for the 2021-22 municipal year, which was seconded by Councillor Mrs. A.A. Fitzgerald.

The Chairman asked if there were any other nominations.

Councillor A.M. Muckley nominated Councillor P.E. Woodhead to be Chairman of the Council for the 2021-22 municipal year, which was seconded by Councillor S.K. Crabtree.

The matter was then put to a vote.

Resolved:

That Councillor C.D. Smith be elected Chairman of the Council for the 2021-22 municipal year.

Councillor C.D. Smith thereupon read and signed the Acceptance of Office.

Councillor C.D. Smith, the newly appointed Chairman, thanked Members for electing him to office and took the Chair.

(Councillor C.D. Smith in the Chair)

7. Election of Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillor P.M. Hewitt nominated Councillor M.S. Buttery to be Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2021-22 municipal year, which was seconded by Councillor M. Sutherland.

The Chairman asked if there were any other nominations.

Councillor P.E. Woodhead nominated Councillor A.M. Muckley to be Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2021-22 municipal year, which was seconded by Councillor A. Layton.

The matter was then put to a vote.

Resolved:

That Councillor M.S. Buttery be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the 2021-22 municipal year.

Councillor M.S. Buttery thereupon read and signed the Acceptance of Office.

8. Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2021 be approved as a correct record.

9. Chairman's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Chairman's Fundraising

The Chairman informed Members that his chosen charity for the year was Riding for the Disabled Association Stafford and District Group.

Members would shortly be receiving an email regarding charity donations in place of circulating a collection tin at each meeting.

(ii) Mike Edmonds, Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles

The Chairman advised that Mike Edmonds, Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, would be retiring from the Council at the end of May, and wanted to put on

record Members' thanks for his contribution to the Council over the last thirty years, and wish him well in a long and happy retirement.

Several Members then spoke to give thanks and best wishes to Mr Edmonds.

10. Leader of the Council

Councillor B. Jones nominated Councillor Miss O. Lyons to be the Leader of the Council, which was seconded by Councillor M.S. Buttery.

Resolved:

That Councillor Miss O. Lyons be elected Leader of the Council to hold office in accordance with the Constitution.

Councillor Miss O. Lyons thereupon declared and signed the Acceptance of Office.

11. Leader's Announcements and Correspondence

(i) Relaxation of Covid Restrictions and Latest Case Rates

The Leader advised that Monday 17 May saw further relaxation of the Covid restrictions, with regulations surrounding retail, hospitality and entertainment eased. The reopening of our high streets was welcome news, and, on behalf of the Council, the Leader wished local traders every success in the coming weeks and months after what had been an unimaginably challenging year. The District had some incredible local businesses that were undoubtably the life blood of the community. The Leader asked that Members took this opportunity to show support and encourage residents to shop local.

Encouragingly, confirmed cases of Covid-19 remained low, and case numbers in the 7 days leading up to 14 May saw a further reduction by comparison to the week before. The Covid case rate in Cannock Chase was currently below the overall rates in Staffordshire, the West Midlands and England.

In respect of the vaccination rollout across the District, the Leader advised that as of 16 May, approximately 58% of residents had received their first dose of vaccination with 33% having received their second.

(ii) West Midlands Designer Outlet Village

The Leader advised that the Designer Outlet village opened on 12 April 2021 and noted it was a fantastic local asset. As the development continued to progress, and as the shops within the Centre continued to open up, the Leader again wished them every success.

(iii) Retirement of Mike Edmonds, Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles

The Leader confirmed with sadness that Mike Edmonds, Head of Environment and Healthy Lifestyles, would be retiring from the Council later this month. He had first joined the Council in 1990 as a Principal Rating Officer.

After 14 years working in taxation, Mr Edmonds had greatly diversified and had since worked in Building Control, CCTV, Social Alarms, Customer Services, Environmental Protection and Private Sector Housing.

More recently, in his current role, Mr Edmonds had secured Rugeley Swimming Pool, the Community Sport and Recreation Hub, and introduced Artificial Turf Pitches at

Cardinal Griffin, Bradbury Lane, and shortly, Rugeley Leisure Centre. These improvements were all tributes to the work of Mr Edmonds and his team.

Over the past 15 months Mr Edmonds' dedication had helped to protect services, and he had worked tirelessly to support Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles to survive, having postponed his retirement to do so. The Leader was sure Members would agree that this showed his sheer selflessness and dedication of staff.

The Leader thanked Mr Edmonds for the past 31 years' service and wished him a happy and healthy retirement.

(iv) New Administration

The Leader noted that she had already taken the opportunity to welcome new Members, but following the change in Administration a week ago, felt it would be wrong not to take the opportunity to touch on the Administration's immediate priorities:

- The importance of listening and taking stock of where the Council was had been mentioned previously. Engaging with residents, but equally the Senior Leadership Team, Council employees and fellow Councillors, regardless of political allegiance. By working constructively together, the Leader stated that this would be a strong, ambitious and resilient Council.
- The pandemic had brought challenges and tragedy. The focus must be on recovery and ensuring local communities flourished.
- Rainbows had become a recognised symbol of hope during the pandemic, and alongside the NHS, local volunteers in their various forms, were the treasure holding communities together.
- The opportunity would be taken to further the Council's work within its communities, and work together to shape the future of the area. The health, wellbeing and safety of residents as we emerged from the pandemic was vital, and the Council's partnerships with statutory bodies, groups providing invaluable services within the community, and the County Council, would be strengthened.
- Economic recovery and long-term prosperity were a priority, and Cabinet would be immediately progressing the 'Levelling Up Fund' application. As an Administration, they were aware of the potential financial challenges the Council may face, but were clear that supporting small business, local entrepreneurs and reinvigorating town centres was key. High streets were evolving and they must transform into destinations, the beating hearts of communities, attracting residents to shop, socialise and enjoy. In June, the Cabinet would review a pilot in respect of car parking to attract visitors back and provide businesses with a much needed boost.
- Equally, tackling climate change and improving the local environment would be at the forefront of the Administration's agenda. They would work swiftly towards becoming a true paperless authority and reduce the carbon footprint of the District. Over the past 2 years, the Leader noted she had spoken many times on the importance of improving the District's parks and protecting its green spaces, something that had become particularly apparent during lockdown. Cabinet would shortly consider a report that concentrated on repairing the bridges and boardwalks across the District and take steps to determine work required to revitalise parks and play areas.

Finally, the Leader noted that as the new administration settled in, they would continually review the needs of residents and, hoped that Councillors from across the Chamber will work with them to ensure Cannock Chase was a place Members were proud to call home.

12. Form and Composition of the Cabinet

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Miss O. Lyons, notified the Council of the form and composition of the Cabinet:

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

13. Leader of the Opposition

The Chairman called upon the Leader of the largest opposition group to confirm the acceptance of office as the Leader of the Opposition.

Councillor G. Adamson (Labour) confirmed his acceptance of office as Leader of the Opposition.

14. Form and Composition of the Shadow Cabinet

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor G. Adamson, notified the Council of the form and composition of the Shadow Cabinet:

Councillor	Shadow Portfolio
G. Adamson	Leader of the Opposition
T.B. Johnson	Deputy Leader of the Opposition and District Development Shadow Portfolio Leader
J.T. Kraujalis	Community Engagement, Health & Wellbeing Shadow Portfolio Leader
J.A.A. Newbury	Environment & Climate Change Shadow Portfolio Leader
J.P.T.L. Preece	Housing, Heritage & Leisure Shadow Portfolio Leader

P.T. Witton Innovation and High Streets Shadow Portfolio Leader

F.W.C. Allen Neighbourhood Safety & Partnerships Shadow Portfolio Leader

15. Allocation of Seats to Committees and Other Bodies

Consideration was given to the Report of the Interim Managing Director (Item 12.1 – 12.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

A copy of Appendix 1 of the report, setting out the allocation of seats to Committees and Other Bodies for each of the Groups on the Council, was tabled at the start of the meeting.

Resolved:

That the allocation of seats to the different Political Groups to the Council's Committees and Other Bodies, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be confirmed.

16. Appointment of Members, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Other Bodies for 2021-22

A schedule setting out the nominations provided by each of the Political Group Leaders for Members to be appointed to the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Other Bodies, together with nominations for the appointments of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen (Item 13.1 – 13.6 of the Official Minutes of the Council) was moved by the Leader of the Council.

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The membership of the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Other Bodies for the 2021-22 municipal year, as set out in the schedule circulated in advance of the meeting, be agreed.
- (B) The Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and Other Bodies for the 2021-22 municipal year, as set out below, be agreed:

Committee	Chairman (Councillor)	Vice-Chairman (Councillor)
Economic Recovery Scrutiny Committee	Mrs. S.L. Thompson	J.T. Kraujalis
Financially Resilient Council Scrutiny Committee	R.J. Hughes	G. Adamson
Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	M.S. Buttery	J.A.A. Newbury
Planning Control Committee	P.D. Startin	A.M. Muckley
Licensing and Public Protection Committee	B. Jones	T.B. Johnson
Audit & Governance Committee	P.G.C. Jones	J.A.A. Newbury
Standards Committee	C.D. Smith	T.B. Johnson
Trade Union Consultative Forum	J.P. Johnson	N/A

17. Representatives on Outside Bodies 2021-22

Consideration was given to the Report of the Interim Managing Director (Item 14.1 – 14.3 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

A copy of Appendix 1 to the report, setting out the schedule of proposed appointments of representative to outside bodies, was tabled at the start of the meeting.

Members agreed to suspend Council Procedure Rule 15(8) for voting purposes, and then determined the appointment of representatives to outside bodies. Following a vote being taken for those bodies where the number of nominations were greater than the number of seats available, or no prior nomination had been received, it was:

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The Council's representatives on outside bodies for the 2021-22 municipal year, as detailed in the schedule included as an Annex to these Minutes, be approved.
- (B) The Managing Director, in consultation with the Political Groups Leaders, makes appointments to additional outside bodies, and amendments to any existing outside bodies, as necessary, throughout the municipal year.
- (C) In the event of the Political Groups Leaders failing to agree nominations to outside bodies, as referred to in decision (B), above, the appointment would be a matter for determination by Council.
- (D) The Managing Director, when appointing representatives to outside bodies, be authorised to determine which of the appointments should be classed as an 'approved duty' for the purposes of claiming travel and subsistence expenses.

18. Appointment of Interim Joint Chief Executive

Consideration was given to the Report of the Leader of the Council (Item 15.1 – 15.11 of the Official Minutes of the Council).

Resolved:

That:

- (A) The appointment of Tim Clegg as Interim Joint Chief Executive for Stafford Borough Council and Cannock Chase District Council for a period of 14 months ("the Term") with effect from 1 June 2021, be approved, along with his appointment as Head of Paid Service from 1 August 2021.
- (B) An interim report be submitted after 8 months in relation to the effectiveness of the interim sharing arrangements and an outline business case for ongoing sharing between the two Councils.
- (C) During the Term, Mr Clegg would remain employed by Stafford Borough Council and seconded to Cannock Chase District Council by agreement under section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- (D) The full costs of the Joint Chief Executive post be shared with Stafford Borough Council on a 50% / 50% basis, and it was accepted that the current salary base for the post would be increased by 15% during the Term, to reflect its increased responsibilities across the two Councils.

- (E) A £20,000 budget was set aside to enable independent support and advice to be procured to progress the business case (with Stafford Borough Council also setting aside £20,000 for this purpose).
- (F) For the period of the interim arrangements, no changes be made to the existing interim arrangements in relation to the Local Returning Officer and Local Electoral Registration Officer for Cannock Chase Council, with the duties remaining with the Head of Governance and Corporate Services.
- (G) The Interim Joint Chief Executive be delegated authority to carry out any functions currently delegated to the Managing Director within the Constitution (except those relating to the roles of the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer).
- (H) In order to provide adequate cover arrangements, and to provide a mechanism in relation to conflicts of interest, the Interim Joint Chief Executive be delegated authority to appoint an Interim Deputy, from the existing Senior Management, for Cannock Chase Council. The Deputy post being delegated authority to undertake the role of Head of Paid Service function in the absence of the Interim Joint Chief Executive, and to be subject to a 10% uplift for the 12-month period commencing 1 August 2021.
- (I) A non-decision-making Shared Services Board be established, consisting of the Leader and Deputy Leader (or nominee) of each Council, together with the Interim Joint Chief Executive, Interim Deputies for each Council and Shared Services Client Leads of each Authority, as appropriate. The Board would report to both Councils with proposals for consideration.
- (J) The Head of Governance and Corporate Services, together with the Head of Human Resources, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to finalise the necessary legal and HR arrangements in relation to the above decisions.

The meeting closed at 7:24 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

Council Appointments to Outside Bodies for 2021-22

Descriptors for letters shown in brackets after Members' names:

- (C) = Conservatives
- (L) = Labour
- (CCI&G) = Chase Community Independents & Green

Name of Body (and number of seats)	Date of Retirement	Appointed Representative
Barbara Bird Memorial Fund (x1)	2024 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M. McCalli (C)
Beaudesert Sports Field and Recreation Ground Charity Management Committee (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. A. Muckley (CCI&G)
Cannock Advice Centre (x3)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P. Jones (C) Cllr. P. Kruskonjic (C) Cllr. H. Sutton (C)
Cannock Bowling Green Trust (x4)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. G. Adamson (L) Cllr. P. Jones (C) Cllr. D. Smith (C) Cllr. H. Sutton (C)
Cannock Chase Arts Council (x3)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P. Haden (C) Cllr. R. Hughes (C) Cllr. J. Preece (L)
Cannock Conduit Trust (x5)	Upon retirement from the Council	Cllr. F. Allen (L) Cllr. M. Davis (L) Cllr. J. Kraujalis (L) Cllr. H. Sutton (C) Cllr. P. Witton (L)

Name of Body (and number of seats)	Date of Retirement	Appointed Representative
Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P Hewitt (C)
Charity for the Provision of Allotments for the Labouring Poor of the Ancient Parish of Rugeley (x3)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. L. Arduino (C) Cllr. N. Lyons (C) Cllr. S. Thompson (C)
Charity for the Provision of a Recreation Ground for Inhabitants of the Ancient Parish of Rugeley (x3)	2023 Annual Meeting	Cllr. A. Boucker (C) Cllr. R. Hughes (C) Cllr. N. Lyons (C)
Chase Sports Council (x6)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M Buttery (C) Cllr. C Frew (C) Cllr. J Johnson (C) Cllr. A. Layton (CCI&G) Cllr. J. Preece (L) Cllr. L Wilson (C)
Chetwynd Charity (x4)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. A Boucker (C) Cllr. R Hughes (C)
	2024 Annual Meeting	Cllr. C. Frew (C) Cllr. J. Johnson (C)
Etching Hill Village Hall Committee (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. J. Johnson (C)
Foundation of Clara Caroline Walhouse and the John Wood and Walhouse Church of England School Foundation (x1)	2024 Annual Meeting	Cllr. H. Sutton (C)
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P. Hewitt (C)
Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP Joint Scrutiny Committee (<i>Substitute Member</i>) (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P. Startin (C)

Name of Body (and number of seats)	Date of Retirement	Appointed Representative
Landor Society (x2)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. O. Lyons (C) Cllr. P. Startin (C)
Longdon (Cotton) Almshouses (x2)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. J. Johnson (C)
	2025 Annual Meeting	Cllr. R. Hughes (C)
National Association of Councillors (x2)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P. Jones (C) Cllr. D. Smith (C)
Norton Canes Community Centre (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M. Hoare (C)
Poplars Landfill Site Liaison Committee (x7)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M. Buttery (C) Cllr. A. Fitzgerald (C) Cllr. P. Haden (C) Cllr. M. Hoare (C) Cllr. J. Kraujalis (L) Cllr. P. Kruskonjic (C) Cllr. J. Newbury (L)
Shoal Hill Common Joint Committee (x2)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. D. Smith (C) Cllr. H. Sutton (C)
Slitting Mill Village Hall Committee (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M. Sutherland (C)
Staffordshire County Council Corporate Parenting Panel (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. B. Jones (C)
Staffordshire County Council – Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee (<i>Co-opted Member</i>) (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M. Buttery (C)

Name of Body (and number of seats)	Date of Retirement	Appointed Representative
Staffordshire County Council – Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee (<i>Substitute Member</i>) (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. S. Thompson (C)
Staffordshire Playing Fields Association (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. M. BATTERY (C)
West Midlands Combined Authority (<i>Non-Constituent Member</i>) (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. O. Lyons (C)
West Midlands Combined Authority (<i>Substitute Member 1</i>) (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. B. Jones (C)
West Midlands Combined Authority (<i>Substitute Member 2</i>) (x1)	2022 Annual Meeting	Cllr. P. Hewitt (C)
West Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (x1)	2023 Annual Meeting	Cllr. V. Jones (C)