

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MONDAY, 11 APRIL 2005

IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT: Councillors

Williams, B. (Chairman)  
Freeman, M.P. (Vice-Chairman)

Ball, G.D.	Dixon, D.I.
Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Easton, R.
Carr, I.R.	Morgan, C.W.J.
Daly, K.	Thomas, D.
Davies, D.N.	Toth, J.

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. D.J. Bennett, K.L. Bennett, R. Jones, R.C. Turville and A. Williams).

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman referred to the death of Councillor Reg Cooper and the Committee observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS OF MEMBERS IN CONTRACTS AND OTHER MATTERS AND RESTRICTION ON VOTING BY MEMBERS

<u>Member</u>	<u>Nature of Interest</u>	<u>Type</u>
C.W.J. Morgan	Council Tenant	Personal
D.I. Dixon	Council Tenant	Personal
J. Toth	Partner works in the Council's CCTV/Social Alarms Section	Personal
J. Toth	Member of Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Parish Council	Personal
J. Toth	Member of Staffordshire County Council	Personal
D.N. Davies	Member of Rugeley Town Council	Personal

R. Easton	Member of Rugeley Town Council	Personal
R. Easton	Member of Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council	Personal
R. Easton	Eligible for Concessionary Fares	Personal
I.R. Carr	Member of Heath Hayes and Wimblebury Parish Council	Personal
B. Williams	Member of Rugeley Town Council	Personal
B. Williams	Member of Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council	Personal
B. Williams	Eligible for Concessionary Fares	Personal

38. AUDIT COMMISSION – ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER 2004

Consideration was given to the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2004 (Enclosure 4.1 – 4.27). The Director of Resources outlined the key messages from each page of the document and identified any issues requiring attention. Members were afforded the opportunity to raise any issues.

Arising from this the following points were raised:-

Concern that Heads of Service were not present at the meeting in order that Members could ask questions relating to the contents of the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter.

The need for tenants to be given a balanced view on information relating to LSVT.

The need to clearly decide and determine the future of the Leisure Service for the whole District.

The need for the Leisure Management Business Plan to be completed in a timely manner.

The need for the Council to implement the main provisions of the new role of the Monitoring Officer under the Local Government Act 2000. It was considered that a number of areas required action, in particular those outlined in Enclosures 4.10 and 4.11 of the report as follows:-

- (a) The Standards Committee had not formally met since the new constitution was introduced in January 2002. This is contrary to

the Local Government Act (LGA) 2000. This Council has drafted terms of reference for the Standards Committee per the LGA 2000 but this has not finalised and approved them as required by the Act.

- (b) The Council has not been presented with a detailed paper on the role of the Monitoring Officer. In accordance with best practice, Members should receive and approve such a paper detailing the role of the Monitoring Officer and should include a detailed working protocol of how the role should work in practice.
- (c) The Council has introduced the model code of conduct and has established registers of interests for Members. At the time of KPMG LLP's review there was no monitoring of these registers to ensure the relevant rules and regulations are being complied with. KPMG LLP understands that subsequent to the review the Assistant Solicitor to the Council has undertaken an audit of these registers.
- (d) The Whistle Blowing Policy needs to be updated to reflect the Council's new officer structures and roles. The Monitoring Officer role in the collating and monitoring of any whistle blowing allegations needs to be formalised and incorporated into this policy.
- (e) At the time of the review a Deputy Monitoring Officer had not been appointed. However, subsequent to the review of the Head of Human Resources has been appointed to the post.
- (f) Training on the constitution and code of member conduct had been offered to Members. However, not all Members had attended. The Monitoring Officer should ensure that all Members receive sufficient training in these areas.

The need for the Old Hednesford Road Parkland Development Scheme to be progressed.

There then followed a lengthy discussion on the contents of the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2004.

**RESOLVED:**

- (A) That the Head of Leisure and the Portfolio Leader for Culture and Sport be invited to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in order that Members could ask questions relating to the completion of the Business Plan.

- (B) That the Standards Committee receive a report outlining the areas for action as detailed in (a) – (f) above and a further report be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee regarding these issues.

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CHAIRMAN