

**CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE**  
**CUSTOMERS AND CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 4.00 P.M.**  
**IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK**

**PART 1**

PRESENT:  
Councillors

Johnson, T.B. (Chairman)  
Cooper, Miss J. (Vice-Chairman)

Bernard, Mrs. A.F.	Kraujalis, J.T.
Burnett, G.	Pearson, A.
Freeman, Miss M.A.	Stretton, Mrs. P.Z.
Hoare, M.W.A.	Sutherland, M.

Also in attendance –  
Councillor Mrs M.A. Davis (Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader, Observer).

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received for Councillors C.H. Anslow and Mrs. D. Grice.

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

No declarations of interests or party whip declarations were received.

**3. Scope and Functions of the Customers and Corporate Scrutiny Committee**

The Head of Governance delivered a presentation to Members on the above, which covered the following:

- Support for the Committee;
- Background to Scrutiny – key legislation;
- Purpose of Scrutiny;
- The Committee's Role;
- The Committee's Remit;
- Performance Management;
- Scrutiny Work Programme;
- Examples of Scrutiny Work;
- Work Programme 2015/16;
- Priority Delivery Plans;
- Customers Priority Delivery Plan (PDP) – strategic objectives and direction of travel performance indicators.

Councillor Sutherland raised concern about the reporting cycle for the work programme in that it would not necessarily allow the same Members of the Committee to see through work from one year to the next.

Councillor Kraujalis suggested that each of the new Scrutiny Committee's could produce an annual report on work undertaken in line with the relevant municipal year.

Councillor Burnett recommended that this matter be referred to the 'transitional' Scrutiny Committee for further consideration as part of its wider review of Scrutiny.

Members attention was drawn to the fact that at present no direction of travel performance indicators were listed for the 'making the best use of limited resources' strategic objectives, so Officers were open to suggestions as to what could be included.

#### **4. Work Programme 2015-16**

The Chairman opened up the discussion on this item by suggesting that no more than three specific strands of work be chosen in order that they can be done well over the remainder of the year.

Councillor Kraujalis then suggested that due to there being less time in the current year than normal to carry out work, that only two specific work strands be chosen.

Members then considered the following as potential work items:

- Community Engagement Review;
- Council website refresh / implementation of electronic web-based forms;
- Support Strategy for Universal Credit claimants;
- Asset Management Plan

##### Community Engagement Review

The Chairman recommended that this be one the Committee's key work items for the rest of the year.

Councillor Kraujalis agreed, and stated it would be better handled by this Committee rather than the cross party working group which had been proposed at the Annual Council Meeting held in May.

The Head of Governance advised that this review could be run in a similar manner to how the Community Forums review was undertaken with the old Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Burnett raised that the Council's ICT and Marketing/Communications teams should be invited to give their input into this review and the Committee should look at other local authorities to establish what they do well and not so well in this area.

The Head of Governance advised that the community engagement remit sat primarily within the Policy & Performance team, supported by Communications. The ICT Service did not have a direct input into this issue but provided the infrastructure to support it.

#### Council website refresh / implementation of electronic web-based forms

Councillor Sutherland suggested that as the new website was due to go live shortly, Members should be given an opportunity to view and provide feedback on it before being officially launched.

Councillor Kraujalis raised concern about the publication of councillors' personal contact details on the website (name, contact numbers and postal address) with respect to potential ID fraud.

The Head of Governance suggested that such an issue could be looked at as part of a wider review of data transparency and information published online. Members decided this was not a priority for review at the current time.

#### Support Strategy for Universal Credit claimants

Councillor Pearson requested that this be included as one of the main work items due to being a key issue for residents. Councillors Miss Freeman and Mrs Davis gave their support for this.

Councillor Kraujalis advised that the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and Cannock Advice Centre (CAC) were in place to provide such support, so they should be tailoring their services for this purpose, especially given the amount of funding both organisations received from the Council each year.

Councillor Freeman then suggested that the Committee should also be scrutinising the work of the CAB, and there had been dissatisfaction for a long time with their service provision.

Councillor Kraujalis then commented as this could potentially be a large piece of work, it would be better to start looking at towards the end of 2015-16 and early into 2016-17.

The Head of Governance advised that the Universal Credit scheme had not yet formally launched and it was up to the Department for Work and Pensions as to when that would happen, therefore it would be more appropriate to pick this up as a piece of work at a later stage anyway. Officers could provide an update at the next meeting on progress to date and what was expected to happen in the future.

The Head of Commissioning further advised that the Council had annual service level agreements in place with the CAB and CAC, so the Committee could reasonably ask for representatives from each organisation to attend a future meeting to provide updates on their current and future work, particularly related to Universal Credit and benefits claimants.

#### Asset Management Plan

Councillor Burnett suggested that this be included on the work programme to enable Councillors to better understand what assets the Council owns and all

associated costs, as it may be a number of years since the Council had such a Plan in place.

The Head of Governance advised that this could be done, but it would be necessary to understand the intention of the reports which were scheduled to be considered by Cabinet in October 2015 and April 2016.

**5. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 30 November 2015

The meeting closed at 4:55pm

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CHAIRMAN