

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH, 2013 AT 4.00 P.M.
IN THE CIVIC CENTRE, BEECROFT ROAD, CANNOCK

PART 1

PRESENT:
Councillors

Freeman, Miss. M. (Chairman)
Gamble, B. (Vice-Chairman)

Allt, Mrs. A.
Bennett, C.

Davis, Mrs. M.A.
Jones, R.

20. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

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

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made.

22. Minutes

Councillor B. Gamble referred to Minute 17. Update – Langbourne Development and the recent press coverage concerning the delays over the demolition and how the project could be held up due to funding issues.

Councillor Mrs. M.A. Davis referred to the recent Cannock Community Forum and advised that neither Staffordshire County Council nor Angela Schulp, District Commissioning Lead for Health and Social Care were aware of the issues, and the whole of the plans for the development would need to be re-submitted to planning.

Steve Shilvock, Head of Environmental Health was under the impression that Staffordshire County Council would re-submit the plans for the Langbourne development; however this would not include the Ivy House scheme.

AGREED:

(A) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December, 2012 be approved as a correct record.

(B) That the Head of Environmental Health liaise with Angela Schulp, District Commissioning Lead for Health and Social Care to establish the current situation with regard to the Langbourne Development.

23. Horse Meat Contamination of Beef and other Food Products

The Committee received a detailed presentation from Dave Prosser-Davies, Food and Safety Manager.

He reported that Irish authorities found horsemeat in products labelled as containing only beef. It was found months before, however tests had to be re-carried out to ensure they were correct due to implications for the UK and European Food Industries and a number of factories were identified as the source of beef products that had been contaminated or adulterated.

The UK Food Standards Agency (FSA) approached industry to test all its beef products for horse and the next round of tests revealed that the "beef" in frozen products made for Tesco, Aldi and Findus by the French manufacturer, Comigel was up to 100% horse.

Comigel made cheap beef meals for supermarkets and branded companies in 16 different countries. Horsemeat meals were withdrawn in 7 countries.

It was reported that Comigel subcontracted its ready meal production to a factory in Luxembourg, Tavola. It was supplied with meat by a company called Spanghero who had purchased meat from a Dutch trader already convicted of passing horse off as beef.

The Dutch trader ran Draap Trading Ltd, and it emerged during the owner's trial in Holland that he had supplied French companies with horsemeat imported from South America and Mexico fraudulently labelled as Dutch and German "beef" dating back to 2007.

In April 2012, The Food Standards Agency (FSA), after pressure from Brussels, banned the use of desinewed meat, or DSM in these products. DSM is a high quality form of recovered meat. When the use of this was banned, manufacturers had to then source other cheap protein to use in products.

It was reported that a number of companies dominate the beef processing and supermarket sectors across Europe. They developed supply chains, particularly for economy lines which enable them to buy the ingredients for processed foods from wherever they were cheapest at any point.

He reported that national devotion to horses had led to over breeding on a massive scale, and large numbers of animals were being destroyed each year. It was estimated that thousands of horses in the UK were slaughtered each year for consumption abroad and it was suspected that, despite the

ban on the export of live horses for slaughter trade was still taking place.

It was reported that bute levels would have to be multiplied 1,000 times to be at the same level as that which used to be given to humans. Therefore even if products were consumed that contained horse meat contaminated with bute, the risk of damage to a person's health was very low.

He advised that the FSA was still in charge of food safety however, the Department of Health was responsible for nutritional standards, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs covered food labelling and veterinary medicines.

It was reported that Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Trading Standards carried out an informal survey in January at supermarkets and found 2 items which contained traces of horse DNA. Both were nationally withdrawn from retail sale the same day and both samples contained less than 1% horsemeat.

Subsequently Staffordshire County Council took samples from a business who supplies SCC establishments and there was no presence of horsemeat.

SCC had contact with all Staffordshire based businesses who had a risk of being involved and all of those had taken steps to ensure that the products they were producing did not contain horsemeat.

Visits were being undertaken to all LA approved meat processing premises and coldstores and Staffordshire Schools withdrew beef from the menu as a precaution and would source meat from local suppliers in future.

It was reported that the Council had assisted SCC in their visits including approved premises involved in meat and no issues were found.

Members were then offered the opportunity to ask questions.

A Member referred to the FSA and the current situation and asked about samples that were still outstanding for testing. The Food Safety Manager commented that it was the legal duty of food retailers/manufacturers to ensure food was safe and that labelling was correct was on food, and it was for them to undertake the necessary sampling. He reported that the Council's Environmental Health Service takes approximately 10 food samples per month, and regulators could not possibly cover the commercial demands for sampling.

With regard to food labelling the Food Safety Manager reported that the legislation had not changed and that all ingredients contained within products were required to be detailed on the label.

In response to a question raised by a Member, the Food Safety Manager explained that where horsemeat was found in products at a level of over

1%, the Food Standards Agency stated it was unlikely that poor cleaning or accidental contamination could have taken place.

24. Priority Delivery Plan 2012-13 – Health and Wellbeing Actions

Consideration was given to the Performance Outturn for Quarters 2 and 3.

AGREED:

Members noted the Performance Outturn for Quarters 2 and 3.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 5.00 p.m.