

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 28 June 2017 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa, at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Butler, Coker (Deputy Leader), Grainger, Phillips, Rhead and Whiting.

Also present: Councillors; Mrs Falp – Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Whitnash Residents' Association (Independent) Group Observer; Councillor Naimo, Labour Group Observer; Quinney, representative from Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee;

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mobbs and Thompson.

Councillor Coker chaired the meeting in Councillor Mobbs' absence.

13. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

14. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 5 April and 12 April 2017 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Part 1

(Items on which a decision by Council on 9 August 2017 was required)

15. **Updated Council Strategy and Performance Management Framework**

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive which set out a proposed revised Council strategy for the District, along with an updated performance management framework.

The report requested approval of the proposed revised Council Strategy, which was set out in tables 1 and 2 of the report and at Appendix 1.

In addition, the strategy would be published in a short document and agreement on the narrative should be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Finance Portfolio Holder. If the revised policy framework was agreed then the Council would need to know if it was making progress in achieving the intended outcomes. This would be the subject of a further report to agree the measures that would be used to track the proposed outcomes on an annual basis.

The report advised that last year the Council was part of a Peer Review by the Local Government Association (LGA) which was reported to the Executive in April along with a proposed Action Plan in response. That Action Plan committed the Executive to bring forward an updated Council Strategy which addressed the concerns within the LGA Peer

Review report suggesting that the Council needed to be clearer as to its priorities and as to why it had those priorities.

As suggested by the LGA, an away day was held which helped refine the views and priorities of the Executive, for consideration by the wider Council.

The report highlighted the three key points about the Council's current Policy Framework. These were;

- recognition that the Council needed an internal Mission Statement – the Council's long standing vision was widely acknowledged but the supporting description was long winded;
- the Sustainable Community Strategy no longer served the same purpose as when it was adopted in 2009 and needed revisiting; and
- the Council's internal change programme Fit for the Future with its three strands of People, Service, and Money had significant internal staff recognition and support and success and so should be retained.

It was also recognised that the Council core values, adopted in 2007, were now widely understood by staff and remained highly relevant and so should be retained. The core values were Community Focussed; Value for Money; Environmentally Sensitive; Honesty and Openness; and Fairness and Equity.

The report outlined the proposed policy Framework in full at section 3.4 of the report. However, the a summary of the aims were to maintain the overall vision ("To make Warwick District a great place to live work and visit"), to agree a Mission Statement, to subsume and summarise the intentions of the Sustainable Communities Strategy with the Fit for the Future (FFF) Strategy.

The Mission Statement was proposed to read as follows:

To deliver our ambitions for the communities of Warwick District by: working as one Council and in partnership with others; being Enterprising in our approach; making the most of our creativity and innovation; transforming our services through the use of digital and other technologies; maximising the use of our assets; employing, engaging and empowering great staff; making sure that we can both keep "the lights of the day job on" and do "the bright lights of our key projects".

In addition, the proposal was to translate these strategies, which would inform the annual Service Area Plans across the Council and in turn would inform Team Operational Plans and ultimately individual staff appraisals.

The framework would also agree and ensure that the Council's Key Projects (Table 2) would be aligned to the FFF Strategy whilst retaining the Values as stated in earlier in the report.

Once complete an update to the Council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) was required, as proposed and set out in detail on pages 3 onwards of Appendix 1 to the report. The framework would

require additional support and it was proposed that the £60,000 allowed by the Executive in April 2017 be used to achieve this ongoing support.

The alternative options were that the Council could decide not to change its overall strategy in the way set out in this report. However, what was recommended kept the best of what the Council had had over the past few years but enabled the Council to refine and focus its overall strategy.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee requested that:

- (1) the wording in respect of “lights” in the Mission Statement referring to “the lights of the day job on” and “the bright lights of our key projects” should be changed as Members were not keen on this phrasing; and
- (2) District car parks be listed as a major project in Table 2.

Councillor Naimo addressed Members and explained that it was felt that the introduction needed to be more precise because currently, it was a little vague.

In response, the Executive advised that it had noted the comments made and these would be taken into account when the main document was drafted. In relation to the car parking project request, Councillor Coker assured Members that this would also be taken into account.

Having considered the report, and having had regard to the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Executive

Recommended that Council agree the proposed revised Council Strategy set out in Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 1, to the report; and

Resolved that

- (1) subject to recommendation above being agreed, the Strategy be published in a short document and authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Finance Portfolio Holder to agree the narrative for the document;
- (2) subject to recommendation 2.1 being agreed, a further report will be brought on proposed measures and will be used to track the proposed outcomes on an annual basis; and
- (3) the updated performance management framework as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, Table 3 onwards, be put in operation.

(The Portfolio Holder for this Item was Councillor Mobbs.)

16. **Review of Warwick District Council Members' Allowances Scheme**

The Executive considered a report from the Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer which brought forward the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following a review of Warwick District Members' Allowances Scheme undertaken in 2017.

At its meeting in July 2016, the Executive approved the terms of reference for undertaking a review of the Warwick District Council Members' Allowances Scheme.

A panel was convened under The Local Authorities' (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021) ("the 2003 Regulations") which comprised of Dr Hall, Ms Howe, Mr Purser and Mr Wilkinson. Specific details of the individual panel members were provided at section 3.4 of the report.

The report explained that all Councils were required to convene their Panel and seek its advice before they made any changes or amendments to their Members' Allowances Scheme. They must 'pay regard' to their Panel's recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme. On this particular occasion, the Panel had been reconvened under the 2003 Regulations as it had not reviewed the allowances scheme since 2012 and there had been no changes to the allowances since 2009.

The IRP met at Riverside House, Royal Leamington Spa on 24 and 25 January 2017, in closed session to enable them to meet with Members and Officers and conduct its deliberations in confidence.

All Members were given the opportunity to meet with the IRP and 11 Councillors took this opportunity. Members were also sent a questionnaire addressing the issues that the IRP were required to consider. 20 Councillors responded to the questionnaire and two further Councillors responded to say they had no comments.

In addition, the IRP met with the Chief Executive and the Democratic Services Manager for factual briefings on political structures and constitutional changes since the last review and to obtain an overview on the challenges facing the Council.

The IRP took account of the range and levels of allowances paid in comparable local authorities, namely the four other district/borough councils in Warwickshire and Warwick District Council's eight Nearest Neighbours as defined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy or CIPFA (2014 model), which were used by councils for benchmarking purposes.

The IRP's report and recommendations were attached as Appendix A to the report.

An alternative option was that the Executive could make a number of recommendations to Council about the Independent report. This was

because within law it only had to 'pay regard' to their panel's recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme. In addition, the Executive could consider not proposing alterations to the broadband allowance budget at this stage, in case the Councillor IT Working Party brought forward further proposals for the use of mobile data with iPads.

Additional information was circulated prior to the meeting which provided responses to a number of questions raised by Councillors. These included details relating to the percentage uplift in staff salaries since 2009, benchmarking of Warwick District Council's Civic allowances, allowances for Planning Committee members and other special responsibility allowances and the ICO registration fee. In addition, Members were supplied with links to the 2005 and 2008 Members Allowances reports.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report.

Having considered the report and the additional responses to queries raised, the Executive agreed the recommendations subject to recommendation 2.1 being amended.

Recommended that

- (1) the recommendations in the IRP report, attached at Appendix 1, are implemented from 1 September 2017, with the increased cost, estimated at £19,000 for 2017/18's met from the Contingency Budget and the full cost included within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for subsequent years;
- (2) the Councillor IT Working Party bring a report to the Executive concluding its work after Council has reached a decision in relation to the IRP's Members' Allowances Scheme recommendations; and
- (3) Council thank the Independent Review Panel for its work and detailed report which clearly sets out the challenges faced and reasoning for its recommendations.

(The Portfolio Holder for this Item was Councillor Mobbs.)

17. St Mary's Lands Masterplan and Update on Progress of Delivery Plan

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive which sought approval for the masterplan of the St Mary's Lands area of Warwick, following the undertaking of research work on the need for and impact of a hotel as part of the elements of a masterplan for the whole area.

In addition, the report also provided a further update on progress of the agreed Delivery Plan for this area. A few relatively minor decisions were needed to help further progress implementation of the Delivery Plan.

Members were asked to note the two research reports relating to the need for and the impact of a hotel in this area, approve the adoption of the Masterplan attached at Appendix 3 to the report and note the progress made to date as attached at Appendix 4 to the report. This included an update on specific issues including; the footpath/cycleway, the Saltisford Brook Car Park, and a new entrance to, and concourse at, the racecourse. Full details relating to these issues were provided in sections 3.5 to 3.11 of the report.

Members were also asked to agree that a further report be submitted to Executive in due course relating to the hotel proposal. Officers were mindful that bringing forward a hotel on the site would not be straight forward and a land use allocation within a masterplan did not of itself guarantee delivery of the proposal.

The preparation of a masterplan for the St Mary's Lands area was Council policy as explained at paragraph 4.3.3 of the report. If agreed by Council, the masterplan would form part of the Council's planning policy framework used for determining planning and related applications as well as providing a framework for investment decisions by the Council and its partners.

In addition, budgetary decisions were required relating to the repairs of the roof of Racing Club Warwick and the costs of funding the staff time from Plincke to deliver the remainder of the agreed Delivery Programme for 2017/18.

As explained in paragraphs 3.13 to 3.15 in the report, experience had demonstrated that the Council's progress was being impeded by the lack of resource available to deliver the agreed delivery plan. The report proposed that the contract with Plincke be extended to provide an enhanced amount of officer time for the year to June 2018. It was estimated that this would cost £34,000 and could be funded from the Community Projects Reserve. However, this would require an exemption from the Council's Code of Procurement Practice under Clause 6.4 and the supporting reasons for this were explained in paragraph 3.15.

Finally, approval was sought to run a community online competition to find a new name for the St Mary's Lands Park, the results of which would be fed back to the Executive. It was hoped this would also help to better promote the area, resulting in achieving this area as a destination park.

There were a number of alternative options available to Members and these were detailed in full at section 7 of the report. These included not including the hotel proposal within the masterplan, not receiving a report on the implementation of a hotel, or not adopting the masterplan. However, Members needed to be mindful that the plan had

been based on a considerable amount of public support and it might not be conducive to the community if variations were made.

An alternative proposal to address the lack of resource would be to accept a slow pace of delivery but this carried with it the risk that some projects might not come to fruition at all, or the Council could employ an additional member of staff temporarily. This would likely result in costing the Council £35-£40,000 but would lose the benefit of Plincke's knowledge and experience of the scheme.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Having considered the report the Executive

Recommended that

- (1) the research reports attached at Appendices 1 and 2 on the need for and impact of a hotel be noted;
- (2) the Masterplan at Appendix 2, to the minutes, is adopted;
- (3) a further report is brought to the Executive on how the hotel proposal may be brought forward for delivery;
- (4) progress on the implementation of the Delivery Plan as set out at Appendix 4 is noted and more specifically that:
 - i) the preferred route of the footpath/cycleway as shown on Plan 1 is agreed and appropriate legal agreements are entered to enable it to happen and to be maintained;
 - ii) the car park design for the extension of the Saltisford Brook car park as shown at Plan 2 be approved for the purposes of public consultation and that the response to the public consultation be subject to a further report in due course;
 - iii) the new entrance proposal to be funded by the Jockey Club shown at Plan 3 and supplemented by The District Council is supported; and
 - iv) the land shown on Plan 4 is leased to Racing Club Warwick on terms to be agreed along with other alterations to the Jockey Club's lease boundary to enable the proposed Multi use Games Area (MUGA) to be implemented;

Resolved that

- (5) up to £26,000 be moved from improving toilets in the area to assist with repairing the roof of Racing Club Warwick's (RCW) clubhouse subject to that sum being repaid from grants to be raised by RCW and the usual rules that the Council applies to RUCIS grants;
- (6) £34,000 is made available from the Community Project Reserve to fund staff time from Plincke to deliver the remainder of the agreed Delivery Programme for 2017/18;
- (7) an exemption from the Code of Procurement Practice under clause 6.4 be agreed to allow Plincke to carry out the work set out in Appendix 5 for the period to June 2018;
- (8) an online competition is run for a new name for the St Mary's Lands Park and the results fed back to the Executive; and
- (9) authority is delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business, to make any minor amendments to the Masterplan, for example, the correction of street names if necessary.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Butler.)

Part 2

(Items on which a decision by Council was not required)

18. Housing Related Support Services

The Executive considered a report from Housing Services which updated it on actions taken to protect the Lifeline and Housing Support Services from the loss of £463,700 of Supporting People funding from Warwickshire County Council, since the report presented to Executive in February 2017.

Supporting People funding of £463,700 per annum was previously contributing towards the cost of the provision of services to tenants in sheltered and designated properties but this funding, paid to the Council by Warwickshire County Council, ceased on 31 July 2016.

The Executive had agreed, on 13 January 2016, to approve the utilisation of additional budget provision, held within the HRA Business Plan, to maintain existing levels of Housing Related Support to tenants of the Council's sheltered schemes and properties designated for older people. This provision was made available while new proposals for funding the service were developed and brought forward for approval.

The Executive had agreed, on the 8 February 2017, plans that would seek to address the loss of funding. The plan had three parts: new charges for tenants; identifying savings of costs through a redesign of staffing; and a new marketing plan to generate additional income through the sale of Lifeline Services.

New charges for tenants in sheltered properties and tenants of designated properties were approved in February. These charges generated an estimated £308,000 p.a. This replaced Supporting People charges that previously had generated £166,000 p.a. This meant that additional income of £142,000 p.a. was being collected, that was reflected within the 2017/18 Original Budgets.

The redesign of staffing had been agreed by the Employment Committee which generated savings of £131,000 p.a. through salary and on cost reductions. This would result in the loss of 5.1 FTE posts.

All associated budgets had been examined and a further saving of £127,000 p.a. had been identified. The savings identified were as follows from: Overtime/use of bank staff £89,200; Savings on mileage costs of £20,000; Overheads £10,240; and IT software £6,000.

The final part of the plans was the marketing of our Lifeline and Support services. Some successful marketing initiatives had taken place which included:

- Lifeline vehicles were branded and were a visible presence in the District;
- distributed advertising in the Council Tax demands in Warwick District and Stratford District;
- distributed fliers with the bin collection;
- had renewed our online marketing materials; and
- attending community events and placing marketing materials in doctors surgeries and hospitals.

There were plans to sell many more Lifeline units and the associated services. This more commercial approach meant that the marketing plans needed to be more robust. The employment of a Project Officer, agreed at the last Employment Committee, would lead this work in liaison with our own media team. Our total income each year was £578,000 with plans to generate an additional income of £200,000p.a. by 2019/20.

A summary of the planned actions to address the loss of Supporting People funding and the financial impacts of those plans were as follows:

Summary of loss of funding and cost savings		
Loss of Supporting People funding		-£463,700
Additional income from tenant charges	£141,708	
Savings from reduced staff costs	£131,029	
Savings from other budgets	£126,940	

Total savings/additional income		£399,677
Remaining gap		-£64,023
Income from additional marketing activities		£200,000
Potential positive contribution to the HRA		£135,977

At Executive in February 2017, it was explained that some properties that were currently designated as older person properties were not best suited to this categorisation. Some properties advertised to the over 60s were receiving no or very few bids and then had to be re-advertised. There was an intention to consult with residents during the year to consider changes to age restrictions. Any proposals would come back to Executive for consideration.

Alternatively the Council could decide to no longer provide Lifeline Services or support services to older tenants. The changes proposed made the best use of resources, delivered savings to address the loss of funding and ensured that the Council would protect and continue what were considered valuable services for older and vulnerable tenants and private users.

The Council could also look to contract out Lifeline services. The restructuring of the service allowed the Council to deliver these services in a joined up approach to service delivery. Contracting out services could bring further savings but the current proposals allowed the Council, within existing resources, to continue with services in house, providing continuity of services and a joined up approach to services to older and vulnerable customers.

If the Council was unable to increase take up of Lifeline services within two years, a re-evaluation of the continuation of Lifeline services would take place.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

Resolved that

- (1) the progress that has been made in addressing the loss of funding from Warwickshire County Council, be noted;
- (2) the plans, set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report, for savings and additional income to address the loss of funding from the County Council, be approved; which will deliver £400,000 pa to address the loss of funding but leaves £64,000 as the remaining gap from the loss of Supporting People funding; and
- (3) further marketing activities are aiming to generate up to £200,000 pa, be noted with

minimum of at least £64,000 additional income to negate the loss of funding from WCC in full.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Phillips.)
The Forward Plan reference number was 854

19. **Draft Car Park Strategy**

The Executive considered a report from Neighbourhood Services which sought approval for public consultation on the draft Car Park Strategy.

The draft Car Park Strategy considered the current level of car parking provision in the District, the issues that the service faced, the opportunities and challenges going forward and set out the Council's proposed approach to managing its off-street car parks in Royal Leamington Spa, Warwick and Kenilworth.

The draft Car Parking Strategy had a number of complex, interdependent elements, which impacted on residents, businesses, visitors to the District and the local economy. The Strategy, therefore, needed to be fully aligned with the Council's Vision – to make Warwick District a great place to work, live and visit – and it was proposed that this should be the over-arching principle that underpinned the remainder of the Strategy.

Beneath this over-arching principle it was proposed that the Strategy contained five main principles that would govern how the Council directly provided car parking provision within the District and/or worked with other stakeholders to ensure adequate provision was maintained in the future.

It was recommended that a public consultation exercise was undertaken on the draft Strategy, the results of which would be brought back to a future Executive meeting, together with any proposals to amend the Strategy in the light of the consultation comments. It was proposed to start the consultation in July 2017.

In parallel with the public consultation exercise, dialogue would be held with a range of key stakeholders and their views fed into the development of the Strategy. These stakeholders would include, but not be limited to:

- Town and Parish Councils;
- Warwickshire County Council;
- Local Chambers of Trade and the sub-regional Chamber of Commerce;
- Leamington Business Improvement District;
- Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership;
- Private car park operators; and
- Local retail businesses and shopping centres, tourist attractions, leisure providers, major employers.

It was proposed that these parallel exercises would be completed by December 2017, to allow a final version of the Strategy, amended as appropriate, to be adopted in January 2018.

There was a report, elsewhere on the agenda, from the Task & Finish Group on off-street car parking charges which made a number of recommendations. Subject to the Executive's decisions on the contents of this report the process set out above would enable full consideration of any recommendations that were approved.

Some of the recommendations made by the Task & Finish Group related to the adoption of a revised methodology to review car parking charges. If these recommendations were supported it would not be possible to complete a review based on a new methodology in line with the required timetable for setting revised charges from 1 January 2018. Therefore, any revised methodology underpinning charge setting could only be adopted from 2019 onwards.

Alternatively the Executive could choose not to develop a Car Park Strategy, however this had been discounted due to the complexity of the service, the direct impact on the local economy, the long term nature of the service, the significant amount of income to the Council, and the level of investment required.

Resolved that

- (1) the key principles underpinning the draft Car Park Strategy, as set out below, be approved:
 - ensuring car parks support the Council's Vision for Warwick District - "A Great Place to Live, Work and Visit";
 - ensuring sufficient car parking capacity is provided across Warwick District's town centres to meet the current and future demand for parking;
 - ensuring safe, quality car parking options are provided, that are well-managed and effectively promoted, to meet the demands of our residents, visitors and stakeholders;
 - ensuring sufficient car parking provision is available to support Warwick District Council's key facilities and premises;
 - pursuing opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of car parking in existing car parks and new developments; and
 - considering opportunities to support regeneration projects and development within our town centres through alternative use of our car parking assets;
- (2) the draft Car Park Strategy, attached as Appendix One to the report, be approved for

public consultation and detailed consultation with a wide range of stakeholders;

- (3) the consultation process allows for detailed exploration of the proposals within the Task & Finish Group's report on Off-street car parking charges, as set out elsewhere on this meeting's agenda, to be considered subject to the decisions made in respect of that report;
- (4) any review of the methodology for the setting of car park charges, as proposed by the Task & Finish Group, would not be possible in respect of charges for the next calendar year due to the timescales involved in ensuring new charges can be implemented from 1 January 2018; and
- (5) a further report be brought back to Executive, later in the year, once the consultation exercises is complete.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger.)
The Forward Plan reference number for this item was

20. **Task & Finish Group – Off-street car parking charges review**

The Executive considered a report from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee which made recommendations intended to provide a consistent, transparent and flexible basis for balancing the Council's requirements in terms of Off-Street car parking charges that would seek to ensure the service breaks even financially over the medium-term; in order to:

- to continue to support and improve the facilities for shoppers and visitors; and
- to take account of alternatives such as on-street, private and rail station parking operators.

In March 2016, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed a scoping document for a Task & Finish Group to review off-street car parking charges. The Group had two main objectives:

- to understand the rationale behind the current method of deciding the levels of off-street car parking charges across the towns in the District; and
- to recommend a transparent charging regime for off-street car parking charges across the District that met both the needs of the residents and enhanced the economic prosperity of the town centres.

The report was based on information gathered from extensive consultations with both District and County Council Officers and business representatives and analysis of data.

Other key considerations discussed in the report were:

- the £300k loss being incurred on WDC carparks, on a full cost accounting basis;
- carpark user priorities and preferences indicated by the 2016 survey;
- a long delay in implementing new charges agreed in 2015; and
- growing pressure on parking capacity, especially for short-term users in some locations.

The Head of Finance had advised the Task & Finish Group that:

- (i) the financial objective was for off-street car parking to break-even in the medium term;
- (ii) Councils were not legally permitted to make regular profits from running their carparks;
- (iii) however, the current reporting of car parking revenues and costs did not present a true picture of the financial position; and Finance had now provided 'memorandum' or full business accounts including depreciation, which did give the full picture (Appendix 1);
- (iv) charges could be set across all carparks to meet all costs; there was no requirement for each park to reflect its individual costs; and
- (v) there was no legal requirement to set charges from a particular date in the year.

Revenues and capacity utilisation were running at higher than budgeted rates in 2016/7 across the District but the projected carpark deficit for the current financial year was around £300,000 or 10% of gross revenues. The Council had limited reserves available for the investment required to replace/refurbish three existing multi-storey carparks in the near future.

Modest overall increases in off-street parking charges agreed in September 2015 were only implemented in August 2016, partly due to late stakeholder consultations and other communication/process difficulties with Warwickshire County Council, which must approve all changes. As a result it had not been thought possible so far to propose further increases during 2017/18.

Various approaches to setting car parking charges had been adopted in the District in the past. The approach currently used was summarised in Appendix 7, to the report. The concerns from Officers about adopting a more systematic approach were noted. However the Group was concerned about the risks of not having Council policy and processes properly clarified and documented for this important service. On balance it would have significant advantages. By codifying the criteria and decisions in the way set out in recommendations 2.6 to 2.8 , the process would be more transparent, options and trade-offs more clearly assessed, with decisions more capable of being scrutinised and, crucially, more acceptable to local residents and businesses.

Town centre short-stay charges were currently broadly aligned across the District with the exception of Kenilworth and Old Town Leamington which were approximately 50% of the charges levied elsewhere. All-day rates varied, mostly from £3.00 to £4.50.

Short-stay charges in WDC off-street car parks in Warwick and Leamington town centre were currently aligned with WCC's on-street short-stay rates; although in principle should be lower to encourage more off-street parking. In Kenilworth WCC charges were higher than off-street but lower than they would wish them to be. WCC informed the Task & Finish Group that it wished to move on-street charges up, probably by 5%, across the District at a uniform rate as soon as feasible in the new financial year.

WDC off-street town centre charges, with the exception of Kenilworth, were broadly in line with neighbouring Authorities for 1-4 hour stays – lower for a 30 minute stay and lower than all except Cherwell DC for day rates, generally significantly so.

Both all day and season ticket rates were approximately half those charged by Chiltern Railways in their Leamington station carpark.

Royal Priors, the other large carpark in Leamington, was privately owned but managed by WDC. Its pricing policy was to attract the medium-stay shoppers (up to three hours), discourage both short and long-stay, and set its prices accordingly. Most of the time it was 50-70% full.

An independent user survey in early 2016 across all three towns reported that the key factors in the decision whether or not to use WDC parking facilities were convenience, accessibility and the availability of spaces, together with ease of payment, appearance and safety. Parking charges were around seventh on users' list of priorities.

In Kenilworth, the Waitrose carpark was frequently full. Discussions with Waitrose management indicated that it would have no difficulty with increases in adjacent WDC car parking rates. Its pricing aim would be to eliminate as many non-Waitrose shoppers as possible through appropriate pricing in its carpark.

Trends in car parking revenues and snapshots of capacity utilisation from 12 months ago suggested that most off-street carparks were well-used or near capacity especially at peak times. The main exceptions appeared to be St Mary's Lands, Court Street and Covent Garden Multi-storey. However since those snapshots, strong growth in use of carparks had continued across the District.

St Peter's, Rosefield Street, Linen Street and West Rock, and potentially St Nicholas Park and St Mary's Land 4, were busy carparks with relatively high season ticket usage.

Season and all day ticket users in multi-storey carparks could use any available spaces; at busy times short-stay users were obliged to use the upper decks.

Payment systems used in WDC carparks were generally old, increasingly unreliable and would need to be upgraded, in particular to permit payments by card. This was planned to start with the new Covent Garden carpark. However feedback from other out of area car parks and local business representatives suggested that there could be benefits in

reinvesting rapidly in new technology, giving better reliability, more flexibility and higher financial returns without price rises, from more modern payment and enforcement systems.

Some consultees, notably business representatives in Leamington, pointed to the pressures on high street shopping which were shown in the footfall trends set out in Appendix 11 to the report. The importance of maintaining and improving town centre car parks was underlined, including keeping charges at an acceptable level. This had been taken into account in recommendations to ensure the continued financial viability of WDC off-street parking, to invest in improved and new facilities and to balance charges in such a way as to favour shorter-term shoppers and visitors. The Group noted the footfall trends but found no clear correlation with changes to parking charges over the years; and both the user survey and comparisons with other towns suggested that other factors, widely discussed in recent years, were more important influences on any difficulties being experienced by some Town Centre businesses.

Rateable values for the three main towns were shown in Appendix 9 to the report. They provided a very broad picture of our diverse and geographically spread businesses. The Group concluded that no meaningful conclusions could be drawn from this data about the main focus of this report - off-street parking in the three town centres.

Consultees also suggested that more and better coordinated marketing initiatives could be developed to promote town centre events and businesses, to mutual benefit; for example with short-term promotions and use of advertising on tickets or within the parks themselves. Other suggestions to improve the customer experience and driver use of car parking facilities included improved cleanliness in multi-storeys, better signage into and especially pedestrian signage/mapping out; better lighting in and around certain parks and ensuring there was adequate night-time capacity to support Leamington's evening economy. All welcomed being invited to contribute to this report and the expectation that engagement with the Council on these issues would be more regular and productive in the future.

Park and Ride (P&R) schemes were in the new Local Plan. The longer-term impact of these on WDC car parking pricing (and investment) strategies would need to be carefully assessed. However discussions with Officers at WCC indicated that the first planned 500 space scheme in the ASPS development was likely to have most impact on Business Technology Park and some Warwick Town organisations, for example WCC itself. The impact on parking demand in Warwick was likely to be limited (except perhaps for weekend visitors) and in Leamington hardly noticeable.

As other P&R schemes were developed, for example north of Leamington, the impact was likely to be greater and close coordination would be necessary to ensure the elements of a successful scheme were agreed:

- (a) speedy access to transport and into town centres; and
- (b) adequate differentials between town centre all day/long-stay charges and transfer costs.

Details of the WCC model were made available and some of its key assumptions debated. Some consultees and several members of the Group doubted the suitability and practicality of the North Leamington Park & Ride scheme. However, it was not yet seen to be an immediate issue for the management and pricing of our parking facilities and had therefore not been considered as strictly within the scope of this report.

Alternatively the Council could continue with the current policy of accounting for car parking charges on a current costs basis, without seeking to include longer-term capital costs. This was not sustainable given the overall squeeze on Council finances and the implied cross-subsidisation from other services and Council Tax payers.

In addition to maintain, the Executive could continue with the present structure of rates and adjust them incrementally as required. However, by choosing to review the criteria and rationale for differences in rates and developing a transparent policy, the Council would maintain public confidence. The community would understand the way in which user preferences, business needs, operational and competitive realities and revenue requirements were balanced now and in the future.

The Executive was mindful the significant amount of work undertaken by the Task & Finish group and the draft Car Parking Strategy which had been approved for public consultation. Therefore at this time it was not minded to accept the recommendations in the report but to consider these as part of the information feeding into the Car Parking Strategy for the Council.

Resolved that:

- (1) the Task & Finish Group be thanked for its report;
- (2) the recommendations in the report be noted and be considered in more detail and in conjunction with the results of the consultation arising from the draft car parking strategy.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Grainger.)
The Forward Plan reference number 864.

21. Whitnash Community Hub

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer which presented the business case for a Community Hub based at Acre Close, Whitnash. It proposed the next steps as providing financial, legal and officer support to enable the Hub to be constructed

At its meeting of 6 April 2016, Executive gave its support for the development of a Community Hub for Whitnash and made an in-principle grant offer of £0.5m to help deliver the scheme subject to the following a comprehensive business plan, legal matters to be resolved,

the Council being able to pay the grant and a further report to the Executive on these matters.

The business plan was attached at Appendix I to the report, this had been reviewed and approved by the Council's Finance Administration Manager who oversaw the Council's Rural and Urban Capital Investment Scheme.

Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services team was supporting the project and a report detailing the structure of the proposed contractual arrangements between the parties was attached at Appendix IV to the report. This support would be ongoing should Executive approve the project.

As described in paragraphs 3.29-3.30 of the report, it was officers' view that the Council was in a financial position that enabled it to support the scheme.

The scheme aimed to provide the following services and amenities:

- Town Council office and meeting room;
- a two-badminton court size community/ sports hall for events and hire;
- improved synergy with outdoor sports areas;
- drop in space for police safer neighbourhood team;
- community organisation meeting rooms;
- café and social hub; and
- library, information, one stop shop services (dependent upon WCC requirements).

Having received the Executive's support, WTC commissioned further work from ATI Projects Ltd (ATI) to develop the business case and determine the appetite of Whitnash Sports & Social Club (WSSC) and Warwickshire County Council's (WCC) Library Service to be part of the scheme. The business plan work had now been concluded and was attached at Appendix I, to the report for consideration. Unfortunately, WSSC decided that it did not wish to be part of the scheme; however, WCC was still considering whether to relocate its Library/ One Stop Shop Service from its current building on Franklin Road to the Hub. Should it decide to move, it would be covering its capital and revenue costs in full.

To deliver the scheme there were a number of essentials already in place: a will to succeed; town council political endorsement; community affirmation of the Neighbourhood Plan; land in control of the Town Council; realistic significant funding sources; and project management experience with a track-record of delivery (ATI Projects Ltd). It was considered that the business plan was robust, demonstrating that the Hub had a sustainable future with the potential for ongoing surpluses to be achieved (page 12 of business plan refers).

Discussions had taken place with the Council's lawyers about the best way to bring the project forward from a procurement aspect: It was recommended that the project was broken down into two phases:

- Phase I - Professional Services procured to enable the project to get to RIBA Stage 4 (Strategic Definition, Preparation and Brief, Concept Design, Developed Design, and Technical Design all completed). This phase would be procured by WTC and grant funded by WDC.
- Phase II - Professional Services procured to enable delivery of the Whitnash Community Hub i.e. RIBA Stage 7 (Construction, Handover and Close Out, In Use). This phase would be procured by WTC and funded as described in 3.2.

The major obstacle to negotiate was therefore the funding sources necessary to deliver the construction of the Hub I. The total estimated construction costs and fees to design and build the new Community Hub was estimated at £1.65m excl. VAT. To match these estimated costs a range of funding streams (loans, grants and developer contributions) would be applied for:

- Section 106/ Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding contributions from developers – £590k;
- Sport England Community Fund – currently at application stage £150k;
- landfill trusts – currently at outline application stage £120k; and
- Warwick District Council grant – £500k.

The above funding sources represented a contribution of £1,360,000, indicating a shortfall on the current design of c£290,000. This figure (subject to value engineering) represented the potential magnitude of PWLB funding required by WTC although there would be a cash-flow requirement due to the timing of the S106/ CIL payments. Should Executive agree the proposals in the report, it was recommended that the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Leader, agreed with WTC how this cash-flow matter was addressed and what if any role there was for WDC. The starting point for any conversation would be that WTC should address the issue through PWLB funding. Each of the aforementioned funding sources was now considered in more detail.

At Appendix II to the report was a paper produced by the Council's Sites Delivery Officer exploring the scope for developer S106 contributions. Since the production of that paper, further work had been undertaken and it could be confirmed that the following funding was already in place and had either been received or would be received by the end of this financial year:

£83,163.82 - Golf Lane/ Fieldgate Lane (Parks, Gardens and Allotments contribution i.e. £153,163.82 less £70,000 for Washbourne Fields Play Equipment).

£96,342 - Golf Lane/ Fieldgate Lane (Sports Halls i.e. £784.61 per dwelling).

£2,800 - Land at Heathcote .

£27,000 - Woodside Farm (Indoor and outdoor contributions per dwelling respectively are £56.73 and £831.04).

The potential for future developer contributions was described in Appendix II to the report. The Council had not received planning applications for either of the sites as the Local Plan needed to be adopted by the Council, however, assuming adoption took place and

planning applications were received funding as detailed below was likely to come forward. There was obviously a risk that this funding did not materialise or took longer to come forward than anticipated and this was a risk that needed to be considered when taking a decision on this project.

Agreements to be negotiated

£172,640 - H03 - South of Sydenham/ Whitnash East (S106 site specific).

£155,317 - H45 - Hazelmere and Little Acre, Golf Lane (Town Council proportion of CIL).

£52,650 - Windfalls over the life of the Plan (Town Council proportion of CIL).

On behalf of WTC, ATI had made two categories of external funding bids - Sport England Community Fund and Landfill trusts, totalling £270k,000.

A joint meeting (WTC/WDC/ATI) with the Regional Officer of Sport England resulted in a very positive response on the basis that the plans and objectives were very much in line with the criteria for the Community Investment Fund – and would qualify for a full £150k grant (subject to Main Application approval). Evidence of other funding commitments i.e. WDC would be a pre-requisite of a Sport England application.

WTC had already benefitted from a £50,000 grant from WREN (landfill operator) for the Walking Mile Project on Acre Close Field (2016). The site fell within the range of Sita, WREN and Biffa landfill operator grant schemes and outline applications to all three were (joint funding of £120k) underway.

WDC has made an in-principle commitment to make a grant of £500k for a viable Community Hub scheme. It was not necessary to draw-down all this funding at this point but some up-front funding of c£150k was required to enable the scheme to proceed for planning approval reaching Technical Design stage (RIBA 4). The initial costs programme was set out at Appendix III to the report. This cost programme was an estimate based on current information and presented to provide reassurance that this aspect of scheme development was being addressed in detail. The programme would be finalised once the professional services had been employed. The Council's Community Projects Reserve unallocated balance currently stood at £264,000 and could therefore cover the necessary costs.

The Community Projects Reserve was funded from New Homes Bonus (NHB) monies. Following a revision to the NHB scheme, the S151 Officer predicted that for the next three years, allocations were likely to be in the region of £1.5m-£2.0m annually. With the planned move to 100% Business Rates Retention, there was the possibility that the NHB scheme would change again. Currently there was only a commitment to Waterloo Housing Group of c£200k per year to be deducted from the annual allocation and so the Council should be in a position to meet the £350k balance of its grant contribution.

The Council's S151 Officer captured all the funding information in Section 5 of the report. In the business modelling no allowance had been made for VAT. WTC had procured expert taxation advice to help it with this issue and the position would be monitored closely by the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder and Leader.

There were many options for the delivery of the scheme which had been explored through the feasibility stages. These were documented in the background papers of the report.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the principle of the recommendations but raised concerns that the VAT arrangements for the project have not been fully clarified yet, some Members queried the sensitivity analysis and queried the potential lack of involvement from WCC Library Service and the Sports and Social Club.

Prior to the Executive meeting, further clarification had been provided regarding the fixed costs detailed in the report.

In response, the Executive provided reassurances regarding the VAT issues and noted the Committee's concerns about the absence of WCC and the Sports & Social Club. The Portfolio Holder for Finance reminded Members that this was a grant to Whitnash Town Council and the Council was not underwriting the finances in any way

Resolved that

- (1) the progress made since April 2016 in developing a viable Whitnash Community Hub scheme, be noted and its support for that scheme be confirmed by committing up to £500k from the Community Projects Reserve or future New Homes Bonus spread over financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19, the precise funding to be agreed by the Section 151 (S151) Officer;
- (2) subject to a commitment from Whitnash Town Council to the use of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) funding, up to £150k be released from the Community Projects Reserve in 2017/18 to enable Technical Design stage (RIBA 4) to be reached which includes the submission of a planning application;
- (3) the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer (DCEX (AJ)), be delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Leader, to agree the funding model for the scheme and all necessary legal agreements (including grant agreement with WTC) and consents;

- (4) the S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer (DCX (AJ)), be delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Leader, to release up to £350,000 from the Community Projects Reserve and temporary cash-flow funding from the Council's cash balances; and
- (5) the Council's overall net contribution be capped at £500,000.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item were Councillors Coker, Mobbs & Thompson.)

Forward Plan reference number 870

22. **Transforming our Workplace Budget Provision**

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) that requested approval of funding to enable the Council's workforce to develop new, more effective means of delivering services to its customers, supported by updated ICT provision.

The Council agreed the Fit For the Future (FFF) change programme in 2010. The FFF programme had three interrelated strands – Service, People, Money – designed to address the significant reduction in funding from Central Government, maintain or improve service provision, and support and invest in the Council's staff.

Executive had considered a report at the 1 June 2017 meeting which focussed on the Money strand of the programme. This report focussed on the other Service and People.

The Transforming our Workplace (ToW) group was established in summer 2016. This officer group, chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive (BH), comprised of members of the Senior Management Team, HR staff and staff from various support services in developing a work programme that supported the transition to new ways of working in advance of the HQ relocation. It was not a decision making group in its own right, with any proposals it developed being taken, as appropriate, to the Senior Management Team or the ICT Steering Group for approval, with updates on any workforce related issues also being reported to the People Strategy Steering Group.

Over recent months it had become clear to the ToW group that there were a number of change initiatives that needed to be deployed to support the effective delivery of the Service and People elements strands of the FFF change programme. These initiatives fell into two interrelated strands, one around cultural and behavioural change in the workforce and another around the deployment of ICT solutions that supported the workforce's ability to operate in a more 'agile' manner. Both strands were needed to support the meaningful change in ways of working, necessary to support the change requirements of the FFF programme and allow the Council to improve productivity and reduce costs through the deployment of new ways of working.

The ToW group had concluded that progress was required against both strands prior to the proposed HQ relocation. However, regardless of the progress of that project, the Corporate Management Team had separately concluded that cultural and behavioural change was required to deliver tangible progress against the Digital Transformation programme, approved by Executive in December 2015.

Consequently, the ToW group had been investigating how these work-strands could best be delivered and had concluded that there was a need for the allocation of a capital budget of up to £152,000 to support new initiatives. Provision existed within the existing Service Transformation Reserve, specifically established to support the exploration of new ways of working within the FFF programme, for an allocation of this amount.

The bulk of this budget provision would be used to allow the deployment of ICT products to support new ways of working:

Jabber Video Clients	500	£90.60	£45,300.00
WebEx	50		
SX20 video room kit for plugging into a HDTV	1	£4,279.97	£4,279.97
SX20 Room Control Kit	1	£547.61	£547.61
SX20 software licence	1	£280.45	£280.45
Autostore	25	£495.16	£12,379.00
Storage (If required)	1	£8,000.00	£8,000.00
Total			<u>£70,787.03</u>

The Council currently used a Cisco product, Jabber, to provide presence and instant messaging. An upgrade to the Jabber licence would allow the software to become a softphone which was also capable of point-to-point video calls. This solution could be deployed to home workers and agile workers, allowing them to utilise a softphone device rather than a more expensive internet enabled phone or mobile phone. The use of softphones would enable staff working at home, or off-site, to be connected to the Council's phone system so that all internal Council calls were free of charge, irrespective of where the user was working, and calls could be received, routed and diverted in the same way as if staff were in the office and any non-premium rate external calls made by staff would be free of charge. The final mix of soft and hard phones would need to be determined by the ToW group, but the costs in the table above reflected a full deployment of softphones to all staff.

In addition to this, it was proposed that the deployment of WebEx, another Cisco product, should be investigated. This product would be utilised to provide multi-user video conferencing facilities within the HQ building, allowing staff and members to connect from remote locations and providing secure connectivity for personnel from other organisations to join discussions without having to travel to an on-site meeting. WebEx was a cloud based system so would not have an initial capital cost for its deployment but this type of video-conferencing facility would also require the deployment of the SX20 equipment. This product would allow a room or rooms to be set up with the necessary cameras and microphones to support this new way of working.

All of these products would have an on-going revenue implication, as set out at paragraph 5.3 of the report. The capital costs shown in the table above and the revenue cost projections shown at paragraph 5.3 of the report represented the maximum costs for their deployment. At this stage it was not possible to accurately predict how many user licences would be required and whilst the numbers and, therefore, potential costs could be less than shown it was felt prudent to provide the likely maximum total costs in order to assist members in their decision making process.

Subject to approval of recommendation 2.1 in the report it was proposed to deploy the video conferencing equipment in either the Board Room or the Corporate Training Room at Riverside House and work with BT, the Council's ICT provider responsible for all support and maintenance needs of the network infrastructure, to determine the optimum deployment process on a 'try before you buy' basis. Any equipment deployed in Riverside House would be capable of redeployment to the new HQ building.

To support workforce mobility and agile service delivery, staff would need access to paper documents when off-site. Many of the Council's major systems, such as Revenues & Benefits, had document management solutions as part of their business software applications. However, as more staff adopted agile working practices, it could identify processes that were inhibited by that lack of an embedded document management solution like that within the Revenues & Benefits system. Fortunately, no additional corporate investment in a separate document management solution was required as the Council's existing SharePoint product was capable of acting as a document repository. However, a corporate scanning solution was required that could attach document metadata and intelligently route documents to the appropriate repository within SharePoint.

It was, therefore, proposed to investigate the use of the Autostore product. Again, the costs shown were both provisional and the maximum required as further work would be required to confirm the optimum number of scanning stations. Again, the proposal was 'future-proofed' as the product was compliant with the multi-functional scanning and printing devices due to be deployed later this year, regardless of any future HQ relocation.

Also included within the report was a notional sum for c5 terabytes of additional storage capacity, included for completeness although, at this

stage, it was not known if this would be required. This sum brought the maximum total capital budget that might be required to deploy these ICT products to just under £71,000.

The remainder of the proposed £152,000 budget allocation would be utilised to procure an external 'change-agent' to assist the ToW group to manage the transition to new ways of working and support the cultural and behavioural change necessary to support the Digital Transformation programme. The ToW group had identified a number of potential providers, who had worked with both private and public sector organisations, with expertise in creating and deploying change management programmes designed to allow organisations to achieve cost savings, productivity improvements and enhanced service provision by working in a more agile and flexible manner. The ToW group recommended that such a partner was needed by this Council as the nature of the change required was technically, behaviourally and politically challenging and the delivery and credibility of the change programme would be enhanced by the engagement of an external provider, able to engage and operate with staff and members at both a senior leadership and grassroots level.

Discussions with specialist providers in this area had identified that budget provision of c£80,000 would be sufficient to procure a partner to:

- act as a 'critical friend' to review the robustness of the current proposals to deploy new ways of working;
- develop a clear, evidence-based, change 'proposition' to enable the workforce to understand what change was required, what it would deliver and why, based on experience elsewhere, it was credible and deliverable;
- facilitate leaders and their teams to identify where and how the deployment of new technology could be used to streamline business processes and add value to service delivery;
- implement agile working pilots and use these to refine business processes, use of technology and working practices; and
- prepare staff and members for the transition to agile working to ensure the achievement of enduring changes to working practices to deliver the desired outcomes of costs savings and productivity and service improvements.

Subject to approval of recommendation 2.1 and the allocation of a notional budget of £152,000 from the Service Transformation Reserve it was proposed that officers developed specific proposals to progress the two work-strands. A specification for the proposed change-partner would be developed and, subject to the approval of the Leader, as listed at recommendation 2.2 of the report, a procurement exercise, compliant with the Financial Code of Procurement Practice, would be undertaken.

The ICT work-strand would be developed through further discussions with the Council's provider, BT, and the trialling of the new multi-user video conferencing products. This process would allow for the potential revenue considerations to be fully understood.

Future updates on the progress of this work would be provided through the existing reporting mechanisms on the wider FFF change programme and any future reports on the Digital Transformation programme.

One alternative option would be to attempt to deliver the proposed transition to a more agile approach to service delivery in-house, via the ToW Group, Senior Management Team or, where appropriate, the ICT Steering Group, rather than procure a specialist change-partner. This approach had been discounted based on the evidence gathered from organisations who had already progressed down the proposed transition path, which indicated that change could be effected at a faster pace than if attempted to be delivered through existing resource and that the engagement of an external partner allowed an evidence based approach to be developed that enhanced the credibility of the proposals and minimised the likelihood of resistance to their deployment.

The option of not pursuing a full video conferencing or document management solutions had been discounted given the business process efficiencies that could be derived from the deployment of both technologies.

The option of developing solutions in-house rather than testing and subsequently purchasing existing external products had also been discounted as the Council lacked the resources to develop such solutions on a timely basis and/or potentially the specialist skills to do so at all.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Resolved that

- (1) the draw-down of budget provision of up to £152,000, from the Service Transformation Reserve, be approved to support the work of the Transforming our Workplace group;
- (2) the Deputy Chief Executive (BH), the HR Manager and the ICT Services Manager, be delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to procure a 'change partner' to work with officers on the deployment of new ways of working;
- (3) the Deputy Chief Executive (BH), the Head of Finance and the ICT Services Manager, be delegated authority, in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder, to procure new ICT products or licences, as described in paragraph 3.5 but notes that these would be trialled on a 'try before you buy' basis prior to any orders being placed;
- (4) the potential deployment of new proposed ICT could have a revenue implication of up to

£31,100 per annum, as set out in paragraph 5.3 of the report, be noted and that, if such a cost did materialise, it would require an equivalent saving (or the generation of an equivalent amount of additional income) to be made on a recurrent basis through the wider FFF change programme; and

- (5) further updates on this work be provided as part of the reporting mechanisms for the FFF change programme and Digital Transformation Strategy.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mobbs.)
Forward Plan reference 880

23. **Extension of Navigation on the Avon from Stratford to Warwick**

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive which set out a request for the Council to support in principle the extension of navigation on the River Avon from Stratford to the Grand Union Canal at Warwick.

Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a letter and a project summary outlining the justification and potential impact of being able to extend the navigation on the River Avon from Stratford to the Grand Union Canal at Warwick.

The proposal was a long term one but could generate significant economic benefits for Warwick town and the District by boosting the tourism sector of the local economy. There appeared to be significant potential but the scheme would not progress in the absence of the Council's support. Stratford District Council considered the same request at its Cabinet meeting on 5 June and decided it would offer that support. The County Council was understood to be similarly considering the request.

The Executive could decide not to offer such support. It would be difficult for the scheme to progress without this Council's support and as it could offer significant economic benefits this course of action was not advocated.

Resolved that the request from the Avon Navigation Trust to look further at the principle of the proposal for the extension of navigation on the River Avon from Stratford to the Grand Union Canal at Warwick, be supported.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Butler.)

24. **Gypsy and Traveller Protocol and update on Proposals to prevent Unauthorised Encampments**

The Executive considered a report from the Chief Executive which provided an update following the decisions the Executive made in early

March 2017 in respect of unauthorised encampments and highlighted that a revised joint county wide protocol was proposed to be agreed and that a programme of preventative measures was to be put in place this financial year. The Council needed to address the issue of permanent and transit sites but it was anticipated that this would be addressed by engaging with Parish and Town Councils and receiving a report in the Autumn of 2017

At its meeting on 7th March 2017 the Executive agreed a number of recommendations that included:

- "4 Agree to the principles of a new joint protocol with partners as set out in Appendix 4 and delegate to the Chief Executive, Head of Health and Community Protection in consultation with the Health and Community Protection Portfolio Holder to negotiate a detailed protocol and report back to the Executive for approval.
- 5 That the Executive delegates authority to the Chief Executive, Head of Health and Community and Head of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Health and Community Protection, Housing and Property Services and Neighbourhood Services, to agree the prioritisation of the list at Appendix 5 upon which it proposes to install preventative measures within a year from 1st April 2017, in order to prevent unauthorised encampments, to be funded from the Community Projects Reserve up to a maximum of £174,000 plus 5% contingency.
- 6 That the Executive notes the limitation on the use of powers because of the absence of a transit site within the District and asks Officers to prepare a report on site provision at the earliest opportunity."

In respect of the revised protocol proposed in 4 above, Council officers and Members had been involved in dialogue and a draft was attached at Appendix 1 to the report for the Executive's approval. The draft attached had addressed this Council's Portfolio and Officer comments.

In respect of 5 above, a programme of works had been prepared and was ready to be discussed and agreed with the portfolio holders as per the agreed delegation. It was anticipated that the programme could be implemented this financial year. Since the previous report was considered and decided upon, there had been two sites subject to incursions of significance which did not feature in the programme. One was Edmondscote athletics track for which a solution would be sought but if possible would be brought within the programme. The other was a site in Whitnash which highlighted the problem that Parish and Town Councils could have in protecting their open spaces but did not have any resources. It had been suggested to Whitnash Town Council that could wish to apply for a RUCIS grant and so the principle could therefore apply to other Councils faced with similar scenarios.

In respect of recommendation 6 above, a report would be brought in the autumn to the Executive for its consideration. However, it was proposed that a special meeting of the Planning Forum be arranged to

discuss site provision with the District's Parish and Town Councils in recognition of the difficulty and sensitivity that this issue generated. In the meantime, the Council's decision on Europa Way and to progress the work for relocating Leamington Football Club (LFC) opened the opportunity to create a permanent site on the current site of the Club should be noted as an important step in the context of this report. LFC agreed the principles at its Emergency General Meeting (EGM) on 31 May 2017.

Alternatively we could develop a policy independent of neighbouring authorities but a joint approach was necessary for intelligence sharing and enforcement. A joint approach should reassure residents and businesses that we were working together and had a coordinated, prompt and effective approach to dealing with unauthorised encampments.

The Council could continue to simply 'move on' but this was not any sort of deterrent. The current approach did not address the responsibilities on this authority or key partners to do all it reasonably could to prevent crime and disorder.

The Council could decide not to provide any sites, permanent or transit but the risks set out above suggested that, notwithstanding the difficulties of finding such sites, the risks set out in paragraph 6.4 of the report precluded Officers from recommending such a course of action

Resolved that

- (1) the revised joint protocol attached at Appendix 1, be approved;
- (2) the programme of preventative measures, be noted; and
- (3) a special meeting of the planning Forum be organised to discuss Gypsy and Traveller Site Provision, with a further report be brought in the Autumn to address the issue of site provision.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Grainger, Phillips, Rhead and Thompson)

(The meeting ended at 7.19 pm)