

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23 November 1999 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Evans (Chair); Councillors Attwood, Mrs Begg, Mrs Boad, Coker, Ms Flanagan, Guest, Hammon, MacKay, Short, Tamlin, Thomas.

(Councillor Ms Flanagan substituted for Councillor Mrs Clayton, Councillor Short substituted for Councillor Mrs Hodgetts and Councillor Tamlin substituted for Councillor Darmody)

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 1999, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record, with the exception of minute 4, which was amended to read:-

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) Emily Gill, John Hoy and Canon David Brindley be thanked for their informative presentation;
- (2) the three recommendations put to the Sub-Committee in the presentation, that:-
 - (i) the Council recognise the economic importance of the arts to the town of Warwick;
 - (ii) South Warwickshire Tourism Ltd be asked to promote Warwick as a centre of excellence for the Arts and Cultural Tourism; and
 - (iii) a joint approach to the Arts Council of England, West Midlands Arts, Heart of England Tourist Board and Advantage West Midlands, to pursue a full study to develop a cultural tourism strategy for Warwick, be approved.

be welcomed and noted; and

- (3) officers take account of the recommendations (i) - (iii) above in the wider context of the Council's Economic and Tourism Strategy".

PART I

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE (Continued)

(Matters not the subject of powers delegated to the Sub-Committee by the Council)

2. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2000/2001

(Councillors Attwood, Mrs Boad and Guest declared non-pecuniary, non-substantial interests in this item relating to the funding of South Warwickshire Tourism and left the meeting room during the discussion and voting).

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team and Finance on the detailed revenue estimate proposals for the Sub-Committee for 1999/2000 (revised) and 2000/2001 (original).

The target budget for 2000/2001 for the Sub-Committee amounted to £1,144,600. This had been arrived at by taking the current year's budget estimate and making adjustments for the transfer of the majority of the Key Issues Strategy budgets from Resources Sub-Committee, one-off items for 1999/2000 only, inflation, capital programme effects, committee growth items, items of virement from this Sub-Committee and deductions for approved service plan budget reductions.

The total estimated net expenditure for 2000/2001 was £1,140,400, and was within the Sub-Committee's target budget detailed above. However, the estimated net expenditure was understated at this stage due to the Capital Programme for 2000/2001 not yet being finalised.

A review of the 1999/2000 budget had been carried out in order to establish revised estimates for the current year, and this was detailed in the report. The revised estimates totalled £1,697,400, an increase of £1,105,400 compared with the originally approved estimate for 1999/2000. The major reasons for this increase were the transfer from Resources Sub-Committee of Key Issues Strategy budgets totalling £738,000, ear-marked expenditure of £204,600 having slipped from 1998/1999 to 1999/2000 and the revenue effects of capital programme slippages of £120,000 from 1998/1999 to 1999/2000.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the revenue estimates of £1,140,400 for 2000/2001 be approved for referral to Strategy Committee;
- (2) the revised estimates of £1,697,400 for 1999/2000 be approved for referral to Resources Sub-Committee.

3. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH SOUTH WARWICKSHIRE TOURISM LIMITED

(Councillors Attwood, Mrs Boad and Guest declared a non-pecuniary, substantial interest in this item. They were present for the presentation from South Warwickshire Tourism but left the meeting room during the subsequent discussion and voting on this item).

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The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team on the proposed service level agreement with South Warwickshire Tourism Ltd. The Sub-Committee also received a presentation from Alex Holmes, Chief Executive of South Warwickshire Tourism on proposals for the forthcoming year.

South Warwickshire Tourism currently had 410 members and during the last year those members had seen visiting numbers rise by 3% compared to non-member competitors' visitors reducing by between 3% and 12%. The recent successes for South Warwickshire Tourism included improvements in I.T. and telephone booking. The appendix to the report detailed the proposed service level agreement.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the proposed service level agreement with South Warwickshire Tourism be approved, as amended; and
- (2) Alex Holmes be thanked for his informative presentation.

4. NOTICE OF MOTION

The Sub-Committee considered the following notice of motion from Councillor Copping:-

"In view of the excellent work done for our District's most needy citizens by Steph and Geoff's Christian Mission, will this Council:-

- (a) seek to help the mission locate a building for its work, possibly using SRB5 monies; and
- (b) consider providing c. £1,000 from former Key Issue monies to "pump prime" fundraising for a replacement of one of their vehicles which is now worn out, because a mobile facility will also be required, especially on Thursday and Friday nights".

RECOMMENDED that a report be submitted to a future meeting on the issues raised in the motion.

5. DEVELOPING THE POTENTIAL OF WARWICK AS THE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE ARTS AND CULTURAL TOURISM

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team seeking approval for funding to support a full study to develop a cultural tourism strategy for Warwick.

At the last meeting of the Sub-Committee, members received a presentation by the Warwick Events Group recommending that a joint approach be made to the Arts Council of England, West Midlands Arts, Heart of England Tourist Board and Advantage West Midlands to pursue such a study. Initial discussions with the Heart of England Tourist Board and West Midlands Arts had been positive and Warwick Town Council had

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given their full support. A draft brief for the study was being prepared by the Warwick Events Group.

RECOMMENDED that up to £5,000 be made available from the Economic Development budget to fund a study to develop a cultural tourism strategy for Warwick, and officers be requested to look for further partnership funding.

6. SINGLE REGENERATION BUDGET ROUND 6 (SRB6)

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team seeking their views on whether to prepare and submit an SRB6 bid to tackle deprivation and social exclusion in South Warwickshire.

New SRB guidelines for round 6 were expected to be issued in December. The timetable for submitting the bid was likely to end up being similar to that for SRB5, where an outline bid was submitted for January and the full bid submitted for April, with a decision in July. If that was the case, the guidelines and the requirements to submit an outline bid might be so tight that it would not be possible to report to a Committee in time. It was therefore necessary to agree the broad principles of a prospective bid in advance of the guidelines being issued.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) it be agreed in principle to submit an SRB6 bid;
- (2) a bid covering South Warwickshire be submitted;
- (3) Councillors Mrs Boad, Evans, Guest and MacKay be involved in the preparation of a bid in consultation with the Chief Executive; and
- (4) on the basis of submitting a bid covering South Warwickshire, the Warwickshire Rural Community Council be asked to lead on the bid in terms of preparation and attracting additional resources to the bid from Stratford-on-Avon District Council and other organisations.

7. PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY TOWN CENTRES

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team on a request for release of Town Centre Management Key Issue monies to undertake further work required to support the action plans for Kenilworth and Warwick and Royal Leamington Spa.

Promotional activity to be undertaken by this Council covered projects in all 3 towns which formed the Town Centre Management initiative. These included banners, adverts in local papers and newsletters aimed at

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local residents and businesses detailing the work associated with the Warwick Market Place development and the work to be undertaken at Abbey End, Kenilworth; promotional work associated with the farmers markets across the district; the production of regular town centre newsletters and undertaking survey work to quantify the impact of the markets on the area in which they take place and to monitor customer and business feedback.

Funding already allocated to support the ongoing projects outlined above was now coming to an end and to maximise the full potential of these projects, additional funding needed to be secured.

RECOMMENDED that £8,000 be made available from the Town Centre Management Key Issue monies to support further town centre promotional activity.

8. PROVISION OF A GARDEN SERVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND THOSE WITH DISABILITIES IN WARWICK DISTRICT

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team informing them of the development work which had been undertaken in order to establish a gardening service for older people. A further report also requested a contribution of £5,000 of Social Key Issues money towards a pilot scheme in partnership with Age Concern, Warwickshire's Care and Repair Agency and Warwickshire County Policy for Older People

Shortly after being awarded Better Government for Older People pilot status, the need for a gardening service was identified. At the same time, Housing Committee had requested that the feasibility of such a scheme should be investigated.

Meetings had been held with Age Concern and Warwickshire County Council, who between them were expected to input £34,000 into the scheme. A further £1,000 had been secured from the Older Volunteering Initiative, part of the BGOP pilot. The scheme was expected to cost £40,000 for the 18 month pilot period.

RECOMMENDED that

- (1) the provision of a gardening service for older people and those with disabilities in Warwick District be supported; and
- (2) a contribution of £5,000 from Social Key Issues (targeting of services) budget be made towards establishing a gardening service for older people and those with disabilities pilot scheme over the next 18 months.

9. FUNDING FOR ACTIVITIES DURING FINAL SIX MONTHS OF THE BGOP PILOT

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team seeking approval to allocate £13,600 from the Social Key Issues budget to the BGOP Steering Group.

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A series of initiatives had been identified for the final 6 month phase of the 2 year BGOP pilot. It was suggested that the funding should be allocated to the Members Steering Group as there was no specific general budget for BGOP.

It was anticipated that funding would be required for the following projects:-

Celebration of BGOP conference (£3,000)

Senior Supports Activities Co-ordinator (£3,000)

Senior Peoples' Forum meeting (£600)

Senior Peoples' Festival (£5,000)

Video (£600)

Business Plan - Workshop for members of Senior People's Forum (£500)

Miscellaneous (£900)

RECOMMENDED that £13,600 be allocated to the BGOP Member Steering Group for the initiatives that had been identified for the final phase of the pilot project.

10. BENCHES TO INCREASE INDEPENDENCE

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team on a pilot "Resting Point Strategy" on the Woodloes Estate.

The Better Government for Older People initiative had received a request from a resident of the Woodloes Estate for a number of benches to be placed at close intervals so that older people and those with mobility difficulties could walk greater distances with opportunities for plenty of rests on route. It was intended that such a provision would provide an enhanced quality of life and lead to greater independence for many people.

The Council had consulted with elderly residents on the Woodloes Estate and had been supported by a working party of local residents. This working party intended to produce a draft plan which would be used to further consult local residents. It was anticipated that each bench would cost approximately £500.

RECOMMENDED that funding for 15 benches be allocated to implement the resting point strategy on the Woodloes Estate as a pilot scheme and a further report be submitted to this Sub-Committee on the outcome of the strategy and the suitability of implementing it in other areas of the district.

11. BETTER GOVERNMENT FOR OLDER PEOPLE - CONSULTATION WITH, AN ENGAGEMENT OF, THE OLDER ASIAN COMMUNITY OF WARWICK DISTRICT

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team seeking approval to use money from the Social Key Issues budget 'consultation' for the organisation of a seminar/workshop event and follow up focus groups involving Asian people aged 50+ as part of the Better Government for Older People initiative.

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The seminar/workshop event, called "Raise your Voice", would be held at the Royal Spa Centre on 27 February 2000. It was hoped to attract up to 150 older Asian delegates in addition to representatives from statutory and voluntary organisations and invited guests.

It was proposed that following the event, focus groups would be organised involving a cross section of older people who attended the seminar. The issues arising from the seminar would then be put to the focus groups to discuss what they considered to be the priorities and possible solutions. Final proposals and recommendations would form into a strategy to address the needs of older Asian people in the district. It was anticipated that the cost of such a seminar would be in the region of £5,000.

RECOMMENDED that £5,000 be allocated from the Social Key Issues "consultation" budget towards the cost of a seminar/workshop event to be held next year for older Asian people in the Warwick district.

12. LOCAL EXCHANGE TRADING SYSTEM (LETS)

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team on a request for funding from the local LETS Group.

LETS were local, non profit "exchange" networks in which goods and services could be traded using an interest free local credit or "currency". For example, a LETS member could earn local credits by doing childcare or computer work for one person, and spend those credits on food, hiring equipment, gardening, or carpentry provided by another member of the network. The Environment Key Issue Strategy sought to ensure the sustainable development of the district and LETS scheme achieved this by releasing skills and talents within local communities which contributed to the sustainable regeneration of the area.

Funding was sought from LETS to update their directory, advertise and recruit new members (£1,000) and towards food hygiene training costs (£330).

RECOMMENDED that £1,330 be paid as a one-off grant to the LETS scheme from the general Key Issues budget for costs associated with updating their directory, advertising and recruiting for new members and for food hygiene training costs.

13. VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT STEERING GROUP

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team on whether they wished officers to participate in a Warwickshire (Voluntary Sector) Compact Steering Group. The Compact Steering Group had been developed because the Government was keen to consider innovate ways of meeting community needs. It provided greater joint working between the statutory and voluntary sectors which was needed because it was considered innovate, cost effective and experienced. A Steering Group had been set up with representatives from the CVS and the County Council, and two representatives from Borough/District

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Councils in Warwickshire was sought.

RECOMMENDED that Warwick District Council indicate that it wishes to be represented on the Warwickshire (Voluntary Sector) Compact Steering Group.

14. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT - ASPIRE

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team seeking support for a service level agreement between the Council and the Association for Spinal Injury Research, Rehabilitation and Reintegration.

So far, Aspire had successfully delivered disability awareness training for 150 front line staff, and provided an awareness course for 30 local taxi drivers which had been tailored specifically for them. Aspire had also assisted with the organisation of the recent sports day for people with disabilities held at St. Nicholas Park Leisure Centre and had provided staff for the day to coach and supervised a number of activities.

The aim of the Service Level Agreement was to continue the good work already in place and it was intended that Aspire would provide the Council with action plans to enable it to develop independently in the coming years. Aspire also intended to develop a "Warwick Model" based on works already completed and to promote this as an example of good practice to other local authorities and external agencies. The cost of the agreement would be £5,360 for works to be carried out over a 12 month period.

RECOMMENDED that the Service Level Agreement between this Council and the Association for Spinal Injury Research, Rehabilitation and Reintegration be approved.

15. PRESS FOR CHANGE

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team seeking support for a donation to Press for Change for giving assistance in the establishment of a gender reassignment Code of Practice for the Council.

Due to recent changes in the Sex Discrimination Act to include "gender reassignment", the Council had been drafting a Code of Practice for staff as part of the Council's general equal opportunities policy. Press for Change was an organisation which campaigned to achieve equal civil rights and liberties for all trans-gendered people through legislation and social change. The organisation had provided legal advice, training and support in this area to many organisations. Since February, a local co-ordinator of Press for Change had been working with the Council in developing a set of guidelines for staff followed up by training sessions. As the services had been provided at no cost to the Council, it was suggested that a donation be made to the organisation.

RECOMMENDED that a donation of £150 be made to Press for Change.

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16. ATHLETICS/FUND DAY - EDMONSCOTE TRACK

The Sub-Committee considered a report from Leisure and Amenities and the Commissioning Team seeking financial report for an athletics/fun day at Edmonscote track for people with disabilities.

Leisure and Amenities were currently working in partnership with the Leamington Cycling and Athletics Club to encourage disabled people within the district to participate in athletics. The programme would be launched with an athletics/fun day at the track in Spring 2000, with a series of on-going coaching sessions throughout the summer. The aim of the event was to enable new disabled athletes to have the opportunity to integrate into the main stream athletics run by the club on a regular basis. Part of the funding would be used to train a coach from the club in working with disabled athletes.

RECOMMENDED that funding of £1,600 from the Social Key Issues budget be contributed towards the cost of an athletics/fun day at Edmonscote track to encourage disabled people in the district to participate in athletics.

17. SPORTS SESSIONS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

The Sub-Committee considered a report from Sports Facilities (Contract) and the Commissioning Team seeking financial support for a weekly sports session for people with disabilities that took place at Castle Farm Recreation Centre and St. Nicholas Park Leisure Centre.

There was a well established weekly session at Castle Farm Recreation ground which was attended by members of South Warwickshire MENCAP group each Saturday. A weekly session at St. Nicholas Leisure Centre had also been established which was open to all local people with disabilities. Attendances at the sessions now averaged 15-20 people per week. It was proposed to standardise the charges for the sessions at £1.30 in April 2000. The report detailed the additional costs likely to be faced by the two sports centres whilst these weekly sessions continued to be held.

RECOMMENDED that funding of £3,394.48 be provided from the Social Key Issues funds to cover the cost of providing the sports sessions for people with disabilities at Castle Farm Recreation Centre and St. Nicholas Park Leisure Centre.

18. THE PROVISION OF CYCLING FACILITIES FOR STAFF AND PUBLIC AT THE COUNCIL'S LEISURE CENTRES

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team highlighting the need for secure cycle storage facilities for staff and public at all four leisure centres. The report requested that money be used from the EMAS budget to finance this provision.

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The leisure centres had a high percentage of staff and customers who regularly used bicycles. The existing cycle storage facilities at the leisure centres were considered unsatisfactory and this resulted in staff rooms and toilets often becoming a storage for bicycles.

The Eco Management Audit Scheme (EMAS) for the Council had identified the reduction of CO2 omissions from vehicles travelling to leisure facilities as one of its objectives. The better provision of cycling storage would help towards meeting this target.

RECOMMENDED that £18,000 be allocated from the EMAS budget to make improvements to staff and public cycle storage facilities at the Council's four leisure centres.

19. HILL CLOSE GARDENS, WARWICK

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team on whether to provide financial support to the Hill Close Gardens Steering Group to assist the community work which was being undertaken to help restore the gardens.

A Steering Group comprising Councillors and local people had been set up to guide the restoration of Hill Close Gardens. Whilst a lottery bid had been made to enable the full restoration of the gardens, local people had been undertaking some work themselves and this had reaped benefits in terms of the public being able to visit through open days. This work had been largely financed by local people themselves as well as donations from local organisations and from the open days. However, a request had been received from the Steering Group for this Council, as the Landowner, to assist by providing a small budget that could be used to facilitate the hiring of skips, installation of a water supply, relocation of class room as a temporary office etc. It was suggested that an allowance of £5,000 be made to help the Steering Group undertake some necessary work connected with the restoration of the gardens, to be funded from the general Key Issues budget.

RECOMMENDED that £5,000 be granted from the general Key Issues budget to the Hill Close Gardens Steering Group to help fund its restoration work.

20. CONSIDERATE CONTRACTORS SCHEME

The Sub-Committee considered a report from Engineering and the Commissioning Team informing them of the Considerate Contractors Scheme and seeking approval for the release of financial resources from the Key Issues budget to fund a pilot project.

The Considerate Contractors Scheme aimed to encourage public utilities and contractors working on or adjacent to the highway to carry out their operations in a safe, tidy and considerate manner with due regard to passing pedestrians and road users. The scheme comprised a code of good practice, regular street works inspections by Council officers, annual judging and a telephone hotline enabling the general public to

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comment on the scheme and on participating contractors. It was intended that contractors undertaking work on or adjacent to the highway would be required to become members of the Considerate Contractors Scheme and agree to abide by the Code of Practice.

It was proposed to implement the project on 1 April 2000 and run as a pilot project for 12 months. The estimated cost of implementing the pilot project was £5,000 which could be funded from existing Key Issues budgets.

RECOMMENDED that £5,000 be allocated from the Key Issues budget to fund a pilot 12 month Considerate Contractors Scheme.

21. FLOODING - SALTISFORD COMMON, WARWICK

The Sub-Committee considered a report from Engineering, Finance, Leisure and Amenities and Property Services seeking approval for the release of financial resources from Key Issue budgets to contribute towards the cost of the Saltisford Flooding Alleviation Scheme.

The gardens, properties and highway in Antelope Gardens, Warwick were subject to flooding during periods of high intensity storms and residents had complained to the Council that not enough was being done to alleviate this problem. A survey had been undertaken to investigate the causes of the flooding which had revealed that the capacity of the existing culverted section did not have enough hydraulic capacity to carry the high flows generated during intense storms. This resulted in the water overspilling from the existing open ditch watercourse and flooding the adjacent area of Antelope Gardens. To prevent the overspilling of storm water from the open ditch watercourse, it was proposed to construct an earth "bund" within the Saltisford Common amenity area. This would increase the storage capacity of the brook during times of heavy and intense rainfall, effectively acting as a dam to contain storm flows long enough to allow their natural percolation through the piped culvert without overspilling into the adjacent residential area.

The cost of the scheme was £25,854, of which £12,000 had already been met from the Environment Agency, Head of Property Services and Head of Finance. It was suggested that £11,000 could be met from the Key Issues Strategy budget with the remainder being funded from budgets under the control of the Head of Engineering.

RECOMMENDED that £11,000 be contributed from Key Issues Strategies budget towards the overall cost of the Saltisford flooding alleviation scheme.

22. PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraph 9 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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23. THE GAP - COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CHANTRY SHOPPING PRECENT

The Sub-Committee considered a report from the Commissioning Team concerning, in principle, the broader social and economic issues concerning the GAP.

The GAP opened in June 1999 after their current premises were refurbished at a cost of approximately £18,000. This Council's contribution towards the cost was met from the former Community Key Issues Strategy Working Party. The community centre had proved successful and was meeting clear community needs.

A trader in the Chantry Shopping Precinct had indicated that it wished to expand its premises into those currently used by the GAP. This would require the GAP to be relocated within the shopping precinct. Some members of the Management Committee had stated that they would support the relocation suggestion, provided that the retailer wishing to occupy their premises were willing to pay for the refurbishment of the new premises and would ensure a smooth transition between the two shops. It was also considered that an expansion into the premises currently owned by the GAP would help the economic viability of the present generally, indirectly assisting other traders.

RECOMMENDED that, should it be pursued further, the relocation of the GAP to another shop in the Chantry Shopping Precinct be supported in principle.

PART II

(Matters delegated to the Sub-Committee by the Council)

NIL

(The meeting ended at 8.15 p.m)