

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30 May 2012 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Michael Doody (Chairman), Councillors Caborn, Coker, Mrs Gallagher, Mrs Grainger, Mobbs, Shilton and Vincett.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Boad (Liberal Democrat Group Observer), Councillor Edwards (Labour Group Observer), Councillor Gifford (Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor Mrs Knight (Chair of Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barrott and Kirton.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

PART 1

(Items which a decision by Council is required)

4. **OAKLEY WOOD IMPROVEMENT REPORT**

The Executive considered a report from Environmental Services which brought forward proposals to increase the size of one of the chapels, improve office facilities, car parking, visitor reception areas and the gardens of remembrance at Oakley Wood crematorium.

The proposals had evolved due to the increased pressure on facilities at the crematorium over the years. The suitability of the existing buildings to meet current and future demands had also been investigated.

There were a number of alternative options available, including the choice not to go ahead with the project but this would result in the facilities becoming outdated and unsuitable for purpose. Likewise, smaller scale alterations could be undertaken but this would not make the significant changes that officer's felt were necessary.

Additional funds could also be generated by increasing the resident and non-residents cremation fees, however, this could result in less business because people were more adept at shopping around for lower cost funerals.

Finally, the building works could be undertaken separately to the car park works but officers had discounted this because improving the access to the site was a priority and separate works could exacerbate this.

Councillor Gill addressed members, welcomed the report and stated that he had waited a number of years for refurbishment works to take place at the crematorium. He explained the process that Sikhs and Hindu's honour when a family member or friend passes away. He had concerns that the current facilities resulted in overcrowding of the car park and buildings.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee was concerned that the crematorium grounds were showing signs of neglect and therefore wanted to see the site accommodated in the new grounds maintenance contract.

Members recognised the crematorium's value as a strategic asset and were keen to see investment in it. They considered it to be a good business plan and suggested that it may have further marketing potential which should be investigated.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, expressing a preference for option (iii) under recommendation 2.3, which was to maintain the status quo in respect of the pricing policy. They felt it best to review the prices when all the council's fees and charges were looked at later in the year and requested that they be informed if there was any deviation from the estimated cost.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the pricing structure should move towards the National Average and a concession for residents should remain.

They suggested that the Executive consider providing "Jump Seats" for larger funerals to prevent higher numbers of people being forced to stand. Members also had concerns regarding the delay with receiving legal advice over the Lodge and asked that this be investigated further.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported improvements and investment at Oakley Wood Crematorium and positively supported the idea that it was a service that should be provided by the Council.

In response, the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Coker endorsed the proposed works and was mindful that members of the public were not comfortable when using the existing facilities due to the restricted space. He highlighted the importance of providing a dignified service with a higher percentage of cremations taking place nowadays.

In answer to the Finance & Audit's comments regarding further marketing potential, Councillor Coker felt that word of mouth was the best kind of marketing available. He also agreed that the pricing policy should be reviewed as part of the usual Fees and Charges process.

With regard to the comments made by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Coker advised that officers were not certain that moving towards the national average was the correct direction but assured members that they would bear it in mind in such a competitive market place.

He felt that the idea of 'jump seats' was good and reassured members that legal negotiations were ongoing with the resident at the Lodge and all parties would be kept informed. He was uncertain that catering facilities were appropriate in this setting but agreed that drinks machines could be made available for visitors who had travelled some distance.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Having read the report, and having taken the Scrutiny Committees' comments into account, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations and review the pricing policy as part of the Fees and Charges process.

RECOMMENDED that;

- (1) the improvements at Oakley Wood Crematorium as proposed in this report, be supported;
- (2) up to £985,000 be spent on improvement works to the crematorium, to be financed from the Capital Investment Reserve (or other appropriate financing to be determined as part of the Council's overall Capital Funding), and the Capital Programme be updated accordingly. The details of the project implemented to be agreed between the Portfolio Holder, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Environmental Services and the Section 151 Officer; and
- (3) the pricing policy at Oakley Wood Crematorium remain as existing and will be reviewed as part of the Fees and Charges process.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Coker)
(Forward Plan reference 350)

PART 2

(Items which a decision by Council is not required)

5. FEASIBILITY STUDY OF LEAMINGTON ASSETS – PART A

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) which presented the outcomes of the feasibility study commissioned in respect of Council owned assets in Royal Leamington Spa. The report also highlighted options for the development of the study both in relation to the specific assets and in supporting delivery of Fit for The Future and the Council's Vision.

The report was presented in two parts. The Part A report incorporated all of the information that it was considered appropriate to place in the public domain in order to inform the decision of Members in relation to the recommendations.

Further details, for information purposes, were included in the Part B report, contained in the confidential section of the agenda.

Executive approved funding for a feasibility study of selected assets within Royal Leamington Spa in February 2011 and EC Harris, who had previously undertaken the Accommodation Review, were appointed to undertake the asset optimisation feasibility study.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

The study took place in November and December 2011 and resulted in an Asset Optimisation feasibility study report being produced, with background papers. The report was attached as an appendix to the report along with findings from the study, the Benefits Case Baseline and an assessment of future delivery options.

The full list of recommendations was set out in section 2 of the report.

There were a number of alternatives available to the Executive because they could decide not to approve some or all of the recommendations. Section 5 of Appendix 2 detailed the resultant costs of 'doing nothing'.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee felt the report presented a number of exciting opportunities. Members noted that recommendation 2.15 should read "£20,000 per each of the 5 recommendations" and that the remaining balance on the Service Transformation Reserve should be £354,000. The Committee supported the recommendations, subject to the corrections as stated.

In response to concerns expressed over the number of calls being made on the Service Transformation Reserve, the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee decided it would be prudent to monitor the Reserve's status on a regular basis.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that the reports were good and supported all of the recommendations but there needed to be considerable due diligence before decisions were made. The Committee made the following comments:

1. The Committee supported the Partnership approach but had concerns. It was pleased that due diligence would be undertaken;
2. In respect of Part B of the report, the Committee wanted the Executive to fully ensure it understood the implications, and would fully support due diligence;
3. The new Head Office should be purchased, not leased;
4. The Committee supported urban and economic regeneration with the relocation of the Head Office;
5. A previous feasibility study had been undertaken concerning the Town Hall. (Councillors Mrs Falp, Mrs Blacklock and Gifford had been involved.) This should be used to avoid duplication of effort;
6. The Town Hall should become a model on how to produce a "Green" Grade II Listed Building; and
7. The new Head Office should also be "Green".

In response, the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Caborn, spoke in detail about each of the seventeen recommendations and reminded members that effective regeneration had to be led.

He felt unable to state categorically whether new premises would be bought or leased because it was too early to make this decision. He did advise that the option taken would be the most cost effective one and the building would be as 'green' as possible.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Members were mindful that this was a 'vision', in its infancy and changes would not be happening immediately. Councillor Mobbs confirmed that the figures quoted by the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee were correct and encouraged members to be excited by this ambitious project.

Having read the report, and having taken the Scrutiny Committees' comments into account, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations as per the officers' report.

RECOMMENDED that;

- (1) the outcomes of the asset optimisation feasibility study undertaken by EC Harris, as set out at in appendices one to four to the report, be noted;
- (2) the Council relocate its headquarters office accommodation from Riverside House and seek an alternative site within Leamington Spa, with the aim of using the relocation to support urban and economic regeneration;
- (3) a feasibility study of the Court Street/Althorpe Street area is undertaken to determine its potential as a site for the Council's headquarters office relocation and to assess opportunities for land acquisition to support a wider regeneration scheme;
- (4) irrespective of the future location of the Council's headquarters offices, a separate location will be sought for a One Stop Shop within Leamington town centre;
- (5) the Council should retain the Town Hall within its asset portfolio and undertake a feasibility study of potential future uses;
- (6) the Council seek, at a future date, to redevelop the site currently housing the Royal Spa Centre;
- (7) the cultural 'offer' and activities of the Royal Spa Centre continue to be provided within the town when the current site is redeveloped;
- (8) an assessment of the potential for additional commercial activities at the Royal Pump Rooms, complementary to the continued delivery of the current range of activities and services located on site, is undertaken following the outcome of the current review of the Leamington Visitor Information Centre;

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

- (9) the submission of a funding bid to the Growing Places Fund, as set out in the Part B report, be noted, and officers continue to investigate alternative funding options to secure the best use of its assets in Spencer Yard for cultural, creative and/or commercial uses;
- (10) the potential disposal of the Packington Place car park and adjoining former Italian Club be explored for new affordable housing;
- (11) a specification is prepared for the enhancement of the office accommodation at 26 Hamilton Terrace prior to letting at an increased commercial rental;
- (12) dialogue recommence with Warwick District Citizens Advice Bureau in respect of their future relocation from 10 Hamilton Terrace to alternative premises;
- (13) a partnership approach to the exploration of a range of property options for its existing asset portfolio be agreed 'in-principle';
- (14) a 'soft market testing' exercise be conducted to examine possible partnering options in parallel to a detailed appraisal of a specific option, further information on which is detailed in the Part B report;
- (15) authority be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) and the s151 Officer, in consultation with the Development and Finance Portfolio Holders, to approve a maximum sum of £20,000 per recommendation from the Service Transformation Reserve to enable the specified examinations and feasibility studies to be undertaken;
- (16) if, on further assessment, it is established that the cost of the relevant study cannot be contained within the £20,000 limit, a separate report requesting utilisation of the Service Transformation Reserve will be brought to a future meeting; and
- (17) further reports will be presented on the outcomes of the examination of partnering options and specified feasibility studies.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)
(Forward Plan reference 389)

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

6. RURAL / URBAN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT APPLICATION

The Executive considered a report from Finance which provided details of two applications for financial assistance from Bishop's Tachbrook Parish Council and Bubbenhall Village Hall Management Committee.

Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council were looking for assistance with the building of a new Community Centre in the village, a project that had to date taken ten years to begin.

Bubbenhall Village Hall Management Committee were looking for help to fund the renovation and modernisation of the Gents toilets and showering facilities within the existing changing rooms.

Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council, in addition to submitting their application, had also been instrumental in the setting up of a new charitable trust that would operate the centre once built. The trust would provide £22,975 and a further £16,684 from written pledges towards the first phase of the project.

The Parish Council had £73,004 in reserves of which £50,000 would be provided to help fund this project, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council's last successful application from the Rural Initiative Scheme was in February 2009 for £21,618

The report recommended that the Executive approve the award of a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant to Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council for 27% of the total cost of the project exclusive of VAT subject to a maximum payment of £50,000.

Bubbenhall Village Hall Management Committee submitted an application to renovate and modernise the toilets and the shower facilities at the Village Hall and had approved funding from Bubbenhall Parish Council of £750 towards the project.

The Management Committee had £10,038 in reserves, of which £2,250 would be provided to help fund this project and their last successful application from the Rural Initiative Scheme was in February 2010 for £9,957.

The report recommended that the Executive approve the award of a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant to Bubbenhall Village Hall Management Committee for 21% of the total cost of the project inclusive of VAT subject to a maximum payment of £3,000.

The Council only had a specific capital budget to provide grants of this nature and there were no alternative options if the Council was to provide funding for Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Schemes. However, Members could choose not to approve the grant funding, or to vary the amount awarded as discussed in paragraph 7 of the report.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Councillor Mrs Grainger endorsed the report and highlighted the importance of assisting the District's Parishes and local community organisations.

Having read the report, and having taken the Scrutiny Committees' comments into account, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations as per the report.

RECOMMENDED that;

- (1) a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant of £50,000 be approved to Bishops Tachbrook Parish Council for the building of phase 1 of the new Community Centre, which equates to 27% of the cost; and
- (2) a Rural/Urban Capital Improvement Grant of £3,000 be approved to Bubbenhall Village Hall Management Committee for the renovation and modernisation of the toilet and shower facilities, which equates to 21% of the cost.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Grainger)

7. LEAMINGTON ART GALLERY & MUSEUM SUBMISSION TO MUSEUMS ACCREDITATION SCHEME

The Executive considered a report from Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum (LSAG&M) which sought permission to renew the membership of the Museums Accreditation Scheme and asked the Council to formally adopt the associated Collections Management Framework 2012 – 2017.

The Scheme was managed by the Arts Council England (ACE), was the museum sector's principal quality standard and most local authority, university and national museums sought membership.

Being a member of the accreditation scheme indicated that the museum provided good quality services for visitors and exhibited well cared for and accessible collections for the benefit of the public. It was usually necessary to be an Accredited Museum in order to borrow exhibits from other museums or art galleries, or to create partnerships with them. Accredited status was also recognised beyond the sector, and was a major asset when seeking funds provided by public bodies such as ACE and the Heritage or Arts Lottery distributors, or from charitable bodies such as the Wellcome Trust or the Contemporary Arts Society.

This in turn, assisted the Museum and Art Gallery to continue to raise external funds.

The new Accreditation Scheme was similar to its predecessor but required additional information and more supporting documentation. It included a requirement for the governing body of applicant museums to adopt a new Collections Management Framework to supersede the Acquisitions & Disposal Policy required by the previous Scheme.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

LSAG&M's proposed Collections Management Framework 2012 – 2017 comprised four complementary policies which followed guidelines provided by ACE: 1. Collections Development Policy; 2. Collections Care and Conservation Policy; 3. Collections Access Policy; and 4. Collections Documentation Policy. The Executive had previously approved the Councils Acquisitions and Disposal Policies.

As this was the only nationally recognised accreditation Scheme for Museums in the United Kingdom, there were no alternative scheme's to join. Failure to achieve Accreditation would significantly undermine confidence in LSAG&M within the museums sector, would have a direct impact on the exhibitions and events programme and would result in it becoming harder to borrow exhibits or work with other art galleries and museums.

The Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services, Councillor Mrs Gallagher, endorsed the report and explained the importance of obtaining this accreditation. Not only did it highlight the high quality of service provided by the team at the LSAG&M but was also vital in ensuring top quality collections could be borrowed to help raise external funds to supplement the Council's own funding of the exhibitions, events and conservation programmes.

Having read the report, and having taken the Scrutiny Committees' comments into account, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations in the report.

RECOMMENDED that the application to renew LSAG&M's Museum Accreditation, be approved, and the Collections Management Framework 2012 – 2017, be adopted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Gallagher)
(Forward Plan reference 405)

8. THE DOGS EXCLUSION ORDER 2011

The Executive considered a report from Environmental Services which requested that the Dogs Exclusions Order include the toddlers' play area, The Meadow (off Kingsley Road), Bishop's Tachbrook following a request by Councillor Brookes.

Section 1 of the Schedule in the Dogs Exclusion (Warwick District Council) Order 2011 included –

"Any clearly demarcated children's play areas, paddling pools, bowling greens, multi use game areas, tennis courts, or putting greens signed as a "dog exclusion zone" (whether the sign uses those particular words and/or symbols having like effect." The Executive resolved that prior approval must be given before including any further sites in the Order.

A list of play areas requested by Parish Councils was previously included in the Dogs Exclusion (Warwick District Council) Order 2011 and approved at the Executive in April 2012.

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Defra guidance advised that local authorities should consider how easy a dog exclusion order would be to enforce. These would be easier to enforce if the land was enclosed but the guidance also stated that such orders should not be ruled out for unenclosed land where a special case for them could be made, for example to provide dog-free sections on beaches. The Dog Control Orders (Procedures) Regulations 2006 provided the legal requirement that, where practical, signs must be placed on the land which was subject to the Order.

Officers assessed the site proposed by Councillor Brookes and were satisfied that it met the criteria described in the Defra guidance.

An alternative option was not to include the site in section 1 of the Schedule in the Dogs Exclusion (Warwick District Council) Order 2011.

Councillor Coker addressed members endorsing the report and stated that the issue regarding dogs being on extendable leads in cemeteries needed further investigation.

In response to Councillor Boad's query, Councillor Coker highlighted that the Task and Finish Group were responsible for the description of how areas were to be demarcated.

Having read the report, and having taken the Scrutiny Committees' comments into account, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations in the report.

RECOMMENDED that the toddlers' play area, The Meadow (off Kingsley Road), Bishop's Tachbrook be included in section 1 of the Schedule in the Dogs Exclusion (Warwick District Council) Order 2011.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item Councillor Coker)

9. **SERVICE TRANSFORMATION RESERVE BID – SPORTS & LEISURE**

The Executive considered a report from Cultural Services which sought approval for the utilisation of the Service Transformation Fund to fund a temporary project manager to support the Sports and Leisure Manager through Phase II of the restructure in this service.

As part of the Fit for the Future Programme, the Sport and Leisure team had for some time been considering its purpose, identifying what customers wanted from the service, reviewing how they currently provided the service, whether there were better ways of doing so in the future and considering what opportunities existed to increase income. The project included all the Council's main leisure centres plus dual use sites, sports development activities, outdoor sports and sports events.

Fundamental to the project was a review of the existing staffing structure to consider whether it was fit for purpose in delivering the service. The report requested that £40,000 be used from the Service Transformation Fund to allow the temporary appointment of a project manager in Cultural

EXECUTIVE MINUTES (Continued)

Services to oversee the leisure centre programme review and design the revised operational staffing structure to deliver this programme in future years. Without the added resource it was unlikely that a significant change would be delivered within the timescales required to deliver Fit for the Future.

An alternative option was not to agree the recommendation but the Sports and Leisure Manager would be required to manage the growing number of projects in his section and this would jeopardise the successful completion of Phase I. The service would continue to deliver what it currently delivered but fail to develop and take opportunities to increase participation and income in the future. A detailed review of the service would not be possible with the current management resource and it was likely that no significant change would be made.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations in the report, having been reassured by responses made by the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) to a number of questions, at their meeting.

In response, the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Mrs Gallagher, endorsed the report and highlighted that this recommendation would still need to be considered by the Employment Committee, next month.

Having read the report, and having taken the Scrutiny Committees' comments into account, the Executive decided to agree the recommendations in the report.

RECOMMENDED that a maximum allocation of £40,000 be approved from the Service Transformation Fund to allow, subject to approval by Employment Committee, the temporary appointment for 12 months of a project manager in Cultural Services to oversee the leisure centre programme review and design the revised operational staffing structure to deliver this programme in future years.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Gallagher)

10. **PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute No.	Para Nos.	Reason
11 to 15	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority

holding that information)

The full minutes of Minutes 11 to 15 were contained within a confidential minute which would be made available to the public following the implementation of the relevant decisions. However, a summary of the decisions was as follows:

11. FEASIBILITY STUDY OF LEAMINGTON ASSETS – PART B

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Caborn)
(Forward Plan reference 389)

12. RETAIL DEVELOPMENT IN LEAMINGTON TOWN CENTRE – UPDATE REPORT

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan reference 356)

13. APPROVAL OF COMPENSATION PAYMENT

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

(The Portfolio Holders for this item were Councillors Doody and Hammon)

14. CORPORATE & COMMUNITY SERVICES REVIEW

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Mrs Grainger)

15. NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES REVIEW

The recommendations as set out in the report were agreed.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Shilton)

(The meeting ended at 8.40 pm)