

# WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 August 2015, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Doody (Chairman); Councillors Barrott, Bromley, Mrs Bunker, Butler, Cain, Mrs Cain J.P., Coker, Cooke, Cross, D'Arcy, Davies, Davison, Edgington, Mrs Evetts, Mrs Falp, Mrs Gallagher, Gill, Miss Grainger, Harrington J.P., Heath, Mrs Hill, Howe, Illingworth, Mrs Knight, Mann, Margrave, Naimo, Phillips, Quinney, Mrs Redford, Rhead, Shilton, Stevens, Thompson, Weed and Whiting.

## 22. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashford, Boad, Day, Gifford, Mrs Grainger, Mobbs, Murphy and Parkins.

## 23. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 24. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 24 June 2015, were approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 25. **Communications & Announcements**

The Chairman informed the Council that former County Councillor, Martin Heatley, had passed away following a recent illness.

The Chairman informed the Council that former Warwick District Councillor, Les Caborn, had been taken ill and he would be writing to Mr Caborn offering the best wishes of the Council.

It was agreed by the Council that the statements made to the Council regarding former Warwick District Councillor, Norman Parker, who had recently passed away, should be recorded so that a copy could be passed to the Family.

The Chairman informed the Council that Norman Parker had represented the Leamington Campion Ward from 1973 to May 1983 and had been Chairman of the Council in 1978-79. Tributes were also paid by Councillors, Coker, Barrott, Mrs Falp, and Cooke.

The Chairman informed the Council that it had been agreed for Councillors to receive a presentation at 6.00pm from Warwick University with the title of "The University of Warwick – a profile of the University on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary".

The Chairman informed the Council that there was no business under; Item 5, petitions; and Item 7, Public Submissions.

## 26. **Notice of Motion**

Councillor Barrott proposed, and it was duly seconded that:

*"The Council will seek, through the procurement process, that its contractors and suppliers of goods and services pay their employees the National Living Wage. The Council asks its Executive and officers to begin this process by engaging in dialogue with all the relevant stakeholders and report back to Council with their findings and recommendations."*

On being put to the vote the motion was lost.

## 27. **Leader's and Portfolio Holders Statements**

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Shilton, advised that Jephson Gardens had been awarded for the ninth successive year.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Councillor Mrs Gallagher, updated Council on the work of the Sky Blues in the Community impact project targeted at the residents of the Forbes Estate. The project had exceeded its expectations for activities being delivered and had won the 2014 Community Project of the Year at the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Awards. Sky Blues in the Community had also delivered a viable and sustainable business plan for continuing the work after funding from this Council ends. This would ensure that project continues up to April 2016 and work was ongoing to secure funding to continue providing activities in the community after April 2016.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Councillor Mrs Gallagher, informed Council that the first week of the National Bowls Championships had gone exceptionally well, with high levels of attendance, good competition and very complaints. Local businesses were reporting a boost in trade as were local hotels. She took the opportunity to thank the Green Keeping staff for their excellent work in preparing the greens and ensuring they were at the very highest standard.

The Portfolio Holder for Development Services, Councillor Cross, informed Council that "HS2 additional provisions 2" had been published. These corrected errors in the original environmental statement. There were proposed changes within the District but not the major changes that had been sought. Advice had been provided to the Council, from its legal advisors that it would not be advisable to petition this publication. However, Councillor Cross assured Council that we would continue raise issues with a view to mitigating the impact of HS2 on this District.

(Councillor Mann arrived during this item)

## 28. **Questions to the Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holders**

Councillor Mrs Knight, asked the Deputy Leader, in last term before election many discussions were held regarding how the Council could effectively scrutinise Council activities from a health perspective. It had almost been agreed that a Health Scrutiny Committee should be formed. It was then agreed that we should wait for the new intake of councillors, before making a final decision. In the absence of the Health and Community Portfolio Holder, could the Deputy Leader please tell us when we can expect to have a briefing for new Councillors especially those on Overview and Scrutiny so that we can start a robust scrutiny of all Council business which would have an effect on public health?

In response the Deputy Leader, Councillor Coker, explained he was aware of the need for Health Scrutiny and agreed that this needed to be brought forward by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Mrs Falp asked, the Deputy Leader, if he agreed that the Council should determine the final location of any proposed site for the Gypsy & Traveller sites to be provided in this District, rather than the Executive?

In response the Deputy Leader, Councillor Coker, explained that as a Council we had a Duty to provide sites and this provision was required as part of the Local Plan. If the Council did not have a Local Plan, one could be imposed on it by the Department of Communities & Local Government. The original indication was that the Council would receive contributions from the Government and Traveller Community, but we had a clear problem that we had to provide these sites and we might have to contribute to them.

(Following a further question from Councillor Heath, the Chief Executive confirmed that this would be a decision for the Council to make and not the Executive).

Councillor Quinney asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services, that while it was good that his service area had reduced the waiting time for Disabled Facilities Grants from 14 months to nine months, this was still a long time for residents to wait and, therefore, what was considered as a reasonable service standard (was it for example three months) and when would this be achieved?

In response the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Property Services, Councillor Phillips, agreed that this was an important service provided by the Council and he would take advice on this matter and update Council on this.

Councillor Naimo, asked the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, that following his statement at the previous Council meeting, was he aware that there was already a friends of Eagle Rec?

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Shilton, explained that he was not personally aware of the Group but he would like to meet and work with them.

Councillor Rhead, asked the Deputy Leader, if the Executive would pay due and proper consideration to all consultation responses regarding the siting of any Gypsy and Traveller Site and could he confirm if a compulsory purchase order would be considered as an option before or after a green belt site?

In response the Deputy Leader, Councillor Coker, explained that a Compulsory Purchase Order would be the last resort but having that power available was essential because it could encourage a sale to take place. There were very few offers for the sale of land for this use and if Councillors knew of any potential sites please could they share these with us. As far as consultation responses these would be taken into consideration along with the viability and funding arrangements for each site.

## 29. **Executive Report**

The reports of the Executive meeting on 1 July 2015 and excerpt of 29 July 2015 were proposed, duly seconded and:

**Resolved** that the Executive reports of 1 July 2015 and excerpt of 29 July 2015, be approved.

### 30. **Local Plan – The Way Forward**

The Council considered a report from Development Services that updated them on the latest position with regard to the Local Plan and set out options for the way forward for the Plan.

The Local Plan Inspector wrote to the Council on 1 June 2015. His letter was shown in Appendix 1, to the report. This followed five days of initial hearings in May 2015, during which he considered Duty to Cooperate, overall housing requirements in the District and overall supply of housing. A briefing note prepared shortly after receiving the Inspector's letter was shown in Appendix 2, to the report.

Since then the Leader of the Council had written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government asking that he considered intervening in the Local Plan examination due to the important implications that were likely to arise as a result of the Inspector's findings. The Secretary of State had responded via a recent meeting with the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive at which he indicated that he did not intend to intervene at this stage but he suggested that the Council respond directly to the Inspector.

As a result of this, the Council needed to decide how to respond to the Inspector. The report considered three options and recommended that the Council write to the Inspector requesting that he agrees to suspend the Plan with the Examination recommencing in March 2016.

The report also sought agreement from the Council to the timetable agreed with the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint Committee for Economic Growth and Prosperity (CWJCEGP) for resolving the issue of unmet housing need arising in Coventry.

#### **Resolved** that the

- (1) Local Plan Inspector's Interim Findings as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (2) the timetable for resolving the issue of unmet housing need arising in Coventry set out in the report approved by the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint Committee for Economic Growth and Prosperity on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015 as shown in Appendix 3 to the report, be noted;
- (3) Council writes to the Local Plan Inspector to request that the Examination is suspended whilst the Inspector's concerns are addressed, in line with a timetable, to be agreed with the Inspector; and
- (4) a contingency budget of £30,000 be allocated from the Planning Appeals Reserve to support the work required to achieve the timetable set out in the report and delegated authority is approved for the Head of Finance and Head of Development Services, in consultation with their respective Portfolio Holders, to approve any minor extra

funding from the same Reserve, if required to achieve the stated work.

31. **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 item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

32. **Confidential Executive Report**

The confidential report of the Executive meeting on 1 July 2015 was proposed, duly seconded and:

**Resolved** that the Executive report of 1 July 2015, be approved.

33. **Common Seal**

It was

**Resolved** that the Common Seal of Warwick District Council be affixed to such documents as may be required for implementing decisions of the Council arrived at this day.

(The meeting ended at 7.17 pm)

CHAIRMAN  
23 September 2015