

# Warwick District Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 28 January 2015, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.05pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs Sawdon (Chairman); Councillors; Barrott, Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Mrs Bromley, Brookes, Mrs Bunker, Caborn, Coker, Cross, Davies, Ms Dean, Dhillon, Edwards, Mrs Falp, Mrs Gallagher, Gifford, Gill, Mrs Goode, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Heath, Mrs Higgins, Illingworth, Kinson OBE, Mrs Mellor, Mobbs, Pittarello, Rhead, Shilton, Mrs Syson, Weber and Ms Weed.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Copping, Guest, Kirton, Mrs Knight, MacKay, Pratt, Wilkinson, Williams, and Wreford-Bush.

## 63. **Declarations of Interest**

### Minute 65 – Local Plan Submission Draft

Councillors Caborn, Shilton and Gifford all declared they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest because part of the land being considered for housing development allocation was owned by Warwickshire County Council. Therefore as County Councillors they would benefit from this. However dispensation had been granted, by the Standards Committee on 21 January 2015, for them to participate in this matter.

Councillor Boad declared he had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest because his wife was a Warwickshire County Councillor and part of the land being considered for housing development allocation was owned by Warwickshire County Council. Therefore as a County Councillor his wife would benefit from this. However dispensation had been granted, by the Standards Committee on 21 January 2015, for him to participate in this matter.

### Minute 73 – Strategic Opportunity Proposal

Councillors Caborn, Gifford and Shilton all declared they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest because Warwickshire County Council could significantly benefit from the proposal, therefore they left the room while this item was considered.

Councillor Boad declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest because his wife was a Warwickshire County Councillor and the County Council could significantly benefit from the proposal, therefore he left the room while this item was considered.

Councillor Mrs Falp declared a personal interest because her son was a shareholder in Leamington Brakes Football Club

Councillor Heath declared a personal interest because he was a shareholder in Leamington Brakes Football Club

## 64. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2014 were taken as read and, subject to a correction that Councillor Mrs Mellor was a trustee of Racing Club Warwick and not Hill Close Gardens and that Councillor Mobbs had met

with "some" Warwick Town Councillors, were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 65. **Communications and Announcements**

The Chairman informed the Council that:

- (1) she welcomed the winners, to the meeting, from within Warwick District of the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire Sports awards. Sky Blues in the Community for Community Project of the Year for their work in West Warwick, Kenilworth Wardens Under 14s for junior team of the year and Naomi Folkard for Sports Woman of the Year;
- (2) the Boundary Commission had accepted the consent application from the District Council therefore the proposed Parish and Town Council Boundaries would be in place for the elections in May 2015;
- (3) the Parish and Town Council Clerks and Chairs plus unsung heroes of the District meal had gone very well and thanked everyone involved for making this a success; and
- (4) there would be no business under items; 5, Public Interest Debate; 6, Petitions; 8, Public Submissions; 9, Questions to Committee Chairmen; and 10, Questions to Portfolio Holders.

## 66. **Local Plan Submission Draft**

The Council considered a report from Development Services that sought approval to submit the draft Local Plan and associated documents, to the Secretary of State to commence the Local Plan Examination in Public process.

The report also sought approval from Executive; to publish the Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule for consultation; to update the Local Development Scheme; and to ensure sufficient funding was in place for the Examination in Public process. These aspects would be considered by the Executive that was due to meet at the conclusion of this meeting of the Council.

The table of amendments had been prepared to accompany the Publication Draft Local Plan agreed in April 2014. It did not supersede this, but did indicate the amendments that the Council wished to suggest to the Inspector as the Local Plan was examined. This was the normal practice at the submission stage. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) had been reviewed to take account of; the revisions set out in appendix 1; and the responses to the consultations which related directly to the SA. The updated SA would be submitted to the Secretary of State alongside the Local Plan.

The Council had approved the Publication Draft Local Plan at its meeting on 23 April 2014. This draft was then subject to a six week period of consultation under sections 19/20 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations, 2012. In response to this consultation 365 respondents made representations. In total these respondents made 1642 representations of which 329 were in support of policies/proposals and 1313 were objections.

Following the close of the consultation, officers had read and considered all the representations and had prepared responses to them. This work was presented in the Report of Public Consultation which had been published on the Council's website. A summary of the key issues arising from this consultation were shown in Appendix 6 to the report.

The table of amendments shown in Appendix 1, to the report, had been prepared to take account of those representations that officers considered raised issues that could potentially undermine the soundness of the plan or specific proposals/policies contained within it. With some specific exceptions all these amendments were relatively minor in nature and did not change the overall strategy of the Plan.

One of the representations to the Publication Draft indicated potential for land at Stratford Road, Warwick to be considered for development. Previously this land had not been considered suitable due to the Cordon Sanitaire and concerns about flooding. Following more detailed site assessments, it was considered that this site had the potential to be allocated for employment and as a result a "focused change" consultation was undertaken in November/December 2014. This consultation also provided the opportunity for consultees to review more recently published evidence that had informed the Publication Draft Local Plan (in particular the Joint Employment Land Review and updates to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment).

In response to the focused change consultation 62 respondents made representations. In total these respondents made 127 representations of which 32 were in support of policies/proposals and 95 were objections. As with the Publication Draft consultation, officers had read and considered all the representations and had prepared responses to them. This work was presented in a separate Report of Public Consultation which had been published on the Council's website. The key issues arising from this consultation were included in Appendix 6, to the report.

The Council should submit the draft Local Plan only if it thought that it was ready for such examination, that it complied with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and that it had been prepared in compliance with all relevant legal procedures including the Duty to Co-operate. Officers considered that Council could be satisfied that these requirements were met.

The Examination in Public process would almost certainly require officers to represent the Council at hearings to justify and support the Council's agreed policy as set out in the Publication Draft, as amended by the Table of Amendments shown in Appendix 1 to the report. This recommendation authorised the Head of Development Services to carry out all the administrative, procedural and other ancillary work necessary to move the Plan through this next stage, including any additional work on the evidence base and supporting information. In addition, if the Inspector asked the Council to consider further amendments in order to make the Plan sound, it would enable the Head of Development Services (or the officers they delegated responsibility to), in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to work with the Inspector to develop possible further amendments which would help the Inspector reach conclusions on the soundness of the Plan. In considering this recommendation, Members should bear in mind that it would not authorise the Head of Development to bind the Council to make any new amendments. The Inspector would recommend amendments and the final decision on whether or not to adopt the Local Plan with those amendments at the end of the Examination process would remain with the Council.

The Council was required to fulfil the Duty to Cooperate in preparing its Local Plan. This required a range of activities including preparing a joint evidence base, working with neighbours to consider strategic infrastructure

requirements and sought to reach agreement on strategic matters. Perhaps the most high profile strategic matter was the housing requirement for the Housing Market Area and the distribution of this requirement across the Area. At its meeting on 21 November, the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint Committee for Economic Growth and Prosperity considered and unanimously agreed a report which set out a number of key recommendations, that were set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

The report indicated a housing requirement of 720 dwellings per annum for Warwick District between 2011 and 2031. It also set out a clear commitment and process to address the HMA's additional housing need once this had been established and once the Joint Green Belt Study and other evidence had been agreed. Each of the Council's in the Housing Market Area had, or would be, seeking to formally endorse the recommendations of the EPB report. The timetable for doing this was set out in the report.

An addendum was circulated at the meeting outlining further changes to Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 that had been noted by officers following the publication of the agenda along with a revised plan for DS7 & DS13.

The report as set out, subject to the amendments set out in the addendum was, was proposed by Councillor Caborn, duly seconded and

**Resolved** that

- (1) in accordance with section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Publication Draft Local Plan and Policies Map is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination along with the table of proposed amendments shown in Appendix 1 (as revised by the addendum circulated at the meeting), the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (shown in Appendix 2, as revised by the addendum circulated at the meeting) and all other documents and information as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;
- (2) the Head of Development Services, where necessary in consultation with the Deputy Leader, be authorised to take any steps which she considers to be expedient for the purpose of implementing recommendation 2.1 or promoting the objectives and interests of the Council at the independent examination;
- (3) the Council endorses the report approved by the Coventry and Warwickshire Joint Committee for Economic Growth and Prosperity on 21 November 2014 and shown in Appendix 3 to the report.

## 67. Notices of Motion

It was proposed by Councillor Weber that:

*"this Council will form a Task & Finish Group which will undertake further research and consultation to understand the views of stakeholders in relation to pursuing with the Secretary of State a Regulation 7 Direction of the 2007 Town and Country Planning Act and that the Task & Finish Group will report back to members via the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.*

*Over the past few years a large number of student 'to let' signs have been appearing across Leamington Spa during late October, November and December. In some locations their concentration is such as to disfigure the street scene.*

*It appears that the signs do not relate to current vacancies and are very unlikely to be useful for prospective tenants as students in particular use web-based adverts and university networks in looking for accommodation. The signs are unsightly and reflect a lack of sensitivity by landlords and agents towards the heritage of our town.*

*The case for control is made on the following grounds: the need to reduce street clutter, the effect these signs have in defining an area as 'student' so that they contribute to further 'studentification' and impact on the housing market, and the danger that signs may alert criminals to the location of student properties and expose all residents to burglary.*

*A number of Local Authorities with large student populations have sought or obtained permission to control letting signs with a Regulation 7 Direction. They include the period of display, the number, the design and the impact on the urban environment.*

*The Council would expect the report from officers to include details of known Regulation 7 Directions in England, the benefits these have brought and the potential for introduction into Warwick District."*

This was duly seconded and on being put to the vote it was

**Resolved** that this Council will form a Task & Finish Group which will undertake further research and consultation to understand the views of stakeholders in relation to pursuing with the Secretary of State a Regulation 7 Direction of the 2007 Town and Country Planning Act and that the Task & Finish Group will report back to members via the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

## 68. Leader's and Portfolio Holders' Statements

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Councillor Mrs Gallagher informed the Council that:

- (a) the National Bowls Championships had been very successful and was detailed in a report to the Executive along with the outcome of the subsequent review of the first year. The Council's partnership approach secured a national supporting event which has had a tremendous impact with visitor spend of up to £2million. The National Championships this year would run from 1 to 30 August 2015; and

(b) the Panto, at the Royal Spa Centre, was a huge success. It was the first time it had taken over the £200,000 box office target. Over 19,985 tickets were sold with a profit of little over £32,000. Any profit was good news for the Council and correctly pitched as a mid-sized family event. On this basis she congratulated all staff for their work over the festive season.

69. **Questions to the Leader**

There were no questions to the Leader.

70. **Reports of the Executive**

The reports of the Executive of 5 November 2014, 3 December 2014 and excerpt of 14 January 2015, were proposed by Councillor Mobbs, duly seconded and

**Resolved** that the reports be approved.

71. **Councillor Copping**

It was proposed by Councillor Boad, duly seconded

**Resolved** that Councillor Copping be granted dispensation not to attend Council meetings between now and 7 May 2015.

72. **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.

73. **Strategic Opportunity Proposal**

The Council considered a report regarding the potential for enhancing the strategic ambitions of the Council. The full details of which would be contained within the Confidential minutes of this meeting.

**Resolved** that the recommendations within the report were noted

74. **Confidential Report of the Executive**

The confidential reports of the Executive meeting of 5 November 2014 and 3 December 2014, were proposed by Councillor Mobbs, duly seconded and

**Resolved** that the reports be approved.

75. **Common Seal**

It was

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

(The meeting ended at 9.09 pm)

CHAIRMAN  
25 February 2015