

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 19 April 2000 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Compton (Chairman); Councillors Attwood, Aujla, Mrs Begg, Boad, Mrs Boad, Butler, Byrd, Caborn, Mrs Clayton, Cleaver, Cockburn, Coker, Copping, Crowther, Darmody, Davis, Doody, Dove, Dray, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Evans, Evans, Ms Flanagan, Gifford, Gill, Golby, Mrs Goode, Guest, Hammon, Harris, Mrs Hodgetts, Jackson, Kent, Kirton, Kohler, Mrs Leddy, MacKay, Mrs Pavier, Shilton, Short, Talbot, Thomas, Wooller.

752. PRAYER

In the absence of the Chairman's Chaplain, the prayer was offered by Councillor Attwood.

753. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor Tamlin.

754. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 1 March 2000 were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.

755. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (A) The Chairman read a letter of thanks from Mr Stuart Powell expressing his appreciation for his career with the Council and for the presentation which he had received prior to the last Council meeting.
- (B) On behalf of the Council, the Chairman expressed sympathy to the manager of the Apollo Cinema following the very recent fire.

756. QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 7 (2)

- (A) From Councillor L Caborn to the Chair of the Development Committee:-

Question

"In relation to St Nicholas Car Park in Warwick

- (1) On what date were the engineering works to give the present layout completed?
- (2) Was not landscaping and planting part of the scheme?
- (3) Why has the landscaping and planting not been carried out?
- (4) When will the landscaping and planting be carried to fruition?"

Answer

"The engineering works to provide the present layout for St Nicholas Park Car Park were completed in June 1994. This scheme was undertaken by the

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then Engineer and Surveyor's Department on behalf of Leisure and Amenities. Although the scheme originally has a provision for some landscaping of the site on completion, the final outcome cost of the engineering works exceeded that which had been estimated and it would not carry out the landscaping works within the scheme.

In the period of time since the completion of the works, Engineering and Leisure and Amenities have provided some tree planting and bedding, notably to the side of the flats. Leisure and Amenities have taken the opportunity of the delay to study the car park use and pedestrian desire lines and revised their original plan to reflect these. In particular this will use hard landscaping in areas susceptible to damage. Additional bedding planting will take place in the current year but, although the hard landscaping plans are now complete, there is no specific funding for it in the current year."

In a supplementary question, Councillor Caborn asked the Chair:-

"Would the Chair answer why a supplementary estimate, if needed, was not included in the years between 1994 and 2000 because it is still a six year gap?"

In reply, Councillor Crowther said:-

"I am unable to give any answer to that. This is a matter which occurred in 1994 and my understanding is from officers that they were hoping that they would be able to find money from within existing budgets to resolve this. Clearly this has not happened and it has not been raised in committee since that time. I would like to thank Councillor Caborn for raising it and bringing it before us again because I think it is an important issue that people will want to see resolved."

(B) From Councillor L Caborn to the Chair of the Strategy Committee:-

"In relation to the Parish Council Elections of May 1999, the councils have been billed to pay an increase in charges over the previous election of up to 400% for uncontested election:

- (1) How were the increases in charges arrived at?
- (2) On what date were the new charges decided?
- (3) Were the new charges taken to any committee of the council or group leaders?
- (4) How and when were Parish Councils informed of the new charges?
- (5) How many Parish Councils have settled their accounts for May 1999 elections?"

Councillor I Dove, Chair of the Strategy Committee, replied:-

Answer

"(1) Charges for uncontested and contested elections are made up under the following four main headings. Contested elections also have specific

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additional costs for printing ballot papers, hire of polling stations, production and delivery of poll cards and counting staff:

£

Election fees (for Returning Officer and administration duties)	79.25
Printing and stationery	37.00
Postages	8.62
Advertising and transport	92.27

(A further more detailed analysis can be provided if required.)

The actual costs incurred in organising the May 1999 elections were accurately recorded and apportioned, with the District Council meeting half. It had not been possible for this to have been calculated so accurately for previous elections and the increase in the amounts charged to Parish and Town Councils reflected this, as well as the costs which had risen since 1995.

- (2) There was no actual date when the new charges were set other than the Returning Officer's fees which are updated on the 1 April each year by the same amount of the most recent pay settlement awarded to local government staff. Minute number 19 of Finance Sub-Committee meeting on 11 June 1985 gave the Chief Executive, in the capacity as Returning Officer, authorisation to update fees annually in accordance with the most recent pay settlement award, without having to have committee approval each time.

The other costs of the May 1999 elections were apportioned based on actual costs incurred.

- (3) The re-charge of costs to Town and Parish Councils were not reported to a committee or Group Leaders because they were based on the arrangements referred to in answer (2) above. However, the election accounts were subjected to examination by the Finance Business Unit.
- (4) The preparation of the 1999 accounts was delayed due to the European Parliamentary elections following directly after the May elections. These

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were then followed by the start of the annual electoral registration canvass. When the Parish Council re-charge costs had been finalised in December 1999, a covering letter with breakdown costs was sent out to each Parish and Town Councils and the invoices were raised in week ending 10 December 1999.

In the past the Parish and Town Councils had been notified of potential costs through the annual letter sent out from the District Council regarding the precept and tax bases information for the new financial year. It is intended that in future the need to build up a fund for Parish and Town

Council elections should be emphasised in this letter.

- (5) Out of the 21 Parish and Town Councils administering the 41 Parishes and Town Wards, seven have not as yet settled their outstanding payments. However, all those who have yet to pay have been invited to attend individual meetings so that their costs, and the method of apportioning the costs overall, can be explained in detail. So far four meetings have been held which have proved to be very beneficial. The Election Office would welcome the opportunity to hold a similar meeting with Councillor Caborn if he would find this helpful.”

In a supplementary question Caborn asked the Chair:-

“I thank the Chair of Strategy Committee for the reply which is very full and detailed and I will be taking up the offer to come. In view of the changes in the charges would it not have been better if the Parish Councils had been told so that they could have included these cost in their 1999 precepts rather than doing it a year later.”

In reply, Councillor Dove said:-

“I have no doubt that it would have been better but unfortunately that was not what

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took place. I gather from the enquiries I have made that what has happened is that we now have far greater and more detailed accounts and information in relation to these matters and clearly it may well be that after Parish Councils have had an opportunity to reflect and the Council has had an opportunity to reflect on what has happened, that, in the light of being in possession of that more detailed information, a different scheme might need to be negotiated. Clearly it would have been better if Parish Councils had had the opportunity to budget for it.”

757. STRATEGY COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Dove, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Strategy Committee dated 5 April 2000, be approved and adopted.

758. ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE EXECUTIVE

In accordance with recommendation 15 of minute 749 of the Strategy Committee, an election took place for the Leader of the Executive 2000/01.

The votes cast in respect of the candidates were:-

Councillor Mrs Margaret Begg - 22 votes

Councillor Ian Dove - 15 votes

Councillor Bernard Kirton - 5 votes

As a result of the election, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Margaret Begg be elected Leader of the Executive for 2000/01.

759. STRATEGY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL MINUTES (Continued)

It was moved by Councillor Dove, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Strategy Committee dated 16 March 2000, approved and adopted.

760. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Crowther, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Development Committee dated 6 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

761. HEALTH AND CONTROL COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Attwood, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Health and Control Committee dated 7 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

762. LEISURE COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Ms Flanagan, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Leisure Committee dated 7 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

763. HOUSING COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Bird, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Housing Committee dated 13 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

764. CONTRACT SERVICES BOARD

It was moved by Councillor Attwood, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Contract Services Board dated 15 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

765. LICENCING SUB-COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Clayton, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Licensing Sub-Committee dated 20 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

766. MEMBER/TRADE UNIONS JOINT CONSULTATION AND SAFETY PANEL

It was moved by Councillor Attwood, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Member/Trade Unions Joint Consultation and Safety Panel

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dated 29 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

767. STRATEGY COMMITTEE/DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Dove, duly seconded and resolved that the report of the Joint Meeting of the Strategy Committee/Development Committee dated 5 April 2000, be approved and adopted.

768. PLANS SUB-COMMITTEE

It was moved by Councillor Evans, duly seconded and resolved that the reports of the meetings of the Plans Sub-Committee dated 29 February 2000 and 20 March 2000, be approved and adopted.

769. SECTION 92, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In addition to Members who had already disclosed their interest in the appropriate Committee and Sub-Committee Minutes the following declared their interest in respect of the Minutes set out in columns (1) and (2) below and, when the Minutes were discussed by the Council, took no part in the discussion and did not vote.

(Those shown with * indicate Members who left the meeting whilst the matter was under discussion.)

<u>Minute</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Person declaring interest</u>
736	Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers - Medicals	Councillor Mrs Clayton (pecuniary)

770. 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 6.55 p.m)
CHAIRMAN

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