

WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 20 April 2016, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.05pm.

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

96. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Cain, Mrs Evetts, Heath, Mrs Knight, Morris and Murphy.

97. **Declarations of Interest**

Minute 100 - Notice of Motion

Councillor Thompson informed the Council that he worked for Warwick University, but having taken advice from the Deputy Monitoring Officer, he was able to consider the matter.

98. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 24 February 2016, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

99. **Communications & Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed the new Head of Health & Community Protection, Marianne Rolfe, to the meeting and wished her well in her new role.

The Chairman offered the congratulations of the Council to Mr Harry Guy, who worked at Mallory Court Hotel, and had won the 2016 Roux Scholarship in London, the country's top award for up and coming chefs.

The Chairman informed the Council that on 17 March, the Council was presented with the national Workplace Wellbeing Charter in recognition of its commitment to the health and welfare for its staff.

The Chairman thanked all those Councillors who had attended his Civic Service in Kenilworth but expressed his disappointment about how few Councillors had attended. He asked that at future Civic Services, as many Councillors attended as possible to support their Chairman.

The Chairman informed the Council that there was no business to be considered under Item 5 Petitions or Item 7 Public Submissions.

100. **Notice of Motion**

It was proposed by Councillor Cain and duly seconded that Warwick District Council:

- (1) should not join the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) in the current 'window of opportunity' due to end on 10th June 2016; and
- (2) should however, continue to monitor the progress of the WMCA with a view to considering admission in the next 'window of opportunity' in May 2017 if better and more detailed particulars become evident; further it is a possibility that non-member Councils could be invited as 'Observer Status' during the closure period (June 2016 to May 2017) and WDC should accept any such invitation so as to gather more detailed information and trends which should be reported back to Council as appropriate.

In response to a question from Councillor Weed, Councillor Cain confirmed that this had been investigated by himself, along with Councillors Mann, Rhead and Thompson.

Councillors Barrott, Rhead, Thompson, Quinney, Gill, Boad, Coker, Mrs Falp, Mrs Bunker, Mobbs, Mann and Cain addressed Council on this matter.

On being put to the vote is was:

Resolved that Warwick District Council

- (1) should not join the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) in the current 'window of opportunity' due to end on 10th June 2016; and
- (2) should however, continue to monitor the progress of the WMCA with a view to considering admission in the next 'window of opportunity' in May 2017 if better and more detailed particulars become evident; further it is a possibility that non-member Councils could be invited as 'Observer Status' during the closure period (June 2016 to May 2017) and WDC should accept any such invitation so as to gather more detailed information and trends which should be reported back to Council as appropriate.

101. **Leader's and Portfolio Holders' Statements**

The Portfolio Holder for Cultural Services, Councillor Gallagher took the opportunity to inform Council about the use of Council Parks by Parkrun. This Council recognised the work of Parkrun both locally and nationally in encouraging people to get out in open air, regularly and participate in physical activity. Parkrun operated a weekly free event at Newbold Comyn and this Council did not charge nor intend to charge Parkrun for this. The Council was aware of other groups who used public open space for events and the Council would be approaching the organisers of these to ensure appropriate authority and payments were in place.

The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Shilton, presented the Chairman with a cheque for £4,445 from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management. This money was from the generosity of bereaved families agreeing for their loved ones orthopaedic implants and other metals recovered after cremation to be recycled. It should be noted that bereaved families did have a choice, they could if they wished, have the metal returned to them with the cremated remains.

102. **Questions to the Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holders**

Councillor Boad asked the Leader, what was the threshold for changing bulbs in the Council Chamber because he noted one was not working, and would he agree protocol regarding attendance of outside parties at Group meetings when confidential reports were being discussed when others are present?

In response the Leader, Councillor Mobbs, agreed regarding the protocol and noted the point regarding light bulbs.

Councillor Quinney asked the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, that further to his letter to him earlier in the year, if there was any news regarding potential improvements and a review of policy for waste and recycling collections at HMO properties?

In response the portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services, Councillor Shilton agreed that there was a need for revisions and to get these working as soon as possible. He confirmed that he had talked with Head of Service this week and would be arranging a meeting to get this operating.

103. **Executive Report**

The reports of the Executive meeting on 10 February 2016, 9 March 2016 and Excerpt of 6 April 2016 were proposed, duly seconded and:

Resolved that the

- (1) 10 February 2016 (excluding minutes; 104 to 106 as they were considered by Council on 24 February 2016; and minute 102 which will be considered by Council on 18 May 2016), be approved;
- (2) 9 March 2016, be approved; and
- (3) Excerpt of the minutes on 6 April 2016, be approved.

104. **Scrutiny Committee End of Term Reports**

- (A) The Council considered the End of Term report from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Barrott, took the opportunity to thank the Councillors on the Committee for their work during the year along with the Head of Finance, the Internal Audit & Risk Manager and Senior Committee Services Officer for their work supporting the Committee.

Resolved that the end of Term Report for the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

- (B) The Council considered the End of Term Report for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Boad, took the opportunity to thank the all the Councillors on the Committee for their work along with Deputy Chief Executive and Committee Services Officer for their work supporting the Committee during the year.

Resolved that the End of Term Report for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee be, noted.

(The Chairman and Councillor Mobbs both took the opportunity to thank the Chairs of the Committees and the Councillors on them for their work which was a very important part of the Council.)

105. **Council HQ Relocation and Replacement Convent Garden Car Park Project**

The Council considered a report that set out the current position regarding the relocation of the Council HQ and sought approval from Council that it would accept the potential liability for the expenditure associated with Phase 1 of the Project up to a maximum sum of £1,175,000 in the circumstances where the Council unilaterally withdrew from, or varied the terms of, the project, as further described in the report to the Executive on 20 April 2016.

Executive and Council had received a series of reports, over a period of years, examining the principle of a relocation of the Council's HQ offices from the current Riverside House site. The current HQ building was larger than the Council needed, costly to adapt to facilitate modern ways of working, difficult to modify to generate revenue savings and in need of considerable capital investment that was currently unfunded. The previous reports, therefore, considered how relocation could assist the Council to deliver a number of complementary objectives: the realisation of revenue savings already built-in as commitments within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy; the avoidance of future, unfunded, capital investment in the current building; the use of a relocation to support the local economy and/or stimulate new development within Leamington; redevelopment of the Riverside House site as a brownfield housing development as included within the modified Local Plan; and to ensure the Council had an HQ asset that was fit for purpose and able to support service delivery in a rapidly changing environment.

Since its inception and initial approval by Council, the relocation project had been progressed by officers working in conjunction with the Warwick Limited Liability Partnership (LLP). The LLP, formally the PSP Warwick LLP, was established by the Council in 2013 as a joint venture vehicle with Public Sector Partnerships (PSP) in order to assist the Council to manage and develop its asset portfolio and to unlock complex regeneration and development projects such as this one.

In September 2015 the Executive examined a shortlist of potential relocation sites within Royal Leamington Spa, including an option to refurbish the existing

HQ building, and determined that its preferred option was the comprehensive redevelopment of the current site of the Council's Covent Garden car parks (surface and multi-storey) which would include the construction of the Council's new HQ offices and new car parking in lieu of the existing provision. Executive agreed that the LLP should undertake a detailed feasibility and viability assessment of the preferred option with a further report on the outcome of these studies, including an external validation of the LLP's proposals, being brought back to members. It should be noted that the relatively recent requirement to consider the replacement of the Covent Garden multi-storey car park had added another key dimension and focus to this overall project.

Attached was the report to Executive entitled "Council HQ Relocation and Replacement Covent Garden Car Park Project" (Part A, public report). This Report set out the outcomes of those detailed assessments and proposed that the project should be approved and progressed to a delivery phase. It also included a request for temporary project resource to work with the LLP on the next stages of the project, in accordance with the principles underpinning the new structure for project management, as approved by Employment Committee in March. Additionally, it was proposed to establish a members' reference group to oversee the next stages of the scheme.

Council was asked to note the Executive report because what was proposed was a major project for the Council and the local community, and in addition there were financial implications for the Council if it were to decide, at a later date, that it did not want to proceed with the project in the terms outlined in the Executive report.

There was also a private and confidential Part B report to the Executive on the same item, which explained the legal and commercial considerations in more detail.

Councillor Mobbs proposed the recommendations in the report, which were duly seconded,

Councillors Barrott, Mrs Falp, Davison, Quinney, Mann, Boad, Gifford, Thompson, Miss Grainger, Rhead, Grainger, D'Arcy, Whiting and Mobbs addressed the Council on this matter.

Resolved that

- (1) the Executive Report of 20 April 2016 entitled "Council HQ Relocation and Replacement Covent Garden Car Park Project" and the recommendations therein, be noted; and
- (2) the potential liability for the expenditure associated with Phase 1 of the Project up to a maximum sum of £1,175,000 in the circumstances where the Council unilaterally withdraws from, or varies the terms of, the project, as further described in the Executive Report, be accepted.

(Councillor Barrott left the meeting during this item)

106. **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.

(Councillor Davies left the meeting during this item)

107. **Council HQ Relocation and Replacement Covent Garden Car Park Project**

The Council was asked to note the private and confidential Part B Executive Report of 20 April 2016 entitled "Council HQ Relocation and Replacement Covent Garden Car Park Project" and the recommendations therein.

Resolved that the confidential report to the Executive on 20 April 2016, be noted.

108. **Confidential Executive Report**

The confidential report of the Executive meetings on 9 March 2016 was proposed, duly seconded and:

Resolved that the Executive report of 9 March 2016, be approved.

109. **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 7.42 pm)

CHAIRMAN
18 May 2016