

# WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 26 April 2006, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Shilton (Chairman); Councillors Ashford, Mrs Begg, Mrs Blacklock, Boad, Mrs Bunker, Butler, Caborn, Chander, Cockburn, Coker, Mrs Compton, Copping, Crowther, Davies, Davis, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Doody, Mrs Edwards, Evans, Mrs Falp, Ms Flanagan, Gifford, Gill, Mrs Goode, Hammon, Harris, Hatfield, Ms Hirsch, Mrs Hodgetts, Holland, Kinson, Kirton, Mrs Knight, Kundi, Mackay, Mrs McFarland, Pratt, Sandhar, Mrs Sawdon, Short, Smith, Tamlin and Vincett.

## 1061. PRAYER

Prayers were offered by the Chairman's Chaplain.

## 1062. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Guest and Mrs Mellor.

## 1063. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 8 March 2006, were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.

## 1064. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (A) The Chairman reported that the summer ball which was due to be held on 13 May 2006 in aid of the Leamington Christmas Lights Fund and the Warwickshire and Northamptonshire Air Ambulance would regrettably not now be taking place.
- (B) This being the final full meeting of the Council before the Annual Meeting, the Chairman thanked Councillors for their participation and assistance in the way the meetings of the Council had been conducted during the past year.

## 1065. MEMORIALS AND PETITIONS

- (A) The Council received a petition sponsored by Councillor M Ashford, as follows:-

"With regard to parking in Nelson Avenue and Dale Close, we the undersigned wish to express our concern for the indiscriminate parking in this residential area.

We feel there is a great safety issue for the children attending All Saints Junior School and therefore ask that some action be taken to remedy the problem."

## **Council Minutes (Continued)**

**RESOLVED** that the petition be referred to Housing Services and possibly the Highways Authority for attention.

### 1066. **QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 7(2)**

(A) From Councillor Mrs J Compton to Councillor Mrs M McFarland, Customer and Community Services Portfolio Holder:

“Given that free bus travel across the County is now in place can the Portfolio Holder explain how the new system meets the equality criteria of this Council in applying to people living in rural areas not served by public transport.

Councillor Mrs McFarland replied:-

“People in rural areas will be able to access the new community taxi scheme to be run by Racing Club Warwick, which replaces the taxi token scheme. It is expected that those people who have to use taxis frequently, and have real need, will be better off than with taxi tokens, even though they will have to make some payment for the service.”

In a supplementary question, Councillor Mrs Compton asked the Portfolio Holder:-

“In the light of the fact that the new system with Racing Club Warwick is not in operation and will not be for some weeks, would the Portfolio Holder undertake to take a report to the next Executive as to when it will be brought into operation, how the effects of the new scheme which does not provide a free service to the disabled, do not have transport or the availability of a bus service, and more particularly how equality is provided by not providing a free scheme and substituting one where the proposal is that one has to pay 52 pence per mile. As we all know it is now possible for people over 60 and disabled and in certain categories to travel in the district free of charge and over the County boundary. In no way does this help people in rural areas to take advantage of this free bus travel. On the equality criteria I am informed if you join the Racing Club Warwick Scheme you are not entitled to a bus pass.”

In reply, Councillor Mrs McFarland said:-

“All those that live within the rural areas and disabled people are entitled to access the community taxi. There is a small additional fee charged to those people but if we compare the old taxi scheme to the new we will find that people are better off with the new scheme that is starting.

The scheme works as follows:-

Every resident who was part of the old scheme are entitled to 20 journeys per year through the community taxi. This applies to about 2,000 people. Disabled people are also eligible under this new scheme. People who are not already in the scheme who live within the rural area are also able to participate in the new scheme. If we look at the old taxi scheme, to travel 140 miles would cost the

## **Council Minutes (Continued)**

equivalent of £168 to £236 and the old taxi scheme would only have paid for £50 of that. Under the new scheme the cost of travelling the same distance would cost £77.50 and that includes the extra amount of money that people would be paying. So if we look at it from that angle, the community are getting a better deal from this new service. In terms of equality, if people do not choose to have the concessionary bus pass, the Council has put in money to Racing Club Warwick to a dial up service for those people and that includes those people who are already in the scheme, disabled people and all those who are eligible go on that scheme.

For people who are not able to get access to buses, this scheme is theirs for them to use. If we consider, for instance, Stratford two years ago got their taxi scheme and it has taken a year to put into place scheme for those who were on their taxi scheme. This Council has already put together the scheme which will be starting on 15 May and obviously if we want to provide a quality service we do need to work to make sure we have all the systems and processes in place to make sure it works effectively and we are looking to make sure that that will happen by 15 May.

We could report to the next Scrutiny Committee if Councillor Mrs Compton so wants (but not to the Executive).”

(B) From Councillor B Kirton to Council B Crowther, Leader of the Executive:-

“How many disabled people have been deprived of the facility of free bus travel with the introduction of the new free travel scheme:”

Councillor Crowther replied:-

“Free bus travel is now available to everyone over 60 and people with certain disabilities. People can travel further as their journey now only needs to start or finish within the County. People are restricted to travel after 9.00 am, which actually represents an improvement over the national Government’s scheme of free travel after 9.30 am. Only that very small proportion of people who qualified under our old scheme for passes which allowed peak time travel and who would wish to travel before 9.00 am, are worse off. We cannot know how many individuals used their passes in these circumstances. However, whatever their circumstances, the wider range of free travel within the County and cross boundary is a real benefit to all.”

### 1067. **EXECUTIVE**

It was moved by Councillor Crowther, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the reports of the Executive dated 27 March and 11 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

## **Council Minutes (Continued)**

### **1068. EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Crowther, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the reports of the Employment Committee dated 14 March and 11 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

### **1069. AUDIT AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Caborn, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the reports of the Audit and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 21 March and 3 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

### **1070. EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Doody, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the reports of the Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 21 March and 3 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

### **1071. CULTURE AND SOCIAL POLICY COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Kirton, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the report of the Culture and Social Policy Committee dated 22 March 2006, be approved and adopted.

### **1072. ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Compton, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the report of the Environment and Economic Policy Committee dated 22 March 2006, be approved and adopted.

### **1073. REGULATORY COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Mrs Goode, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the report of the Regulatory Committee dated 10 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

### **1074. MEMBER/TRADES UNIONS JOINT CONSULTATION AND SAFETY PANEL**

It was moved by Councillor Copping, duly seconded and

## **Council Minutes (Continued)**

**RESOLVED** that the report of the Member/Trades Unions Joint Consultation and Safety Panel dated 12 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

### 1075. **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

It was moved by Councillor Evans, duly seconded and

**RESOLVED** that the reports of the Planning Committee dated 21 February, 15 March and 5 April 2006, be approved and adopted.

### 1076. **NOTICES OF MOTION**

(A) It was moved by Councillor M Coker and duly seconded

“That this Council view with extreme concern the financial difficulties facing the South Warwickshire General Hospitals and the potential loss of services to this area and calls upon our local Members of Parliament Messrs. James Plaskitt and Jeremy Wright to press the Department of Health to assist the Hospital and thus ensure that there will be no cut backs in the essential service provided to our community.”

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5(6) it was moved and seconded that the motion proposed by Councillor Coker be considered at the meeting.

On this being put to the meeting, it was declared carried.

First It was moved by Councillor Crowther and duly seconded that the Amendment: Motion be amended to read:

“That, notwithstanding the unprecedented investment in the National Health Service since 1997 and the many benefits it has brought for people in the district of Warwick, this Council views with extreme concern the financial difficulties facing the South Warwickshire General Hospitals and the potential loss of services to this area.

The Council notes that further development of medical services and a desire for greater emphasis on primary and preventative care, means that there is currently a strategic review of service provision, including those services provided by South Warwickshire General Hospitals Trust. It calls upon our local members of parliament, Messrs James Plaskitt and Jeremy Wright, to press the Department of Health to assist the hospital and thus ensure that there will be no cut backs in the essential service provided to our community.”

On a vote being taken, the amendment was declared lost.

The original motion was then put to the meeting and, on a vote being taken, was declared carried.

## **Council Minutes (Continued)**

### **1077. ELECTION OF THE LEADER OF THE EXECUTIVE**

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17, an election took place for the Leader of the Executive 2004/05.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Bob Crowther be elected Leader of the Executive for 2006/07.

### **1078. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor N Vincett be appointed as a substitute member of all Committees (except the Executive and the Standards Committee) for the remainder of the municipal year.

### **1079. SECTION 92, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In addition to Members who had already disclosed their interest in the appropriate 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>Item</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Person Declaring Interest</u>
Agenda Item 6(B)	Questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 7(2)	Councillors Kirton and Holland (Personal: being holders of bus passes).
Agenda Item 7	Reports to Committees: Regulatory Committee	Councillor Kirton (Personal: being an acquaintance of the Chair of the local Taxi Association)
Agenda Item 8	Notice of Motion	Councillor Copping (Personal: being a member of the Primary Care Trust User Group)  Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Personal: husband being an employee of the National Health Service)

**Council Minutes (Continued)**

1080. **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 8.05 pm)

CHAIRMAN