

# WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 19 September 2018, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Cross (Chairman); Councillors Barrott, Boad, Mrs Bunker, Cain, Mrs Cain, Coker, Cooke, D'Arcy, Davies, Davison, Day, Doody, Edgington, Mrs Falp, Gallagher, Gifford, Gill, Mrs Grainger, Heath, Mrs Hill, Illingworth, Mrs Knight, Mobbs, Morris, Naimo, Noone, Parkins, Phillips, Quinney, Mrs Redford, Thompson, Weed, Whiting and Wright.

## 38. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashford, Bromley, Butler, Mrs Evetts, H Grainger, Margrave, Murphy, Rhead, Shilton and Mrs Stevens.

## 39. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 40. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 8 August 2018 were taken as read and duly signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 41. **Communications & Announcements**

The Chairman provided a brief summary of the events he had attended since the last Council meeting.

The Chairman informed Council that there was no business to consider under either Item 5 Petitions or Item 7 Public Submissions.

## 42. **Notice of Motion**

Councillor Naimo proposed the Motion that at the public meeting regarding the Office move proposals arranged by the local Business Community in the early summer, many residents expressed the view that there should be another public meeting. They felt that there was insufficient time to cover all the questions they wished to ask, before final decisions were taken, and they would like to be able to ask them of responsible Executive members, as well as Officers.

Therefore, it was proposed that should another public meeting be called about the Office move proposals, this Council would expect appropriate members of the Executive and senior Officers to make themselves available to attend.

The Motion was duly seconded by Councillor Gifford.

Councillors Mobbs, Quinney, Coker, Boad, Mrs Knight, Mrs Grainger, Gill, Wright, Mrs Bunker, Barrott addressed Council on this matter.

During the debate Councillor Quinney requested a recorded vote on this Motion and, on being supported, this was agreed.

On being put to the vote the motion was lost by 22 votes to 12 with one abstention. The votes were cast as follows:

For: Councillors: Barrott, Boad, Davison, D'Arcy, Mrs Gallagher, Gifford, Gill, Mrs Knight, Naimo, Parkins, Quinney, and Weed.

Against: Councillors: Mrs Bunker, Cain, Mrs Cain, Coker, Cooke, Cross, Davies, Day, Doody, Edginton, Mrs Grainger, Heath, Mrs Hill, Illingworth, Mobbs, Morris, Noone, Phillips, Mrs Redford, Thompson, Whiting and Wright.

Abstention: Councillor Mrs Falp

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

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Councillor Coker, explained that Newbold Comyn works would be completed in full by 10 October 2018 for handover. The usage so far was continuing to be above the expectations of both the Council and Everyone Active. The Executive would be considering the proposals for continuation on the Kenilworth facilities next week.

Councillor Coker also reminded Council about attending Friday Focus events at the Pump Rooms and that tickets were available for an evening with Jonathan Agnew at the Spa Centre.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Phillips, explained that

- (1) following the successful integration of five Syrian refugee families in Warwick District the Council had approached the Home Office to explore if up to a further five families could be integrated in the District. The Home Office had confirmed that five more families could be offered to the District before the end of the current programme. This was now being investigated by Officers but it could be late 2019 before more families were successfully matched; and
- (2) the rough sleepers hostel had opened on 11 September 2019 and provided space for 22 people with 24 hour a day shelter. The rough sleepers co-ordinator was in place to work with our partners and took the opportunity to thank all officers for getting this scheme ready before Winter.

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

Councillor Mrs Gallagher, asked the Leader why, following the vote on the Notice of Motion [regarding the former Royal Naval Club], was he pursuing a vendetta against me in removing from committees?

In response the Leader, Councillor Mobbs, confirmed with Councillor Mrs Gallagher if she was agreeable to him informing Council of the facts of this matter. Councillor Mrs Gallagher agreed to this.

The Leader then explained that the motion put was unprecedented in that it sought to change a decision already taken that had financial implications for Council and impacted on the Creative Quarter. To that end, the Conservative Group discussed and agreed not to support the Motion by a vote of 24 to three. It was also agreed to impose whip and that, if defied, actions could be taken against the respective Councillor or Councillors. Following the vote at the last

Council meeting, it was agreed to discuss actions at the next group meeting but before this discussion took place Councillor Mrs Gallagher had resigned from the Conservative Group.

Councillor Mrs Gallagher asked the Leader when the public would get to know the truth about who CDP were, that the Council had given control of properties too?

The Leader explained that there would be a presentation to all Councillors on 29 October 2018 from CDP and that it was not true that control of Council assets had been passed to CDP.

Councillor Gifford asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing if the Council had attended any of the best practice workshops on building design and would these design practices be included within the proposed new build Council properties being brought forward?

Councillor Phillips highlighted the statement by Councillor Rhead at the last meeting regarding new builds and he was mindful of this approach for new builds which he asked officers to consider as proposals came forward.

Councillor Boad asked the Leader if he agreed that Scrutiny should be a robust process that challenged the Executive; was he aware of the new statutory instrument to enable greater scrutiny of external partnerships; was there a need for greater scrutiny of financial arrangements in light of the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) report?

In response, Councillor Mobbs explained that he valued the role of Scrutiny and having Chairs from opposition Groups to enable them to be as robust as possible. The Scrutiny Committees set their own work programmes and would welcome them looking at the report from CfPS as he would as well.

Councillor D'Arcy asked the Leader if he could provide the Council with an update on the proposed hotel on St Mary's Lands now that a flood risk issue had been highlighted.

In response, Councillor Mobbs explained that this would be a planning matter for consideration but he would ask Councillor Butler to provide an update on this.

(This detailed response is set out at Appendix 1 to the minutes)

Councillor Quinney asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing if the Council would be bringing forward further discretionary payments to help people with the cash flow challenges during the transition to Universal Credit?

In response, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Councillor Whiting, explained that he understood the Council had introduced a fund of this nature and there was no restriction on this fund.

In response to a question of clarification from Councillor Quinney, Councillor Phillips explained that the Financial inclusion group, next week, would discuss the potential for the fund to cover more than just housing benefit.

Councillor Barrott asked the Leader if he could provide an update on the provision of transition sites for Gypsy & Travellers?

In response, Councillor Mobbs said he would ask Councillor Rhead, as Portfolio Holder for Development, to provide an update on this matter.

Councillor Barrott, asked the Leader if there would be an opportunity to debate the potential for unitary status?

In response, the Leader explained that he had attended a Leaders meeting the previous day where this question had been raised. There was no appetite for such a move to a County wide unitary. That said, there could be a discussion and debate regarding a potential North South Unitary in Warwickshire but at this time there was no decision that could be influenced by this because all Council's had to agree to any proposal being taken forward and at the moment not all Council's wanted this.

Councillor Mrs Knight asked the Portfolio Holder for Finance if there could be a briefing for all Councillors on Universal Credit?

Councillor Whiting agreed and would arrange it.

Councillor Heath, asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing with the introduction of the hostel could we ensure that the rough sleepers move in?

Councillor Phillips replied explaining that it was not compulsory but the service and officers were there to help people.

Councillor Heath asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing if anything could be done about those few people who begged on the street but reportedly had their own homes?

Councillor Phillips replied explaining there were discussions on going with the Police.

Councillor Boad asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing if cost benefit analysis had been undertaken to see if it was more cost effective to provide portaloos and skips when there was unlawful Gypsy or Traveller sites than to clear up our land afterwards?

In response, Councillor Phillips explained that this had not been done because it could encourage encampments and the true solution would be to find a permanent site.

Councillor Wright asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing if the Council would be working with health care providers to ensure the homeless people received best possible health care?

In response, Councillor Phillips replied that officers were investigating this using the property in Packington Place.

Councillor Naimo asked the Leader could the Council make a commitment to protecting mature trees across the District to protect them from removal?

Councillor Mobbs explained that he would ask the Portfolio Holder for Development to respond in detail. However, he highlighted the garden suburb principle from the Local Plan and that once the Riverside House development was complete there would be more trees on the site than at present.

Councillor Doody asked the Leader if he agreed that Councillor Mrs Gallagher was a hard working Ward Councillor in her time on the Executive, was an extremely good Portfolio Holder and it was therefore unfortunate she chose to walk the floor?

In response, the Leader agreed and explained that he wished to thank Councillor Mrs Gallagher for her work.

45. **Executive Report**

The excerpt of the report of the Executive meeting held on 30 August 2018 was duly proposed seconded and

**Resolved** that the excerpt be approved.

46. **Revisions to the Membership of Committees**

It was proposed by Councillor Mobbs:

- (a) to replace Councillor Davies with Councillor Day as a member of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee;
- (b) to replace Councillor Day with Councillor Davies as a substitute for Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee;
- (c) to replace Councillor Mrs Gallagher on Employment Committee with Councillor Phillips;
- (d) to replace Councillor Mrs Gallagher with Councillor Illingworth on Standards Committee;
- (e) to remove Councillor Mrs Gallagher as a named substitute for both the Finance & Audit and Overview & Scrutiny Committees;
- (f) to replace Councillor Mrs Gallagher with Councillor Mrs Redford as Parish & Town Council Champion;
- (g) to replace Councillor Edgington with Councillor Ashford on Planning Committee;
- (h) to remove Councillor Ashford as a named substitute for Planning Committee; and
- (i) to appoint Councillor Edgington as a Substitute for Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Mobbs explained that the proposals relating to the Licensing & Regulatory Committee, set out on the agenda paper were not proposed for consideration by Council.

The proposals were duly seconded by Councillor Coker and

**Resolved** that

- (1) to replace Councillor Davies with Councillor Day as a member of the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) to replace Councillor Day with Councillor Davies as a substitute for Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee;
- (3) to replace Councillor Mrs Gallagher on Employment Committee with Councillor Phillips;
- (4) to replace Councillor Mrs Gallagher with Councillor Illingworth on Standards Committee;

- (5) to remove Councillor Mrs Gallagher as a named substitute for both the Finance & Audit and Overview & Scrutiny Committees;
- (6) to replace Councillor Mrs Gallagher with Councillor Mrs Redford as Parish & Town Council Champion;
- (7) to replace Councillor Edgington with Councillor Ashford on Planning Committee;
- (8) to remove Councillor Ashford as a named substitute for Planning Committee; and
- (9) to appoint Councillor Edgington as a Substitute for Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

#### 47. **Public & 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 paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute Nos.	Para Nos.	Reason
48	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

#### 49. **Confidential Executive Report**

The confidential report of the Executive meeting held on 30 August 2018 were proposed and duly seconded.

On being put to the vote it was:

**Resolved** that the report be approved.

#### 50. **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 7.49 pm)

Chairman  
14 November 2018

An update on the plans to build a hotel on St Mary's Lands owing to the flood risk issue that has been identified

The current situation is that the Council had agreed in a report to the Executive to undertake a flood risk assessment. Before this could be done, some work needed to be carried out to give a clearer idea of the potential size and shape of a hotel. This has now been completed following discussions with the Working Party and the Council's Conservation Officer.

The next stage is to undertake the flood risk assessment and Plincke on behalf of the Council is seeking tenders for that work to be done.

I hope this answers your question but please let me know if you require any further information

**Councillor Noel Butler**  
**Portfolio Holder for Business**