

 EXECUTIVE – 8th March 2017		Agenda Item No. <h1 style="text-align: center;">8</h1>
Title: Community Forums and Voluntary & Community Sector spending Review		
For further information about this report please contact	Liz Young Interim Community Partnership Team Manager (01926) 456019 Liz.young@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	ALL	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	NO	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number		
Background Papers	Executive 11 th June 2014: Procurement of Services from the VCS 2015 – 18	
Contrary to the policy framework:	No	
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No	
Key Decision?	Yes	
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	Yes	
Equality and Sustainability Impact Assessment Undertaken	Yes/No (If No state why below)	
To be undertaken following options assessment by external consultant.		
Officer/Councillor Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	09/02/17	Andrew Jones
Head of Service	02/02/17	Marianne Rolfe
CMT	14/02/17	Chris Elliott Bill Hunt Andrew Jones
Section 151 Officer	09/02/17	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	21/02/17	Andrew Jones
Portfolio Holder	20/02/17	Councillor Mrs Grainger
Consultation & Community Engagement		
CPT Survey May 2016 – Survey results Forums & Forum Planning Groups – Appendix 5		
Final Decision?	Yes	

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To recommend a review of Warwick District Council spending on the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS), and also changes to the community forums.
- 1.2 The rationale behind this review is the requirement of the Fit for the Future Report (June 2016) to identify savings from the Council's investment in the VCS and community engagement from 2018/19 onwards and improve the efficiency of the whole community forums process.
- 1.3 To provide the officers with expert advice in identifying best value for the Council's investment in the VCS and community support, it is recommended that consultancy services are procured.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To approve the proposal to reduce the frequency of community forums from three times a year to twice a year in each of the seven locality areas whilst ensuring that alternative methods of community engagement are enhanced.
- 2.2 To note that Warwick District Council (WDC) invests £398,400K annually in the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) and supporting other partnership and community initiatives and agrees that officers procure external support to review how the VCS contracts (2018/19-2020/21) and community support funding can be more effectively targeted.
- 2.3 Subject to agreeing recommendation 2.2, to agree that whilst the future level of grant funding for each of the community forums may change, the forums themselves will still be responsible for deciding grant applications.
- 2.4 Subject to agreeing recommendation 2.2, to agree that up to a maximum of £15k is made available from the Contingency Budget to enable the Head of Health and Community Protection to procure the aforementioned external support.
- 2.5 Subject to agreeing recommendation 2.2, to agree that the total cost of VCS and community support is reduced from its present amount to £350k annually thereby reducing the cost to the Council by £49k but noting that the level of investment has not been reduced over the last ten years.
- 2.6 To approve that the established VCS Commissioning and Grants Panel (that currently consists of 4 Members - 2 Conservative, 1 Labour and 1 Whitnash Residents Association) oversees the review and is expanded to include 3 more elected Members (1 Liberal Democrat and 2 Conservative).

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Reduce Frequency of Forums

- 3.1 The Community Partnership Team (CPT) currently organises 22 community forum meetings and double the number of planning group meetings across 7 locality areas each year.
- 3.2 Changes in the partnership arrangement with the Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has meant a fluctuating and reduced level of staff resource to facilitate the meetings; to support the planning groups; to follow up the actions generated by the forums; and to administer grant applications and process grant payments. Currently there are two

WDC full-time employees who undertake this work as part of their many other duties. There is also part time assistance from WCC employees working with the team to cover forums. WCC also provides 10 hours per week of administration support to the CPT but this is for all the team's activities.

- 3.3 Officers have reviewed the use of team's available resources to determine if there are opportunities to deliver services in a more efficient, cost effective way. Currently a disproportionate amount of resources go into organising and facilitating the 22 forum meetings per year which is not proportionate to the team's overall impact and outcomes achieved.
- 3.4 The organisation of one Forum on average is equivalent to at least 10 working days of officer time plus administrative support. Reduction of forums would enable the redirection of officer resources into the development of key Council work programmes supporting the health and wellbeing, and sustainability agendas.

External Review of V&CS and community support expenditure

- 3.5 The Council currently invests £398,400 in the V&CS and various elements of community support (including community forum grants) as detailed at (Appendix 1). Officers consider that savings in this expenditure could be achieved if the investment was looked at "in-the-round" rather than as discrete budget lines and yet still deliver, support and invest in the needs of the community.
- 3.6 In order to identify savings appropriately, and with reference to social value and the returns on investments currently demonstrated, an external resource with expertise in, and knowledge of, how other Councils have re-shaped their investments in the VCS and community support, is required to work with officers. An estimated cost for consultancy support would be up to a maximum of £15k.
- 3.7 Whilst there are concerns about the effectiveness of the community forums it is considered that providing them with grant funding to distribute via an application process is important and so the terms of reference for the consultancy support will confirm that community forum grants must continue as now although the amount of allocation will be up for consideration.

Elected Member VCS Commissioning and Grant Panel

- 3.8 The VCS Commissioning and Grants Panel will input into and influence the review process at key stages. Given the importance of the review and the need to take on board the views of as many stakeholders as possible, it is recommended that the Panel is expanded.

4 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1 The work of the Community Partnership Team directly supports the thematic and cross cutting priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The team targets its work, as stipulated in the SCS, to the priority wards, supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the community.
- 4.2 In alignment with the SCS's Prosperity agenda, the CPT is re-evaluating how it performs its key functions to ensure future delivery is efficient, cost effective and sustainable. Specifically the team plays a key role in supporting growth e.g. major development of our most deprived wards in Lillington and putting in place robust procurement practices in terms of 3-year contracts with the Third Sector.

- 4.3 The team also leads on the delivery of the Council's health and wellbeing agenda and will also be taking on the sustainability agenda lead role.
- 4.4 The review of the council's investment in the V&CS specifically supports the Service and Money strands of Fit for the Future in relation to continuously reviewing and improving our services whilst ensuring resources are managed appropriately and creatively to ensure value for money and social return on investment.

5 BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 A summary table of V&CS and community support expenditure can be seen at Appendix 1.
- 5.2 The Council currently invests £398,400 in the V&CS and community support. The Medium Term Financial Strategy includes a saving of £42,000 per annum from 2019/20 following on from the FFF report agreed by the Executive in June 2016. However, this report proposes that overall savings are increased to £49,000 and the task of the consultancy advice and VCS Commissioning and Grants Panel is to identify how those savings are to be made.
- 5.3 The 2017/18 Contingency Budget currently has an unallocated balance of £200,700 out of which the proposed consultancy work up to £15k can be met.
- 5.4 Members should note that WCC also invests funding in community forums, however, the respective Division Councillors make their own decisions on whether to allocate their funding to the forums or not. Some Councillors have, in effect, their own grant schemes. Whilst the various schemes are administered by the CPT, this report does not address that issue as it is a matter for WCC.

6. RISKS

Forum Reduction

- 6.1 Reducing the number of forums could possibly affect the levels of community engagement and the opportunities for people to have their say. However, disappointing attendances of actual residents has long been an issue in some locality areas and a reduction in the number of meetings is likely to have minimum impact.
- 6.2 The Locality areas all have existing fora, groups and networks in place that could provide alternative mechanisms for community engagement (and in some cases already do).
- 6.3 Officer time will be freed up to focus on the delivery of other key council priorities.

External Review of V&CS and community support expenditure

- 6.4 The CPT does not have the capacity or expertise in social value or return on investment analysis to conduct a comprehensive review of V&CS Commissioning within the procurement deadlines set for 2017. Failure to conduct an adequate review of the spending in the V&CS could have significant impacts on the community as it could lead to services being commissioned which do not meet the needs of the community or do not provide a return on investment.

6.7 Bringing in an external specialist in this field will provide the necessary objectivity and demonstrate to V&CS partners that the Council is striving to manage the balance between savings, value for money and social value.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 WDC continues to support the current number of Community Forums. However continuing to support the current number would impact upon the ability and capacity of the officers involved to deliver on other key work programmes.

7.3 Officers undertake the review of V&CS and community support spending internally and make recommendations for spending allocations within the proposed new budget. However officers do not have the capacity to deliver this review within the procurement timetable required for the commissioned services. In addition they do not have the expertise to assess social value and investment return in a manner that would provide the required understanding.

8. BACKGROUND

8.1 Reduction of Forums

8.2 The CPT supports 22 community forum meetings per annum across 7 locality areas: North and South Leamington, Whitnash, Warwick Town, Kenilworth, Warwick Rural East and Warwick Rural West and, in addition to this, administers meetings of the planning groups assigned to each forum.

8.3 Agreement was reached 2 years ago by the Chairs of the Forums to reduce from 4 to 3 meetings per year (with the exception of North Leamington who wished to retain 4) and utilise alternative methods of engagement using social media, web based communication and online voting for policing priorities.

8.4 The ways in which we engage with communities are changing with increasing use of social media and digital communication, and whilst forums, in providing face to face interaction for certain members of the community, still have a part to play, other alternative methods should be increasingly utilised to target the diverse, hard to reach groups that do not attend the forums.

8.5 A survey was conducted in May 2016 asking all stakeholders their views on the effectiveness of community forums and the quality of services delivered by the CPT. [Survey results](#)

8.6 In addition to the May survey, Forum Planning Groups and Town and Parish Councils were canvassed again in September 2016 on proposed changes to Forums and the associated grant fund. See Appendix 3 for the feedback received.

8.7 Appendix 3 includes suggestions for alternative approaches if Forums were reduced. For example:

- Merging Rural East and Rural West Forums and seeking additional support from Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) and/or from Parish Councils.
- Whitnash could follow on from Town Council meetings to encourage attendance and share support costs.
- Warwick Town Council has indicated that due to boundary changes in 2018 maintaining 3 forums would be preferable and they may be able to contribute to

the administrative costs of a third forum as well as providing the Court House for one meeting.

- 8.8 WCC is also in the process of reviewing its approach to community forums and its councillor grant scheme as part of a wider Local Governance Review. Additionally within the scope of the review is local decision making, priority setting and influencing at a local level, strengthening community involvement and engagement, informal public consultations, interface and collaboration with other public agencies and the role of social (or other forms of) media.
- 8.9 The WCC review is being led through a cross party member working group. It is anticipated that a final report on future local governance arrangements will be made to Cabinet in March 2017.
- 8.10 The CPT continues to work closely with the WCC Southern Area Team in the delivery of forums and grants, and albeit out of sync in terms of the respective reviews. It is likely that the outcome of WDC's review will have some bearing on their decision making process and impact on the WCC resources which assists WDC to deliver forums and forum related activities.
- 8.11 However, waiting for the outcome of WCC activities prevents officers from realising efficiency savings from officer time in supporting the forums and some small related financial savings. Efficiency savings made could be reinvested in delivering other key work programmes which WDC have identified as important for the community.
- 8.12 If WCC decides to cease delivering community forums then a further report will be presented to Executive recommending WDC's approach in response as there would be a significant impact on resources and staff.
- 8.13 In addition the boundary changes which come into force from 1 April 2017 affect the forum areas of Warwick Rural West and Kenilworth which will change the composition and structure of these localities.
- 8.14 V&CS and community support expenditure
- 8.15 Appendix 1 outlines how the £398,400 spending is allocated across commissioned contracts, community forums, grants, sustainability and community engagement budgets and contributions to external partnerships (JHSW).
- 8.16 Joint Healthy South Warwickshire Grant (JHSW): This Fund has been in existence for approximately 5 years. The contributors are WDC, Stratford DC, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Public Health. WDC makes a contribution of 10K to JHSW (total grant budget of JHSW 80K). These monies are split equally to fund projects across Warwick and Stratford.
- 8.17 This collaborative approach has proved very effective in that the pooling of resources has enabled more health and wellbeing projects of a more substantial and sustainable nature to be funded and has improved communication between the partners involved thus avoiding duplication of effort and resources. It also ensures a joined up approach to meeting key local health and wellbeing performance indicators.
- 8.18 Examples of local projects benefitting from JHSW funding currently are the Social Prescribing Programme run by the Sydni Centre in partnership with the Croft Medical Centre and the Dementia Café run by the Brunswick Hub.

8.19 External support for V&CS and community support review

- 8.20 In 2010/11 the original Elected Member Grants Panel, supported by officers in the Community Partnership Team, went through a detailed options appraisal process to consider how the Council would allocate future funding to the voluntary and community sector. The decision was made to move away from the allocation of annual grants to voluntary and community sector organisations and to put in place a 3 year contract agreement whereby the sector would be invited to tender for delivery of a range services based on an agreed set of priorities.
- 8.21 The Council is now into year 2 of the second 3 year tranche of V&CS contracts. The contracts are monitored every 6 months and performance is reported to the V&CS Commissioning and Grants Panel (the old Elected Member Grants Panel), which oversees the whole VCS Commissioning process. Appendix 2 provides an outline of the services being delivered currently.
- 8.22 Orbit Heart of England has jointly invested with WDC in the Brunswick and Sydni contracts in order to benefit their tenants who live in those areas. It is hoped this productive partnership will continue into the next round of contracts particularly given the significant Orbit housing development in Sydenham.
- 8.23 In accordance with the commissioning and procurement cycle, the review process needs to begin in March/April 2017 which will entail a full review of performance against specification, consultation on new priorities for 2018-21 and production of new specifications.
- 8.24 As it proposed that the overall budget for V&CS and community support is reduced by £49K it is important to ensure that the review is completed in time for the retendering process.
- 8.25 From this external review it will be possible to identify how the £350k budget should be allocated between commissioned services, grants and partnership contributions to minimise the impact on the valuable services which WDC funds within the community yet providing the savings that have been identified in the Fit for the Future Programme.
- 8.26 The V&CS Commissioning and Grants Panel will be meeting with the CPT Manager at appropriate stages during the review and will be assessing the options put forward by the external consultant as to how spending allocations should be made across the variety of funding streams.
- 8.27 Officers, in consultation with the V&CS Commissioning and Grants Panel, will at the conclusion of the external review, bring forward a report to outline the options for future VCS spending.
- 8.28 This committee will receive a future report following the conclusion of the review process.

VCS Spend: £398,400**2017/18**

£

35,000

Community Forums**VCS contracts**

WCAVA

55,000

CAB

100,000

The Gap

35,000

The Chain

29,700

Sydni

20,000

Brunswick Healthy Living
Centre

90,000

**Community Engagement
Budget**

4,000

Small grants

11,200

**Contribution to Joint
Healthy South Warwickshire
Grant**

10,000

Sustainability Budget

8,500

VCS Commissioned Contracts 2015 – 2018: £330,000 per annum

Lots	Type of Service	Service Provider	Yearly Value of Contract
Lot 1. Third Sector Support	Ensuring that local third sector organisations get the advice, support and representation they need to improve the circumstances of the people and communities they work with	Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA)	£55,000
Lot 2. Services in Targeted Geographic Areas – Brunswick	To target those people living in disadvantaged areas within Brunswick, Crown, West Warwick and Sydenham who are feeling socially excluded due to lack of resources, rights, services and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to the majority of people in a community, whether those are of an economic, social or cultural nature	Brunswick Healthy Living Centre	£50,000
Lot 3. Services in Targeted Geographic Areas – Crown		Crown Community Hub (formerly The Chain)	£30,000
Lot 4. Services in Targeted Geographic Areas – West Warwick		The Gap Warwick Percy Estate Community Projects Ltd.	£35,000
Lot 5. Services in Targeted Geographic Areas – Sydenham		Sydni Sydenham Neighbourhood Initiatives	£20,000
Lot 6. Financial Inclusion	To minimise the likelihood and impact of financial exclusion in Warwick District through the provision of advice, support and services at the	Warwick District Citizens Advice Bureau	£100,000

Lots	Type of Service	Service Provider	Yearly Value of Contract
	point of need in a coordinated and collaborative manner		
Lot 7. Delivery of Employment Clubs	To manage the three Employment Clubs currently operating from the Brunswick Healthy Living Centre, Lillington Youth Centre and The Gap Community Centre	Brunswick Healthy Living Centre	£40,000

Views on Community Forums and the Grant Fund from Planning Groups and Town & Parish Councils

A briefing note was circulated to Forum Planning Groups and to Town and Parish Councils in September giving an overview of WDC's impending review of Community Forums. The responses received are detailed as follows:

North Leamington Forum

From: heather.haslettmnwa@btinternet.com [<mailto:heather.haslettmnwa@btinternet.com>]

Sent: 17 October 2016 14:42

To: Bernadette Allen

Subject: Re: Future of Community Forums

I've thought for some time that the resources spent on Community Forum were completely out of proportion to the benefits. I think the Community Forum is a great idea, but if people don't come, it's time to give up. If Community Forums are to continue, I think there should be fewer meetings and they should cover specific issues, such as planning, as those seem to be the meetings with the best attendance.

I would favour combining the grants with the existing Small Grants fund. Otherwise, could we consider having a panel similar to the existing Community Forum planning group to decide the grants, but with a couple more non-councillor representatives? Maybe open to the public? Perhaps vote on line like we do for the police priorities? but this has the downside that no-one would have heard of it.

Police priorities - could it be done online only?

Police reports - duplicated for the people in my Neighbourhood Watch group. Are they duplicated elsewhere? If the police have to do this sort of session with the public, could it be done as a short meeting just with the Police?

Regards

Heather Haslett

Chair of Milverton Neighbourhood Watch Association

Councillor Amanda Stevens

I understand the need for savings and have some sympathy with the suggestion to reduce the number of meetings that some forums meet. But North Leamington is a diverse area and I think it would still be reasonable to have three. As for lack of public participation it is for local councillors to spread the word and try to encourage residents to go along. Could schools do more to encourage parents to attend? I would also suggest you request that town and parish clerks do more to advertise the meetings on the public notice boards.

Leamington Town Council has two annual rounds of small grant bidding that are considered by its Cultural & Community Committee (max £2000). And this works well. I was interested in the proposals for reducing the Forum's rounds of grant applications. Re the submission by local groups and charities for financial assistance it is important that their reps are always directed to the relevant ward Councillor. In fact I would make it a requirement as I believe was originally the case for applications to be supported by the councillors who represent the ward where the service or event is to operate.

Best wishes

Cllr Amanda Stevens

South Leamington Forum

Well attended

I think the number of attendees at our South Leamington community forum the other night demonstrates how important we feel these meetings are - the Sydni Forums are always well attended but this seemed the biggest turn out I've seen. I think I mentioned also that looking at the agenda of the North Leamington forum - we seem to have a lot more on our agenda in the South! (Or maybe that was just this time).

Networking and building relationships

It would be a shame for the community to see these disappear altogether. We've already reduced the forums from 4 to 3 a year. Although a lot of communication is done via email, face-to-face meetings are also important to develop relationships with the community, Councillors and other agencies. The meetings are often a good opportunity for agencies to network with each other - as well as with residents.

Yes, better publicity could be explored - perhaps attendees/cllrs have a responsibility to bring/invite new people to each meeting - as Kath Bannister did with the Shree Krishna Ladies group.

We've also talked about expanding to Westbury Centre for our next meeting and the Queensway Sikh Community Centre have now offered to host a forum meeting as well - there seems to be growing interest in our forum, not reducing!

Grants

As for the grants - this is something that community groups find very useful - but as you know, it's often the same groups applying each year. Is the aim to support a wider range of organisations? In which case again, better and wider advertising.

Whitnash Planning Group

They want to see the Forum continue but in a different guise - a new mechanism. They agree that something is needed - but not sure what.

They acknowledge that the current format is not working.

One suggestion is to have the meeting an hour before Town Council meeting.

Warwick Rural East

The Forum empowers the community to raise issues and have the opportunity to have some say on what's done locally e.g. policing priorities

The Forum provides the opportunity for residents to have regular face to face contact with police and councillors. There is no other opportunity available to residents to do this

Resourcing the Forum is minimal with administration provided by one officer per Forum

The breadth of representation of groups / opinion by attendees e.g. Parish Councillor is more relevant to the impact the Forum has than the numbers present at the meeting

Conclusion: the Forum still has a purpose. The benefits outweigh the disadvantages

On 23 September 2016 at 16:06, <Davidlawrie1@aol.com> wrote:

Para. 1.4. I have always wondered why so few members of the public attend our Rural West meetings, but the answer might lie in the fact that the public are probably not aware that they are taking place, and what their purpose is. This might be simple apathy, or it might be that the meetings are inadequately advertised; my money is on apathy, based on the sparse attendance of the public at Parish Council meetings which are well advertised in the parish.

As an older person I would personally be excluded from communication if the social media route were chosen, because I do not subscribe to social media, and have no intention of doing so. I think that social media would reach only the younger members of the community, because older members have not been indoctrinated. The effect would be to attract a completely different audience. This might be a good idea, but it would be unwise to ignore older people.

Para. 1.5. I am surprised that there are 30 meetings per annum, and can appreciate why WDC would like to reduce the cost of this.

Para. 3.2. Withdrawing Community Forum grants would certainly withdraw the teeth of the Forum, and I suggest that one might as well then wind up the system anyway.

Para. 4.1. Annual Community Conferences might work, but might not save a lot of cost, because it would still involve a lot of officers' time to implement decisions (and vet grant applications) during the year.

Regards,

David (Shrewley Parish Council)

Warwick Rural West

Forum briefly discussed this paper last night, and the key messages are:

People would like to consult parish councils on the proposals, and will get back to me by Mon 24 October with views

Some concern was expressed about a lack of formal consultation with forums on the proposals, although I stressed that this was an opportunity to do so

The boundary review changes will mean that the Forum won't exist as it stands now, and maybe the 2 rural Forums could be combined into one

It was generally felt that the opportunity for 3 tier conversations to take place was extremely valuable

There was a suggestion that the WALC Area Committee could be involved in whatever is created in the future

That's about it- I agreed to bring an update back to the last meeting of the WRW Forum, which will be 26 Jan

Lapworth Parish Council

LPC values the opportunity that the Warwick Rural West Forum offers to share concerns and views with neighbouring Parishes and authorities and would ideally chose to keep it. However it appreciates the increasing financial pressures facing local government so if the levels of communication and access to grants are kept open via alternative channels it has no objection to change.

Barford & Wasperton PC

I note with concern the proposals to review the operation of the forums.

I only have experience of Warwick Rural West Forum but hold the opinion that it provides an excellent opportunity to share views across all levels – WCC, WDC, PC/TCs, Police and other agencies, even if attendances are sometimes disappointing.

When first established as “Localities” it promised contact with officers who could get things done and be answerable to us all and to some degree that has been achieved. It is a shame that the wider public seldom gets involved unless specific interest groups wish to contact us to spread their message or perhaps to claim some of the funding available – but perhaps that is all rather inevitable as we are all so busy and often quite self-centred or focused...

If the review is really about is saving costs then in my view it would be better to maintain the current level of meetings, possibly consider some forum mergers and make savings through reducing the grant funding available – some of which frankly is not always good/best value for public money and should perhaps be funded through other routes, albeit perhaps demanding more local effort and commitment.

John Murphy

Barford PC

Kenilworth CF planning group

In some respects Forum is working well - good regular attendance & high level of on-line votes for police priorities

In other respects not so well - struggling to spend Forum funding each year & loss of interaction with residents (residents mainly being spoken to at mtgs)

Conclusion: Overall there's good support for the Forum to continue

Leamington Town Council (5 Oct)

The Council's Policy and Resources Committee considered the briefing paper on the future of Community Forums at its meeting last night.

There was no consensus among Members as to a way forward on this. The Council has therefore agreed that individual members should express their views through the Forum Planning Groups and the Forum meetings.

District & Town, Manor

From: Eagles,Angus 1284 [<mailto:angus.eagles@warwickshire.pnn.police.uk>]

Sent: 16 October 2016 13:08

To: Bernadette Allen; Groom,Peter 6179

Cc: Kitson,Christopher 1958

Subject: PS

Re the future of forums discussion from the other evening....

Pete has reported to me very limited buy-in from the public with regard to online voting. He spent the best part of a morning pushing the online vote to various channels (Twitter, mailing list, etc. etc.) which yielded a harvest of exactly... ZERO extra votes. As we discussed this is a significant draw on resources and a lot of effort is yielding very little community engagement.

Warwick Town Council

WTC can relate to the need for Warwick District Council to review the Community Forum however, to do so before Warwickshire County Council completes its review seem counterproductive.

We firmly believe the Forums do have an important role to play as they provide the only opportunity for resident to meet all levels of Councillor in one place, together with officers and the police. We also understand that we will be returning to three Warwick Council wards by 2018 so for Warwick maintaining three Forums would seem sensible. However we would be happy to offer the Court House as a central venue for one meeting and maybe able to contribute to the administrative costs of a third Forum should the decision be to reduce them to twice yearly.

We also feel that the police do not require such a large officer/PCSO attendance at each forum, a reduced number would be ample. We also feel that there is no longer a need for a

follow up meeting to agree police priorities, sign off the grants etc. as these could easily be resolved by email and discussion with the Chairman, which would reduce Officer time.

With regard to the community forum fund that Warwick District Council provides to (£5000) each Forum in Warwick this is greatly appreciated as we do not receive any WCC Cllr funding and would not like to see this fund reduced. Where WCC Cllrs do not contribute their Cllr fund to their Community Forum Fund we believe strongly that WCC should take on the full administrative cost of supporting their grants and not WDC.

Kind regards

Jayne Topham

Town Clerk

From: l.bromley@sky.com [<mailto:l.bromley@sky.com>]

Sent: 02 November 2016 11:55

To: Bernadette Allen

Subject: Community Forum

Dear Berni,

I gave my thoughts on improving the meetings to Cllr Warner but I repeat them again below, with some added suggestions.

Topics discussed are considered boring by many who attend and they don't come again.

Topics that would draw crowds are the unpalatable ones such as parking, traffic problems, public transport, road safety - traffic lights and box junctions, social services, alcohol and drug abuse, facilities/clubs/activities for the elderly and also for the young, waste collections, parks and open spaces maintenance, contacting our Councils/Councillors re our problems, crime in the area, how to object to planning applications, etc. With a little thought, I could come up with many more.

After listening to the various talks there is only 15 minutes left for round-the-table discussion. This is totally insufficient, particularly as we are told to discuss the issues raised in the talks, i.e. Community Forum format. Attendees go away disappointed that they could not raise their issues.

There should be a much longer opportunity for questions and answers, particularly to the Police (which was very helpful in the past).

There should be an opportunity for any other issue to be raised from the floor and, if the answers are not available, these should be taken back to the various cllrs/officers for response and brought up at the next Forum.

Putting the stickers on the maps takes a lot of time and is a waste of time as nothing is done about them.

There is insufficient publicity for the meetings. There was nothing on the notice boards in St. Nix and I daresay any other notice board. The press should be given more information such as the topics and there seems no reason why the meetings do not feature in the local press. Are all the newspapers contacted - including the Midweek (which many Warwick people receive)?

I asked Cllr Warner to note the following issues to be brought up at the de-brief or be taken forward by Cllrs.

Many thanks indeed.Linda