

**Richard Davies**  
Chairman of the Council

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**Council meeting: Wednesday, 21 August 2013**

Notice is hereby given that a special meeting of Warwick District Council will be held at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa on Wednesday, 21 August 2013 at 6.05pm.

**Emergency Procedure**

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman will announce the emergency procedure for the Town Hall.

**Agenda**

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct. Declarations should be entered on the form to be circulated with the attendance sheet and declared during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

**If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.**

3. **Notice of Motion**

To consider the following motion from Councillor Mrs Knight:  
"That Warwick District Council is extremely concerned about the proposed cuts of £2.3 million to the Warwickshire County Council Children's Centre budgets for the year 2013-14 and agrees to send the following letter to Warwickshire County Council in response to their current consultation (which ends on August 27th 2013):

'To Warwickshire County Council

## REVIEW OF EARLY YEARS PROVISION WARWICKSHIRE CHILDREN CENTRES

We refer to the consultation with regard to the delivery of services at the network of Children's Centres throughout Warwickshire.

Warwick District Council has considered the proposals set out in the Consultation paper and its response is as follows:-

- (i) The Council recognises the vital role of Children's Centres in supporting the personal, social and emotional development of children. Their contribution to the well-being of society as a whole is so significant that the development and funding of the service must be addressed in a strategic review, taking account of the long term demands on the service and the funding available to it. This will not be achieved by a short term review based on the narrow horizon of a single round of spending cuts.

Given the uncertainty of the Warwickshire County Council Budget 2014 – 18 and the recommendations for increased investment in Children's Centres in the recent All Party Parliamentary Report of July 2013, the Council recommends that the current consultation is put on hold, to allow for more long term strategic planning involving all partners including South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust.

- (ii) The Council endorses the recommendations of the All Party Parliamentary Sure Start Group with regard to the use of pooled budgets between local authority and health services to allow for the commissioning of a range of Perinatal and Children's Centre services, taking a more holistic and preventative approach to working with families.
- (iii) The Council opposes the closure of any operating Children's Centre, including the site at Dale Street, Milverton, Leamington, as increased travel time and costs for families resulting from any closure would inevitably reduce access to services. Of the options listed in the Consultation paper, only Option 1 would keep all Children's Centres operational, while Options 2 and 3 would involve closures including that of Dale Street. The Council notes with concern that all of the options suggested assume significant reduction in the activity of Children's Centres in order to meet 'required savings' targets and recommends as above that this be put on hold for review.
- (iv) The Council sees merit in the collaborative approach between Centres, building on the nationally recognised success of the Warwickshire Centres and the sharing of good practice within the service. The 'clustering' of Centres is an option that merits further consideration.

In a recent OFSTED inspection at Westgate and Newburgh (June 2012) which was judged to be outstanding in all areas, the lead inspector said that the cluster working in Leamington and Warwick West was the best example of cluster working he had seen nationally. For this reason the Council recommends that Westgate and Newburgh Children's Centre remains within the Leamington and Warwick West cluster and continues to work collaboratively with Warwick Nursery and Children's Centre.

- (v) The Council wishes to emphasise the importance of a genuinely universal service, open to children and parents of all backgrounds, to the success of Children's Centres. Barriers such as charges for activities, 'targeting' of some neighbourhoods and families leading to possible stigmatisation of service users while discouraging others, and reduced provision with less convenient locations or times offered, threaten the important idea of 'one-stop-shops' for support available to everyone at the formative time of life."

4. **Code of Conduct Complaint**

To consider the report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer **(Item 4/Page 1)**

5. **Welfare Reforms**

To consider the report from the Benefit Fraud Manager **(Item 5/Page 1)**

6. **Common Seal**

To authorise the affixing of the Common Seal of the Council to such deeds and documents as may be required for implementing decisions of the Council arrived at this day.



Chief Executive  
12 August 2013

**Please note that the majority of the meetings are held on the first floor of the Town Hall. If you feel that this may restrict you attending this meeting, please telephone (01926) 412656 prior to the meeting, so that we can assist you and make any necessary arrangements to help you to attend the meeting.**

**THE AGENDA IS AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT ON REQUEST, PRIOR TO THE MEETING.**