

Minutes of the Meeting of Warwickshire County Council held on 20 March 2018

Present:
Councillor Clive Rickhards (Chair)

Councillors Margaret Bell, Parminder Singh Birdi, Sarah Boad, Mike Brain, Peter Butlin, Les Caborn, Mark Cargill, Richard Chattaway, Jonathan Chilvers, Jeff Clarke, John Cooke, Andy Crump, Yousef Dahmash, Corinne Davies, Nicola Davies, Judith Falp, Jenny Fradgley, Bill Gifford, Pete Gilbert, Dan Gissane, Clare Golby, Colin Hayfield, John Holland, John Horner, Andy Jenns, Kam Kaur, Keith Kondakor, Jeff Morgan, Bill Olnor, Maggie O'Rourke, Bhagwant Singh Pandher, Anne Parry, Dave Parsons, Caroline Phillips, Wallace Redford, David Reilly, Howard Roberts, Kate Rolfe, Jerry Roodhouse, Andy Sargeant, Izzi Seccombe OBE, Dave Shilton, Jill Simpson-Vince, Bob Stevens, Heather Timms, Adrian Warwick, Alan Webb, Chris Williams, Pam Williams and Andy Wright.

1. General

(1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Jo Barker, Alan Cockburn, Neil Dirveiks and Keith Kondakor (for part of meeting).

(2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Item 6 (3) Motion regarding George Eliot Hospital

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke declared a pecuniary interest as an employee of South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust (but had left the meeting during the adjournment and prior to consideration of this item).

(3) Minutes

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2018 be approved as a correct record.

(4) Announcements

Warwickshire Young Poet Laureate – Annabel Peet

The Council welcomed Annabel Peet, pupil of Stratford Girls' Grammar School, and Warwickshire's Young Poet Laureate for 2018. Annabel recited her poem 'To Warwickshire'.

The Chair thanked Annabel, on behalf of Council, and wished her well for the future.

National Schools Rugby Finals at Twickenham

The Chair congratulated Warwick School for winning the Schools Under 18s Rugby Cup for the eighth time and congratulated Kenilworth School who had also reached the finals in the Under 15s Schools Vase.

Matt Western MP

The Chair reported the recent resignation of Matt Western as county councillor for Leamington Willes.

The Council noted that Matt had been first elected in 2013 and served on a number of council bodies, including as Chair of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (which later became the Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee) and as a member of the Regulatory Committee and on the Local Pension Board. Matt had also instigated and contributed to many interesting debates at Council meetings, one of which resulted in the Council adopting an Energy Plan, and has continued to work hard in his community following his election as MP in 2017.

Councillor Richard Chattaway, Leader of the Labour Group, expressed his personal thanks and that of his Group for Matt's hard work on the Council and in his community.

The Chair, on behalf of Council, wished Matt Western well for the future.

Chris Lewington- Head of Strategic Commissioning

The Chair announced that Chris Lewington, Head of Strategic Commissioning was retiring after 10 years' service with the County Council. Chris had worked previously in Worcestershire in the voluntary sector before taking up the post in Warwickshire as Careers and Customer Service Engagement Manager before becoming Interim Head of Strategic Commissioning in 2012 and then permanent Head of Service in 2013. The Chair added that Chris had led on a number of key areas, including the Better Care Fund and the Adults Transformation Programme, and was a strong advocate for commissioning in both Childrens and Adults Services.

The Chair, on behalf of Council, thanked Chris for her service and wished her well in her retirement.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Leader of the Council, expressed her appreciation to Chris for her support and in particular for her leadership of the transformation programme and for her passion and 'can do' approach.

Councillor Les Caborn, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health, commended Chris for her experience and expertise which is recognised regionally and nationally. Councillor Caborn added his appreciation for Chris's championing of integration with Health and for her determination to ensure positive outcomes for people, and for the legacy she leaves for Warwickshire.

Councillors added their endorsement and thanks to Chris and wished her well for her retirement.

Chris thanked councillors for their support and paid tribute to her excellent team, and wished the Council well for the future.

The Edward's Trust

The Chair thanked all members who had given donations to the Edward's Trust and added that he would report the total amount raised at a future meeting.

Lord Lieutenant's Service

The Chair announced that the service to celebrate the Commonwealth is to be held on Sunday, 8th April, at 10.30am at St Mary's Church in Warwick.

Civic Service 19 March 2018

The Chair thanked all of those who had attended the civic service held on Sunday 19 March, despite the inclement weather.

Kenilworth Station

Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Leader of the Council, made the following statement:

'Members will be aware that the opening of Kenilworth Station is imminent and much welcomed. There is no doubting the economic benefits the station will bring to the town and surrounding area, as well as the travel links to the wider Midlands. We have been waiting for this station for over 50 years.

Members will also be aware that there have been difficulties in getting to the opening date and that we have had problems with delays. The station is a very complex project, much more complex than the opening of parkway stations of which we have delivered several successfully over the years.

None of us, as members of this council, colleagues in other authorities, or in the community, are happy with this situation. There are, no doubt, learning points for all concerned and to that end I am proposing the establishment of a scrutiny task and finish group to look into what problems have beset the opening of Kenilworth Station. I propose that we extend our invitation to our partners to participate, in particular Kenilworth Town Council; Rail Consultants SLC Rail; Network Rail; the Department for Transport and others that may be necessary as we progress.

I would welcome the support of you as councillors in establishing this task and finish group under the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.'

(5) Petitions

None.

(6) Public Speaking

Cycling

Dr Robert Bearman, representative of the Stratford Cycle Forum, addressed the Council in support of the motion at item 6 on the agenda regarding the allocation of funds to develop a network of cycling routes. Dr Bearman referred to the benefits of cycling, not just for personal health, but for the whole community, particularly in urban areas, through reduced pollution; a lessening of traffic congestion and the improvement to the urban environment.

Dr Bearman stated that the key obstacle that deters many from cycling is the potential danger of urban roads and there is a need for a firm statement by the County Council that it recognises this disincentive and, therefore, that it will develop a ring fenced programme to provide a network of safe, accessible and direct routes that link places people need to get to. It is only in this way that there will be an increase in cycling that will benefit the whole community. Dr Bearman added that he recognised that car travel was the only option for many people and for certain types of trip but fewer cars on the road will be of benefit to all. Dr Bearman appreciated the economic restraints and efforts made to date to include cycleways in development but there is a need for a joined up plan, independent of any developer contributions or similar windfalls, that acknowledges the need for the provision and establishes a ring fenced budget to implement it.

The Chair thanked Dr Bearman for his presentation.

The member debate on cycling is summarised at minute 6 below.

2. Treasury Management Strategy 2018-19

Councillor Peter Butlin, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, recommended that Council approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018-19 and was seconded by Councillor Izzi Seccombe.

Councillor Butlin highlighted that the Council only invests short term cash where risks are low and investment returns are prudent and the Council also ensures that enough money is set aside to fund capital expenditure plans, especially if it involves borrowing.

Councillor Butlin added, in response to a question from Councillor Richard Chattaway regarding what the financial pressures will be in future, that the key issues would be the funding from the retention of business rates and the pressures from children and adult social services, which would need to be considered in the One Organisation Plan for 2020 onwards.

The recommendations were put to the vote and were agreed as set out below.

Resolved

- (1) That the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy for 2018/19 be approved and its provisions have immediate effect in the current financial year 2017/18;

- (2) That the Prudential Indicators (as outlined in Appendix A of the report) are noted;
- (3) That the County Council requires the Head of Finance to ensure that gross borrowing does not exceed the prudential level as specified in Appendix A of the report, taking into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in the budget report;
- (4) That the County Council delegates authority to the Head of Finance to undertake all the activities listed in Appendix G of the report, subject to the use of any new financial instruments being approved by Cabinet; and
- (5) That the County Council requires the Head of Finance to implement the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as specified in Appendix H of the report.

3. Education & Learning (Schools) Capital Programme 2017-18 and Approval of Statutory Proposals

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning, presented the report and recommended that Council approves an addition to the Capital Programme to deliver the schemes set out in the report. Councillor David Reilly seconded the recommendation.

Councillor Dave Parsons asked why the cost of replacement of the SEND facility at Water Orton Primary School was being met by the County Council rather than by HS2, as the replacement is necessitated by the track of HS2.

Councillor David Reilly responded that negotiations did achieve £3.3m compensation for the rebuilding of the school and that the allocation of £650,000 will ensure a new facility for SEND which he welcomed.

The recommendation was put to the vote and was agreed as set out below.

Resolved

That the County Council approves the addition of £3,076,540 to the Capital Programme to deliver the schemes outlined in section 3 of the report.

4. Review of Warwickshire County Council Members' Allowances Scheme - Report of the Independent Panel

Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Leader of the Council moved the following recommendations and was seconded by Councillor Kam Kaur, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation:

- A (1) That the Council accepts the following Panel recommendations:
- (2) That from 15 May 2018(Annual Council) and annually thereafter, the Basic Allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances increase in

line with the basic annual NJC pay award increase (excluding the National Living Wage).

- (8) That Councillors on the Adoption and Fostering Panels be assigned an SRA of £1,000 per member per annum.
 - (9) That the Chair of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel be assigned an SRA of £3,000 on occasions when the Chair is a nominated County Council representative on the Panel.
 - (12) That the fee for individual member registration with the Information Commissioner Office be reimbursed to members as this is an unavoidable expense in undertaking their role.
 - (13) That reference to members' pensions (paragraph 13 of the Allowance Scheme) be deleted as councillors are no longer able to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.
 - (14) That the reference to purchase of rail tickets through Democratic Services be removed from the Allowances Scheme.
- (2) That the Joint Managing Director (Resources) be authorised to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme to take account of these changes.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe reminded members that the review of member allowances was required by law and had to be undertaken by an Independent Panel. Councillor Seccombe thanked the Panel for their work and pre-empted her views on the findings by stating that she believed that people stand for local election because they want to make a difference to their communities and that councillors work extremely hard and are not incentivised by receipt of allowances. She added, however, that it is important to encourage people from across society to stand for election and that the allowances went some way to compensate members for the cost of undertaking the role.

Councillor Seccombe highlighted, in particular, her support for a special responsibility allowance being paid to the Chair of the Police and Crime Panel when that member is a County Council nominee, in recognition of the level of work and responsibility that the role requires. In addition she supported an allowance to the members on the Fostering and Adoption Panels, given the considerable workload associated with those positions. Councillor Seccombe explained that, aside from these additions, she did not support other changes to special responsibility allowances proposed by the Panel (noting that removal of the Group allocations would remove the flexibility to change allocations as circumstances change) or the backdating of increases. Councillor Seccombe concluded that the scheme needed to be affordable and that it would be wrong to increase the budget for members' allowances at a time of reduction in services.

Councillor Kam Kaur, in seconding the motion later in the debate, agreed with the comments regarding the time commitment made by councillors in undertaking their role and in particular those who have to balance this with work commitments. Councillor Kaur recognised that the Independent Panel had produced a thorough

report but added that one size does not fit all and that she supported the proposal as being the most appropriate for Warwickshire County Council.

B Councillor Jerry Roodhouse, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, moved the following proposal and was seconded by Councillor Sarah Boad:

‘That the County Council accepts all of the recommendations of the Independent Panel, excluding recommendations (1) and (10) (relating to a 1% increase backdated to May 2017).’

Councillor Roodhouse explained that he supported the Independent Panel report, in particular their view that the roles and responsibilities of those receiving special responsibility allowances should be more transparent. In particular, he wished to see greater clarity with regard to the role of those members supporting Cabinet.

Councillor Sarah Boad, in seconding the proposal at B, reminded members that the scheme had evolved, and she had in particular welcomed the addition of an allowance for child care to enable her to attend meetings and hoped that the levels allowed for carers were kept under review to ensure they were at an appropriate level. Councillor Boad added that many employed councillors like her, did not get time off from work and had to fit council work in outside of work hours but continued to do this as they received satisfaction from being able to serve their communities.

Councillor Richard Chattaway, Leader of the Labour Group, supported the proposals at A, as retaining flexibility on the allocation of SRAs in Groups and also because it kept the cost of the Scheme below that of the similar sized authorities against which Warwickshire was benchmarked.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, Leader of the Green Group, expressed his support for the Independent Panel recommendations and added that a good basic allowance is important but also noted that the level of allowance for Cabinet members was considerably lower than in other authorities and he had recommended to the Independent Panel that the Cabinet Portfolio Holder allowances be increased in view of the level of responsibility they held.

DEBATE

The following points were also raised during the debate:

- Many employed members lose earnings due to taking time off for council duties and are less likely to be promoted or feel able to seek promotion.
- It is difficult to attract younger people to stand for election due to the time commitment and balancing the role with work and family commitments.
- Much of the work of councillors is not within the key committees, but in other roles and in constituency work.
- There is a workload associated with the role of vice chair of overview and scrutiny committees, and the committee chairs appreciate the support of their vice chairs and therefore the special responsibility allowance should be retained.
- Many members fit the hours around their work in order to undertake this public service.

- There should be an appropriate level of remuneration to encourage a wide range of people from across all walks of life to stand for election.
- Although members may feel uncomfortable in considering their own remuneration, it is a small percentage of the budget and is a way of enabling people from all walks of life to serve their communities.

VOTE

The amendment at B above was put to the vote and was LOST, the vote being 8 for and more against.

The proposals at A above were put to the vote and were AGREED, the vote being 43 for, 7 against and 1 abstention

Resolved

(1) That the Council accepts the following Panel recommendations:

(2) That from 15 May 2018(Annual Council) and annually thereafter, the Basic Allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances increase in line with the basic annual NJC pay award increase (excluding the National Living Wage).

(8) That Councillors on the Adoption and Fostering Panels be assigned an SRA of £1,000 per member per annum.

(9) That the Chair of the Warwickshire Police and Crime Panel be assigned an SRA of £3,000 on occasions when the Chair is a nominated County Council representative on the Panel.

(12) That the fee for individual member registration with the Information Commissioner Office be reimbursed to members as this is an unavoidable expense in undertaking their role.

(13) That reference to members' pensions (paragraph 13 of the Allowance Scheme) be deleted as councillors are no longer able to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

(14) That the reference to purchase of rail tickets through Democratic Services be removed from the Allowances Scheme.

(2) That the Joint Managing Director (Resources) be authorised to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme to take account of these changes.

5. Updates to the Council's Constitution

Councillor Kam Kaur, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customers, presented a report and sought approval to changes to the Council's Constitution to give effect to legislation that requires an independent panel to be convened for any case of proposed dismissal of a statutory officer. Councillor Heather Timms seconded the proposal.

Resolved

- (1) That the changes to Employment Standing Orders 6 and 7, and the changes in the arrangements for the Appointments, Disciplinary and Disciplinary Appeals Sub-Committees are approved, as set out in the appendix of the report.
- (2) That the Joint Managing Director (Resources) be authorised to take any necessary steps to implement the changes and amend the constitution to reflect those changes.

6. Notices of Motion

(1) Cycling

- A Councillor Jenny Fradgley moved the following motion and was seconded by Councillor Jonathan Chilvers:

‘That the Council requests that Cabinet develops a strategic, costed three year (2019-2022) cycling plan that supports a network of safe, accessible and direct routes that link places people need to get to, including a prioritised programme of works and setting out the funding implications for the County Council so that this can be considered as part of the 2019-2020 budget refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan’.

Councillor Jennifer Fradgley explained that, although she had cycled all her life and adapted to the increasing traffic, there were constraints and barriers to cycling and a lack of infrastructure. Councillor Fradgley reported that many parents did not wish their children to cycle as they feared for their safety and added that Stratford town (with its compact leisure and retail areas, schools within the town boundary and few hills) should be cycle friendly but it is not due to constraints and barriers.

Councillor Fradgley referred to a number of local planning documents that refer to cycling and the benefits of cycling for health, the environment and the economy but the cycling routes provided by developers do not go beyond their sites and do not link to schools, work places or shops. She added that cycle and walking routes need to be provided for developments from the outset, so that people develop the habit of cycling but if this connectivity is not supported town centres will suffer, and will lack vitality. Councillor Fradgley referred to the current task and finish group which had been established to look at the cycling network, identify gaps and prioritise those projects that will give the most benefit in encouraging residents to cycle with confidence and safely. Councillor Fradgley urged the Council to support the group’s work by ensuring their recommendations will be considered in the building of the budget for 2019/20 and beyond and by committing appropriate and affordable projects to the budget process.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, in seconding the motion later in the debate, explained that the aim of the motion was for the Council to move away from its ad hoc approach to cycling and ensure proper planning of cycling infrastructure which requires the Council to take a clear strategic lead. Councillor Chilvers stated that the current separate approach is illustrated by the fact that requests for the re-marking of cycle

routes are viewed as something completely different from requests for re-marking roads and this approach needs to change and cycling routes need to be an integral part of the infrastructure, rather than treated separately as at present.

Councillor Chilvers stated that he would have preferred his original motion but accepted the amendment in that it is a step forward to developing the plan and he welcomed the comments from the Cabinet Portfolio Holders and the Chair of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny in their expectation of costed and prioritised plans coming forward. Councillor Chilvers added that he looked forward to robust and costed proposals being developed over the next few months so that they can be considered in time for the budget refresh in 2019.

- B Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, moved the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor David Reilly:

Delete the words between 'Cabinet' and 'be considered as part of the 2019-2020 budget refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan' and insert '..reviews the report of the Cycling Task and Finish Group and considers which of its recommendations can be implemented within existing resources and which would need to..'

The motion as amended to read:

'That the Council requests that Cabinet reviews the report of the Cycling Task and Finish Group and considers which of its recommendations can be implemented within existing resources and which need to be considered as part of the 2019-2020 budget refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan'.

Councillor Clarke stated that cycling has been recognised as important for Warwickshire, in particular in supporting economic growth and improving health and wellbeing of residents. He added that the cycle policy is part of the Local Transport Plan and the cycling network has expanded in recent years, but there are missing links and new routes are required to achieve a more comprehensive network so that cycling is viable for everyday journeys. Councillor Clarke referred to the Department for Transport's 'Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy' published in 2017 which aims to make cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys and includes guidance for local authorities to prepare their own plans.

Councillor Clarke welcomed the work of the task and finish group and would appreciate the group bringing forward a fully costed three year plan to enable informed decisions. Councillor Clarke added that there is the opportunity for further investment, including from S106 monies, the Local Growth Fund, National Productivity Investment Fund, Department for Transport, HS2 funding, Highways England Cycling Safety and Integration Fund as well as the Council's own Capital Investment Fund. Councillor Clarke concluded by welcoming this coming forward to Cabinet.

Councillor Jenny Fradgley indicated that she would accept the amendment proposed by Councillor Jeff Clarke.

DEBATE

The following points were made in support of the motion:

- Whilst there are many new cycle routes, there are missing sections and there needs to be a comprehensive strategy.
- There has been a lot of discussion in cycle groups and now is the time to achieve outcomes.
- It is important that there is a budget for cycling and that the task and finish group identify resources.
- The Conservative amendment is welcome as it states that there will be consideration of funding schemes.
- The Council needs to make cycling routes a priority in order to lever funding from developers.
- The government has announced £1.2bn for walking and cycling across the country and success depends on local authorities bidding for schemes. There is £101m to improve cycling infrastructure; £80m for safety awareness training; £389.5m for councils to invest in walking and cycling schemes and £5m to improve cycling facilities at railway stations. Warwickshire roads are crowded and effective bids must be put in to ensure Warwickshire receives a fair share of the money.
- Funding for maintenance is also needed once walking and cycling routes are in place. There are already cases of highway markings being in a poor condition.
- Each of the five local development plans have specific entries regarding cycling and the Council is making progress in bids to support cycling from HS2 and from other funding pots.

VOTE

The motion at A, as amended by B, was put to the vote and was carried, unanimously as set out below:

Resolved

That the Council requests that Cabinet reviews the report of the Cycling Task and Finish Group and considers which of its recommendations can be implemented within existing resources and which need to be considered as part of the 2019-2020 budget refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan

(2) The Royal Warwickshire Regiment of Fusiliers Museum – St John’s House, Warwick

A Councillor John Holland moved the following motion and was seconded by Councillor Richard Chattaway:

‘That the Council recognises the importance of the Royal Fusiliers Museum in reminding people of the sacrifices made by those who have served our country and writes to the Secretary of State for Defence asking him to reconsider withdrawal of their funding and also writes to Warwickshire MPs asking for their support.’

Councillor Holland explained that he wished assurance that the tenure of the Royal Fusiliers was secure and also wished to see the continuance of the Museum. Councillor Richard Chattaway added that museums were important as a reminder of the commitment of those who have served for the country but accepted the amendment proposed by Councillor Izzi Seccombe as set out below.

- B Councillor Izzi Seccombe moved the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor Jeff Clarke:

Delete the words after 'our country..' and insert 'asks the Regiment to prioritise investment in and promotion of their Warwick Museum rather than alternative sites'

The motion as amended to read:

'That the Council recognises the importance of the Royal Fusiliers Museum in reminding people of the sacrifices made by those who have served our country and asks the Regiment to prioritise investment in and promotion of their Warwick Museum rather than alternative sites.'

Councillor Izzi Seccombe stressed that the Council had huge support for the Royal Fusiliers, as illustrated by the Council's award to them of freedom of the County, and the Council supported them and their service to the country and Warwickshire. Councillor Seccombe reminded Council that the Ministry of Defence had reduced funding to the Fusiliers but added that the Council could not take on the funding. It was noted that the Council had renewed the lease to the trustees of the museum for six years. Councillor Seccombe explained that it was for the Fusiliers to decide whether or not to remain in Warwickshire, having already moved some of its administration out of Warwick.

The motion as amended at B above was put to the vote and was agreed as set out below:

Resolved

That the Council recognises the importance of the Royal Fusiliers Museum in reminding people of the sacrifices made by those who have served our country and asks the Regiment to prioritise investment in and promotion of their Warwick Museum rather than alternative sites.

(3) George Eliot Hospital

Councillor Dave Parsons moved the following motion (amended to refer to three MPs, not two) and was seconded by Councillor Alan Webb:

'That this Council welcomes the praise given to staff by the CQC in their recent inspection of George Eliot Hospital, including the 'caring and compassionate approach to patient care'. The Council is extremely concerned however that the inspection has placed the hospital in 'need of improvement' and urges the Hospital Improvement Board to take urgent action to raise standards of care in End of Life Care and in Accident and Emergency and also encourage the three Conservative MPs representing the areas the hospital serves to give their fullest support to the process of improvement in order to achieve the high standards of medical care, in all areas,

which should be the entitlement of the people of North Warwickshire’.

Councillor Dave Parsons recognised that the CQC findings had been of a great disappointment to the hard working staff at George Eliot. Councillor Parsons stated that there were 10 hospitals in the region requiring improvement and that it was indicative of problems within the NHS that requires actions.

Councillor Alan Webb added that there is an underlying reason for the need for improvement in hospitals across the country and that he believed this was a resource issue, including problems of recruitment and retention. He added that there needed to be a proper review of the NHS.

- B Councillor Clare Golby moved the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor Margaret Bell:

Delete all words after ‘need of improvement’ in the second sentence and replace with the following:

‘but supports the Hospital Improvement Board plan of action to raise standards of care.

We also recognise the historic encouragement of the three Conservative MPs representing the area the hospital serves. We also encourage on-going support from them in relation to the process of improvement which the George Eliot Hospital are undertaking, in order to achieve the high standards of medical care, in all areas, for those who need to use their services.

The motion as amended to read:

‘That this Council welcomes the praise given to staff by the CQC in their recent inspection of George Eliot Hospital, including the ‘caring and compassionate approach to patient care’. The Council is extremely concerned however that the inspection has placed the hospital in ‘need of improvement’ but supports the Hospital Improvement Board plan of action to raise standards of care.

We also recognise the historic encouragement of the three Conservative MPs representing the area the hospital serves. We also encourage on-going support from them in relation to the process of improvement which the George Eliot Hospital are undertaking, in order to achieve the high standards of medical care, in all areas, for those who need to use their services.’

Councillor Golby advised the meeting that the MPs are active in supporting the George Eliot and that a motion to encourage them was needed. Councillor Golby added that actions were taking place, including the introduction of a strategic operational end of life group which oversees all aspects of end of life care; the recruitment of a specialist palliative care team for nurses and doctors; the appointment of a new lead specialist nurse; appointment of a consultant and further consultant posts; end of life training for designated staff, including sessions with Myton Hospice.

Councillor Margaret Bell, in seconding the motion, recognised that the hospital had been working well to continually improve and that the findings were disappointing and the rating on some aspects as ‘inadequate’ is alarming. Councillor Bell added,

however, that concerns have been expressed for some time and this provides an opportunity to address the problem which is a systemic issue across the whole area and one issue is that there are no end of life care beds in the north of the County.

Councillor Bell recognised that work is underway, including at the Warwickshire North Health and Wellbeing Partnership, but stressed that now is the time to focus on addressing the issues of end of life care.

Councillor Dave Parsons indicated his acceptance of the amendment to his motion.

DEBATE

The following points were raised in the debate:

- The staff at George Eliot are dedicated and members spoke of their positive experiences.
- The CQC report is of concern and indicates that something is not right and the Improvement Board needs to come up with actions.
- There is no need for poor end of life care but it needs proper investment in knowledge, specialist training and expertise.
- A transparent discussion is needed at national level on the problems within the NHS.
- The George Eliot has transformed over the years and has a good reputation now, and when there are problems there is now transparency and honest debate.
- The new estate plans are good but they need to be resourced.
- Revenue investment is needed in the NHS – in both GP care and hospitals.

During the debate Councillor Izzi Seccombe advised that the Health and Wellbeing Board would be considering the hospital's improvement plan, including how the single end of life strategy is being implemented at the George Eliot. Councillor Wallace Redford also gave assurance that this issue would be included in the work programme for the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The motion as amended at B was put to the vote and was agreed as set out below:

Resolved

That this Council welcomes the praise given to staff by the CQC in their recent inspection of George Eliot Hospital, including the 'caring and compassionate approach to patient care'. The Council is extremely concerned however that the inspection has placed the hospital in 'need of improvement' but supports the Hospital Improvement Board plan of action to raise standards of care.

The Council adjourned at 12.55 pm and reconvened at 1.40pm.

(4) Street Lighting

Councillor Richard Chattaway moved the following motion and was seconded by Councillor Alan Webb:

- A 'That this Council recommends that Cabinet considers the progress with the programme of LED lighting and advises when it will be possible for street lighting to be switched back on.'

Councillor Richard Chattaway explained that this motion was before Council as a promise had been made to residents that the part night street lighting would be discontinued for those who wished to keep street lighting on once progress had been made with the LED replacement programme. Councillor Chattaway added that there was support for lights being turned back on as crime was increasing and police levels decreasing. Speaking later in the debate, Councillor Chattaway added that he did not think it right that local councils should have to pay for lighting and that he would also welcome a pilot.

Councillor Alan Webb, in seconding the motion later in the debate, added that members should consider their own response to deterring crime (such as sensor lighting) and it may be appropriate to review options and there should be local flexibility. Councillor Webb added that there were requests for lighting where there are problems, for example where there have been a number of cases of vehicle damage and where it is hard to gather evidence without lighting.

B Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, moved the following amendment and was seconded by Councillor Peter Butlin:

Delete all the words after 'Cabinet....' and replace by '...reviews the street lighting position following the completion of the rollout of the LED lighting programme.'

The motion as amended to read:

'That this Council recommends that Cabinet reviews the street lighting position following the completion of the rollout of the LED lighting programme'.

Councillor Jeff Clarke referred to the reasons for the decision taken in 2012 to move part night street lighting. These included the achievement of financial savings but also the reduction in energy use (approximately 3,000 tonne of CO₂ emission savings per year), and many also welcomed the reduction in light pollution. Councillor Clarke reported that past reviews of the policy did not produce any evidence that reducing night lighting led to an increase in crime.

Councillor Clarke advised that the programme of LED replacement will continue as part of routine maintenance, but the return was smaller as there were fewer high consumption units. In addition it would be possible to consider the impact of dimming lights but a proper evaluation would be needed. Reversing the policy and turning the lights back on now would cost around £540,000 which is not budgeted for and there is also the OOP saving plan of £900,000 to be delivered by 2020 through the part night lighting scheme.

DEBATE

The following points were raised in the debate:

For the motion at A:

- There has been an increase in burglaries in rural areas in north of the County and there does not appear to be adequate police response and switching the lights on may deter the crime.
- There have been requests for lights to be turned on, particularly for shift workers.
- The poor condition of pavements means that lighting is required for safety reasons.

Against the motion at A or for the amendment at B:

- Most burglaries take place during the day, rather than the night.
- The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to no longer have reports back in 2015 as crime had not increased. However it is now an appropriate time for a review.
- Road accidents are highest between 3pm and 7pm.
- Residents have either not been asking for lights to stay on or have asked for lights to be turned off.
- There have been savings from the part night lighting both financial and environmental. Turning the lights off is saving 12,000 tonnes of CO₂ a year.
- There is flexibility to turn the lights on when appropriate or when the police have so advised, as happened during the recent bad weather.
- There should be a proper review before lights are put back on (possibly at the 75% roll out that was one of the targets considered in earlier reports on this). This could include a pilot area (with the agreement of residents) that looks at the impact of part switch on/dimmed lighting.
- There is the option for local councils to pay for lights to be kept on and this already happens in some rural areas.

During the debate members questioned when the rollout of LED lighting would be complete and sought assurance that the amendment at B did not seek to delay the report indefinitely. Councillor Peter Butlin reported that the part night lighting has been an enormous success in making savings so that money could be spent elsewhere and has reduced CO₂ emissions. Councillor Butlin explained that the review would not be tied to the percentage of completion of the LED lighting and gave his assurance that the review would be undertaken within the next financial year. Councillor Butlin added that the review should include proper statistics on what has been achieved, the levels of crime (and perception of crime) and road safety issues as well as the experience of other councils who have undertaken trials of dimming lights.

VOTE

The amendment at B was put to the vote and was carried the vote being 37 for, 6 against and 3 abstentions.

The motion as amended was put to the vote and was carried as set out below, the vote being 37 for, 5 against and 4 abstentions.

Resolved

That this Council recommends that Cabinet reviews the street lighting position following the completion of the rollout of the LED lighting programme.

7. Member Question Time (Standing Order 7)

(1) Health and Wellbeing Boards Concordat

Councillor John Holland asked Councillor Izzi Seccombe, the Leader of the Council and Chair of Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board, whether, given

the proposal to remove the savings figure from the concordat, it is better to be open and transparent about the scale of cuts or to conceal the number. Councillor Izzi Seccombe replied that the concordat agreed and ratified by all councils except one, identified at that time the scale of the challenges to all agencies (the six councils, NHS acute services, CCGs, Mental Health trust etc.) if no action had been taken and if there had been no money coming back in. Since that time a lot of action has been taken to make savings and more money has been put into Adult Social Care, including £2bn last year and more this year so the figures no longer apply. Councillor Seccombe added that this was agreed at the last Health and Wellbeing Board of which Councillor John Holland is a member.

Councillor John Holland added that he was aware the figure had changed and asked for the current figure.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe replied that she would try to find that out, but it may not be readily available as there are multiple agencies.

(2) Child Poverty

Councillor Corinne Davies asked Councillor Jeff Morgan, the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children Services whether, in view of his and the Deputy Leader's comments at the previous meeting that child poverty rates were largely due to a significantly flawed mechanism for calculating child poverty, will the current Child Poverty Strategy which puts child poverty in Nuneaton and Bedworth in excess of 20% be withdrawn and, if so, how can members be assured that the commitment to dealing with child poverty remains a priority for the Council and is not going to disappear?

Councillor Jeff Morgan responded that the point he was trying to make was that there needs to be a more subtle approach to dealing with poverty and that the crude measure of 'less than 6% of median incomes' is insufficient and leads to unhelpful outcomes. For instance in the economic crisis of 2008 child poverty rates fell - not because the poor were getting richer but because the rich were getting poorer. The County Council's Child Poverty Strategy already takes a rational approach by focusing on three issues: jobs and skills (helping the economy grow); early intervention and breaking the cycle (in particular the Priority Families Programme and targeted services from children and family centres); financial inclusion and resilience (partly from work with CAB and integration in the new hubs and the families brokerage service). Councillor Morgan added that it is evident that Nuneaton and Bedworth is a priority area and that he will ensure that the Council continues to address the issues there as well as in other pockets of the County.

Councillor Richard Chattaway asked for more information on how these issues are going to be addressed and Councillor Morgan agreed to do this.

(3) Homelessness

Councillor Alan Webb asked Councillor Les Caborn, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health, whether he could provide a breakdown of the number of statutory homeless people in Warwickshire and the direction of travel over the last three years.

Councillor Les Caborn replied that the numbers of homeless recorded by DCLG as being homeless and in priority need in 2016 were:

North Warwickshire 85
Nuneaton and Bedworth 128
Rugby 168
Stratford on Avon 142
Warwick 136

Councillor Caborn added that he had the DCLG breakdown from 2008/9 to 2016/17 which he undertook to circulate to all members.

Councillor Caborn reported that there had been excellent support from district and boroughs for the launch of the Council's Homelessness Strategy and that two essential pieces of work were underway – a health needs audit using Homeless Link and proper mapping of homelessness in Warwickshire.

(4) Food banks

Councillor Richard Chattaway (on behalf of Councillor Maggie O'Rourke) asked Councillor Kam Kaur, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation whether she could provide the number of individuals or families receiving support from the County's food banks, per district area, and what has been the decrease or increase in numbers over the last three years.

Councillor Kam Kaur replied that her information is not directly from the foodbanks themselves but via the Warwickshire Welfare Service which records a gradual decrease in the number of referrals to foodbanks over the period April 2015 to December 2017. In addition to referrals the Welfare Scheme provides store vouchers to help customers where the foodbank is not operating on the day the support is needed or is inaccessible due to a person's mobility. The total number of customers supported was 197 between April 2015 - March 2016; 299 between April 2016-March 2017 and 94 between April 2017 and December 2017. Councillor Kaur undertook to share the breakdown per district with members who wished to see them and would forward the information to Councillor Maggie O'Rourke.

(5) Use of capital receipts from land disposal, Nuneaton

Councillor Caroline Phillips asked Councillor Peter Butlin, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, whether the receipts from the sale of farmland in Nuneaton (i.e. Top Farm and Eastboro Way) will be spent on improving life for Nuneaton residents, given the fact that it is the largest town in Warwickshire and has high levels of deprivation.

Councillor Peter Butlin replied that, with the exception of school land receipts, the Council tends not to ring fence receipts. The Council prioritises the capital programme based on need, not from where the receipts originate. With regards to the sites in Nuneaton, the receipt for Eastboro Way is already earmarked for the delivery of the OOP 2020 savings targets for Property Services. 5% of receipts are reinvested in smallholdings. The receipt from the sale of Top Farm is yet to be prioritised for any particular need. The receipt is forecast to be received

in phases over a number of years beyond 2020. It will therefore be subject to business cases being made and approved. Councillor Butlin added that the Council is already investing in Nuneaton through the Transforming Nuneaton programme and that he had been promoting Nuneaton at the MPIM conference in France the previous week.

(6) Kenilworth Station

Councillor Bill Gifford asked Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Leader of the Council, on what date would Kenilworth Station open. Councillor Izzi Seccombe referred to her earlier statement and that she was unable to give a date at present.

(7) Capital Programme

Councillor Richard Chattaway asked Councillor Peter Butlin, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, whether he would ask the Joint Managing Directors to explore the Council's approach to managing the capital programme, specifically what might be done to better coordinate delivery.

Councillor Peter Butlin replied that he agreed that there should be a more coordinated approach to capital programmes, a lot of them being currently divided into three, and he would ask for a more coordinated approach to be explored.

(8) Ryton Organic Gardens, Rugby

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse referred to a 3,000 signature petition and asked Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Leader of the Council, what the Council was doing in relation to the sale of Ryton Organic Gardens.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe responded that notification had not been in time for Council to consider whether to make a bid for the land and that it would be for Rugby Borough Council to consider any application for development of the site.

Councillor Alan Webb asked what grounds would make development of the site inappropriate. Councillor Seccombe replied that this is not an issue for this Council but for the planning authority.

(9) Cycling

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers asked Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, whether he would share the West Midlands Combined Authority report on cycling with the rest of the Council.

Councillor Jeff Clarke replied that he would circulate the document.

(10) Impact of Brexit

Councillor Sarah Boad asked Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Leader of the Council, whether the County Council had undertaken any work to assess the impact on Warwickshire (in terms of education, health etc.) of leaving the European Union and will this be done if not.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe replied that this would be looked at by the CW LEP and she would circulate dates when known.

(11) Falls Prevention

Councillor Bill Olnier asked Councillor Izzi Seccombe, the Leader of the Council, what she would be doing to address the issue of falls and whether there would be additional funding.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe replied that there were a number of factors that lead to falls and local authorities and health have a roll in many of these and the level of prevention depends to a large extent on the amount of money available in adult social care and in health. It is being done on a reduced budget which was the message behind the article to which Councillor Olnier referred.

(12) Welfare Rights Contract

Councillor Corinne Davies asked Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, whether he could give assurance that, given the award of the Welfare Rights Contract to the CAB, residents will receive the same like for like and seamless transfer of services, including representation in court in particular for the most vulnerable members of our community.

Councillor Jeff Clarke responded that there is a transition period and he would ensure that the transfer is seamless.

Councillor Bill Olnier asked when the transfer would take place as he understood there had been a challenge that may have delayed it. Councillor Jeff Clarke replied that it would be soon and he would notify members of the date.

(13) Warwickshire Skills for Employment Conference, Stoneleigh Park

Councillor Yousef Dahmash asked Councillor Colin Hayfield, the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning, whether he could provide some feedback on the recent Skills for Employment conference.

Councillor Colin Hayfield replied that the conference on 7th March had been the fourth and best attended conference to date. Councillor Hayfield thanked David Ayton- Hill, Economy and Skills Group Manager, for an excellent presentation on economic patterns and the likely economic future. Councillor Hayfield had been particularly interested to hear that 65% of the children entering school now will be going into jobs that do not currently exist. This presented a challenge for the Council and for schools in equipping children with skills for work. Councillor Hayfield undertook to circulate the slides from the presentation and offered to arrange a seminar for members in the future.

(14) Covent Garden Car Park, Leamington Spa

Councillor Bill Gifford asked Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, what discussion had taken place with Warwick District Council to provide further 2 hour parking spaces within 5-10 minutes of the Parade in Leamington, during the rebuilding of Covent Garden Car Park.

Councillor Jeff Clarke undertook to speak to Councillor Bill Gifford about this issue.

(15) Transfer of children from statements of educational need to education and healthcare plans

Councillor Jeff Morgan asked Councillor Colin Hayfield, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning, what progress had been made in transferring the statements of special educational needs to the new education and healthcare plans.

Councillor Colin Hayfield replied that the deadline for the conversion is the end of March and that Warwickshire was not going to meet the deadline. Councillor Hayfield explained that officers had to convert 2781 statements and at the same time deal with an annual 20% rise in applications. 2200 statements had been completed and, although the deadline would not be met, all will be in draft form by June. Councillor Hayfield added that the team were disappointed not to hit the deadline but he paid tribute to the team who were working exceptionally hard to complete these.

(16) Education Strategy

Councillor Mark Cargill asked Councillor Colin Hayfield, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning, what progress was being made on the consultation on the new Education Strategy.

Councillor Colin Hayfield replied that, rather than consulting on a prepared draft strategy, the approach being taken is one of co-production with head teachers and others involved in education. A conference of over 100 head teachers had been held to discuss elements that should go in the strategy. In this way the strategy will be developed 'bottom-up' and Councillor Hayfield urged members to take part in this consultation.

(17) County Highways and Forestry Teams

Councillor Dave Shilton asked Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, whether he would thank the gritting and forestry teams for their hard work in clearing the roads during the recent bad weather.

Councillor Jeff Clarke replied that he was proud of the work undertaken and would pass on members' appreciation.

(18) Children Centres

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers asked Councillor Jeff Morgan, the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children Services, whether he would give assurance that there would be no days lost during the transition of services from the children's centres to outreach services. Councillor Jeff Morgan replied that he would provide this information within a few days.

(19) Welfare Rights Contract – Support of people attending court

Councillor Richard Chattaway asked Councillor Jeff Clarke whether he could confirm whether people will continue to have support for court appearances, under the new contract referred to by Councillor Corinne Davies in her question (question 12 above)

Councillor Jeff Clarke replied that he would check this and provide a written response.

(20) Stockingford Railway Station

Councillor Caroline Phillips asked Councillor Jeff Clarke, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment, whether there were any plans in place for a railway station at Stockingford.

Councillor Jeff Clarke replied that this was an aspiration and there are still plans to have a station at Stockingford.

8. Any other items of urgent business

None

9. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved

That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the item mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. Capital Programme Provision for Disposal of Strategic Land

Councillor Peter Butlin, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, presented a report requesting an addition to the capital programme to support the strategy for the disposal of strategic land. Councillor Butlin moved that the recommendations be approved and was seconded by Councillor Izzi Seccombe. The Council agreed as set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting closed at 3.35 p.m.

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Chair