

Minutes of a Meeting of the North Warwickshire Area Committee held on 23 May 2007 at the Coleshill Town Hall, High Street, Coleshill

Present: -

Members of the Committee

Councillors Richard Grant
 Colin Hayfield
 Joan Lea
 Brian Moss
 Ray Sweet

Officers Bill Basra, Corporate Partnerships Officer
 Chris Burrows, Minor Works Programme Manager
 Ann Mawdsley, Principal Committee Administrator
 Alistair Rigby, Community Partnership Officer North Warwickshire
 Sian Stroud, Senior Solicitor
 Kate Wilding, Participation Youth Worker
 Lee White, Special Transport Projects Sponsor
 Alison Williams, Area Manager North Warwickshire

Also in Attendance **10** Members of the Public attended.

1. Appointment of Chair

Councillor Colin Hayfield, seconded by Councillor Brian Moss, proposed that Councillor Ray Sweet be appointed Chair of the Committee.

A vote was taken and it was resolved that Councillor Ray Sweet be appointed Chair of the Committee.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Councillor Brian Moss, seconded by Councillor Ray Sweet, proposed that Councillor Richard Grant be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

A vote was taken and it was resolved that Councillor Richard Grant be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. General

The Chair thanked the Committee for showing confidence in him again and said he would do his best for the Committee and for the people of North Warwickshire. He added that the Committee had achieved a lot over the past year and the interest shown by the public had been encouraging and ran through the process members of the public should go through to put questions to the Committee.

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anne Forwood and Mick Stanley.

(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Members declared personal interests as set out below:

- (1) by virtue of them serving as North Warwickshire Borough Councillors as follows:-

Councillors Anne Forwood, Peter Fowler, Colin Hayfield, Joan Lea, Brian Moss, Mick Stanley and Ray Sweet.

- (2) Councillor Richard Grant declared a personal interest in Item 5 as a member of the North Warwickshire and Hinckley College Board of the Corporation.

(3) Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 March 2007 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the North Warwickshire Area Committee meeting held on 21 March January 2007 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Page 3 – 2. Public Question Time – (1) Question from Mr Paul Reader, resident of New Arley and member of the New Arley Parish Council

Bill Basra reported that a follow-up response had been sent to Mr Reader regarding the signage issue.

Page 3 – 4. Gorsey Green Lane, Fillongley – Heavy Goods Vehicles – (Public Question 2) – Question received from Mrs Fiona Barrington-Ward, acting on behalf of Mr Peare, Green End

Sian Stroud reported that following the North Warwickshire Area Committee decision not to support the request for an Amenity Weight Limit on Gorsey Green Lane, Mr E D Peare had made a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. She noted that the provisional view of the Ombudsman was that the complaint would not be upheld because there was no evidence of maladministration in the Council's actions

Page 3 – Verbal Update from Young People

Debbie Horton, Voice 4M reported to the Committee that following the petition that had been collected by the pupils of Queen Elizabeth School in support of traffic calming/speed reduction on

Witherley Road, Atherstone, Councillor Richard Grant, together with a representative from the Police and others, had visited the School on 16 May to meet with the School Council and Debbie Horton. Following this, officers from the County Council were looking at possibilities and working with the young people on possible designs before holding a public consultation into putting up a Puffin Crossing on Witherley Road. She added that the pupils were keen for speed to be reduced on this road and had been pleased to see so many people who cared about them.

The Chair thanked Debbie Horton and noted his gratitude to see young people getting involved in community life. He added that these were the good things about young people that the press should be reporting on. Councillor Richard Grant added his support and thanks and added that it had been agreed at the meeting that the School would also be re-enforcing their delivery of road safety education.

4. Public Question Time

Although no public questions had been received within the five day stipulation, the Chair agreed to take a question from Mr Trevor Hopkins.

“A privately run Nursery in Mancetter which had provided superb service, which had received funding from the County Council and the Lottery Fund had been closed. It was alleged that this was due to financial grounds through a failure to report to Companies House within a designated time and a resultant dispute over rental etc.

Did the County Council have any procedures in place for reviewing financial matters such as these where public money had been spent to ensure this did not happen again?”

It was agreed that this question would be put to the relevant Directorate who would be asked to respond to Mr Hopkins.

5. Area Community Learning Partnership (ACLP) for North Warwickshire Borough Council, Progress Report 2006/07 and Action Plan for 2007/08

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families summarising progress made by the ACLP during 2006/07 and giving an outline for proposed partnership activity for 2007/08.

Dave Potter added that the ACLP had received funding from the Area Committee to hold two learning events last summer, and these had taken place in Kingsbury and Arley and had been very successful. The event in Kingsbury had resulted in a six-week taster session involving 17 users. 14 of these had completed the six weeks and 9 had signed up for further courses at Polesworth College. The Partnership were looking to holding a similar session in Arley this summer.

During the following discussion, the following points were raised:

1. It was noted that the actions and activities outlined in the report were based on targets and needs identified by individual agencies within the partnership but there was a need to ensure that outcomes were built in.
2. Kate Wilding reported that she had delivered a 15 week motivational programme at Coleshill School last year working with young people to ensure they did not become NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training). She would be delivering this programme to Polesworth High School and Queen Elizabeth School, and was waiting for confirmation from Coleshill School to repeat the programme there.
3. Members agreed that there would be an opportunity to scrutinise this further in their Local Area Scrutiny.

Resolved:

- (1) That the progress made in the development of the Community Learning Strategy and the multi-agency Community Learning Plan for North Warwickshire Borough is noted.
- (2) That the detailed progress report against 2006/07 actions be endorsed.
- (3) That the Area Committee gives its comments on the draft outline plan and actions for 2007/08.
- (4) That a finalised Area Community Learning Plan for 2007/08 is made available to the Area Committee for information in the summer.

6. 2007-08 Capital Programme for Transport – Delegated Budget

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy following agreement by Members at the 21 March 2007 Area Committee meeting to defer the decision regarding allocation of the delegated budget to schemes on Rectory Road, Arley, Merevale Road, Atherstone and Boot Hill, Grendon, until contact had been made with the relevant Town/Parish Councils to seek a financial contribution towards each scheme.

Chris Burrows reported that following discussions with the relevant Parish and Town Councils, contributions of £10,000 had been made towards the schemes outlined in the report.

Members acknowledged the contributions made by local councillors and communities to progress these schemes and added their support.

Resolved:

That Area Committee approves the addition of the three schemes on Rectory Road, Arley, Merevale Road, Atherstone and Boot Hill, Grendon

to the 2007-08 Capital Programme for Transport, to be funded from the Area Committee's delegated budget of £40,000.

7. Review of Parking Policies

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy following the request by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comments to be sought from Area Committees and other consultees on the draft Parking Policies. Lee White added that the proposed changes were largely in response to the new powers Local Authorities would receive under the Traffic Management Act to be implemented next year and an attempt to improve the Highway network overall.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

1. Members all agreed that this was an extremely complex issue faced in all towns and villages across the area.
2. There was some discussion around enforcement issues, and it was agreed that alternative facilities needed to be in place before enforcement could be prioritised by the police. Lee White added that decriminalised parking was only expected to be introduced in North Warwickshire in two to three years, when enforcement would be carried out by Local Authority traffic wardens. Enforcement needed to be on a reasonable basis around a provision that allows flexibility within a framework agreed between councils and the community. There needed to be a clear understanding that unreasonable behaviour such as blocking roads and pavements, the use of verge parking for cars for sale and dangerous situations arising from parents dropping children off at schools.
3. Residents' parking was a big issue across the county, and it was suggested that a trial, using temporary signage could be carried out to show clearly where parking was for residents only, providing this was practically possible. This would not be possible for Waiting Restrictions, which carried legal restrictions and required permanent markings.
4. Members noted the problems that had arisen from older homes built either before it was common to own a car or from previous Government policies allowing only one car parking space per house. It was agreed that there was a need for greater co-ordination with the Borough Council to make the best use of on and off-street parking.
5. There was a need for strong links between this policy and safety policies such as Safer Routes to School.
6. The core issues such as public transport needed to be reviewed alongside the Parking Policies.

Resolved:

The Area Committee considered the draft parking policies and wished to make the following observations to the Cabinet:-

- (1) that these policies should be linked to other WCC policies e.g. safer routes to school and public transport to provide a coordinated approach to parking issues.
- (2) That the enforcement regime must be robust but be capable of taking into consideration local circumstances where parking difficulties exist.
- (3) That the parking policies must link with the policies of the Borough Council in respect of off-street parking to ensure that joined up approach is taken and to ensure that the mix of off- and on-street parking is correct.
- (4) That footway / verge parking must be considered against local circumstances of safety, access and the flow of traffic.
- (5) That the Area Committee would welcome investigation of trial residents parking schemes in their area.

8. North Warwickshire Well-Being Fund

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Performance and Development noting the progress of previous allocations.

Resolved:

That the Area Committee note the end of project reports for two funded projects 'Positive Diversionary Activities' and 'North Warwickshire Play Strategy'.

9. Provisional Items for Future Meetings

The Committee agreed the provisional items identified for future meetings, with the following additions:

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College – opportunities for learners
Update Report on the Consultation regarding traffic calming in Manor Road, Mancetter
Update Report on North Warwickshire Sustainable Community Plan
Delivery of Primary Care in North Warwickshire

10. Any Other Items

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items. He thanked the ladies for providing refreshments for the meeting and Parish Council for allowing the Committee to use the Village Hall.

The Chair thanked Alison Williams for all the work she had done, and said that the Committee were looking forward to her return after maternity leave. On behalf of the Committee, he wished Alison every happiness for the birth of her baby.

Date of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 11 July 2007 at the Newton Regis Village Hall, Austrey Lane, Newton Regis.

The Committee rose at 7.00 p.m.

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Chair of Committee