

The **WARWICK AREA COMMITTEE** met at **WARWICK** on the **21st MARCH, 2006**.

Present:-

Councillor Sarah Boad (Chair)
“ Alan Cockburn
“ Jose Compton
“ Chris Davis
“ Eithne Goode
“ Marion Haywood
“ Raj Randev
“ Dave Shilton
“ Mota Singh

Also Present:-

Officers: Graeme Fitton (Environment and Economy Directorate), Jane Pollard and Peter Hunter (Performance and Development Directorate), Tim Howram (Chair of Area Community Learning Partnership), Helen Maclagan (Head of Museum Service).

1. General
(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Ken Browne, Les Caborn, Michael Doody, Bernard Kirton, Tim Naylor and John Whitehouse.

(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Personal interests relating to any item on the agenda arising by virtue of the member serving as a District or Borough Councillor were disclosed by Councillors Alan Cockburn, Jose Compton, Chris Davis, Eithne Goode and Dave Shilton.

In addition the following interests were disclosed:-

Councillor Sarah Boad – agenda item 5 – representative on Sure Start – personal; agenda item 8 – knows one of the postholders – personal.

Councillor Jose Compton – Board member of the CVS – agenda item 7(4) – prejudicial; agenda item 5 – personal.

Councillor Chris Davis – agenda item 8 – Regenesi s Board member – personal.

Councillor Dave Shilton – agenda item 7(4) – President of CVS – personal.

Councillor Mota Singh – agenda item 7(5) – Member of Asian Elderly – personal; and agenda item 8 – Regenesi s Board member – personal.

2. Public Question Time

(1) Proposed Crossing – Windy Arbour, Kenilworth

Councillor Felicity Bunker, Kenilworth Town Council

She asked the Committee to do what they could to expedite the provision of a permanent crossing in Wind Arbour near to Kenilworth School. She also said that there was antipathy towards the provision from some neighbours who lived close to the site of the proposed crossing and who considered that traffic calming measures would be sufficient.

Graeme Fitton said that the Council had been investigating putting in a crossing for some time and would be reporting to the Area Committee in May for a decision.

While understanding the neighbours concerns about the proximity of the proposed crossing, Members said that children's safety had to take priority.

(2) Gritting – Brookside Avenue and Farmer Ward Road, Kenilworth

Councillor Felicity Bunker, Kenilworth Town Council

She informed the Committee that Brookside Avenue and Farmer Ward Road, Kenilworth, had been taken off the gritting route. The alternative of providing a grit bin was inappropriate. She said that there was an Industrial Estate at the end of Farmer Ward Road and that the road was susceptible to a lot of ice. She asked that it be reinstated in the gritting programme for next winter.

Graeme Fitton said that he was not aware of the reason for its omission from the gritting programme but it would have followed a review of the programme and it would have been decided that other roads had a greater priority. The gritting programme would be looked at again for next winter and consideration would be given to the inclusion of the roads then. It was likely that the inclusion of any roads would mean others would have to be displaced to make room for them. He added that these roads would receive precautionary gritting and if icy conditions lasted other roads not in the programme would begin to be gritted.

(3) Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement throughout the Warwick District

Brian Wall, Royal Leamington Spa Chamber of Trade

He said that the proposed date for the introduction of the decriminalisation of parking enforcement throughout Warwick District Council was now October 2007. The Royal Leamington Spa Chamber of Trade fully supported the introduction of a sensible, fair and balanced decriminalisation scheme. They fully realised the problems currently being faced by residents and did not oppose the inclusion of residents' parking zones in selected areas surrounding Leamington town centre. However, he must make the Committee aware that the proposed changes currently being considered would displace several hundred vehicles from the town centre area, many of which would be all-day commuters who were absolutely essential to the

vitality and viability of Royal Leamington Spa. Many town centre businesses currently found it difficult to attract and retain staff and anything that made it more costly and less convenient for the town's employees was bound to make the situation worse. It had to be in everyone's interest to provide an acceptable alternative mode of transport for a proportion of those people who worked in the town centre. The capital cost of providing a park-and-ride scheme would be very substantial indeed. However, there were scores, possibly hundreds, of people who commuted into the town centre from the suburbs of Lillington, Cubbington, Whitnash and Sydenham. These were high-density population areas and it therefore seemed reasonable to believe that the provision of a reliable and reasonably priced rapid bus service would provide an acceptable alternative to the car for many of these local commuters. That would, in effect, be a park-and-ride scheme but people would park at home. The capital outlay would be very small indeed when compared with providing a park-and-ride scheme, but no bus operator would trial such a scheme without the backing of a local authority subsidy. He therefore wished to ask Member if they understood the importance of providing an acceptable alternative mode of transport for Leamington's all-day commuters, prior to the introduction of decriminalisation. Whether Members agreed that Warwickshire County Council should fund a trial scheme for a rapid bus service to reduce car usage by all-day commuters. And whether such funding would be available to subsidise a trial rapid bus scheme during the next twelve months.

Graeme Fitton said that he shared Mr. Walls' sentiments. There was a bid for a major scheme (SPARK) with the Department for Transport for improvement to the public transport in and around Warwick and Leamington. This had received regional support and a response was expected at the end of March or beginning of April. There were bus services running into the town centre at fifteen minutes intervals. Although there were no funds for a pilot scheme at present the success of the SPARK bid would lead to considerable improvements in public transport within two to three years. Bus services were deregulated and open to competition and operators would only operate a service where it was viable.

Councillor Eithne Goode believed that appropriate public transport should be put in place before decriminalisation was introduced. She pointed out that the 69 bus service that travelled along Lillington Road did not begin until 9.30 a.m., which was too late for many commuters. It would be helpful if the 69 service started a hour earlier and finished a hour later.

It was noted that the only service that operated early in North Leamington travelled to or from the Town Centre and, at the top of Leicester Street, completed a circle using Gresham Avenue, Valley Road, Mason Avenue and Buckley Road. To divert that service would lengthen its travel time to over a hour. What was wanted was an assembly point on the Lillington Road where people could catch a bus straight into the town centre.

It was agreed that Graeme Fitton would look into this issue and that an update would be reported to the next meeting.

(4) Petition – Queensway bus service

Councillor Mota Singh presented a petition, signed by fifty plus persons, requesting the reinstatement of the Sunday bus service to enable attendance at the Sikh Temple between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Elderly women would use the service.

It was agreed that Graeme Fitton would arrange for a response to be made by the Environment and Economy Directorate.

(5) Petition – Cherry Orchard, Kenilworth – Railway maintenance access

Councillor Dave Shilton presented a petition requesting the closure of the railway access point off the Cherry Orchard cul de sac in Kenilworth. Residents had been subjected to heavy plant using the access point and workmen shouting in the middle of the night. It was clear that Network Rail were not able to control the contractors that they used.

It was agreed that Graeme Fitton would arrange for a response to be made by the Environment and Economy Directorate.

At this point the Chair informed Members that this would be the last meeting of the Committee that Graeme Fitton would be attending as the representative of the Environment and Economy Directorate as he was moving to the Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee. Martin Stott would replace him. The Chair and other members thanked him for the assistance he had given them and for his professionalism.

3. Capital Programme for Transport 2006-07

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Environment & Economy.

The following points were made:-

- Table 1 – Crossing Facilities – First line – This should read Newbold Terrace rather than Newbold Road.
- All the items in Table 1 were planned for completion in 2006/2007 but it was expected that some items would slip.
- Work at Wharf Lane, Lapworth, was not included because it was a maintenance scheme, which would be reported to the Committee in May.
- Statistics on accidents were gathered over three year periods and new hot spots would arise suddenly if there were a number of accidents in the third year. It was expected that appropriate work on the new accident hot spots would be completed within twelve to eighteen months.
- Members were not happy with the suggestion that if a scheme remained on the list for three years without being selected it should be removed

from future lists and therefore they would not include that part of the recommendation in their resolution.

It was accordingly Resolved:-

That Members:-

- (1) Support the Capital Programme for Integrated Transport for Warwick area given in Table 1.
- (2) Support the schemes identified in Table 3 for the delegated budget.
- (3) Support the allocation of the additional capital funding for road maintenance as set out in Paragraph 5.1.

4. A425 Old Warwick Road and B4087 Tachbrook Road, Leamington Spa – Conversion of Two Lengths of Footway Into Shared use Footway/Cycleway

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Environment & Economy and it was accordingly Resolved:-

That Area Committee approves the conversion of sections of footway along the A425 Old Warwick Road and B4087 Tachbrook Road, Leamington Spa to shared use footway/cycleway to allow a cycle crossing facility to be at this junction as shown on the plan in Appendix A.

5. Area Community Learning Partnership (ACLP) for Warwick District, Progress Report 2005/06 and Action Plan for 2006/07

The Committee considered the report of the Area Community Learning Partnership.

Tim Howram introduced the report and said that the greatest claim to fame was in the area of creating a network of organisations across the district. The success of this has gained additional funding for two years. This had aroused interest from Rugby and Stratford-on-Avon areas and the Government Office for the West Midlands. A party was due to visit the area from Barrow in Furness.

The Help a Mate scheme on the Packmores had engendered limited interest and was now to be evaluated.

The following points were raised in the ensuing discussion:-

- There were hundreds of people involved in the various activities.
- There was a significant literacy programme, both within and outside schools. Accommodation was provided at the local ASDA supermarket for such activity.
- There was a continual search for other sources of funding and the possibility of seeking charity status to open up other sources was being considered.
- The new displays in Leamington Library in connection with increasing awareness of legal rights and access to information resources would be extended to Warwick and Kenilworth Libraries.
- Item 3.2 – Tim Howram would come back to Councillor Raj Randev on the event to be organised in Leamington Library.
- In connection with the development of the extended schools provision throughout the District, there had been five or six submissions but more were expected in the second round. The slow uptake was probably due to reticence amongst headteachers.

It was then Resolved:-

- (1) That the progress made in the development of the Community Learning Strategy and the multi-agency Community Learning Plan for Warwick District be noted.
- (2) That the detailed progress report against 2005/06 actions be endorsed.
- (3) That a finalised Area Community Learning Plan for 2006/07 is submitted to the Area Committee for information in the summer.

6. Potential Tourist Information Facility in Market Hall Museum, Warwick

The Committee considered the report by the Director of Libraries, Heritage and Trading Standards.

Helen Maclagan introduced the report.

Councillor Marion Haywood supported the proposal for further investigation and looked forward to seeing the architectural drawings of the proposed layout in due course.

In response to a question from Councillor Dave Shilton, Helen Maclagan said that there was no plan B for funding the proposal if the Advantage West Midlands bid failed.

Councillor Raj Randev said that it was important to ensure that if the proposal proceeded museum services would not be seriously affected. He said that the first floor of the museum was not properly used and asked if something could be done about it.

Helen Maclagan said that the first floor was not accessible to disabled persons and she proposed to see whether it was possible to install a lift to open up access. She was also keen on extending public access to the top floor.

In response to Councillor Chris Davis, Helen Maclagan said that any services using the Museum building would be expected to pay for the accommodation used. There was no intention that the County Council should take over responsibility for the Tourist Information Centre.

Councillor Alan Cockburn welcomed the prospect of unlocking the potential of the Museum.

The Chair said that presumably there would be a problem with having to provide a fire escape from the top floor. Helen Maclagan said that she was aware of the use of innovative solutions to the installing fire escapes in other buildings and hoped that one could be found for the Museum.

It was then Resolved:-

That members:

- Support further investigation of feasibility and negotiations about the integration of Warwick Tourist Information facilities into the museum building at Market Hall, Market Place, Warwick and
- Note the list of issues raised.

7. Well Being Fund / Social Inclusion Fund 2005/6 – Funding Proposals

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

- (1) Introduction**
- (2) Well-being Fund – Available Resources** and
- (3) Social Inclusion Fund – Available Resources**

These paragraphs were noted.

- (4) Wellbeing Fund Proposals**
 - (a) Whitnash Basketball Court and Multisports Area**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £8,000 to Whitnash Youth Club/Whitnash Parish Council towards the cost of the provision of a Basketball Court and Multisports Area at the playing fields at Acre Close, Whitnash.

(b) Cubbington Parish Council – Sports Pavilion

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £5,000 to Cubbington Parish Council towards the cost of providing sports facilities in Cubbington, particularly an improved sports pavilion for the use of Cubbington Albion Football Club and other groups within the community who use the recreation ground, on the proviso that the premises should not be for the exclusive use of one club, but be available for the wider community.

(c) Council for Voluntary Service – Support for Warwick District Faiths Forum

Councillor Jose Compton left the room in accordance with the disclosure of the prejudicial interest recorded at Minute 1(2).

It was then Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £5,000 to the Council for Voluntary Service – Warwick District to facilitate the operation of a Faiths Forum for Warwick District and to undertake work resulting from the establishment of the Forum

Councillor Jose Compton returned to the room.

(5) Social Inclusion Fund Proposals
(a) The Racing To Get There Link

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £5,500 to the Racing to Get There, Racing Club Warwick's Community Transport Project towards the purchase of an additional passenger vehicle carrying up to eight passengers and adapted to take one passenger in a wheelchair.

(b) Elderly Asian Men's Group – Provision of new Toilet/Shower/Changing and Kitchen Facilities

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £7,000 to the Elderly Asian Men's group towards the cost of building a new toilet/shower/changing/kitchen area at the Sikh Temple complex.

8. Warwick District Community Development and Support Posts

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

Resolved:-

That Warwick Area Committee approve a contribution of £25,000 per annum from 1st April 2006 for a period of three years to the employment by Warwick District Council of two community development and support workers to be jointly managed by Warwick District Council and Warwickshire County Council.

9. Provisional Items for Future Meetings

The Committee noted the following provisional items:-

16 May 2006

Tachbrook Park Road, Leamington Spa – speed reduction scheme.

Highway Maintenance Plan 2006/2007 and Five Year List of Structural Maintenance Schemes

Crossing facility on Windy Arbour, nr Whitemoor Road, Kenilworth

Provision of commuter bus services – Leamington Spa town centre and surrounding area.

**10. Minutes of the meeting of 24 January 2006 and matters arising
(1) Minutes**

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 24 January 2006, having been circulated, be approved and be signed by the Chair.

(2) Matters arising
(i) Minute 1 – Budget 2006/2007

Councillor Alan Cockburn said that the consultation process had worked very well.

(ii) Minute 7 – Warwick Road, Leek Wootton – Proposed Pedestrian Crossing

The Chair referred to two letters she had received on this matter. As the subject matter of those letters was a matter for the Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council, she proposed that nothing further be done other than recording their receipt in the minutes and attaching copies to the signed minutes. This was agreed.

(iii) Minute 12(2)(iii) – Kenilworth/Leamington Spa cycle route

Councillor Dave Shilton welcomed this.

(iv) Minute 12(2)(iv) – Coventry Arena – railway station

Councillor Dave Shilton said that this would help in the bid for the Kenilworth Railway Station as there was support for a link with the Arena Railway Station.

(v) Minute 12(2)(vi) – Lord Leycester Hospital Retaining Wall, Warwick

Graeme Fitton confirmed that the work on the wall was progressing well in accordance with the timetable.

(vi) Minute 12(2)(vii) – A429 Coventry Road, Warwick – Possible Lowering of Speed Limit

In response to a question from Councillor Jose Compton, Graeme Fitton confirmed that the publication of revised Circular 1/93 was still awaited but it was understood that receipt was imminent.

11. Any other items

None.

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Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 7.30 p.m.