

The **WARWICK AREA COMMITTEE** met at **WARWICK** on the **22<sup>nd</sup> JANUARY, 2008**.

Present:-

Councillor Sarah Boad (Chair)  
“ Marion Haywood (Vice Chair) (In the chair for item 8(2)(ii))  
“ Ken Browne  
“ Jose Compton  
“ Chris Davis  
“ Eithne Goode  
“ Bernard Kirton  
“ Tim Naylor  
“ Raj Randev  
“ Dave Shilton  
“ Mota Singh  
“ John Whitehouse

Also Present:-

Officers: Sue Ashley, Roger Bennett, Shirley Reynolds, Helen Smith and Martin Stott (Environment and Economy Directorate), Nick Gower-Johnson, Tim Healey, Peter Hunter and Tony Maione (Performance and Development Directorate), John Harmon, Peter Thompson and Helene Toogood (Children, Young People and Families Directorate)

The Chair said that this was probably going to be the last meeting of the Committee that Peter Hunter would be attending prior to taking up his duties full-time in Nuneaton. She then paid tribute to his service to the Committee and it was Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee place on record their deep appreciation of the sterling efforts of Peter Hunter on their behalf over the last eight years as Warwick Area Manager and wish him luck in his new post as Nuneaton Area Manager.

**1. General**  
**(1) Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Les Caborn, Alan Cockburn and Michael Doody.

**(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

The following Councillors disclosed the following interests:-

Councillor Sarah Boad – agenda item 8(2.2) – prejudicial – Member of the Management Committee for the CHAIN.  
Councillor Raj Randev – agenda item 8 – personal.  
Councillor Dave Shilton – agenda item 6 – personal.

## **2. Public Question Time Cycling Routes**

### **Rodney King, Cycleways**

There had been a number of complaints over the past four or five years about the cycleways infrastructure in the District. He referred especially to Emscote Road, Warwick, and Victoria Terrace and the lower part of the Parade, Leamington Spa, as having particular problems. Cyclists were intimidated by other traffic because of lack of space.

Martin Stott said that new national guidance had been received in connection with cycling infrastructure design. This was likely to lead to a fairly thorough review of cycleways. There was a proposal for a feasibility study into the continuation of the Emscote Road cyclepath to Leamington Spa. At the same time the existing cyclepath could be reviewed.

Councillor Eithne Goode reminded the Committee that the creation of a Leamington Spa to Kenilworth cycle path was a medium term aim of the Transport Plan 2006/11. She asked for this not to be forgotten.

Councillor Bernard Kirton referred to the piecemeal development of cycle paths that had left gaps in the network. He agreed that the Emscote Road cyclepath left a lot to be desired and doubted that it was as wide as the handlebars on a bicycle.

Roger Bennett said that Cycleways had been represented on the working group involved in the development of the scheme on Parade and Victoria Terrace. The organisation expressed the view that dedicated cycling facilities were not essential if general traffic speeds on the route were 20 mph or lower in which case cyclists were happy to form part of the traffic flow. The early indications were that the scheme had resulted in lower traffic speeds, an increase in the number of cyclists and a reduction in vulnerable road user casualties.

## **3. Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement (DPE) – Warwick District**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

- (1) Introduction and**
- (2) Proposals as Advertised**

These paragraphs were noted.

**(3) Broad Street, Cherry Street, Guy Street and Guy's Cliffe Terrace, Warwick. Proposed One-Way Traffic and variations to parking arrangements**

Roger Bennett introduced this paragraph.

**Alan Beddoes, resident**

Residents were seeking a viable solution to the challenge of meeting the demand for parking spaces in the area. There was a need for 60 parking spaces but the existing proposals would only deliver 40. The Committee were urged to rethink the proposals and adopt the alternative of removing the footpath on the north side of Guy's Cliffe Terrace and at the north end of Guy Street and introducing angled parking. Most pedestrians used the southern pathway.

**Jill Murray, resident [In her absence Peter Hunter summarised a letter she had written]**

She requested the Committee to defer a decision to enable further discussion to take place on the options available including echelon parking and a Home Zone.

Roger Bennett said that surveys had been carried out in respect of pedestrian usage that revealed a significant number of pedestrians including children and people with prams and pushchairs used the northern footpath in Guy's Cliffe Terrace. Motorised mobility vehicles also used the path. The reallocation of the footway in favour of motor vehicles would be contrary to County Council policy. Although it might be technically feasible to introduce a Home Zone, it would involve a complete review of the parking and traffic management arrangements. There were currently no resources available to develop a scheme which in any event could not be delivered within the same timeframe as the advertised proposals.

Councillor Marion Haywood said that she was aware of the problems and concerns of the residents, as she did not have parking outside her own house and there was no access to the back of her property. She had looked at the proposals very carefully and considered that they produced the maximum parking possible in the streets. She had carried out her own survey and had found considerable usage by young children going to Coten End School, older children going to Myton School and adults. A significant number of cyclists also used the route. She supported the recommendations in the report.

**(4) Roe Close, Sharpe Close and Truman Close, Warwick – Proposed Residents Only Parking (Zone W6)**

Roger Bennett introduced this paragraph.

**Mr. Matthewson, resident**

This proposal would cause a problem for neighbouring streets. Many of the residents concerned did not own a vehicle. There was a small off street

parking area in Roe Street owned by the Warwick District Council that had not been taken into account.

Roger Bennett confirmed that the off street parking area was under the control of the District Council. Residents only parking was not normal County Council policy but it is felt that this was a special case given that many of the residents in the area were elderly and vulnerable.

Councillor Raj Randev supported the proposals in the report.

In connection with the proposed blue badge parking space in Paradise Street, it transpired that the resident in question was not currently a blue badge holder and therefore it was proposed that the provision of that space would be deferred for now but provided when an application for a new Blue Badge was made. This was agreed.

**(5) Wathen Road and Peel Road, Warwick – Proposed Residents Only Parking (Zone W5) and variations to parking arrangements**

Roger Bennett introduced this paragraph.

Councillor Raj Randev supported the proposals.

**(6) Coventry Road, Warwick – Proposed Waiting Restrictions**

Roger Bennett introduced this paragraph.

On the question of further displacement arising from the proposal, he said that some of parking would be rail commuters and that these would probably be displaced to Warwick Parkway. The others were employees of local businesses and these may be displaced into the nearest unrestricted streets. The situation would be monitored and, if necessary, further measures might need to be considered. It was understood that the Warwick District Council was considering the provision of a new car park in the area adjacent to Warwick Nursery School.

Members questioned whether the District Council was considering seriously the provision of a car park as an earlier proposal for one had been rejected.

**(7) DPE Review**

The following issues were raised by Members:-

- (i) Morton Street, Leamington Spa – this was a narrow terraced street and the yellow lines had increased reducing the available parking. The suggestion was to reduce the length of yellow lines to provide sufficient parking space for six cars.
- (ii) Trinity Street, Leamington Spa – some motorists were adopting the dangerous practice of parking at the junctions. Parking restrictions would

be considered. It was noted that the police remained responsible for dealing with dangerous parking.

- (iii) Chandos Street, Leamington Spa – there was a need for greater enforcement.
- (iv) There would be a need to review the streets on the periphery of the scheme area to ascertain the impact upon them of the arrangements.
- (v) People living in rural areas who travelled into Leamington Spa welcomed the 20p parking charge.
- (vi) The proposed reduction from 8 p.m. to 6 p.m. in Leamington Town Centre for when the restriction came off would be welcomed by proprietors of eating establishments, as bookings generally were not being made until 8 p.m. It was suggested that the earlier end time should be made standard across the District. However, the proposal was that this should apply to commercial/non-residential streets. It was noted that there were none in Kenilworth.
- (vii) A report should be made to the Committee on the enforcement of the scheme, including routes and frequency of visits the wardens paid to individual streets.
- (viii) There was a need to look at the impact on Forfield Place and High Street, Leamington Spa.
- (ix) There was a problem in Tachbrook Road and Bury Road, Leamington Spa from parking by rail commuters. It was likely that restrictions on parking would have to be increased to take account of the problem.
- (x) There was difficulty in parking for most the length of Woodbine Street, Leamington Spa and the possibility was being considered for one-way traffic and extending the eligibility of residents to park in other streets.

It was then Resolved:-

- (a) That the Warwickshire County Council (District of Warwick) (Permitted Parking Area and Special Parking Area) (Waiting Restrictions, On-Street Parking Places and Resident's Parking) (Consolidation) (Variation No 3) Order 2007 and the Warwickshire County Council (Guys Street and Guy's Cliffe Terrace, Warwick) (Traffic Regulation) (Variation No. 1) Order 2007 be made as advertised but with the following modifications:-
  - (I) Retention of the existing double yellow lines fronting No 22 Cherry Street.

- (II) Retention of the existing residents parking scheme in Wathen Road and Peel Road pending the outcome of the proposal in (2)(ii) below.
- (b) That the following proposals be advertised:-
  - (I) No waiting from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday outside No's 13 to 19/21 Cherry Street.
  - (II) Waiting limited to 20 minutes except for W6 permit holders in Wathen Road, Peel Road and Percy Road.
- (c) That no further action be taken in respect of providing footway parking on the north side of Guy's Cliffe Terrace and at the north end of Guy Street.
- (d) That the request for a "Home Zone" type scheme in the Guy Street/Cherry Street area be noted but that residents be advised that current resources do not permit this being given further consideration.
- (e) That further consultations be carried out with residents of Coventry Road with a view to revised proposals being developed and advertised for the parking arrangements along the road.

#### **4. Business Improvement Districts – Leamington and Warwick**

Sue Ashley, Town Centres Regeneration Manager, Environment and Economy Directorate and Helen Smith, BID Leamington Manager made a presentation to the Committee on Business Improvement Districts for Leamington Spa and Warwick. The following points arose from the presentation and the ensuing question and answer session:-

- (1) BIDs started in USA and was first introduced to the UK in 2004. A pilot Rugby BID was in its second year. Local businesses were consulted on what they wanted in the package and then voted on it. The BID required 51% of the local businesses to support it and the rateable value of those businesses that supported the BID must be equal to at least half of the business rateable value for the area. The BID was then financed by a special business rate levied on the businesses in the area.
- (2) The 462 businesses in Leamington Spa had a rateable value of £20m and were being asked to fund a £300,000 per annum scheme, requiring a 1.5% levy on business rates if approved.

- (3) It was proposed that £160,000 per annum would be spent on marketing, £45,000 per annum on events to bring more people into the town and £45,000 for the first year on informing people where to go once they arrived in the town.
- (4) The business plan would be produced this week.
- (5) The Electoral Reform Service would run a postal vote between the 27<sup>th</sup> February and 27<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Businesses would be encouraged to vote in the run up to the vote.
- (6) The result would be known on the 28<sup>th</sup> March and, if successful, would start on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008.
- (7) Consideration was being given to a BID for Kenilworth but it had been agreed that it would be more appropriate to wait until Waitrose was in place and it was likely to be in the next phase.
- (8) Old Town, Leamington Spa was not included in the BID. The original study had been based on the whole of Leamington Spa but that would have involved 1,300 businesses, which was too large. Also it became clear that the two parts had different needs. There was a possibility that Old Town would combine with Whitnash for a combined BID.
- (9) A Town Centre Manager would be appointed who would also benefit Old Town.

The Chair thanked Sue Ashley and Helen Smith for the presentation and wished them well with the vote.

## **5. Warwick Town Centre Traffic Management Review – Progress Report**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

Peter Hunter said that Iain Roxburgh, Warwick Town Centre Forum Facilitator, had been unable to attend the meeting because of a long-standing engagement in London. He then read from a note prepared by Iain Roxburgh:-

- The Forum had been very successful as the means of discussing and reconciling differences of view and reaching near consensus on the way forward. It was a brave and innovative decision by the County Council to initiate the Forum and as an example of community engagement in a difficult area of public policy, it was exemplary.
- The County Council was a member of the Forum and it was within the Forum's working groups that open and frank discussion of the issues had taken place. It was there that previous views based on misconceptions and sometimes prejudice had been modified by evidence, soundly based argument and debate and consensus built. Professional advice had been given by Council officers – sometimes uncomfortable advice – and been taken into account by other Forum members. The culture had been one of openness, frankness and no surprises. This engendered a trusting relationship.

- That was why he was concerned about surprises in the officer report before the committee. For example, he had been told that the contents of paragraph 6.3 had never been discussed with other Forum members. Whatever the merits of modelling the effects of the proposed measures (and as far as he was aware the Forum had no objection to modelling as such), the way it was presented for the first time in the report was seen negatively. He was anxious that it might undermine trust in the County Council.
- While it was recognised by other Forum members that the funds were not yet available for implementation of the 20 mph and street by street measures, it was seen as very important that the Council's continued commitment was demonstrated by both a decision to proceed to the detail design stage on them and to establish a project group to examine Road User Charging. He urged the Committee to give strong support this evening to those proposals and a clear signal to the other members of the Forum that the County Council continued to back that method of working with local communities.

**John Holland, resident West Street**

He urged the implementation of a 20 mph speed limit.

**Gavin Ashe, resident**

He had taken part in the Forum and had been pleasantly surprised that it was working positively and constructively. Many residents and proprietors had given up their time to create a safer and slower town. He felt that the air pollution issue had been sidestepped in the report. A survey had revealed that there were eighteen children living in Jury Street and High Street.

**Sue Butcher, Warwick Chamber of Trade**

The proposals supported by the Forum would make a positive impact on the town and were imaginative. She asked members to support the proposals for the earliest possible implementation.

**Walter Block, Chair of the Forum's Technical Group**

The Technical Group of the Forum welcomed the recommendation for Chapel Street to be one way. The Group made the following proposals to speed up progress on the implementation of a town centre traffic scheme:-

- A programme for implementation of street-by-street and junction-by-junction measures throughout the town centre based on the round table discussions with residents and traders, of course taking into account the need for design, estimating, the relevant appraisals and formal wider consultations.
- A recommendation on the extent of a 20 mph speed limit, and on the reclassification to lower categories of the main roads through the to town centre, as vital and deliverable support for street-to-street measures.

- The formation of a broad-based group (on consensual lines of the successful bus station Project Group) to assess the merits or otherwise of Road User Charging or a Gateway ring of traffic lights as possible further longer-term policies, but not as an alternative to the proposed street-by-street measures, the 20 mph limit and the declassification of town centre main roads.

**Dennis Cripps, resident**

There was a need to manage the peak hour blockage and speed up implementation of the proposals. Traffic management should meet the need of the community. Congestion charging or traffic gating scheme should be seen as additions to the proposals and not as alternatives.

The following points arose during the ensuing member discussion:-

- (1) Members' preference was for a road charging scheme rather than a gateway traffic light ring scheme.
- (2) Work was being held up by the lack of Section 106 payments. These were phased according to the number of units completed on the South West Warwick development.
- (3) The removal of the A429 in Warwick from the Primary Route Network would mean that through traffic would be more likely to use the A46 Warwick Bypass.
- (4) Data received from safety audit and from traffic modelling was required to support the detailed design stage.
- (5) The Environment and Economy Directorate would be prepared to look into road charging provided that the public was supportive of the proposal.
- (6) That a report be submitted to the next meeting on funding arrangements.

It was then Resolved:-

That the Warwick Area Committee supports:-

- (1) The continuing work of the Warwick Forum.
- (2) The continuing work of officers in assessing the 'street by street' proposals with rapid implementation of the detailed design stage.
- (3) The establishment of a joint group to examine the possibility of road charging or a gateway ring of traffic lights.
- (4) The implementation of a one-way system on Chapel Street.

- (5) Further investigation into the removal of the A429 in Warwick from the Primary Route Network.
- (6) A report being brought to the next meeting of the Warwick Area Committee on the Section 106 agreement funding for the Warwick Town Centre Traffic Management proposals.

## **6. Proposed Changes to Parking Fees and Charges across Warwick District**

The Committee considered the report by the Interim Strategic Director for Environment and Economy.

The Chair said that she had concerns about the proposal to increase the cost of the on-street parking charge in Leamington Spa Town Centre from £1.80 to £2.00 for a two-hour stay so soon after the implementation of decriminalisation. She suggested that the increase should be deferred until such time as the hours of operation of the scheme in Leamington Town Centre were amended by the reduction in the end time from 8 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Councillor Ken Browne suggested that the Warwick District Council should be asked to make a similar reduction in its off-street car parks.

It was then Resolved:-

That Warwick Area Committee:-

- (1) Endorses Warwick District Council's proposed changes to off-street car parking across Warwick District.
- (2) Defers an increase of the on-street parking charge in Leamington Spa Town Centre from £1.80 to £2.00 for a two-hour stay, until such time as the hours of operation in Leamington Town Centre were amended by the reduction in the end time from 8 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- (3) Asks Warwick District Council to amend its off-street charging hours so they are aligned with on-street charging hours, in the spirit of partnership and in recognition of the jointly agreed principle underpinning decriminalisation that off-street parking should be more attractive than parking on the highway.

**7. Woodloes Infant School, Woodloes Junior School and Ridgeway School, Warwick**

The Committee considered the report by the Strategic Director of Children, Young People and Families.

Peter Thompson introduced the report.

**Pat Flynn, Headteacher Ridgeway School**

Although Ridgeway School was in broad agreement with the proposal it was subject to a condition that the new school for Ridgeway would be delivered before the new Woodloes schools. The existing Ridgeway School had not been designed as a school and was not fit for purpose. It had been in limbo for the last ten years with nothing being done to the fabric of the building. There was severe overcrowding with nine temporary classrooms and two lunchtime sittings. Fire regulations would be contravened if a full school assembly was held. There was a need for a new building very quickly. Funding had been in place since 2001. The existing school was well respected and well located.

John Harmon said that there was not sufficient money presently allocated for new Ridgeway School so there would be need to spend in anticipation of capital receipts. Ridgeway School would be contributing to the proposal through the realisation of capital resulting from the sale of the existing site while the Woodloes schools would contribute by providing the land. It might prove possible to deliver the new Ridgeway School at the same time or before the new build at the Woodloes School but it would not be appropriate to make promises at the moment that one school would be built before another without consulting all the schools and working out the optimum sequencing of building in order to achieve the desired outcome for all children involved. There would be several complexities to address including the disposal of playing fields involving Sports England.

During the course of the consideration of this item the three-hour limit for meetings was reached and the Committee agreed to continue.

Members were adamant that the situation with the Ridgeway School needed to be resolved as soon as practicable. The proposed association with an amalgamated Woodloes Primary School appeared to offer the best solution and should be pursued.

Councillor Bernard Kirton asked that the Committee receive regular update reports after planning permission had been granted.

It was then Resolved:-

- (a) That the Warwick Area Committee unanimously support a proposal to amalgamate Woodloes Infant and Junior Schools and provide new accommodation for Ridgeway School.
- (b) That Cabinet be informed of the Warwick Area Committee's unanimous support for the proposal to locate the Ridgeway School together with an amalgamated primary school for the Woodloes and that this be achieved as fast as appropriate.

## **8. Wellbeing Fund/Social Inclusion Fund 2007//8**

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

### **(1) Introduction**

This paragraph was noted.

### **(2) Funding Proposal**

#### **(i) CAB/local – Employment of additional outreach advice worker**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £23,655 to CAB/local for an additional half-time outreach advice worker and administrative support for that worker with on costs for the last year of a three-year project.

#### **(ii) The Chain Community Office, Lillington – Public Information Window**

Councillor Sarah Boad left the room at this point in accordance with the disclosure of a prejudicial interest recorded at Minute 1(2) and Councillor Marion Haywood took the Chair.

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £2,690 to Lillington Community Help Advice and Information Network to replace the shop window at the Chain premises.

Councillor Sarah Boad returned to the room and resumed the chair.

**(iii) The GAP Action Partnership – Percy and Emscote Area Plan Printing**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £3,164 to the Gap Action Partnership to print 5,000 copies of the Percy and Emscote Area Plan to enable every resident in the area to receive a copy of the plan.

**(iv) South Warwickshire Village Liaison Officer Project – Village Welcome Packs, Cubbington and Bishops Tachbrook**

Resolved:-

That approval be given to a grant of £600 to the South Warwickshire Village Liaison Officer Project for 1,000 folders for Cubbington and 1,000 folders for Bishops Tachbrook in respect of welcome packs.

**9. Provisional Items for Future Meetings**

The Committee noted the following provisional items:-

11<sup>th</sup> March 2008

- Capital Programme for Transport 2008-09 – draft programme for Warwick Area.
- Changing school admission numbers.
- A429 Barford to Warwick cycleway.
- Update on the proposal for a public service centre in Kenilworth.
- Warwick Town Centre traffic management scheme – progress with section 106 agreement funding proposals.
- Traffic Management Act 2004 – Civil Parking Enforcement (formerly Decriminalised Parking Enforcement).

6<sup>th</sup> May 2008

- Woodloes Primary Schools – to consider comments as part of the consultation on future proposals for the Woodloes schools.
- Area Community Learning Partnership for Warwick District, progress report 2007/08 and action plan 2008/09.
- Lillington Primary School – to consider comments as part of the consultation on future proposals for the school.

**10. Minutes of the meetings of 25<sup>th</sup> September 2007 and matters arising  
(1) Minutes**

Resolved:-

That the minutes of the meeting of the Warwick Area Committee held on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2007, having been circulated, be approved and be signed by the Chair.

**(2) Matters arising**

**(i) Minute 2(1) – St. Augustine School, Kenilworth, Pelican Crossing**

The Committee received the following briefing note from Lynn Harding, Environment and Economy Directorate:-

**Background**

The headteacher of St. Augustine's Primary School has expressed concern about the safety of children and parents crossing Beehive Hill.

A site visit was carried out in Spring 2007 by Stan Milewski (Road Safety), Lynn Harding (Traffic Project) and Sally Brandrick (Children, Young People Health and Safety Officer).

As there is no evidence of the need for a pedestrian crossing other than at school arrival and leaving times, it was felt that the provision of a school crossing patrol would be the appropriate solution. A pedestrian survey was carried out, which showed that the site did meet the criteria necessary for a school crossing patrol. A recruitment campaign was then carried out, but this was unsuccessful.

**Pedestrian crossing request**

Following the unsuccessful attempt to recruit a school crossing patrol, Warwickshire County Council were requested to install a pedestrian crossing.

The site does not meet the numerical criteria for provision of a pedestrian crossing and there is no history of personal injury accidents here.

The school is a Roman Catholic Primary School with a wide catchment area and the recent School Travel Survey (Nov 2007) showed most (84%) came by car, with only 21 pupils (13%) walking.

There are concerns about installing a puffin crossing where it will be so little used as this may result in accidents as vehicles brake unexpectedly.

The school have recently provided postcode data to indicate the possible use of a crossing and the feasibility of this as a Safer Routes to Schools scheme is being investigated.

Councillor John Whitehouse said that the points raised by officers for refusing the crossing had already been rebutted by the school. He asked that officers should engage with the school and the community to bring a resolution to the issue. The school was aware that the crossing could not be provided at the natural crossing line and accepted that it would have to be located down the road and confirmed that it would be used. The key issue was not the small

number of children who walked to those who were driven because parents parked in side streets and walked their children the rest of the way.

Councillor Dave Shilton supported those comments and added that even more people would need to cross the road with the opening of allotments.

Martin Stott said discussions would continue with the school.

**(ii) Minute 13(2)(i) – Proposed Merger to form a South Warwickshire CDRP**

The Committee received the following briefing note from Kate Nash, Community Protection Directorate:-

In July 2007 Warwick and Stratford CDRPs submitted proposals to Government Office for the West Midlands that they should merge to form a joint South Warwickshire CDRP. The two CDRPs had been operating for some time as a joint body and the merger proposals were supported by all partners including WCC (Cabinet 19 July 2007). A shadow CDRP came into being during the Autumn of 2007 and the CC agreed new representation to this body (one member each from Warwick and Stratford Area Committees and the Portfolio holder for Community Protection – agreed by the respective committees in Sept 2007).

In mid November 2007, Government Office for the West Midlands informed the shadow South Warwickshire CDRP that they had decided not to recommend Home Office ratification of the proposed merger.

GOWM stated that they were satisfied with the joint working arrangements in place, but had taken into account the fact that the partnerships' performance was not on track to achieve their PSA1 targets. Before taking the merger any further forward, GOWM said it was looking for a sustained improvement in performance.

Although the merger itself went on hold, the shadow merged body proposed that for the immediate future, they continued to hold joint meetings, in particular to complete the urgent tasks of carrying out strategic assessments and developing new partnership plans. This has happened.

As a separate development, the two District Councils are also in discussion over proposals to streamline the support they offer to the CDRP(s) by merging the officer support team. These discussions are ongoing.

It is proposed that partner agencies will be formally consulted on whether they wish these arrangements to continue beyond April 2008 and at some point a decision will also need to be taken on whether we wish to resubmit an application – it will be important to see year end performance before we are able to judge whether such an application is likely to be more successful second time around.

It is therefore anticipated that a more formal consultation with WCC will be undertaken during the Spring.

**11. Any other items**

Nil.

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Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 9.29 p.m.