

County Council

Tuesday, 22 September 2020

Minutes

Attendance

Members

Councillors Alan Cockburn (Chair), Peter Gilbert (Vice Chair), Helen Adkins, Jo Barker, Margaret Bell, Parminder Singh Birdi, Sarah Boad, Mike Brain, Peter Butlin, Les Caborn, Mark Cargill, Jonathan Chilvers, Jeff Clarke, John Cooke, Andy Crump, Yousef Dahmash, Corinne Davies, Nicola Davies, Neil Dirveiks, Judy Falp, Jenny Fradgley, Bill Gifford, Daniel Gissane, Clare Golby, Seb Gran, Colin Hayfield, John Holland, John Horner, Andy Jenns, Kam Kaur, Keith Kondakor, Jeff Morgan, Maggie O'Rourke, Bhagwant Singh Pandher, Anne Parry, Dave Parsons, Caroline Phillips, Wallace Redford, David Reilly, Clive Rickhards, Howard Roberts, Kate Rolfe, Jerry Roodhouse, Andy Sargeant, Izzi Seccombe, Dave Shilton, Jill Simpson-Vince, Dominic Skinner, Heather Timms, Adrian Warwick, Alan Webb, Chris Williams, Pam Williams, Andrew Wright

Officers

Monica Fogarty, Chief Executive
Nigel Minns, Strategic Director for People
Mark Ryder, Strategic Director for Communities
Rob Powell, Strategic Director for Resources
Paul Williams, Democratic Services Team Leader

1. General

(1) Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence

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

In view of the nature of the issue being considered under agenda item 2 and the recent meetings of the Dispensations Sub Committee Councillor Alan Cockburn (Chair of Council) read out the following statement.

"The Dispensations Sub-committee has granted dispensations to all Warwickshire County Councillors who are also District/Borough councillors or whose spouses or partners are District/Borough councillors to allow them to speak and vote on matters relating to devolution and local government reform. This enables them to play a full role in the debate on devolution and local government reform.

The Dispensations Sub-committee has also granted a dispensation to Cllr Brain who has a

disclosable pecuniary interest by virtue of his wife's employment with Stratford on Avon District Council. The dispensation allows Cllr Brain to speak and vote on matters relating to devolution and local government reform.

As these interests have been registered and/or dispensations granted there is no need for the councillors to declare them individually.

If members have any other declarations of interest which are not included in their register of interests relating to matters on the agenda, then now is the time to declare them”.

(3) Chair's announcements

1) Councillor Alan Cockburn informed Council of the passing of Councillor Bob Stevens on 31 July 2020. Councillor Stevens had been a member of the County Council since 1997 and the County Council’s Deputy leader from 2005 to 2013. He also served as Chair of the Council in 2015/16. Latterly he had served as the Chair of the Pensions Fund Investment Sub Committee.

After a career in the Royal Navy Councillor Stevens had served on Stratford on Avon District Council. He was closely involved with the armed forces community and supported the work of Gallanos House in Southam, a care home for those with connections to the armed forces.

Members of Council joined in remembering Bob Stevens.

Councillor Andy Crump who knew Bob Stevens for over 40 years expressed his shock at the death of his friend. Both had regularly played cricket together. Councillor Crumps stated that Bob Stevens had been a fine servant to the residents of Warwickshire and to the armed forces community.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) stated that he had first met Bob Stevens at the old Gallanos House. He has spent many pleasant hours with Bob Stevens who was a true gentleman.

Councillor Dave Parsons (Deputy Leader of the Labour Group) had come to know Bob Stevens through their joint work on HS2. Bob Stevens, he stated, was a man of integrity who never accepted “spin” from anyone. He was always a delight to be with and had been remembered by another former member as the best boss he had ever had.

Councillor Judy Falp remembered Bob Stevens for his visits to Whitnash in connection with civic events and with the British Legion. He was always a gentleman who did what was right, she said.

Councillor John Horner remembered joining Stratford on Avon District Council and being welcomed by Bob Stevens. More recently he had witnessed Bob Stevens in his role as Chair of the Pension Fund Investment Sub Committee. In this he had developed a strong understanding of the technical aspects of pensions. He had also served as Vice Chair of the starting committee of Borders to Coast.

Councillor Yousef Dahmash quoted Oscar Wilde. “Some people cause happiness wherever

they go. Others whenever they go". Bob Stevens was very much the former. He would be sadly missed.

2) Councillor Cockburn informed the meeting that Council had recently been awarded the Gold Award for the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. This was a testament to the work undertaken by Bob Stevens.

(4) Public Speaking

1) The Chair welcomed Councillor Tricia Elliott, a member of Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, who wished to speak in support of the motion concerning SEND.

Councillor Elliott focused principally on the plight of children with Autism. Expressing concern over the length of waiting lists for support she suggested that a better understanding of Autism in mainstream schools would help in the identification of Autism and improve how children were treated. Council was informed that some schools adopt an overly disciplined approach to children with Autism. This can lead to school refusal by the child. The case of one child was cited. This child, who had not flourished at their school had moved to another one outside of Warwickshire. In the new environment, their level of attainment had increased and they were now of university level. In another instance a visually impaired child with Autism was disciplined for attention seeking. Councillor Elliott concluding by stating that conveying Autistic children out of county for their education was negligent. If the needs of children could be met in the mainstream environment there would potentially be less demand for EHCPs.

2) The second speaker, Cass Leese, had given her apologies. Councillor Helen Adkins (Leader of the Labour Group) read out the essence of Ms Leese's statement. This focused on the need for greater funding for SEND services. Having cited a number of reports the statement ended,

"For those children with SEND, not accessing support is life-changing and life-altering. We are aware that Warwickshire is urging schools to be more inclusive, a wholly admirable aspiration. But regardless, many SEND children - such as those with autism, a background of trauma or neurodiversity and / or social emotional and mental health difficulties, being in a mainstream setting without an EHCP and the additional intensive support it brings, is impossible. These children are being set up to fail, not just at school, but in life. It leaves these children at risk of social isolation, academic failure, mental health problems and for some, on a collision course with exclusion from school.

The buck has to stop here. Cabinet (Council) has the authority and duty to lobby central government.

We urge Cabinet (Council) to support this motion to set up a Task & Finish Group plus petition to address the SEND funding gap - which we are aware is projected in Warwickshire to be a deficit of £150m in a decade.

Officers are working incredibly hard to make efficiencies and find solutions to minimise this outcome. But they are not magicians or miracle workers. And even with strict plans in place, which of themselves will have a huge impact on thousands of children, young people and their

families, the plans only reduce the decade's deficit to £91m".

3) Councillor Helen Adkins read out a statement from Councillor Mini Mangat, Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, Warwick District Council.

"I support this motion on the pressing and urgent issues posed by racial discrimination and inequality. The world is shifting on its axis and just as WCC has supported the urgency of climate change with a real commitment, so must this growing societal emergency be responded to. It is shameful that inequality is so persistent in societies, here in Warwickshire and across the globe. I am in no doubt that WCC takes its obligations to equality and diversity seriously but that is not enough, council has a responsibility to take action that will contribute to the eradication of racial discrimination and reliance on reaching the requirements of legislation is not sufficient to counter the injustices and trauma that many people in my communities experience, WCC must move beyond compliance; it is not enough to be non-racist WCC must act on being systemically and overtly anti-racist. To champion this fight against racism WCC must listen and learn not only from colleagues but also from members of our communities and use those conversations and dialogue to catalyse action, this is an opportunity to take a fresh look with our communities about what more could be done and learning from them and others to innovate and make measurable progress. As proposer of the race equality motion to WDC and as the Chair of the Task & Finish Group looking at Warwick District Council's approach to race equality, I support the motions recommendation for the Communities OSC to establish a task and finish group to be charged with undertaking a review of the councils approach to race equality and its report to the committee to include an action plan with a view to the cabinet adopting the committee's recommendations in the report and its action plan, the progress and outcomes of the action plan to be monitored by the Communities OSC with the expectation that measurable improvements will be made within a given time period".

Councillor Alan Cockburn thanked speakers for their contributions.

2. Devolution and Local Government Reform

Councillor Isobel Seccombe moved the following motion:

1. That, having considered the Strategic Case for Change for Local Government Reform in Warwickshire, the Council supports its submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in order to elicit from Government an invitation to enter into conversation and consideration of the future local government structure for Warwickshire.
2. That the Council considers that in the next phase of work to shape a future model for local government in Warwickshire, conversations should take place at all levels, including with residents, based on the following principles
 - i. double devolution - moving influence and power closer to communities, levelling up health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities;
 - ii. ensuring that Climate Change and adaptation are built into a new model of local government;
 - iii. achieving better value for our taxpayers;
 - iv. simplified governance with clear, accountable leadership;
 - v. co-design of the model is undertaken; and

vi. a balance of local focus with a strategic approach when needed.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Peter Butlin.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse proposed an amendment which replaced the word “elicit” in point 1 with the word “seek” and added a point to say, “That a Citizens Panel be established, with an invitation extended to the District and Borough Councils to undertake/ establish this jointly with the county council, to seek the views of Warwickshire residents about proposals for future local government reform in/for Warwickshire”.

Councillor Sarah Boad (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) seconded the amendment.

Acceptance of Amendment

Councillor Butlin proposed a further amendment to the substantive motion by adding a paragraph at point 3: “That immediately following this meeting, the Leader invites the Warwickshire District and Borough Councils to make their submission to MHCLG jointly with the County Council”.

Councillor Isobel Seccombe seconded the amendment and both Councillor Seccombe and Butlin accepted the amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group as a friendly amendment.

Councillor Helen Adkins proposed an amendment to the substantive motion which replaced the word “supports” in the first point with the word “delays” and removed the words “elicit from Government an invitation to enter into conversation and consideration of the future local government structure for Warwickshire” replacing them with the words “consult its partners and residents on the future of local government in Warwickshire”. Additional paragraphs at points 2 and 3 were proposed as follows:

“2. This Council notes that as we move towards the publication of the government white paper this Council intends to undertake thorough and transparent conversations with its borough and district partners as well as consultation with the public, in a bid to move forward in transparency and open co-operation.

3. This Council also requests that a further report be brought back to Cabinet on the options for consultation with partners and residents”.

Councillor Dave Parsons seconded the amendment.

During the course of the debate, which suggested that support for this amendment was limited as it was considered that the outcome would result in too lengthy a delay when consideration of unitary status had been a longstanding issue, a short adjournment took place and the Labour group amendment was withdrawn without objection.

During a robust debate, Members made the following points:

- Moving toward unitary presented the opportunity to make savings but there must also be quality of service and representation.

- Whilst the unitary system was not universally supported, it was generally recognised that the notion of unitary made financial sense in the unprecedented circumstances across the country.
- It was noted that the formation of a single unitary authority would potentially deal with issues of adult social services and fire and rescue services more easily than a model which saw the creation of two unitary councils. A single unitary would be better placed to cope with the challenge of social care, with representation at a local level and the economies of scale that could be delivered.
- Proposals for two unitary councils– one representing North Warwickshire and the other the South – were noted and it was suggested that this would be a preferred option for residents, citing economic and cultural differences alongside health inequalities. However, it was noted that there were cultural differences among the district and borough councils that did not follow the north/south divide.
- A view was expressed that there was still some merit to an enhanced status quo position being given some consideration although this viewpoint was generally dismissed, particularly in view of the savings that would be needed to be made to 2025.
- Support was given to a unitary system which gave increased powers to town and parish councils ('double devolution'), which could provide greater impetus to the resolution of local issues, but it would be important for town and parish councils to be distributed throughout the county, with sufficient powers and finance to carry out their responsibilities. Wiltshire and Milton Keynes were cited as good models for town and parishes working well alongside a principle council.
- It was noted that the Secretary of State would make the decision on future structures and it was important for both reports to be presented so that public consultation could consider the full evidence. Some caution was raised about setting in motion a process that was not within the Council's control and if it was subsequently decided by the Councils that unitary was not the best option, the final decision still lay with central government.
- Commenting on the perception of confusion among residents as to the operation of the two tier model, it was noted that residents simply wanted their issues addressed and did not generally have a view on who dealt with problems as long as they were dealt with. Reflection took place on whether residents wanted one councillor contact for all issues rather than the two or three that were in place in the current system. Some queries resulted in crossover between the tiers and it was difficult managing the interface between two Councils. Examples of parking permits, grass cutting and installation of bus shelters were given. Anecdotally, it appeared that problems generally occurred when residents had 'fallen through the gap' between County and District/Borough and whilst the proposal presented an opportunity to address this, a unitary solution was not necessarily required to see more joined up services. There were some examples of good practice between the tiers of government but the loss of a single telephone line and Shire Hall reception inquiry desk for district and county councils was lamented. It was suggested that joined up working between the county and district was key to the provision of improved services for residents.
- The consultative ethos of the substantive motion was welcomed as it sought to seek the involvement of residents and district and borough councils. The view was expressed that sufficient time be given to consultation to build knowledge and understanding so that communities were genuinely able to contribute from a grass roots position.
- More public involvement in the decision along the lines of a residents panel or citizen's jury was promoted.

- Some disappointment was expressed in the process to date and it was felt that it should have concentrated on being open and transparent at the outset, consulting and listening to the boroughs and district councils. Instead borough and district council Leaders had suffered a high level of stress and anxiety and unpleasant meetings had taken place that could have been avoided with the approach that was now being seen.
- It was noted that funding from central government was decreasing and demand on services were rising. This, together with rising unemployment, was exposing financial difficulties around the country not just in Warwickshire. The situation needed to be addressed and in light of this, the current governance model was unsustainable. Local government needed to be lean and efficient and professional in its delivery of services. In the current circumstances it was hard to disagree with the conservative manifesto commitment to deliver local government reform. Being in the vanguard of reform would lead to savings, improved services and more resilient communities.
- Some consideration was given to the look of democracy in a single unitary council and whether it would be possible to introduce a system of voting along the lines of that undertaken by the London assembly to introduce an element of proportional representation which would see greater cross-party involvement and smaller residents groups having representation.
- The need to maintain support for frontline workers with a less complicated management system was suggested.
- Delay to the government's white paper was noted and this gave rise to views that the report was premature since the content of the white paper was unknown in terms of the operation of democracy, population or the process of application. The view that it was not necessary to submit the reports to government at this stage was made, but rather that time should be taken to educate and engage with residents and allow them to contribute to the debate from an informed knowledge base. In contrast, the impact of Covid-19 was considered a factor in the need to press ahead with the submission which could be made under existing processes. However, the view that the need to concentrate on solutions to the impacts of Covid-19 was more pressing than reorganisation was also put.

A second Labour amendment was proposed by Councillor Dave Parsons and seconded by Councillor Helen Adkins which sought to amend point 1 of the substantive motion by adding words as follows:

“1. That, having considered the Strategic Case for Change for Local Government Reform in Warwickshire, and in light of the debate today, the Council considers that its submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in order to seek from Government an invitation to enter into conversation and consideration of the future local government structure for Warwickshire should await the publication of the white paper.”

A number of Members expressed the view that the amendment was not dissimilar in effect to the earlier motion that had been withdrawn. Mixed views were expressed with some members believing that the content of the white paper would make little difference and others considering there would be merit in viewing its content before progressing. A level of concern was expressed about delay in a climate of uncertainty and that now was the time to show leadership and shape the future together.

Vote

A recorded vote was requested by the Chair

Vote 1 was on the amendment proposed by the Labour Group.

Votes for the amendment - Councillors H Adkins, C Davies, N Dirveiks, J Holland, M O'Rourke, D Parsons, C Phillips and A Webb

Votes against the amendment - Councillors J Barker, M Bell, P S Birdi, S Boad, M Brain, P Butlin, L Caborn, M Cargill, J Chilvers, J Clarke, A Cockburn, J Cooke, A Crump, Y Dahmash, N Davies, J Fradgley, B Gifford, P Gilbert, D Gissane, C Golby, S Gran, C Hayfield, J Horner, A Jenns, K Kaur, J Morgan, B S Pandher, A Parry, W Redford, D Reilly, C Rickhards, H Roberts, K Rolfe, J Roodhouse, A Sargeant, I Seccombe, D Shilton, J Simpson-Vince, D Skinner, H Timms, A Warwick, C Williams, P Williams, A Wright,

Abstentions - Councillors J Falp and K Kondakor

The amendment was lost 8 votes to 44 (2 absententions).

A further record vote took place on the substantive motion

Votes for -

Councillors P S Birdi, S Boad, M Brain, P Butlin, L Caborn, J Clarke, A Cockburn, A Crump, Y Dahmash, N Davies, J Fradgley, B Gifford, P Gilbert, D Gissane, C Golby, S Gran, C Hayfield, J Horner, K Kaur, J Morgan, B S Pandher, W Redford, C Rickhards, H Roberts, K Rolfe, J Roodhouse, A Sargeant, I Seccombe, J Simpson-Vince, D Skinner, H Timms, A Warwick, C Williams, and P Williams,

Votes against –

Councillors H Adkins, M Bell, C Davies, N Dirveiks, J Falp, J Holland, A Jenns, K Kondakor, M O'Rourke, D Parsons, C Phillips, D Reilly, A Webb, and A Wright

Abstentions –

Councillors J Barker, M Cargill, J Chilvers, J Cooke, A Parry and D Shilton

This was won 34 vote for to 14 against (6 abstentions).

Resolved;

1. That, having considered the Strategic Case for Change for Local Government Reform in Warwickshire, the Council supports its submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in order to seek from Government an invitation to enter into conversation and consideration of the future local government structure for Warwickshire.
2. That the Council considers that in the next phase of work to shape a future model for local government in Warwickshire, conversations should take place at all levels, including with residents, based on the following principles

- i. double devolution - moving influence and power closer to communities, levelling up health and wellbeing and tackling inequalities;
 - ii. ensuring that Climate Change and adaptation are built into a new model of local government;
 - iii. achieving better value for our taxpayers;
 - iv. simplified governance with clear, accountable leadership;
 - v. co-design of the model is undertaken; and
 - vi. a balance of local focus with a strategic approach when needed.
3. That the Council considers that a Residents Panel should be established and that an invitation should be extended to the District and Borough Councils to do so jointly with the County Council, to seek the views of Warwickshire residents.
 4. That the Council requests that the Leader, following this meeting, considers inviting the Warwickshire District and Borough Councils to make their submission to MHCLG along with and at the same time as any submission made by the County Council

3. Notices of Motion

Four motions were debated by the Council.

1) Black Lives Matter

Councillor Helen Adkins moved the following motion being seconded by Councillor Dave Parsons who reserved his right to speak.

“The recent conversations around racism and the Black Lives Matter movement have highlighted the systemic disadvantages suffered by Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. Such disadvantages manifest in health, educational and employment outcomes and opportunities. The Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted that the BAME community has been disproportionately affected with reported higher mortality and infection rates. In light of this, this Council considers it important to consider how well the needs of the BAME community are being met within the County. Therefore, this Council will:

Initiate a cross party Task and Finish group of the Communities OSC, to investigate and to report back on race inequalities across Warwickshire, both internally within the County Council and externally in relation to meeting the needs of BAME communities within Warwickshire”.

In introducing the motion Councillor Adkins acknowledged that no body or individual has all the answers. She considered that more could be done to support the BAME community and that the County Council should lead by example. Positive acknowledgement of inequality was not enough. The Council should ask what more was needed to be done to eradicate discrimination.

Councillor Les Caborn (Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health) submitted an amendment which he hoped would be accepted as friendly. It would not, he considered, in any

way diminish the basis of the original motion. The reason behind it was to ensure that members were provided with the latest data on the issue before commencing any further work.

The amendment (made to the second section of the motion) stated,

“Therefore, this council:

Notes the work that has been initiated to progress the findings of the Public Health England Review of the impact of Covid 19 on BAME communities following the report to Cabinet in July, endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and the inclusion of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme in the Council’s Recovery Plan and asks that an interim report be brought to a joint meeting of the Communities and Adult Social Care and Health OSC’s by December 2020, so that members can consider the continuing work and the establishment of a task and finish group to investigate and to report back on race inequalities across Warwickshire, both internally within the County Council and externally in relation to meeting the needs of BAME communities within Warwickshire”.

Councillor Kam Kaur (Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation) seconded the amendment and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Adkins accepted the amendment as friendly.

Councillor Caroline Phillips referenced the Macpherson report produced after the inquiry into the death of Stephen Lawrence. She stated that much of what was contained in the report continued to be relevant. Councillor Phillips also noted a recent OFSTED report which explored the relationship between ethnicity and educational attainment. It was noted that there were significant variations in the level of attainment in some groups across different parts of the country. In many areas the attainment level of children from black and minority ethnic communities was seen to decline as they progressed through school. In some areas they had entered the education system at or close to the top of the range emerged at the bottom.

Councillor Kaur thanked Councillor Adkins for reading Councillor Mangat’s statement. She noted that Lord Simon Woolley (founder of Operation Black Vote) had cautioned against relying heavily on the Black Lives Matter banner. The principal focus should be on equality, diversity and inclusion. The County Council has already undertaken much work in this field as reflected in its People Strategy.

Councillor Sarah Boad (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) expressed her support for the motion. She stated that there is always a danger of being drawn into a false sense of security and that it is good to be prompted to check that all is as it should be.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe reminded Council that health within the BAME community had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting in July 2020. She agreed that the outcomes for peoples’ lives should be the same regardless of race. The population of Warwickshire was not as diverse as in some other parts of the country although Council was reminded of the Ghurkha community in Nuneaton. Diversity in communities was to be welcomed. The key, she concluded, will be to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had all the information it required to progress its work.

Councillor Les Caborn emphasised that within any community there are sub-groups. There are also intergenerational households that present their own characteristics. Thus, as much up to date data as possible is required.

Councillor Dave Parsons cited an incident from the 1950's when his Father and Uncle had misunderstood the political views of the singer Paul Robeson. Councillor Parsons used this example to illustrate the need to understand the issues behind the challenges being faced by black and minority ethnic communities.

Councillor Helen Adkins thanked Councillor Caborn for proposing the amendment and stressed the need to listen to the black and minority ethnic community.

A vote was held.

The amended motion was agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

The recent conversations around racism and the Black Lives Matter movement have highlighted the systemic disadvantages suffered by Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. Such disadvantages manifest in health, educational and employment outcomes and opportunities. The Covid-19 pandemic has further highlighted that the BAME community has been disproportionately affected with reported higher mortality and infection rates. In light of this, this Council considers it important to consider how well the needs of the BAME community are being met within the County.

Therefore, this council:

Notes the work that has been initiated to progress the findings of the Public Health England Review of the impact of Covid 19 on BAME communities following the report to Cabinet in July, endorsed by the Health and Wellbeing Board, and the inclusion of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion programme in the Council's Recovery Plan and asks that an interim report be brought to a joint meeting of the Communities and Adult Social Care and Health OSC's by December 2020, so that members can consider the continuing work and the establishment of a task and finish group to investigate and to report back on race inequalities across Warwickshire, both internally within the County Council and externally in relation to meeting the needs of BAME communities within Warwickshire.

2) SEND

Councillor Caroline Phillips seconded by Councillor Corinne Davies moved the following motion.

"Given the immense pressure that the Council faces in meeting the cost of SEND provision, this council will:

Initiate a cross party delegation to lobby Government in relation to the need for more funding for this key service and request the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Task and Finish Group to monitor delivery of SEND provision".

Councillor Colin Hayfield stated that he supported the motion as did Councillor Sarah Boad who informed the meeting that as the Chair of a Board of School Governors she was constantly seeking additional funding in this area. It was crucial she said that the government provide for resources.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse observed that any task and finish review into SEND should reflect on the demand for services post Covid-19.

Councillor Dan Gissane congratulated the Children and Families Team for winning team of the year. He emphasised the role of communication in ensuring that schools and SEND coordinators were aware of what services are available. It is important, he concluded, to speak to schools to develop an understanding of the challenges they are facing.

Councillor Yousef Dahmash recognised that some additional funding had been provided by government but considered that this was insufficient.

Councillor Pam Williams supported the motion adding that timescales for obtaining support are too long.

Councillor Izzi Secombe agreed that SEND funding was a long running issue. The County Councils Network has lobbied on this issue but as costs increase so does the demand for services. She agreed that services should be delivered in-county adding that this was one rationale behind the establishment of the Pears facility in Bedworth.

Councillor Dave Shilton expressed his support.

Councillor Caroline Davies, who had seconded the motion thanks speakers for their support adding that it was hoped that any review would result in parents receiving more support.

Councillor Phillips, the mover of the motion thanked members for their support.

A vote was held.

The amended motion was agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

Given the immense pressure that the Council faces in meeting the cost of SEND provision, this council will:

Initiate a cross party delegation to lobby Government in relation to the need for more funding for this key service and request the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to set up a Task and Finish Group to monitor delivery of SEND provision.

(3) Tuberculosis in Cattle

Councillor Keith Kondakor, seconded by Councillor Jonathan Chilvers tabled the following motion:

“This Council recognises that farming is a very important part of the Warwickshire economy and that the county council supports farming in many ways including through its own small holdings. The Council further recognises that Tuberculosis in cattle is a very serious problem for farmers which needs long term sustainable action, including the development of accurate testing and an effective bovine vaccine. Therefore, this Council agrees:

- To actively promote better bio security (including the vaccination of badgers) with tenants of its smallholdings with the aim to reduce cattle-to-cattle transmission; and
- To write to DEFRA stating that the Council is concerned with proposals for the culling of badgers on land in its ownership and wishes to explore with them alternatives that enable a sustainable approach to bovine TB control.”

Councillor Kondakor spoke regarding the motion stating that a badger cull was due in Warwickshire despite it being shown that such culls do not limit the spread of TB in cattle. He stated that one hundred thousand badgers had been culled to date but the spread of TB is down to lax practice by farmers. The key, he suggested, is good bio security. A badger vaccine exists but a cattle vaccine is required too. In addition, more rigorous checks on cattle herds are required along with restrictions on the movement of slurry, controls on contractors’ vehicles and increased fencing especially around drinking areas.

Councillor Peter Butlin tabled an amendment to the motion asking that it be treated as a friendly amendment. The amendment stated,

“This Council recognises that farming is a very important part of the Warwickshire economy and that the county council supports farming in many ways including through its own small holdings. The Council further recognises that Bovine Tuberculosis in cattle is a very serious problem for farmers which needs long term sustainable action, including the development of accurate testing and an effective bovine vaccine.

Therefore, this Council agrees:

- ~~• To actively promote better bio security (including the vaccination of badgers) with tenants of its smallholdings with the aim to reduce cattle-to-cattle transmission; and~~
- To write to DEFRA stating that the Council is concerned with proposals for the culling of badgers on land in its ownership and wishes them to explore ~~with them~~ alternatives that enable a sustainable approach to bovine TB control.”

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Mark Cargill.

Councillor Butlin, himself an ex-farmer, explained the rigours of testing for TB in cattle. This had been introduced to reduce the incidence of TB in humans. Cattles, he said, carry TB. This is why cattle are rarely left outside at night. Antibiotics are becoming less effective and although biosecurity (of which much is being done) can be effective, it is difficult to apply.

Councillor John Horner supported the use of bio security adding that the amendment should be agreed as Defra is the only organisation that can progress the matter.

Councillor Dave Parsons called for another solution to be found that does not involve the killing of badgers.

Councillor Mark Cargill, the seconder of the amendment stated that farmers are aware of the value of bio security. The case for badger culling was unclear and it depended on which report was read. He agreed that Defra's officers are the experts and asserted that they will continue to seek a solution. The Council's tenant farmers earn very little off their land and are aware of the implications of TB.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, the seconder of the original motion expressed his disappointment at the amendment adding that the County Council has a general power of competence that it could use to ensure bio security measures at its own smallholdings. He observed that tests for TB in cattle are not entirely reliable adding that the principal cause of increases in the incidence of TB is homelessness and chaotic living.

In response, Councillor Butlin observed that TB was introduced into the population from milk.

In closing, Councillor Keith Kondakor stated that badgers are not a major cause of Bovine TB. The best solution was bio security. Citing the 2018 Godfray Report into TB Councillor Kondakor stated that it contained little to suggest that any wildlife played a major role in spreading the disease. Exemplar farms should be identified where bio security was practiced well.

Vote on Amendment

A recorded vote on the amendment was requested.

Votes for the amendment.

Councillors Bell, Singh Birdi, Butlin, Caborn, Cargill, Clarke, Cockburn, Cooke, Crump, Dahmash, Golby, Gran, Hayfield, Horner, Jenns, Kaur, Morgan, Pandher, Parry, Redford, Reilly, Roberts, Sargeant, Seccombe, Shilton, Simpson-Vince, Timms, Warwick, C. Williams, P.Williams (30)

Votes against the amendment.

Councillors Adkins, Boad, Chilvers, C.Davies, N.Davies, Falp, Fradgley, Gifford, Gissane, Holland, Kondakor, Phillips, Roodhouse, Webb (14)

Abstentions

Councillors Dirveiks and Parsons (2)

The amendment became the substantive motion. This was carried.

Resolved:

This Council recognises that farming is a very important part of the Warwickshire economy and that the county council supports farming in many ways including through its own small

holdings. The Council further recognises that Bovine Tuberculosis in cattle is a very serious problem for farmers which needs long term sustainable action, including the development of accurate testing and an effective bovine vaccine.

Therefore, this Council agrees:

- To write to DEFRA stating that the Council is concerned with proposals for the culling of badgers on land in its ownership and wishes them to explore alternatives that enable a sustainable approach to bovine TB control.”

4) Promoting the Warwickshire Canal Network

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, seconded by Councillor Keith Kondakor proposed the following motion.

“The canal network in Warwickshire passes through all five districts and boroughs and is a massive asset for tourism, wellbeing and ecology. In developing recovery plans for Warwickshire and mindful of the need to increase UK based tourism, the County Council will:

1) Actively promote our local canal network and its opportunities for leisure, wellbeing and employment throughout 2021/22 City of Culture and beyond.

2) Work with the Canal and River Trust to identify, prioritise and cost key stretches of towpath for improvement in order to better attract S106 and CIL funding.

In supporting the motion Councillor Chilvers emphasised the need to enhance the profile of the canal network and its role in transport, tourism, wellbeing and ecology. The upcoming Coventry City of Culture event could see arts and the canal network brought together.

Councillor Keith Kondakor stated that some parts of the canal network are often overlooked. As a result, their towpaths are neglected and muddy.

Councillor Heather Timms proposed a friendly amendment. This was seconded by Councillor Chilvers. This stated,

The canal network in Warwickshire passes through all five districts and boroughs and is a massive asset for tourism, wellbeing and ecology. In developing recovery plans for Warwickshire and mindful of the need to increase UK based tourism, the County Council:

1. Acknowledges the work being undertaken to develop a Waterways strategy for Warwickshire as part of the Heritage and Culture Strategy action plan;

2. Will actively promote our local canal network and its opportunities for leisure, wellbeing and employment (including 2021/22 City of Culture, Birmingham 2022 and beyond);

3. Will work with the Canal and River Trust and other partners to identify, prioritise and cost key stretches of towpath to improve accessibility and connectivity in order to better attract funding.

Vote to continue meeting.

At this point the Council meeting had been running for six hours. In accordance with standing orders a vote was held as to whether the meeting should continue. The proposal was made by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Chilvers. A vote was held and it was agreed that the meeting should continue.

Resumption of Meeting

Councillor Timms expressed her support for the canal network and explained that much work had already been undertaken to enhance it.

Members including Councillors parsons, Boad, Cooke, Holland, Cargill, Parry, Dirveiks and Fradgley all spoke regarding the value of the canal network.

Councillor Chilvers thanked members for their support. In response to a point made by Councillor Cargill regarding the Canal and Rivers Trust Councillor Chilvers recognised that as an organisation they are stretched and can be difficult to engage with. This made supporting them all the more important.

Councillor Timms closed by thanking heritage and culture officers for helping to develop the Waterways Strategy.

A vote was held and the amended motion was agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

The canal network in Warwickshire passes through all five districts and boroughs and is a massive asset for tourism, wellbeing and ecology. In developing recovery plans for Warwickshire and mindful of the need to increase UK based tourism, the County Council:

1. Acknowledges the work being undertaken to develop a Waterways strategy for Warwickshire as part of the Heritage and Culture Strategy action plan;

2. Will actively promote our local canal network and its opportunities for leisure, wellbeing and employment (including 2021/22 City of Culture, Birmingham 2022 and beyond);

3. Will work with the Canal and River Trust and other partners to identify, prioritise and cost key stretches of towpath to improve accessibility and connectivity in order to better attract funding.

4. Any Other Business

none

The meeting rose at xxx

.....
Chair