

County Council

Thursday, 23 July 2020

Minutes

Attendance

Members

Councillors Alan Cockburn (Chair), Pete Gilbert (Vice Chair), Helen Adkins, Jo Barker, Margaret Bell, Parminder Singh Birdi, Sarah Boad, Mike Brain, Peter Butlin, Les Caborn, Mark Cargill, Jonathan Chilvers, 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, Dave Parsons, Caroline Phillips, Wallace Redford, Clive Rickhards, Howard Roberts, Kate Rolfe, Jerry Roodhouse, Andy Sargeant, Izzi Seccombe, Dave Shilton, Jill Simpson-Vince, Dominic Skinner, Bob Stevens, 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. Election of Chair of Council

The meeting was opened by Councillor Nicola Davies, the outgoing Chair of Council. Councillor Davies requested nominations for the Chair of Council for 2020/21.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe (Leader of the Council) nominated Councillor Alan Cockburn. Councillor Peter Butlin (Deputy Leader of the Council) seconded the nomination. No other nominations were proposed.

Vote

Monica Fogarty (Chief Executive) oversaw the vote. 48 Members voted for. There were 2 abstentions and none against.

Councillor Alan Cockburn took the Chair and proposed a vote of thanks to Councillor Nicola Davies. This was seconded by Councillor Sarah Board who commended the work undertaken by Councillor Davies since May 2019.

Councillor Davies duly thanked Council for its support during her tenure and especially thanked those officers who had helped her in her role as Chair.

Resolved:

That Councillor Alan Cockburn be elected Chair of Council until the annual meeting of the Council in 2021.

2. Election of Vice Chair of Council

Councillor Seb Gran nominated Councillor Peter Gilbert to the position of Vice Chair of Council for the period to May 2021. The nomination was seconded by Councillor Yousef Dahmash. There were no further nominations.

Vote

Monica Fogarty oversaw the vote. 48 members voted for. There were two abstentions and no votes against.

Councillor Peter Gilbert thanked Council for its support.

Resolved:

That Councillor Pete Gilbert be elected Vice-Chair of Council until the annual meeting of the Council in 2021.

3. General

(1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jeff Clarke, John Cooke (Part of meeting only), Anne Parry and Dave Reilly.

(2) Dispensations for Absence

None required.

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

None.

(4) Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 February 2020 were considered and agreed to be accurate.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 18 February 2020 are approved as a correct record.

(5) Chair's announcements

Councillor Alan Cockburn announced the passing of four ex-Councillors and Councillors since the last meeting of Council.

1) Ex-Councillor Stanley Birch – Ex-Councillor Stanley Birch, having been elected to Leamington Borough Council in 1964, joined Warwickshire County Council in 1970. He served the Council for 23 years and was Chair in 1989/90. He was Chair of the Police Authority between 1973 and 1987. In addition, Stanley Birch was active in the area of health being at one point the Chair of South Warwickshire Health Authority. As well as supporting the voluntary and community sector, Stanley Birch was instrumental in the setting up of the first women's refuge in Warwickshire.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) acknowledged the life and work of Stanley Birch having met him when he was Chair of the Police Authority.

Councillor Sarah Boad (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) had known Stanley Birch and acknowledged him as a good servant to the public.

2) Ex-Councillor Bernard Kirton – Ex-Councillor Bernard Kirton passed away on 7 April 2020.

Councillor Judy Falp opened the tributes stating that she had known Bernard Kirton for over 25 years. He was a mentor and a friend who was stubborn and hardworking and helped people quietly behind the scenes.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse remembered Bernard Kirton's negotiating skills; making sure that the people of Whitnash benefitted from any deals needing to be made.

Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi recounted how he had been persuaded by Bernard Kirton to stand as a councillor. He would always be remembered as the "King of Whitnash".

Councillor Sarah Boad stated that she had often sat next to Bernard Kirton at meetings and found him to be good company. He was also an early adopter of new technologies such as fax machines.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers (Leader of the Green Group) stated that Bernard Kirton had acted as a fine role model to him.

Councillor John Holland noted how helpful Bernard Kirton had always been. He always sought to find out what people really wanted to achieve.

Councillor Neil Dirveiks informed Council that despite living in the north of Warwickshire he had known of Bernard Kirton all of his life. He commended Bernard Kirton for always speaking up for the people in his community.

3. Councillor Bill Olnor – Councillor Bill Olnor passed away on 18 May 2020 whilst still in office.

Councillor Helen Adkins (Acting Leader of the Labour Group) mourned the loss of a “political giant”. She stated that she had not previously known how appreciated he was by the community he served. He demonstrated tireless commitment to the most vulnerable and was a very kind person.

Councillor Jeff Morgan stated that Bill Olnor and his wife Gill had been good friends to his parents. In 2003, on the occasion of Councillor Morgan’s Father’s 90th birthday Councillor Olnor had arranged for a birthday card to be signed by Tony Blair. This reflected his generous personality.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse regarded Bill Olnor as a good friend and observed what a good team Bill and Gill had been.

Councillor Maggie O’Rourke (Acting Deputy Leader of the Labour Group) regretted not being able to say goodbye properly to Bill Olnor. She had known him for 20 years and had worked with him to secure pay increases for local NHS staff. He always did the very best for his town.

Councillor Dave Parsons had grown to know Bill Olnor very quickly and really appreciated his integrity and humour. Having worked for Rolls Royce, Bill Olnor became an MP serving in Westminster for 18 years. Bill Olnor would now be resting in a good place.

Councillor John Holland recognised Bill Olnor’s local and national reputation.

Councillor Judy Falp stated that Bill Olnor was a true Labour man who worked hard for his community and the George Eliot Hospital and Mary Ann Evans Hospice.

Councillor Keith Kondakor recognised the political differences between himself and Bill Olnor but always found him approachable. He could often be found chatting to people in the town centre on a Saturday morning.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe saw Bill Olnor as a guiding light and a great friend to all.

Councillor Pete Gilbert had known Bill Olnor all of his life. Bill, he said, was selfless and had secured him an internship at the Houses of Parliament.

4. Councillor Richard Chattaway – Councillor Richard Chattaway (Leader of the Labour Group) passed away on 19 June 2020 whilst still in office.

Councillor Helen Adkins stated that Richard Chattaway had led the Labour Group at the County Council with skill and dedication. He believed strongly in building consensus and also in picking the right battle. Warm and friendly he never complained when his health was failing, and he continued to work for the people of Warwickshire right up to the end.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe stated that Richard Chattaway had been a great friend to her. He was passionate about the community and about his Group on the Council. A staunch advocate of the forces community he always supported the Armed Forces Day and Armistice Day in Bedworth. He always sought ways in which the lives of people living in his community could be improved.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse got to know Richard Chattaway during a review of the Fire and Rescue Service. He had a fine eye for detail and would dedicate a great deal of time getting to understand the information presented to him. He was always ready to sit and discuss issues to find solutions and was a great friend to his community.

Councillor Jonathon Chilvers stated that he had always enjoyed spending time with Richard Chattaway who was always caring and professional.

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke stated that Richard Chattaway had always been a man of the people who had quietly raised a great deal of money for charities. His enthusiasm and commitment would never be forgotten.

Councillor Caroline Philips told the meeting that she felt blessed to have known Richard Chattaway. He had true Labour values, had served in the army, worked hard for the Armistice Day commemorations and was proud of his town of Bedworth. Following his retirement from full time employment he served night shifts at a residence for people with disabilities.

Councillor Andy Crump (Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety) expressed his thanks for the support that Richard Chattaway had given him concerning the Fire and Rescue Service.

Councillor Judy Falp recognised Richard Chattaway as strong Labour man who had displayed a high degree of thoroughness and dedication to his role.

Councillor Pete Gilbert had known Richard Chattaway for many years. He was passionate about his hometown and served his country and his community well.

Councillor John Holland stated that Richard Chattaway was always highly credible and cheerful. He would be sorely missed.

(6) Petitions

None

(7) Public Speaking

The Chair welcomed two public speakers to the meeting, Sally Duns and Susan Rasmussen.

1) Sally Duns, speaking on Agenda item 8, opened by stating that she had lived in Warwick for 25 years and in Hampton Magna for 18 years. She, along with family members, were

keen cyclists who enjoyed seeing other people using their bicycles during the lockdown period. Recognising the mental and physical benefits of cycling as well as those on the environment Sally Duns commended the proposals before Council but asked that more be done to provide a joined-up network of cycle routes.

2) Susan Rasmussen spoke to a motion being tabled by the Green Group. She called on Council to support green alternatives to motor transport noting that cycling and walking can bring about significant benefits. A network of segregated cycle routes should be constructed whilst school children should be encouraged to walk and cycle to school. Urban areas should have a standard 20mph speed limit with a “whole route” approach being adopted to transport planning. Consultation on the Local Plan had provided evidence that many people in Leamington Spa would support these measures.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their contributions.

4. Appointments to Committees

Councillor Izzi Seccombe moved the recommendations before Council and was seconded by Councillor Helen Adkins.

Following a brief introduction by Councillor Seccombe Council voted on the recommendations. They were agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

1. That the Council confirms the Committee structure and delegations to member bodies and officers as set out in the Constitution
2. That the number of places on Council Committees be as follows:

Cttees	Con	Lab	LD	GR	WRA	Ind Con	Ind Con	Ind Lab	Vac	Vac	Total
Audit & Standards Committee (6)	3	1	1							1	6
Regulatory Committee (12)	7	2	2						1		12
Staff & Pensions Committee (6)	4	1	1								6
Adult Social Care & Health (10)	6	1	2	1							10
Children and Young People (10)	6	1	1	1			1				10
Communities	6	1	1	1		1					10

(10)											
Resources and Fire & Rescue (10)	6	1	1		1			1			10
Entitlement Political Balance	38	8	9	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	64

3. That the Council appoints the committees and membership:

Committees	Con	Lab	LD	Green	WRA/Ind Vacancy	Total
Audit & Standards Committee (6 +2 co-optees) J Bridgeman * +Vacancy	Singh Birdi Horner Reilly	Dirveiks	Gifford		Vacancy	6
Regulatory Committee	Cargill Cooke Parry Reilly Simpson-Vince Warwick C.Williams	Phillips Dirveiks	Rolfe Rickhards		Vacancy	12
Staff and Pensions Committee	Horner Kaur Singh-Pandher Stevens	Dirveiks	Gifford			6
Adult Social Care & Health OSC	Barker Bell Brain Cooke Jenns Redford	Adkins (Sp)	Roodhouse (Sp) Kate Rolfe	Kondakor (Sp)		10
Children & Young People OSC	Bell Dahmash Gilbert Roberts CWilliams PWilliams	C.Davies (Sp)	Skinner (Sp)	Chilvers (Sp)	Gissane	10
Communities OSC	Golby Gran Jenns Singh-Pandher Shilton Wright	Holland (Sp)	Fradgley (Sp)	Kondakor (Sp)	Sargeant	10

Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC	Singh Birdi Cooke Gilbert Jenns Reilly Warwick	O'Rourke (sp)	Boad (Sp)		Falp Webb	10
Joint Staff Negotiating Body *Leader appointment	Kaur* Hayfield*	O'Rourke	Gifford			
Joint Teachers Negotiating Body *Leader appointment	Kaur* Hayfield*	Dirveiks	Gifford			
Pension Fund Sub-Committee *appointments are made by Staff and Pensions Committee	Stevens Horner Redford	Dirveiks	Gifford			
Pool of Members to sit on Appointments Sub-Committees and Staff Appeals Sub-Committees. *appointments are made by Staff and Pensions Committee	Butlin Caborn Cargill Clarke Cockburn Dahmash Hayfield Horner Kaur Morgan Redford Roberts Simpson-Vince Seccombe Singh Birdi Singh Pandher Stevens Timms Warwick P Williams	Adkins Vacancy O'Rourke Parsons	Boad N.Davies Rickhards Roodhouse	Kondakor		

4. (a) That John Bridgeman be confirmed as the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee.
5. (a) That the Council confirms/amends membership to the following bodies:

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat
Health and Wellbeing Board (4)	Caborn Morgan Seccombe	Parsons	
Joint Coventry & Warwickshire Health OSC (5)	Bell Golby Redford	Adkins	Roodhouse
Corporate Parenting Panel (6)	Gilbert Morgan C Williams P Williams	Phillips	Rickhards
Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) (5)	Golby P Williams Singh Birdi	Phillips	Boad
Warwickshire Waste Partnership (5)	Timms Horner Wright	Dirveiks	Fradgley

- (b) That Cllr Caborn is appointed as the Chair of the Health and Well-being Board
- (c) That the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services is appointed as the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
6. (a) That the following be appointed to the LGPS Local Pension Board and Fire & Rescue Local Pensions Board:

<i>LGPS Local Pension Board</i>	<i>End of term of office</i>
Mike Snow [Employers Rep]	July 2023
<i>Fire & Rescue Local Pension Board</i>	<i>End of term of office</i>
Councillor David Reilly [Employer Representative]	July 2023
Dawn Suckling [Employer Representative]	July 2023

- (b) That the Council confirms that the Employer Representatives on the Fire & Rescue Local Pension Board be either members or officers of Warwickshire County Council.
7. That the following County Councillors be appointed to the Police and Crime Panel: [5 = 2 CON 1LAB 2 LD]

Councillors N.Davies, Gilbert, Wright, O'Rourke and Fradgley

8. That the Council confirms/appoints to the following external bodies

	Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrat
LEP (1)	Butlin		
LGA (4)	Seccombe Butlin	Adkins	Roodhouse
CCN (4)	Seccombe Butlin	Adkins	Roodhouse
LGA Fire Commission	Crump		

9. That Council confirms the delegations to officers as set out in the Constitution.
10. That the Council authorises the Strategic Director Resources to make such amendments to the Council's Constitution as may be required as a consequence of any changes agreed by the Council.

5. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20

Councillor Yousef Dahmash (Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee) moved the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Wallace Redford (Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee) who reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Dahmash thanked members and officers for their contribution to the work of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). In addition, he thanked the Portfolio Holders for their contributions at meetings. It was noted that the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on the operation of his committee, but the re-establishment of meetings was welcomed. Prior to lockdown the opportunity had been taken by the committee to hear from frontline officers and service users to gauge their views. This had been welcomed by those who had been invited to the meetings and been very successful. In addition, pre-meeting briefings had been held for members. Again, the opportunity had been taken to meet front line staff. Overall, the committee had displayed very good cross-party working.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers echoed the previous remarks concerning the efficacy of hearing from service providers and users but did suggest that more should be done to develop focused recommendations stemming from those discussions.

Councillor Alan Cockburn (Outgoing Chair of the Communities OSC) noted the extent of public interest in scrutiny and commended the use of single item meetings for thoroughly exploring topics.

Councillor Adrian Warwick (Chair of the Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC) thanked officers and members for their support of the scrutiny process and commended all staff for their ongoing commitment and hard work during the current pandemic.

Councillor Keith Kondakor stated that scrutiny is effective at the County Council. In particular, he welcomed that members who are not on a particular committee are

permitted to speak if they wish to share their knowledge or opinions. He also noted that single issue meetings are a good means of thoroughly exploring a topic.

Councillor Wallace Redford supported all that had been said previously. He noted that the agenda for the Adult Social Care and Health OSC will need to adapt to reflect the impact of Covid-19. The joint OSC with Coventry had worked well as had the pre-meeting briefings often provided by the Department of Public Health.

A vote was held and the recommendation agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

That Council notes the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/2020.

6. Annual Monitor of use of the Urgency and Call-in procedures 2019/20

Councillor Izzi Seccombe introduced the report, drawing a distinction between those decisions made prior to the Covid -19 pandemic and those made during it.

Councillor Peter Butlin seconded the recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers welcomed the opportunity to comment on Covid-19 related items adding that in some other local authorities it was the Chief Executive that was taking the decisions; a process that sometimes lacks transparency. He suggested that the County Council had been slow to introduce remote meetings but welcomed that they are now operational.

Councillor Keith Kondakor stated that in some instances urgency can deny an opportunity to contribute to discussions on an issue, The example he used concerned a bid to the DfT for an electric bus initiative where tight deadlines set by the DfT had meant that the report and subsequent decision had needed to be made very quickly.

Councillor Mark Cargill welcomed the briefings that are delivered by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive. He also noted that district and borough councils have responded well to the pandemic.

In summing up, the Leader commended the council for being agile in its decision-making. The time taken by the council to introduce virtual meetings was no greater than other councils and the speed with which remote working had been introduced was commendable.

A vote was held and the recommendation agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

That Council notes the report.

7. Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy

Councillor Peter Butlin explained that the report before Council had largely been written prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Key features of the strategy included a proposal to borrow over a longer period in order to secure better returns, the spreading of risks across the entire council and further consideration of ethical investments that will support the Council's climate emergency work.

Councillor Adrian Warwick seconded the recommendations and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Keith Kondakor suggested that the Covid-19 pandemic will have changed the risk profile for the council. For example, property investments that previously promised good returns may no longer do so. Some councils, he added, have over invested in projects such as inter-council loans with some councils being placed in a difficult position owing to falling income.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse welcomed the references to ethical investment adding that the evidence available suggested that interest in this area is likely to increase.

Councillor Adrian Warwick stated that the County Council is in a better position financially than many other local authorities.

Councillor Peter Butlin concluded by noting that ethical investments, like any other, must work for the benefit of the council.

A vote was held. The recommendations were agreed with one abstention and no votes against.

Resolved that:

1. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 (Appendix 1 to the report) be approved and that its provisions have effect from 1st April 2020.
2. The Investment Strategy for 2020/21 be approved (Appendix 2 to the report).
3. The Council require the Strategic Director for Resources to ensure that gross borrowing does not exceed the prudential level as specified in Appendix 1 Annex B to the report, taking into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in the budget report.
4. The Council delegates authority to the Strategic Director for Resources to undertake all the activities listed in Appendix 1 Annex H of the report.
5. The Council requires the Strategic Director for Resources to implement the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as specified in Appendix 1 Annex I to the report.
6. The Council notes the decision of the Leader to enable an option to make an early payment of pension fund contributions subject to the conditions set out at Section 7.24 of the Treasury Management Strategy being met.

8. Capital Investment Fund 2019/20 Warwick Town Centre Transport Package

Councillor Peter Butlin introduced the published report and thanked Sally Duns for her earlier comments. He thanked the local members for Warwick along with officers for the efforts they had put into the scheme.

Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi seconded the proposal adding that he agreed with all of its objectives.

Councillor John Holland welcomed the scheme and Councillor Keith Kondakor, as well as requesting that the model being used be copied elsewhere, requested that funds be set aside to assist with snagging and other contingencies.

Councillor Peter Butlin closed by saying that funds to cover contingencies had been identified.

A vote was held and the recommendations agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

1. That the Council approves an allocation of £4.046 million funding from the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) to deliver a transport package for Warwick town centre (as set out in paragraph 2.1 and 3.1) and the addition of the project to the Capital Programme at a full cost of £4.418 million with the balance of funding coming from the Community Infrastructure Levy.
2. That the Council authorises the Strategic Director for Communities to procure and enter any agreements to give effect to the proposals on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

9. Historic Bridge Maintenance Programme - Capital Programme Entry

Councillor Jo Barker moved the recommendation observing that Honnington Bridge in her division was often damaged by floating debris.

Councillor Mark Cargill seconded the recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

A number of members with historic bridges in their divisions commended the proposals. Councillor Cargill observed that in his division there are two historic bridges in his area and in summing up Councillor Barker congratulated the officers and the Executive for securing the funding.

A vote was held. The recommendation was agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

That the Council approve the addition of the Historic Bridge Maintenance Programme to the capital programme at an estimated cost of £6.30m, funded from the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) and the Department for Transport (DfT) Challenge Fund.

10. Warwickshire Rail Strategy 2019 - 2034

Councillor Peter Butlin introduced the report noting that the rail strategy had been subject to extensive consultation reviewing access, ticketing, links, new stations and devolution. The results of the Williams Rail Review had been delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Council was informed that Covid-19 had led to a downturn in rail travel to the extent that the rail franchises had effectively ceased to exist. Future rail service delivery may be through public service contracts rather than franchises.

Councillor Dave Shilton seconded the proposal and reserved the right to speak.

Councillor Dave Parsons accepted that the rail strategy was not contentious but suggested that it was not ambitious either. He noted that issues around track capacity were closely linked to HS2, a scheme to which the Council was opposed. There was reference to a new station at Polesworth in the strongly but the case for it was not made strongly.

Councillor John Horner noted that the strategy had been drafted pre-Covid-19. Given the decline in tourism in Stratford-upon-Avon he wondered whether more emphasis should be made to links between Stratford and London thus increasing the potential for attracting tourists.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse agreed that the effect of the pandemic should be reflected in a more ambitious strategy. Rugby Parkway station will be welcomed but for it to succeed there will be a need for cycle links, e-bikes, integrated travel and integrated ticketing.

Councillor Keith Kondakor noted that despite having a station with seven platforms, Nuneaton is not served by an adequate number of trains. The Manchester stopping service will not stop at Nuneaton and Leicester services bypass the station. A proposal for a new station adjacent to the A5 north of Nuneaton is not realistic. The focus should be on existing stations and on the construction of a new station at Stockingford where there is already a catchment of prospective passengers. Finally, Councillor Kondakor called for a new entrance to be provided on the Weddington side of Nuneaton station.

Councillor Clare Golby echoed the views regarding the need for a new station at Stockingford and for a Weddington side entrance to Nuneaton station.

Councillor Neil Dirveiks reminded Council that the strategy being considered was a high-level document. People, he said, require easy access to stations. He cited Atherstone where an access bridge had been removed at a time when patronage was on the rise.

Councillor Jill-Simpson Vince echoed her support for Rugby Parkway station stating that it will take pressure of the main station in Rugby. Councillor Yousef Dahmash observed that some minor improvements proposed for Rugby station had been a long time in coming. Regarding Rugby Parkway, whilst agreeing that it would be a welcome addition, he noted that it may have a negative impact on the A428 Crick

Road. Councillor Maggie O'Rourke hoped that increases in home working would lead to a reduction in air pollution.

Councillor Bob Stevens agreed that the strategy lacked ambition seemingly failing to take account of the impact of HS2. Warwickshire could become a dormitory zone. There is a need for an integrated transport policy and nowhere does the strategy seek to improve services to London.

Councillor Alan Webb observed that the proposed Rugby Parkway station may not provide all the solutions in that area. It needs to be easy to access the station if customers are to be drawn away from the town station. Councillor Dave Shilton noted that it had taken many years to secure a new station in Kenilworth. Having met representatives of the rail industry he was hopeful of significant improvements to facilities and services.

In closing this item Councillor Peter Butlin observed that ambitions will be reinforced by discussions around devolution. He considered that the strategy did take account of the impact of HS2. Regarding Stockingford he considered that if franchises are replaced there may be a stronger case for building the new station. Finally, Councillor Butlin stated that a new Nuneaton Parkway station would not impact on service provision.

A vote was held. The recommendations were agreed with one vote against and one abstention.

Resolved

1. That the Council notes the results of the consultation and the resulting modifications made to the draft Warwickshire Rail Strategy.
2. That the Council endorses the Warwickshire Rail Strategy 2019-2034 and agree that the document is added to the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011- 2026.

The meeting adjourned for lunch at 13.05.

11. Audit and Standards Committee Annual Report 2019/20

The meeting re-convened at 2.00pm.

Councillor Kam Kaur introduced the report, thanking the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee and the Council's external auditors. She moved the recommendation and was seconded by Councillor Mark Cargill. Councillor Cargill stated that in his view the committee was very effectively run and did a good job. These views were echoed by Councillor Bill Gifford.

In closing, Councillor Kaur remembered Bob Meacham who had been an independent member of the committee but who had passed away in the last year.

A vote was held and the recommendation agreed unanimously.

Resolved:

That the Council notes the Annual Report of the Audit and Standards Committee.

12. Notices of Motion**Motion 1**

Councillor Keith Kondakor moved the following motion.

“This Council is committed to producing a new Local Transport Plan where:

- 1) Public transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for our daily activities. We will encourage the reduction in car use by supporting a convenient, cost-effective and coherent public transport network.
- 2) We will support actively moving towards a position where all road vehicles from motorcycles to HGVs will be zero emission. We will support technological advances, including new modes of transport and mobility innovation, to drive modal shift and change the way vehicles are used.
- 3) Our goods will be delivered through an integrated, efficient and sustainable delivery system.
- 4) We will support clean, place-based solutions that meet the needs of local people and champion the climate agenda through local leadership. Changes and leadership at a local level will make an important contribution to reducing national GHG emissions.
- 5) Warwickshire will be an internationally recognised leader in environmentally sustainable, low carbon technology and innovation in transport”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Jonathan Chilvers who emphasised that most of its features were based on proposals put forward by Grant Schapps MP (Secretary of State for Transport).

Amendment 1

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse proposed an amendment adding a further bullet point to say, “We will accelerate and support stronger localised school green

travel plans by working with such bodies as the “Living Streets “ campaign all aimed at creating healthier communities by improving the air quality around schools”.

Councillor Sarah Boad (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) seconded the amendment and expressed her support for the motion as a whole. In doing so Councillor Boad noted that the Covid-19 pandemic had resulted in less traffic and improved air quality. Children, she suggested, should be encouraged to walk or cycle to school and bus operators should reinstate services they have withdrawn.

Acceptance of Amendment

Councillor Keith Kondakor accepted the amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group as a friendly amendment.

Debate

Members of the Council made the following points.

Councillor Dave Parsons stated that improvements in air quality should commence in the home. Log burners and gas central heating add particulates and sulphur dioxide to the atmosphere.

Councillor Helen Adkins supported the motion stating that it captured the need of the moment.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe stated that whilst she would not support the motion, her objection was based on process proposed to be followed rather than the principle. Costings would be required before any commitments could be made. The motion appeared to bypass the work of the Covid-19 working groups which would in time be reporting to Cabinet.

Councillor Judy Falp commended the road safety team of the County Council.

Councillor Bill Gifford, having expressed his support for the amended motion suggested that it was concerned with the principles placing these over the process. Council was reminded that in July 2019 it had declared a climate emergency.

Councillor Clare Golby reminded Council that a new Local Transport Plan is in preparation. This, she said, should be allowed to evolve. She also stated that not all people can afford newer, greener forms of transport.

Councillor Keith Kondakor, who had proposed the motion, observed that traffic related air pollution can be very localised. He expressed his disappointment at the lack of support for the motion stressing that it was focused on developing a better system. At this stage budgetary issues were not part of the debate.

Vote

A vote was held.

There were 26 votes against the amended motion. 51 members were present therefore the amended motion was lost.

Motion 2

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers introduced and moved the following.

“This Council,

- Thanks the huge number of people and community groups who volunteered or offered to volunteer in their communities during the first phase of the pandemic.
- Recognises that is now a short-term one-off window to engage with individuals and groups and broker opportunities that could help address long term issues such as loneliness in our community.
- Supports the making of an urgent bid to the Sustaining Prevention Fund to provide additional short-term (6 months) resources, to enable further proactive outreach and work with new community groups to help keep volunteers engaged in their communities for the longer term.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Dan Gissane who reserved the right to speak.

Amendment 1

Councillor Heather Timms proposed the following amendment.

“This Council

- Thanks the huge number of people and community groups **(including town and parish councils)** who volunteered or offered to volunteer in their communities during the first phase of the pandemic.
- Recognises that there is ~~now a short term one off window~~ an opportunity to engage with individuals and **volunteer** groups ~~and broker opportunities~~ that could help address long term issues such as loneliness in our communities.

- ~~Supports the making of an urgent bid to the Sustaining Prevention Fund to provide additional short term (6 months) resources to enable further proactive outreach and work with~~ **Refers this motion to the cross party Covid 19 Recovery Working Group on Communities who are considering what is required for new community groups to help keep volunteers engaged in their communities for the longer term, in order to make recommendations to Cabinet in September 2020**

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Izzi Seccombe who reserved her right to speak.

Councillor Chilvers declined to accept the amendment as a friendly amendment.

Amendment 2

Councillor Clive Rickhards, seconded by Councillor Sarah Boad proposed an amendment on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group. This proposed an addition to the second bullet point so that the end of it read,

“.....such as loneliness, Isolation and mental health especially anxiety in our community”.

Acceptance of Amendment

The amendment proposed by the Liberal Democrat Group was accepted as a friendly amendment by Councillor Chilvers.

Debate

Councillor Helen Adkins expressed her support for the motion and friendly (Liberal Democrat) amendment. She rejected the Conservative amendment stating that it appeared to be a retrograde step.

Councillor Andy Crump reminded Council that the Covid-19 working groups had focused on the elements set out in the motion.

Councillor Dave Parsons considered that both motions before Council were sensible and well intentioned. He could not understand why there would be any reluctance to support them.

Councillor Clare Golby commended the working groups for moving quickly. She added that Warwickshire CAVA is already supporting community groups to bid for funding. There are plenty of opportunities for people to engage with community groups, but members need to be able to signpost to them.

Councillor Keith Kondakor suggested that the third sector will see a great deal of change during and after the pandemic. With uncertainty over a second wave it is important to boost third sector groups.

Councillor Dave Shilton observed that Nuneaton and Bedworth had not identified a County Council community champion. He thanked officers for their hard work during the pandemic and called for a letter of thanks to be sent to communities and local councils.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe emphasised that the issue of whether the motion should be supported or not was around the process. The Covid-19 working groups, she said, were already engaged in the work proposed by the motion. It would be preferable to champion the outcome of the working groups.

Councillor Gissane, who had seconded the motion observed that with people now returning to work it was important that the good work of community groups continues to be supported.

Councillor Timms concluded that there was already a good team working with community groups. Any bid to the investment fund would only serve to distract officers and delay matters.

Councillor Chilvers echoed the thanks of officers to the voluntary sector and the localities team. Aside from the differences around process it would be good to find a way forward to provide more support to communities.

Vote

A recorded vote was requested by Councillors Kondakor, Chilvers and Boad.

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

Votes for the amendment – Councillors Barker, Bell, Singh Birdi, Brain, Butlin, Caborn, Cargill, Cockburn, Crump, Dahmash, Gilbert, Golby, Gran, Hayfield, Horner, Jenns, Kaur, Morgan, Pandher, Redford, Roberts, Seccombe, Shilton, Simpson-Vince, Stevens, Timms, Warwick, C Williams, P Williams, Wright
(30)

Votes against the amendment – Councillors Adkins, Boad, Chilvers, C Davies, N Davies, Dirveiks, Falp, Gifford, Gissane, Holland, Kondakor, O'Rourke, Parsons, Phillips, Rickhards, Roodhouse, Sargeant, Skinner, Webb
(19).

The amendment was won 30 votes to 19. This then became the substantive motion on which a (non-recorded) vote was taken. This was won 29 for, 14 against and 3 abstentions.

Resolved

That the following motion is agreed.

This Council

- Thanks the huge number of people and community groups (including town and parish councils) who volunteered or offered to volunteer in their communities during the first phase of the pandemic,
- Recognises that there is an opportunity to engage with individuals and volunteer groups that could help address long term issues such as loneliness in our communities,
- Refers this motion to the cross party Covid 19 Recovery Working Group on Communities who are considering what is required for new community groups to help keep volunteers engaged in their communities for the longer term, in order to make recommendations to Cabinet in September 2020.

13. Member Question Time (Standing Order 7)

A series of questions to Portfolio Holders were asked by members.

Question 1 – Scrapped Weddington GP Surgery – Asked by Councillor Keith Kondakor

Over the last 9 years the project to build a GP surgery in the Weddington division has obtained a site from the Church Field developer and over £900,000 in approved section 106 contributions. The site had outline permission for the surgery and is spade ready. There a GP keen to get a new surgery going if it was built.

There are no GP surgeries in my division and a very rapidly expanding population due to 7 approved housing developments. It is expected that next month the North Warwickshire CCG will formally scrap this project and instead expect residents to wait for a large PFI like funded health centre on a County Council owned site, which is unlikely to happen soon, if ever.

We need the County Council, a commercial firm or community organisation to own the building to get round the new NHS privatisation rules.

Can Warwickshire County Council intervene so that we can have new GPs before winter 2021/22?

Answer to question 1 given by Councillor Les Caborn

The site in question has a complicated history. There are two options being considered; a surgery at Church Field and a health and leisure hub at Top Farm. The funding of any scheme has yet to be agreed and it will be the CCG governing body that makes the final decision. The CCG has suggested that a temporary solution might be found in St Nicholas.

In response Councillor Kondakor observed that a five consulting room practice was required immediately. An overly large facility provided in ten years would not provide the solution.

Question 2 – Warwickshire Property Company – Asked by Councillor Clive Rickhards

Given that the proposed Warwickshire Property Company will be wholly owned by the Council and will set certain targets what assurances are there on the nature of democratic control and scrutiny of the company?

Answer to question 2 given by Councillor Izzi Seccombe.

Work on the property company has been on-going since the May 2020 meeting of Cabinet. No final decisions have been taken and all are subject to legal advice. Further reports will be submitted to Cabinet and Council in October. The intention is that whatever form the project takes it will be subject to close scrutiny.

Question 3 – Cambourne Way/Eastboro Way – Asked by Councillor Keith Kondakor

After just over 2 years the 30 MPH speed signs have finally been reinstalled at the junction of Camborne Drive and Eastboro Way. Would I be correct in thinking the County Council has a legal requirement to reinstall 30MPH signs after road schemes remove existing signs and how many speed signs have been reported to the council in Warwickshire over the last 2 years? Has there been more that have taken over a year to be reinstated?

Answer to Question 3 given by Councillor Izzi Seccombe

A full response could not be given at the meeting. This was however promised. In the meantime, evidence suggested that there had been no long-standing requests for a replacement sign. Only the one that had prompted the replacement.

Question 4 – Covid -19 and Inequalities – Asked by Councillor Helen Adkins

What is the County Council presently and actively doing to prevent the inequalities across Warwickshire further impacting upon such residents during the rest of the COVID crisis? And will the Council undertake a report focusing on the inequalities across the County and the impact such inequalities has had/will continue to have on the COVID pandemic?

Answer to Question 4 given by Councillor Les Caborn

A report on Covid-19 and black and minority ethnic communities by Cabinet. The County Council is aware of the issue and is working hard to address it.

In response Councillor Adkins observed that there are communities in Warwickshire other than black and minority ethnic.

Question 5 – Black Lives Matter – Asked by Councillor Corinne Davies

In light of the BLM movement, is the Council monitoring its policies to ensure they prioritise diversity and inclusion within the County's workplaces?

Answer to Question 5 given by Councillor Kam Kaur

The County Council works hard to restrict any discrimination. Black and minority ethnic employees comprise a greater proportion of the workforce than is reflected by the national average. Strong messages regarding Black Lives Matter have been conveyed by the Council and work continues to encourage people from black and minority ethnic communities to join the workforce.

Question 6 – Care Homes and Covid-19 – Asked by Councillor Dave Parsons

What is the Council doing to ensure that further outbreaks of COVID are prevented in care homes? Furthermore, what is the Council doing to ensure there is adequate PPE and protection for staff in care homes, in the light of a possible second surge during the winter?

Answer to Question 6 given by Councillor Les Caborn

A care homes outbreak control plan has been developed and the Council is working with all care homes to manage the situation. The aim is to embed training and good practice in care homes so that they can manage themselves. This is all part of the Covid-19 resilience process.

A system of mutual aid calls has been established that enables parties to ask question of guest speakers.

Question 7 - Students Returning to Leamington – Asked by Councillor Helen Adkins

How is the Council preparing for the return of 6,000 students, many of whom will be international students, to Leamington in the coming months?

Answer to Question 7 given by Councillor Les Caborn

The County Council is working with landlords' associations and is in touch with the welfare departments of the local universities. A more comprehensive answer was promised.

Question 8 – Full time Education Leavers – Asked by Councillor John Holland

This year many people leaving full time education will be unable to find employment. What is the County Council planning to support these young people?

Answer to Question 8 given by Councillor Colin Hayfield

Most young people when leaving school will move on to further education or training. Around 1000 may end up with no firm destination. This figure will be monitored throughout August. For those who are unable to find employment or training then the NEETs system will support them. The system applied this year will not be significantly different from that of previous years.

Question 9 – Funding for maintained Nursery Schools – Asked by Councillor Caroline Philips

Would the County Council be prepared to join a campaign for improvements for funding to maintained nursery schools?

Answer to Question 9 given by Councillor Colin Hayfield

The Council is proud of the six maintained nursery schools in Warwickshire. The government is unclear on what it plans to provide in the way of support. The County Council would engage with a campaign to see funding increased.

Question 10 – Coventry City FC’s proposed new stadium – Asked by Councillor Keith Kondakor

Coventry City FC has announced that it is planning to construct a new stadium on land close to Warwick University. If this project proceeds will the County Council insist on the construction of a new railway station to serve it?

Answer to Question 10 given by Councillor Peter Butlin.

A new station would be sought as part of the project. There is much work to be done to secure funding and relevant permissions.

14. Any Other items of Urgent Business

(1) Meetings on Rising of Council

The meeting rose at 15:58

.....
Chair