

County Council

Date: Tuesday 13 December 2022
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, Shire Hall

Membership

Councillor Dave Humphreys (Chair)
Councillor Jo Barker
Councillor Richard Baxter-Payne
Councillor Brett Beetham
Councillor Margaret Bell
Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi
Councillor Sarah Boad
Councillor Barbara Brown
Councillor Peter Butlin
Councillor Jonathan Chilvers
Councillor Jeff Clarke
Councillor John Cooke
Councillor Andy Crump
Councillor Yousef Dahmash
Councillor Piers Daniell
Councillor Jackie D'Arcy
Councillor Tracey Drew
Councillor Judy Falp
Councillor Jenny Fradgley
Councillor Sarah Feeney
Councillor Bill Gifford
Councillor Peter Gilbert
Councillor Clare Golby
Councillor Brian Hammersley
Councillor John Holland
Councillor Marian Humphreys
Councillor Andy Jenns
Councillor Kam Kaur
Councillor Jack Kennaugh
Councillor Justin Kerridge
Councillor Christopher Kettle (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sue Markham
Councillor Jan Matecki
Councillor Sarah Millar
Councillor Chris Mills
Councillor Jeff Morgan

Councillor Penny-Anne O'Donnell
Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher
Councillor Daren Pemberton
Councillor Caroline Phillips
Councillor Wallace Redford
Councillor Howard Roberts
Councillor Will Roberts
Councillor Kate Rolfe
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse
Councillor Isobel Seccombe OBE
Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince
Councillor Tim Sinclair
Councillor Mejar Singh
Councillor Richard Spencer
Councillor Heather Timms
Councillor Mandy Tromans
Councillor Robert Tromans
Councillor Martin Watson
Councillor Adrian Warwick
Councillor Andrew Wright

Items on the agenda: -

(3) Signed Minutes of Council on 13 December 2022

3 - 16

Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

County Council

Tuesday 13 December 2022

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Dave Humphreys (Chair), Councillor Jo Barker, Councillor Brett Beetham, Councillor Margaret Bell, Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi, Councillor Sarah Boad, Councillor Barbara Brown, Councillor Peter Butlin, Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, Councillor Jeff Clarke, Councillor John Cooke, Councillor Andy Crump, Councillor Piers Daniell, Councillor Tracey Drew, Councillor Judy Falp, Councillor Jenny Fradgley, Councillor Sarah Feeney, Councillor Bill Gifford, Councillor Peter Gilbert, Councillor Clare Golby, Councillor Brian Hammersley, Councillor John Holland, Councillor Marian Humphreys, Councillor Andy Jenns, Councillor Kam Kaur, Councillor Justin Kerridge, Councillor Christopher Kettle (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jan Matecki, Councillor Sarah Millar, Councillor Jeff Morgan, Councillor Bhagwant Singh Pandher, Councillor Daren Pemberton, Councillor Wallace Redford, Councillor Will Roberts, Councillor Jerry Roodhouse, Councillor Jill Simpson-Vince, Councillor Tim Sinclair, Councillor Richard Spencer, Councillor Heather Timms, Councillor Mandy Tromans, Councillor Robert Tromans, Councillor Martin Watson, Councillor Adrian Warwick and Councillor Andrew Wright

1. General

(1) Apologies for Absence

Councillors Richard Baxter Payne, Yousef Dahmash, Jack Kennaugh, Sue Markham, Chris Mills, Penny-Anne O'Donnell, Caroline Phillips, Howard Roberts, Kate Rolfe, Isobel Seccombe and Mejar Singh.

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

None.

(3) Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 29 September 2022 were agreed as an accurate record for signing by the Chair.

(4) Chair's announcements

The Chair recalled some events that he had recently attended:

Star Awards

The Council's STAR Awards celebration event was held on 28th November. The Star Awards are the Council's annual peer-nominated, peer-judged award scheme. Warwickshire County Council depends on the passion, dedication and hard work of all its employees to deliver the best for the people of Warwickshire. The STAR Awards gives Council employees the opportunity to recognise those colleagues who consistently go above and beyond, improving outcomes for local people, communities, businesses, and staff.

The Chair extended huge congratulations to the winners and finalists and to the 170 colleagues who were nominated in 2022 by their peers.

The Chair's Award winner was the Warwickshire County Council Commonwealth Games 2022 Project Team. This was a truly great team effort, with credit going to teams in thirteen different service areas. The Council's contribution to the Commonwealth Games was a huge success and built on six years of successful cycling history for Warwickshire. The games saw the biggest sporting event in Warwickshire history with over 30,000 spectators and several live TV sites across the county that attracted a high number of visitors. The events were two years in the making and there was involvement from over 70 colleagues from across the Council. They worked so successfully, with very many organisations and different systems and protocols. Their work showcased Warwickshire's heritage and beauty which will have boosted Warwickshire's profile for tourism and investment potential both nationally and internationally and will translate into lasting benefits.

British Empire Medal Recipients

Sorrelle Clements had undertaken some amazing work for Coventry Libraries over ten years with a focus on increasing engagement, accessibility and inclusivity. Sorrelle received the award for her services to Libraries.

In response to the emergence of Covid, Lawrence Kelly set up the Wellbeing Sanctuary within the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust to give colleagues a chance to de-stress in a confidential, safe place. Lawrence went on to help with the successful launch of the Mental Wellbeing App in May 2020. Lawrence received the award for his services to Mental Health. The Chair was impressed with the way he thanked everybody that had worked with him, noting that the work was a team effort and he had received the award on their behalf.

Warwick University

The Chairman had been impressed by a presentation from a group of students who had put together a website with colleagues from various disciplines to help improve the approach to inclusion and exclusion.

Now That's What Nuneaton Calls Music

The Chair invited Councillor Mandy Tromans to share details of a project combining the talents of pupils from 25 different schools from across Nuneaton to record a charity Christmas album. 'Now That's What Nuneaton Calls Music: Christmas Edition 2022'. The project aimed to raise funds for the Nuneaton Community Christmas Lunch Group to cover the cost of lunch at Newtown Centre for those alone across the town on Christmas Day. Any extra funds would be shared with Nuneaton Salvation Army and Nuneaton Foodbank. Councillor Tromans indicated that she would share details of how to purchase a copy of the CD and support the children in their charitable venture.

Babbs Mill Park Lake Tragedy

The Chair noted the sad death of four young children who had fallen into a frozen lake at Babbs Mill Park in neighbouring Solihull on 11 December 2022. Council paid tribute with a one minute's silence.

(5) Petitions

None.

(6) Public Speaking

None.

2. Addition to Capital Programme 2022/23 Oakley School

Councillor Peter Butlin (Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property) moved the recommendation as set out in the report. In doing so, he noted that a main contractor (Wilmott Dixon) had been appointed and a reserved matters planning application had been approved by Warwick District Council. The allocated budget was subject to the results of further required site surveys and the continued development of the detailed design which, at the time of allocation, had still to be completed. Understanding from these processes had been included in the tender process and the results of the tender exercise had increased the cost estimate by an additional £4.311m.

The most significant element of the increase related to ground works, with inflation and a range of mechanical and electrical requirements together with the additional costs of the highways works to improve traffic management also being a factor. It was critical that the Council entered into a contract with the main contractor prior to Christmas so that the project could progress, prices be fixed, and completion dates were not put at risk

Councillor Jan Matecki seconded the recommendation and reserved the right to speak.

Debate

Councillor John Holland noted that the funding needed to be agreed for the project to go ahead and school places to be provided on time. He briefly reflected on the availability of an alternative site for development.

Councillor Tracey Drew noted the proposed expenditure as set out in paragraph 1.6 of the report and sought assurances that the building design would be fit for the future without any need for costly retrofitting at the time of opening.

Councillor Matecki noted that the costs outlined in the report compared favourably to the percentage increases on construction costs that he had seen reported elsewhere. He further noted that the ground stabilisation at the site was not due to its topography and it was not possible to know what ground work may have been required at alternative sites. He also noted that funding was required for traffic management and the work with the developer that had taken place to reduce the need for lengthy road closures. He pointed out that the alternative to approving the funding was that the school would not be built which was a risk to the education of those children who would attend.

Councillor Butlin drew attention to paragraph 3.2 of the report which set out that the additional £4.311m funding would be allocated from existing unallocated Basic Need grant. In response to Councillor Drew, he asserted that he was confident the building would not require any retrofitting.

Vote

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried with unanimous support.

Resolved

That Council approves the allocation of an additional £4.311 million to the Oakley School project to be funded from unallocated Education Capital Resources, and its addition to the Capital Programme.

3. WFRS Prevention, Protection and Response Strategy

Councillor Andy Crump (Portfolio Holder for) moved the recommendation as set out in the report. In doing so, he highlighted that the strategy set out the approach to make Warwickshire safer for the next five years and supported the outcomes and objectives of the Council.

Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi seconded the recommendation, noting that a good response to the consultation had been received with a high proportion of residents supporting the approach.

Debate

Councillor Sarah Boad noted the difficulties of consulting in such a way that met statutory requirements but also attracted sufficient responses. She thanked those who had taken the time to respond and particularly drew attention to paragraph 4.8 of the report which set out the responses to what else Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service should consider in the prevention, protection, and response priorities and the frequency of responses around funding, resources, education and response. She congratulated the Fire Service on its social media presence and the prevention and safety messages that were shared. Her sense was that residents valued the Fire and Rescue Service and welcomed the cross-party involvement in CRMP meetings and the responsiveness of Fire Officers to the questions and queries raised in that forum.

Councillor Sarah Feeney expressed her disappointment that Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and Rugby Borough were under-represented when comparing where survey respondents resided to the 2021 Census populations for these areas and that the age of respondents was also comparatively high. She considered that learning from other consultations which had greater youth engagement could be helpfully shared ahead of the next survey, particularly noting the success of the bus surveys conducted by the Bus Service Improvement Plan Group.

Councillor Sarah Millar thanked those involved in preparing the report and was pleased to see the climate change theme running throughout the strategy. She recalled concerns in the summer around fires on Newbold Comyn and the work that had taken place to raise awareness of the risks posed by portable barbecues. It had been a summer of extremes and she was of the view it would not be a one-off.

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers applauded the work of the Fire and Rescue Service, particularly recalling the response to the fire at the Leeson Polyurethanes facility in August 2022 and the gratitude of local residents. He also noted that there was no mention of arson in the report and sought further details about the time spent on arson cases and the concern this caused.

Councillor Falp added her support for the strategy whilst noting that a good service had to be well funded and reminded Members to consider this during budget setting activity.

Councillor Crump welcomed the comments received and applauded the work of the Fire and Rescue Service, particularly its partnership working and the events of the extreme summer. He noted that the level of engagement had increased since the last consultation but that he would like to see a higher number of responses, particularly among young people and work was underway to increase engagement in schools. He was a strong advocate for funding the service. Whilst he did not have statistics on arson to hand, he agreed to provide this after the meeting.

Vote

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried with unanimous support.

Resolved

That Council:

1. notes the WFRS Prevention, Protection and Response Strategy 2022/2027 consultation process, and
2. approves the WFRS Prevention, Protection and Response Strategy 2022/2027 at Appendix 1 of the report for publication.

4. Local Pension Board Appointment

Councillor Christopher Kettle moved the recommendation as set out in the report. Councillor Bill Gifford seconded the recommendation

Debate

Councillor Sarah Millar expressed her disappointment that there were no women on the Board and that this appointment would not redress the position. She had raised the issue of gender diversity at the Council meeting in March 2022 when two new Members of the Board were appointed and sought assurance that greater efforts in future would be taken to encourage women to the Board.

Some Members echoed the views of Councillor Millar, making the following points:

- The Board should be representative of its Members and the majority of LGPS Members were women
- More female role-models were required in male-dominated industries in order to increase diversity
- More should be done to understand why women with the relevant interests, skills and qualifications did not volunteer for the role
- The selection process for the role should be reviewed to attract more women to the role

Some Members expressed the following alternative views:

- The best possible person should be appointed to the role particularly as it required particular expertise and skills
- The role required a considerable time commitment in terms of training and development, particularly for someone from a non-pensions background
- The outcome of the selection process did not mean that it was not a robust process
- The pool from which the appointment was made was relatively small and no other candidate had come forward
- The outcome of the selection process was not reflected in the authority as a whole which had a female Leader, four females appointed to the Cabinet and a female Chief Executive.

Councillor Kettle noted that there were no other names put forward for consideration and that an amendment to the Motion had not been tabled. He did not consider that a male appointment would differentiate their responsibilities in terms of male and female members of the scheme and, in fact, the nominee was highly qualified to deliver in the role.

Vote

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried with a majority in support.

Resolved

That Council approves the appointment of Councillor Ian Shenton as a scheme employer representative on the Warwickshire Local Pension Board for a three year term in accordance with the Terms of Reference of the Local Pension Board.

5. Notice of Motion

Councillor John Holland moved the following Motion as printed on the agenda:

Taking into account Article 2 Paragraph 2.3 of the Constitution which sets out the Roles and Functions of All Councillors and the Elected Member Role Profiles at Part 4(1) of the Constitution, this Council will review the role of local councillors in relation to decisions in their Division and make recommendations as to how it might be enhanced.

In doing so, he explained that the focus of motion was understanding the profile of the councillor, as described on the Council's website, to produce a vision for the people in the areas they had been elected to represent and build up support for the vision. As a point of reference, he recalled presentation on the JSNA which had been provided before the May 2021 election which he considered may mean that new councillors were not aware of the needs and how they might be met. He considered that a review of how local councillors are performing and providing support to them would improve the quality of the Council.

Councillor Sarah Feeney seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.

Debate

During the debate, concern was expressed at the cost of such a review in terms of diverting officer time, when there was already clarity of the roles and responsibilities of councillors, and current councillors had demonstrated their effectiveness. The support of mentors within groups was suggested as best practice to understand how to get work done in the division councillors represented.

Conversely, some Members welcomed the idea of developing ways to increase effectiveness, particularly for those in minority groups, by consulting and sharing information with local members at an early stage. It was considered that the relatively small cost of conducting a review to consider how this might be achieved was outweighed by the benefits.

Councillor Feeney emphasised the point of the motion was to ensure that every Councillor was involved in decision making for their residents. She noted that good organisations regularly reviewed policies and procedures and wanted to understand how community power worked within the confines of the Constitution.

Councillor Holland refuted suggestions that the review would incur a high level of costs. He considered that it was important councillors could demonstrate their effectiveness and considered that the suggested review would reveal how to do that through quality control and an assurance that councillors were doing the right things.

Vote

A vote was held and the motion was defeated.

6. Member Question Time (Standing Order 7)

(1) Question to Councillor Watson from Councillor Roodhouse

"BT landlines are to be phased out by 2025. We know that there is a growing digital divide. What actions is WCC taking to support individuals?"

In response, Councillor Watson explained that BT were not phasing out landlines but the infrastructure was changing from analogue infrastructure (ie the old copper networks) to a new digital (fibre) infrastructure. All network providers, not just BT, were carrying out this work as part

of the digitalisation of the UK to provide improved high speed services. These changes may have an impact on some security, safety and alert systems.

In industry most security companies were aware of the changes and had already made preparations to change signalling devices and the way they were powered.

The general advice for individuals was to contact the supplier or maintainer of their devices for advice. Most systems would continue working but there were some changes being made to signals and associated power systems since local power was now required rather than the old telephone exchange. These changes had been underway for some time and it was a change that the Council was aware of and had been engaging with care partners.

Councillor Watson noted that this issue was covered by the larger 5G roll out, which the Council was also working to bolster. Councillor Watson advised that he would share this information with Councillors.

Councillor Roodhouse sought assurance that communications on this subject would be shared with the wider public and elected members going forward.

Councillor Watson responded that some messages would be issued that elected members could share with the communities they represented.

(2) Question to Councillor Butlin from Councillor Roodhouse

"Warwickshire County Council supports Educaterers that supplies school meals. What assurances can the Portfolio Holder give in regard to its financial stability and what work is being carried out in promoting this service, especially with the extra energy and cost of living crisis?"

Councillor Butlin responded that in respect of Educaterers' financial stability, it had been a difficult couple of years due mainly to Covid and more recently inflationary impacts. Educaterers continued to provide a high-quality service to all schools during the Pandemic, without the requisite level of income to support all its costs due to reduced pupil numbers taking up meals. Consequently, the Council provided Covid funding from the general Covid grants from Government to off-set losses across the last two trading years for Educaterers. This still left a small residual loss for the company based on other factors though.

The Council had also resolved the historic pension liability issue for Educaterers, as per the Cabinet decision under the exempt item on the 12 April 2022.

Educaterers had seen a steady recovery in the number of meals provided in schools and hence its income base, however, inflationary pressures were still making trading conditions extremely difficult, compounded by twin factors of the national minimum wage rises and reluctance on the part of schools to pass on costs to parents through meal cost rises. All school catering companies were facing very similar issues. The cost of living crisis sadly may see more families become eligible for free school meals, and schools were generally good at promoting and raising awareness with their parents on this issue.

Councillor Roodhouse asked whether Councillor Butlin would join a campaign and write to lobby government, local MPs, and other relevant parties, to seek an increase in the allocation the

- government provided for its meals, which Councillor Roodhouse believed was around £2.43 per meal which resulted in national pressures on school meal services.

Councillor Butlin responded that bearing in mind the comments he had made regarding inflationary costs, that he would be glad to lobby government and MPs to seek a better allocation in line with inflation.

(3) Question to Councillor Kaur from Councillor Rolfe (asked on her behalf by Councillor Roodhouse)

"With inflation for food now at 16% many families are being hit hard financially and free school meals play an increasingly important part in helping those families with children.

Would the Portfolio Holder please tell me how many children in Warwickshire currently receive free school meals and does she have any information on how many children are eligible but not claiming?

What action is the County Council taking to promote uptake?

For families on universal credit the current cut off point for eligibility is a household income of less than £7,400 per year, after tax and not including any benefits. This limit was fixed in 2018 and has not been increased. Will she lobby government to increase this limit in line with inflation?"

Councillor Kaur advised that in January 2022, 16,181 pupils were eligible and claiming a free school meal in Warwickshire, 18.6% of the school population. This is an increase of nearly 2,000 pupils since January 2021, when 14,451 (16.8%) of pupils were eligible and claiming. The latest data we have (as at May 2022) shows a continued increase with 16,819 (19.2%) children eligible and claiming a free school meal in one of Warwickshire's state-funded schools.

Unfortunately, we do not hold any figures about the numbers who are actually eligible but not claiming. We only know through the termly school census collections about children in our state-funded schools that are eligible and actually claiming a FSM. There is a difference between the census figures reported here and data on our own Management Information System which includes children that qualify for wider Local Welfare Scheme support (including the Household Support Fund) and we will pursue further work to interrogate the data we have in more detail.

In terms of promoting take up, a number of projects have taken place in recent years with schools to promote awareness of free school meals and try to encourage parents to apply. Recent work with districts and boroughs and social housing providers has also helped to promote the entitlement to eligible families. We have also looked at the school Admissions process, asking for NI numbers from parents so checks can be made but this cannot be mandatory.

We are now working on a pilot project with Nuneaton & Bedworth, North Warwickshire and Rugby councils alongside Sheffield local authority, who have found an effective way to increase take up, to take learning and look how it can be applied.

As you will be aware, £421 million has been made available to county councils and unitary authorities to support those most in need to help with global inflation challenges and the significantly rising cost of living. The objective of the household support fund is to provide support

to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs, specifically food, energy and water bills. This phase of the grant runs from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 and Warwickshire has again been allocated £3.47million which is being distributed through the local welfare scheme. My colleague, Councillor Heather Timms and I will continue to lobby for support for those families and will be looking at monitoring our demand, need and provisions going forward so we will be working with central government colleagues to promote and push our cause.

(4) Question to Councillor Bell from Councillor Holland

In July 2022 Council resolved that "Council notes that Joint Strategic Needs Area Assessments were carried out in 2019. The information within those assessments was provided to the Place Based Partnerships, which provide activity updates to the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board, including on prioritised activities to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities. The Council requests an update from the Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board on Place Based Partnership priorities and progress on reducing inequalities.

Can the Portfolio Holder give a verbal report now with a detailed written report within one month?

Councillor Bell offered reassurance that that tackling health inequalities based on the JSNAs remained top of the agenda from the Place Forums through the Health and Wellbeing Boards to the new Integrated Care System.

In September 2022 the Health and Wellbeing Board received a report containing a progress update against the health inequality priorities for each of the three place-based partnerships - Warwickshire North, South Warwickshire and Rugby.

The Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 11 January 2023 would include a discussion item where the three Place Forums would give a presentation on their priorities. All councillors were welcome to attend.

Councillor Bell provided further reassurance that she was joint Vice Chair of the new Integrated Care Partnership (part of the Integrated Care System) which had recently developed the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy which would be submitted to government. Health inequalities based on the JSNAs were top of the priority list and three key areas of focus had been identified, the first of which was reducing health inequalities. This was an issue that was threaded through the strategy, accompanied by a delivery plan, embedding it in everything that was done.

(5) Question to Councillor Redford from Councillor Chilvers

"Please could you provide an update on any work being done on possible phases 2 and 3 of the A46 link road/multimodal corridor?"

As Councillor Redford had been excused from the meeting at this point, a written response would be provided.

(6) Question to Councillor Redford from Councillor Gifford

“Councillor Redford, I am sure you are aware that many of the on-street parking machines in Leamington town centre are not working and can only be used as a location for RingGo. This not only inconveniences shoppers - and older shoppers in particular - but it is also a barrier to people going to the town centre, at a time when many shops are already struggling. When does the County Council intend to repair or replace these parking machines so that those who can only pay by cash or card can do so?”

In Councillor Redford's absence, Councillor Butlin responded to apologise for the problems currently being faced in Leamington, and indeed other locations across the county. At the time of the meeting, there were 13 machines out of 184 not operational and engineers would be on site during the week to try and fix them. The main problem with Pay & Display machines across the county, was that the majority were coming to the end of their operational life and unfortunately given the age of the machines, repairs were becoming harder and more complex and it was increasingly hard to source the necessary parts. Despite this, assurance was given that the 13 machines out of order would be repaired in the week commencing 12 December 2022.

Councillor Butlin added that an asset replacement programme was being undertaken for pay and display machines to update stock, which would include additional payment capabilities such as contactless and chip & pin. The Council would look to ensure cash payments remained an option, as well as continuing to support the RingGo platform which accounted for over 50% of all parking purchases. This replacement programme was significant and would be going out to procurement in the new year. It was expected a roll out of new machines would take place over the course of 2023.

The Council would continue to closely monitor the performance of the machines and aimed to keep them operating as much as possible while the replacement programme progressed.

(7) Question to Councillor Crump from Councillor Chilvers

“Do you welcome the conclusions from the Environment Agency's 4 year evaluation of Natural Flood Management pilots which found that nature based solutions were much more cost efficient than 'concrete' solutions and protected 1000s of homes? Now the Environment Agency plan to double the Natural Flood Management schemes it funds will you ensure that Warwickshire brings forward more bids for this funding to protect residents in our county?”

Councillor Crump advised that Warwickshire had been very successful in recent years helping to facilitate natural flood risk management schemes, working in partnership with the Environment Agency and with local partnerships like the Shipston Flood Resilience Forum. The Council would continue to look for every opportunity to apply for funding to deliver further flood resilience works across the county. The Environmental Agency's increase in funding for natural flood resilience schemes was welcomed.

A more comprehensive response would be shared after the meeting.

(8) Question to Councillor Timms from Councillor Millar

“Please could you provide an update on the Cost of Living Summit held on 25th November, and what progress has been made on the out comes of the summit in the following weeks since?”

Councillor Timms welcomed the opportunity to share how much work the Council had done in this area.

The Summit had been attended by 114 delegates from across the public, private, and voluntary, community, and social enterprise sectors, including delegates from health, education, and the police.

An agreed "offer on a page" for residents and communities to help with the cost of living had been drafted and comments from partners were awaited. The draft had also been shared with group leaders for comment.

The www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk microsite was launched at the summit. This provided information, advice and support for residents and communities across Warwickshire, and provided partners, including town and parish councils, with a central and assured source of help. The content would develop over coming weeks as more support offers came forward and included an 0800 helpline number.

A network of warm welcome hubs had been launched, including:

- Libraries offering extended opening hours and additional services
- Hubs set up across the county by Borough and District Council partners
- The network of up to 80 community-led hubs being supported by Warwickshire Rural Community Council with the help of funding from Cadent and the County Council.

The "wraparound" element of warm hubs was crucial, helping to link and signpost people to the advice and guidance of organisations such as Citizens Advice.

Further warm hubs would be brought on stream over the coming weeks, including the possibility of hubs in wholtime fire stations

Funding grants launched included:

- The Council committing to funding the network of Community Managed Libraries to purchase community fridges.
- Cost of Living Support Grants of up to £1,000 to voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector organisations, including Town and Parish Councils.
- Funding for Citizens Advice to extend and enhance its telephone advice services over the next 2 years.
- Funding for food banks to support needs around food, other household essentials, and the operating costs of the foodbanks themselves.
- Funding to providing transport for people with no other transport options to get to their essential medical and social appointments (VASA, Medicar, and Beeline)
- The Community Pantries in Lillington, Old Arley and Camphill had been extended for another year
- The recent autumn county councillor grant fund was open for cost of living applications

Councillor Timms concluded by reminding Members that a briefing on the cost of living was taking place the following day.

(9) Question to Cllr Bell from Cllr Matecki

Councillor Matecki raised an issue he was dealing with in his division and noted that the Council did not have an internal procedure for making Prevent referrals and also questioned the way data protection requests, particularly subject access requests, were dealt with.

Councillor Bell was aware of the case being referred to, recognising that it had been a difficult case which had been distressing for the family for which she apologised on behalf of the Council. The initial investigation had found that the Prevent referral was justified, however, improvements to the process had been noted. Councillor Bell considered that it was, therefore, a legitimate suggestion for a documented process to be put in place to provide support for those making a referral and help with management of the sensitivities around them. She was happy to investigate this case to consider lessons to be learnt and would share her findings in due course.

7. Any Other items of Urgent Business

None.

The meeting rose at 12.20pm



Chair

Continued on Page 15 of 14

The following information is provided for the purpose of the audit. It is not intended to be a substitute for the audit of the financial statements. The audit of the financial statements is the responsibility of the auditor.

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For information only, please refer to the audit report.

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The following information is provided for the purpose of the audit.