

**Minutes of the Meeting of Warwickshire County Council held on
14 December 2010**

Present:

Councillor Jose Compton (Chair)

Councillors Martyn Ashford, Peter Balaam, Peter Barnes, Sarah Boad, Peter Butlin, Les Caborn, Richard Chattaway, Jeff Clarke, Alan Cockburn, Ron Cockings, Mike Doody, Alan Farnell, Jim Foster, Peter Fowler, Carol Fox, Mike Gittus, Colin Hayfield, Robin Hazelton, Bob Hicks, Richard Hobbs, Clare Hopkinson, Julie Jackson, David Johnston, Joan Lea, Barry Lobbett, Barry Longden, Tilly May, Frank McCarney, Phillip Morris-Jones, Brian Moss, Tim Naylor, Clive Rickhards, Carolyn Robbins, Kate Rolfe, Jerry Roodhouse, John Ross, Chris Saint, Izzi Seccombe, Martin Shaw, Dave Shilton, Bob Stevens, Ray Sweet, B.E.M., June Tandy, Heather Timms, Sid Tooth, John Vereker, C.B.E., D.L., Helen Walton, Angela Warner, Claire Watson, John Whitehouse, Chris Williams, Sonja Wilson and David Wright.

1. General

(1) Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors John Appleton, Penny Bould, Richard Dodd, Martin Heatley and Mike Perry.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Item 4 – High Speed Rail

Councillor Richard Hobbs declared a prejudicial interest as a relative owned property near to the proposed route.

(3) Minutes

Following comments from Councillor Chris Davis that his apologies for non attendance at the last meeting had not been recorded, it was **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2010 be agreed as amended and be signed by the Chair.

(4) Chair's Announcements, Correspondence, Petitions

(i) Announcements

The Chair reminded members that there would be an opportunity for each member to sign a charter committing the Council to fighting the stigma around mental health problems.

(ii) Warwickshire County Boys Choir

Following comments from the Chair, the Council placed on record their appreciation to the Warwickshire County Boys Choir for their success in the Grand Final of the BBC Choir of the Year competition.

(ii) Correspondence

None

(iii) Petitions

Mrs French on behalf of the League of Friends of Shipston on Stour presented a petition of 2185 signatures opposing the closure of South Warwickshire Care Homes consultation needs to be with the community.

The Chair indicated that the petition would be passed to the Strategic Director of Adult Health and Community Services for attention.

2. The Impact on Warwickshire of the Local Government Finance Settlement

Councillor Alan Farnell, the Leader of the Council, informed the Council that, as there had been insufficient time to analysis the local government finance settlement that had been received very recently, a presentation would not be possible at today's meeting. He added that information would be circulated to members as soon as possible leading to a further financial report to feed into the February budget debate. He would discuss the process with the leaders of the other groups.

3. Police Authority Presentation

The Council received a presentation about the new policing model recently approved by the Police Authority. The issues covered included:

- Philosophy of continued evolution – provided further opportunities for change
- New financial landscape – increased the need for and pace in which change has to be delivered
- Reorganised to provide best protection with resources available
- Investments to mitigate threat
- Uniformed workforce – more time visible in communities to prevent and reduce crime and disorder
- Improved professionalism of crime investigation

- Delivery of professional services and facilities that enable the delivery of protection

Following the presentation the Chief Constable responded to questions from members.

4. High Speed Rail 2

Councillor Alan Cockburn presented the report from the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy. Seconded by Councillor Bob Stevens he moved:

That, as there can be no environmental or economic benefits for Warwickshire, this Council:

- (1) Opposes the proposed High Speed Rail 2 scheme.
- (2) Recommends that the consultation be deferred until all information is made available.
- (3) Instructs the Leader to write to the Secretary of State for Transport (copy to Warwickshire MPs) expressing these views.

Councillor John Whitehouse, seconded by Councillor David Johnston, then moved the following amendment:

Addition of (4) to Councillor Cockburn's motion:

- (4) Agrees to work with the other local authorities affected by the planned HS2 route, and with the Action Groups established throughout Warwickshire, to provide coordinated opposition to the current scheme.

During the debate Councillor Cockburn, with the consent of his seconder, agreed to incorporate Councillor Whitehouse's amendment in his motion.

Following further debate during which many members expressed concern over many aspects of the proposed Scheme the motion, as amended, was put to the votes and was CARRIED unanimously.

5. Appointments to Committees

Councillor Colin Hayfield presented the report of the Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce and Governance.

Resolved:

That the Council confirm the following allocation of seats on committees:

Committees	Con	LD	Lab	Other	Total
Audit and Standards Committee	4	1	1		6
Regulatory Committee	7	3	2		12
Staff and Pensions Committee	4	1	1		6
Overview and Scrutiny Board	7	2	2	1	12
Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	2	2		10
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	2	2		10
Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6	2	2		10
Total	40	13	12	1	66

6. Revised Petitions Scheme - E Petitions Facility

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Lead Portfolio Holder for Customers, Workforce and Partnerships, presented the report of the Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce and Governance.

Resolved:

That the Council approves the inclusion of the arrangements for e-petitions in Appendix 1 (without amendment) of the report of the Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce and Governance and authorises the Strategic Director of Customer Workforce and Governance to make any necessary amendments to the Petitions Scheme to incorporate those changes.

7. Member Development Programme

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Lead Portfolio Holder for Customers, Workforce and Partnerships, presented the report of the Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce and Governance.

Resolved:

- (1) That the feedback from the West Midlands Council Member Development Assessment Team be noted.
- (2) That Council agree the actions to take forward the recommendations from the Assessment Team as set out at 4.1 of the report of the

Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce and Governance and the additional recommendations at 4.2.

- (3) That Council support the continuation of the West Midlands network for a trial period and that the Member Development Steering Group further explore sub-regional opportunities.
- (4) That Council note progress in completion of the mandatory programme as set out at 5.1 and agree the proposals at 5.2 with regard to the completion of this year's mandatory development programme and 5.3 criteria for exemptions (with amendment to the Member Allowances Scheme).
- (5) That Council agree the proposed approach to mandatory development for 2011/12 as set out at 5.4.

8. Monitoring of Decisions under the Urgency Procedure

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Lead Portfolio Holder for Customers, Workforce and Partnerships, presented the report of the Strategic Director of Customers, Workforce and Governance.

The Council noted the report.

9. National Demonstrator Programme for Common Assessment Framework (CAF) - Addition to Capital Programme.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe, Lead Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care presented the report of the Strategic Director of Adult Health and Community Services.

Resolved:

Council approve the addition of £1,732,113 expenditure to the Council's capital programme across 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13, to be fully funded by Common Assessment Framework Grant from the Department of Health.

10. Land for Disposal at South West Warwick – Addition to Capital Programme

Councillor Colin Hayfield, Lead Portfolio Holder for Customers, Workforce and Partnerships, presented the report of the Strategic Director of Resources.

Resolved:

That the Council approve the addition to the capital programme of the costs to be paid by the Council to Taylor Wimpey pursuant to the Flood Agreement of £925,000, to be funded from prudential borrowing in lieu of the future capital receipt.

The Council adjourned for lunch from 12.50 p.m. to 2.15 p.m.

On commencement of business the Chair indicated that Members Question time and Questions to the Leader would be taken before the items relating to the Rugby Western Relief Road. These minutes reflect the order of the agenda

11. Rugby Western Relief Road

Councillor Whitehouse presented the report from the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Following debate it was **Resolved:**

That the Council note that the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that in the interests of open and transparent scrutiny, all the information relevant to the matter needed to be in the public domain and agreed to adjourn their meeting until all relevant information could be made publicly available.

The report to be considered at Agenda Item 16 no longer contained exempt information and the Council agreed to consider the report in open session.

12. Member Question Time (Standing Order 7).

(1) Protecting the Fire Service

Cllr Richard Chattaway asked Councillor Richard Hobbs, Lead Portfolio Holder for Community Safety the following question:

"During the Leader's speech to Full Council on 2 November, Councillor Farnell stated that 'those services from which we will not look for savings' included the fire service. However, savings proposal FR-05 states that management and support staff in the fire service will be reduced by 18%.

Can the Portfolio Holder explain what impact these cuts will have on training, development, policy, planning and fire safety support and to what extent will this hinder the ability of firefighters to deliver frontline

services to the current level. Can he also confirm if this will impact on building inspections?"

Councillor Hobbs replied:

"Councillor Farnell has indicated that savings would not affect front line services. As portfolio holder I looked at savings which will not affect emergency response times. Training and support and fire safety will be included in policy development."

Councillor Chattaway then asked:

"If managers and operational staff are removed how will front line service not be affected?"

Councillor Hobbs replied:

"I repeat the points made."

(2) Supporting Youth Development

Councillor Richard Chattaway asked Councillor Richard Hobbs, Lead Portfolio Holder for Community Safety the following question:

"At his Challenge session on 21 July 2010, the Portfolio Holder emphasised the need to support youth development and Young Firefighter Association activities within the fire service. Will he therefore confirm that if this programme which has been such a success in developing young people's skills for their future education, employment and training will continue next year?"

Councillor Richard Hobbs replied:

"I am discussing with partners other means of funding."

(3) Funding Bid for NUCKLE

Councillor Richard Chattaway asked Cllr Alan Cockburn, Lead Portfolio Holder for Environment & Economy the following question:

"Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that he is urging the Department for Transport to make a final funding decision on the Major Scheme Bid for NUCKLE Phase 1, in order that this Council can determine if it should proceed with the capital investment proposal of £670,000 in 2011/12?"

Councillor Cockburn replied:

“This is a high priority for Warwickshire and Coventry and the bid will be submitted by the 4 January. Councillor Farnell and the Leader of Coventry City Council are to meet Phil Hammond to raise the priority of this scheme.”

Councillor Dave Shilton then asked:

“Will this include funding for Kenilworth Station?”

Councillor Cockburn replied:

“The second round of area grants will be important in this respect.”

(4) Siblings and School Catchment Areas

Councillor Kate Rolfe asked Councillor Heather Timms, Lead Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families the following question:

“In light of the recent reports stating that there is likely to be a shortage of school places in Stratford Town can the Portfolio holder assure me siblings of children who have been allocated schools out of catchment will be given a higher priority than 5 out of 6 on the criteria list? There are a number of families living south of the river in Stratford who have been directed to take their children to schools north of the river in the past few years as there were no available places in the local schools. These families want assurances that younger brothers and sisters will be able to go to the same school.”

Councillor Timms responded

On the 16 December the Cabinet will consider 2 reports addressing admission issues in the county. In Stratford upon Avon, 15 additional places have already been approved for Bridgetown Primary School which will increase reception capacity in the town to 295. This will remove the difficulties for the coming year.

Councillor Rolfe then asked:

“Parents will be forced to take children to schools out of their catchment. I know of 5 families who can not be reassured that if they put the Willows Primary School which is within their catchment as first choice for their sibling children, they will not be given places out of their catchment area.”

13. Leader of the Council Question Time.

(1) English Defence League

Councillor June Tandy asked:

“The recent march by the English Defence League cost £350k can this cost be recovered. What can be done to stop marches by this organisation?”

Councillor Farnell, Leader of the Council, replied:

“I have written to the Home Secretary seeking a ban on EDL marches and about the cost of the police presence at such events. I understand that Marcus Jones MP wrote in similar terms to the Home Secretary and he has been advised that the Home Secretary feels reluctant to ban such organisations for several reasons including the ability of groups to re-establish themselves under a different title.

I can not give an answer about recovery of the costs incurred by the Police.”

(2) Automated Fire Alarms

Councillor June Tandy asked:

“Will the Leader reconsider the decision that the fire service should not respond to alarms triggered by automated alarms even when sheltered accommodation is involved.”

Councillor Farnell replied:

“Many resources are wasted responding to false alarms from automated alarm systems which can be triggered by a number of things including insects. There are other means of confirming that there is an actual fire which will result in the fire service attending. There is a need for common sense in this matter.”

(3) Alderman Smith School

Councillor Barry Longden asked:

“There have been considerable delays in certificates of achievements being sent to pupils at Alderman Smith School and work of pupils undertaken in connection with IT studies appears to have gone missing. I have not had an official response to my concerns in this matter. Will the Leader look into this?”

Councillor Farnell replied:

“I will get an urgent response on the matter.”

(4) Academies

Councillor Chris Saint asked:

“Will the Council facilitate applications for academies?”

Councillor Farnell replied:

“Applications need to be made by governing bodies. It is not up to the Council who applies. We have to make sure we provide a traded service that is cost effective and efficient.”

14. Any other items of urgent business.

None

15. Report Containing Exempt Information

The report to be considered at Agenda Item 16 no longer contained exempt information and the Council agreed to consider the report in open session.

16. Rugby Western Relief Road

Councillor Alan Cockburn, Lead Portfolio Holder for Environment and Economy presented the report

Seconded by Councillor Martyn Ashford, he moved and following debate it was **Resolved** by 25 votes to 8:

- (1) That the increase in expenditure for this project from £55M to £60.495M, as set out in Table 1 of the report of the Strategic Director of Resources, be added to the Council’s capital programme.
- (2) That the proposals set out in Table 1 of the report for funding increased costs in 2010-11, including virement of funding from Nuneaton Ring Road and Stratford Mini Tram, be approved.
- (3) That the capital receipt from Lower House Farm be earmarked for Rugby Western Relief Road and that if the capital receipt is not received until 2011-12 the amount required in 2010-11 be funded through temporary Prudential Borrowing.

The Council rose at 3.25 p.m.

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Chair