

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
HELD ON 22 JULY 2021.**

PRESENT: Councillors Susan Rasmussen (Chair), Janet Alty, David Brunson, Will Bryce, Mubarak Chowdry, Judith Clarke, Jennifer McAllister, Louisa Radice, Amanda Stevens and Nick Wilkins.

Officer: Democratic Support Officer.

Also present: Christina Boxer (Warwick District Council Commonwealth Games Programme Manager), Rose Winship (Warwick District Council Head of Leisure Services and Paul Garrison (Warwick District Council Project Manager).

27. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs A Boad, S Boad, B Gifford, J McGhee and N Kaur Atwal, and the Town Clerk.

28. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Rasmussen declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 on the Agenda as a member of Cycleways and Clean Air for Leamington. Cllr Brunson also declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 on the Agenda as a member of Cycleways.

29. **PUBLIC FORUM**

There were no representations from members of the public.

30. **UPDATE ON COMMONWEALTH GAMES 2022**

Christina Boxer updated the Council on how work on the Commonwealth Games 2022 and specifically on the Lawn and Para Bowls has been progressing in Leamington Spa. The main points were as follows:

- Lawn Bowls and Para Bowls will take place in Victoria Park from 29th July 2022 – 6th August 2022.
- There will be 9 days of competition, 2 sessions a day, an estimated 5000 daily visitors and 28 nations competing (240 competitors based on Commonwealth Games 2018 figures)
- Related infrastructure improvements are being funded by Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and include bowls venues and Victoria Park upgrades, and wider public realm and transport enhancements.
- Business and employment opportunities at the Games are currently being advertised via this portal:
- Volunteering opportunities are being advertised via social media and local partners
- The regional ticket ballot went live on 16th July 2021 – people from the West Midlands will have first choice on tickets for the Games until 30th July 2021.
- Local opportunities to get involved include:
 - Creation of street dressing
 - Volunteering at the Bowls competitions
 - Junior Bowls and BAME initiatives

- The Queen's Baton Relay
- 28th July 2022 – Community Fun Day in the Pump Room Gardens – live site showing the opening ceremony on a big screen
- There are three stages of Venue Operating Plans (VOP) for the Games. Victoria Park is at VOP stage 2 completed. The planning application for the temporary works at Victoria Park are currently on the Warwick District Council planning portal for comments. The original proposal has been adjusted to maintain access from Avenue Road to Victoria Park throughout the Games process.

Paul Garrison then gave an overview of the infrastructure improvements projects which have been delivered to date:

- Over £1.8 million has been invested so far in improvement projects with in excess of another £2 million to be spent by July 2022.
- Public realm improvements have included new fencing, path renewals and planting in Victoria Park, on the Riverside Walk and on York Walk.
- Tennis courts in Victoria Park and Christchurch Gardens have been refurbished.
- New outdoor gym installed in Victoria Park.
- New mobile CCTV equipment purchased for use during the Games.
- "Choose How You Move" sustainable travel initiative across the District.
- Bowling greens re-laid, bowling clubhouse and tennis pavilion refurbished in Victoria Park.
- New PA system installed at the bowling greens.
- Free public wi-fi installed at the bowling clubhouse and the tennis pavilion.
- Investment in greens maintenance equipment and bowling aids.

Further improvement projects to be delivered:

- Parking and toilet facilities improvements at Victoria Park
- Better cycle parking in Leamington Spa
- New wayfinding scheme
- New play facility in Victoria Park
- Major improvements to Leamington Spa Station forecourt and underpass

A Q & A session was then held which covered these main points:

1. WDC plans for temporary parking arrangements regarding local residents whose properties will be affected:

A separate sub-group for parking has been created with WDC officers, Birmingham 22 representatives and the Friends of Victoria Park which has held three meetings to date to work through parking concerns. No councillor representation. WDC currently working on where residents' displacement parking can be best located (this will apply to residents who have parking permits). Discussions focussing on how best to suspend the current parking arrangements and move it elsewhere in Leamington temporarily.

Archery Rd will be closed to traffic for a couple of hours a day with entry controlled by a steward. Members were assured that there would not be much impact on Avenue Rd in terms of additional parking.

2. Railway station underpass renovation:

Will be cleaned and painted – creative finish to be decided and will include new lighting. There will be a focus on dealing with litter, graffiti and cleaning street furniture just prior to the start of the Games.

3. Outstanding infrastructure expenditure with one year to go:

£2 million of CWLEP grant funding has been allocated for the remaining infrastructure improvement programme. Some match funding from WDC will follow. All proposed improvement projects are fully funded and will be completed by the time of the Games. The improvements to the railway station will be the largest amount of expenditure.

4. Disabled parking provision:

Adelaide Road car park had been allocated for this purpose. Birmingham 2022 have now said they have found a better option (not as yet disclosed).

5. Wayfinding design:

A consultancy has been appointed to research and design the new wayfinding scheme in keeping with Leamington's existing brand and its architecture. They are working with the Leamington Society and the Leamington History Group on the content. There will be directional monoliths through the main spine of the town from Old Town to Christchurch Gardens.

Paul Garrison to check with colleagues whether the draft designs can be shared with the Town Council for their input yet. Once finalised, the wayfinding designs will require a planning application which will come to the Town Council Planning Committee for comment and Paul will attend a meeting of that committee if requested to discuss.

6. Directing Commonwealth Games visitors into town:

Live Site encourages visitors to go further afield into the town and illustrates what is on offer (*Live Sites typically comprise: free to enter locations with a defined perimeter, screen provision to watch the Games, designated space for 'have-a-go' sport elements, food and beverage sales provision, sponsor activation, merchandise sales, and performance, participation or entertainment elements.*)

Volunteers will have info pack on Leamington prior to the Games so they can read up on what Leamington has to offer and can give advice to visitors.

Car parking ticket will be a daily ticket which will encourage longer stays.

Exit route onto Archery Rd – York walk – footbridge into Live Site and then into the town centre.

Businesses can register on the Commonwealth Games 2022 business portal so visitors can find them on the official website.

Members outlined the potential advantages to be found in working with the local Shopmobility scheme and the Guild of Guides in terms of promotion, accessibility and longer stays. Members were assured that there would be no events clashing with the Games in town e.g. Art in the Park will take place a week later than usual in 2022.

Rose Winship thanked the Council for their financial contribution to the street dressing funding, asked if a working group could be set up to discuss what the street dressing in town could look like and offered to provide a further update in the future

to the Council. She also informed members that the production of a Sustainable Travel Plan for the Games in Leamington was the responsibility of Birmingham 2022 as it is their event.

The WDC officers were thanked for attending the meeting and providing detailed updates. They then left the meeting at 7:05pm.

31. COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR FORUM

Cllr S Boad noted:

The Parade has now re-opened to all traffic and buses services have returned their normal route. This has generated strong views on both sides - the Parade had to re-open as it was closed using an emergency traffic order. Plans for the future of the Parade will be brought forward in due course. There is currently no budget for any work to be carried out.

The County Council is currently asking residents and parents to comment on issues around parking outside schools. Closing date is 30th July. Link to the survey can be found on the WCC Facebook page:

- Parents/ Carers: <https://forms.office.com/r/jeWYQCC50S>
- Residents: <https://forms.office.com/r/fcKxv1W8Hd>

Following a motion I moved at the last Council meeting, and which received unanimous support, an all-party working group has been set up to oversee the production of a Bus Service Improvement Plan as required by Government. Town and Parish councils will be consulted in due course. I am a member of the group so will keep you all informed as to progress.

32. MINI HOLLANDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME & CYCLE SCHEMES

Resolved that the Mini Hollands Development Programme & Cycle Schemes Report is noted and that members unanimously support the provision of a letter of support to Warwickshire County Council in relation to its expression of interest in the Department for Transport's 'Mini Hollands Development Programme' and also the provision of a letter of support to Warwickshire County Council in relation to its bid for capital funding for the specific walking and cycling infrastructure / scheme identified (A425 Radford Semele – Leamington Cycle Route).

Members noted that all pedestrians including the disabled must be taken into equal consideration when cycling schemes are designed for Leamington.

33. UPDATES FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON EXTERNAL BODIES

Resolved that the Council noted the updates provided.

34. COVID / OPERATIONAL UPDATE

The Democratic Support Officer gave a brief update:

Office staff have had an initial meeting regarding a return to the office following the lifting of the government's work from home directive. It was agreed that officers would adopt a combination of office/home working following annual leave taken in August. Officers would then work an agreed rota of days in the office and from home per week.

Resolved that the Council noted the update provided.

35. BOUNDARY REVIEW

Resolved that the review is noted and no comments were provided for feedback.

Members noted that the boundary review would result in all Leamington streets being included within the Warwick & Leamington constituency.

36. CIVIC HONOURS COMPETITION

Resolved that the report is noted and this item is to be considered by the Communications Working Group which would investigate potential methods of engaging residents to see how popular the idea of city status for Leamington would be.

37. MINUTES OF COUNCIL AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council

Resolved that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10th June 21 are confirmed as a correct record.

Policy and Resources Committee

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 17th June 21 are received.

Planning Committee

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 13th May 21 and 9th June 21 are received.

38. PAYMENTS

Resolved that the payments identified are approved

<u>Cheque Number</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Total</u>
106764	K Geddes	Re-imbusement for online payment - Art in the Park stall booking (Leam in Bloom)	£60.00	£0.00	£60.00
106765	S Marks	Re-imbusement Zoom subscription -July21 (Invoice ref INV97380969)	£11.99	£0.00	£11.99

106766	Warwick District Council (cheque payable to Post Office Ltd to enable paying in at Post Office)	Leamington In Bloom - bedding plants for Floral Trains	£312.00	£0.00	£312.00
			£383.99	£0.00	£383.99

