



THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF
ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
TOWN HALL, THE PARADE,
ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA
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ROBERT NASH ACIS DMS
Clerk to the Town Council

Our Ref: RN/

Your Ref:

28TH August 2012

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee will be held in Meeting Room 5A, Town Hall, Parade, Royal Leamington Spa on **MONDAY 3RD SEPTEMBER 2012 at 6.30 pm.**

The business will be as set out below.

Yours faithfully,

CLERK TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

To Councillors: Mrs S.E. Boad, T. Crockford, W.L. Gifford, D.A. Greenwood, S. Ingleby, J. Knight, A. Morrison and A. Wilkinson

(All other Members of the Town Council – Agenda for information only)

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee are invited to declare any interest they may have in items identified for discussion at the Meeting.

3. **PUBLIC FORUM**

To receive representations from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

4. **MINUTES**

To consider and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21ST June, 2012 (Report No. 4)

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

(i) **War Memorial (Minute 5(ii))**

Town Clerk to report orally progress since the last Meeting.

6. LOCAL COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT -DISPENSATIONS

To consider the attached Report (Report No.6)

7. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

To consider the attached Report (Report No.7)

8. TOWN COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

To consider the development of a Town Plan/Forward Strategy.

9. LILLINGTON LIBRARY

To consider the attached Report (Report No.9)

10. WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

To note that the Annual General Meeting of WALC will be held on Weds 7th November 2012 at Shire Hall, Warwick commencing at 7.30 pm.

To consider:-

- (i) Any additional nominations to membership of the WALC County Committee (Cllr J. Knight is presently the Council's direct appointee)
- (ii) A resolution to be moved at the Annual General meeting. Resolutions need to be concerned with issues that affect the majority of Councils.

11. MAYOR'S CHAUFFEUR

To approve arrangements for the appointment to the Post of Mayor's Chauffeur.

12. COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

To receive and approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Communications Working Group held on 21st August 2012 (Report No.12).

13. ACCOUNTS

To consider and approve accounts arising for payment since the last Meeting.

14. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To consider and, if so agreed, to RESOLVE that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the Meeting and they are instructed to withdraw.

15. SHOPMOBILITY REVIEW

To consider progress in relation to the review of the Shopmobility Scheme. Town Clerk to report orally.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JUNE 2012 HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, PARADE, LEAMINGTON SPA

Present: Councillors Sarah Boad, Bill Gifford, Balvinder Gill (substituting for Cllr Ann Morrison), David Greenwood, Sue Ingleby, John Knight, Amanda Stevens (substituting for Cllr Tim Crockford) and Alan Wilkinson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tim Crockford and Ann Morrison.

Also present: Mr Nick Darwen (Warwickshire County Council) and Ms Elizabeth Young (Warwick District Council).

There were no members of the public present.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Ann Morrison was proposed and seconded as Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee for the municipal year 2012-13. There being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED that Councillor Ann Morrison is appointed Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee for the municipal year 2012-13.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Sue Ingleby was proposed and seconded as Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee for the municipal year 2012-13. There being no further nominations, it was

RESOLVED that Sue Ingleby is appointed Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee for the municipal year 2012-13.

3. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Mr Nick Darwen of Warwickshire County Council outlined the County Council's approach to closer working with Town and Parish Councils and arrangements for the potential devolution of services or closer involvement in service provision. He explained that the County Council was responding to both the current economic situation in which it had been necessary to implement reductions in services, and the Government's desire for greater competition and diversity in the delivery of services at a local level.

He acknowledged that there was tension between greater involvement of neighbourhoods on the one hand and achieving economies of scale on the other. However, there were opportunities to develop dialogue with local councils as they were important bodies at the local level which could help to foster greater levels of community ownership of services.

Mr Darwen indicated that following a series of seminars, several local councils had indicated a preference for greater involvement in services such as highways, transport, culture and crime prevention and public safety. The County Council would consider the implications for their involvement in these services as part of its response to the localism agenda.

In answer to a question, he confirmed that the County Council's preferred approach was to seek the views of local councils rather than prescribe a list of services that were suitable for devolved service delivery.

Following further discussion, the Committee noted the opportunities available to the Council and it was suggested that this matter could be explored further at a meeting of the Forward Plan Committee.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the officers are thanked for their presentation; and
- (ii) that opportunities for the Town Council's participation in the delivery of services currently provided by Warwickshire County Council are discussed at a future meeting of the Forward Plan Committee.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 April 2012 are confirmed and signed as a correct record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Social Cohesion Fund

The Town Clerk reported a reply received from the Director of Hybrid Arts explaining that the application for a grant had been based on an incorrect calculation of the cost of professional support. It was indicated that this should have reflected the cost of support staff, hence the remuneration per individual ranged from £15 to £25 per hour and not £40 per hour as previously indicated.

RESOLVED that the explanation from the Director of Hybrid Arts is accepted and the opportunity is taken to review the outcome of the project and report to a subsequent meeting of the Committee.

(ii) War Memorial

The Town Clerk reported that consultation had now been concluded with the local branch of the Royal British Legion which had expressed concern at the proposal to introduce a gravelled or paved area around the base of the Memorial. This was based on the belief that the Legion would lose significant income if individuals were unable to place wooden crosses around the Memorial on the soft landscaping.

As a compromise, it was suggested that brick pavers be introduced around the newly laid slabs and the remainder of the area be returned to grass.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Town Clerk proceeds with the renovation of the War Memorial on the basis of maintaining a grassed area around the base of the Memorial; and

- (ii) that an application be made to the War Memorial Trust for assistance with the costs of cleaning the Memorial and laying of brick pavers to the West side of the Memorial.

6. LOCAL COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT

Consideration was given to a Report (Report No. 9) setting out the implications for the Council of changes to the Code of Conduct as a result of the Localism Act 2011. It was noted that the National Association of Local Councils had drawn up a model code but it was recommended that, wherever possible, local councils consider adopting the Code of Conduct to be used by their District or Borough Council. This would ensure uniformity between local councils and make the task of enforcement much more effective. Warwick District Council was due to adopt a code at its meeting on 27 June 2012.

RESOLVED

- (i) that subject to Warwick District Council approving a Code of Conduct at its meeting on 27 June 2012, this Council considers the adoption of the District Code of Conduct at the next meeting of Council on 12 July 2012; and
- (ii) that the Report is noted.

7. LEAMINGTON OLD TOWN “PORTAS” FUNDING BID

Consideration was given to a Report (Report No. 10) setting out a request from a project team comprising local residents and the Old Town Business Association, for funding to support a bid to the Government backed “Portas” Pilot Competition.

The bid would be made to attempt to secure £100k of funding to invigorate and revitalise the old town area of Leamington. In order to support the bid, it was essential that it received a commitment from local businesses and local authorities, and a bid of £10,000 was therefore requested from the Town Council to match that pledged by the District Council. It was indicated that payment of this sum is only incurred should the bid to the Portas Pilot be successful.

RESOLVED

- (i) that a letter of support and a pledge of £10,000 match funding be sent to the project team leader for the Old Town Portas bid; and
- (ii) it is **recommended** that Council provides £10,000 from balances as a provision in the event of a successful outcome for the Old Town Portas bid.

8. STREET LIGHTING CHANGES

The Town Clerk reported a letter from Warwickshire County Council announcing that it would be implementing a reduction in the operation of street lighting in order to save a potential £500,000 per year and reduce carbon emissions. The reduction in street lighting would operate between the hours of midnight and 5.30am but would not apply to the following locations:

- Where there are potential hazards on the highway such as roundabouts, traffic signal controlled junctions, traffic calming features etc;
- At pedestrian crossings;
- Where there are local authority or police CCTV cameras;
- Adjacent to elderly persons care homes, sheltered accommodation and hospital accident and emergency departments;
- Adjacent to taxi ranks;
- Public footpaths, alleyways and cycle paths which are located away from roads.

Concern was expressed that the County Council had taken an arbitrary decision which affected some residential areas more significantly than others and that it had not allowed the Town Council sufficient opportunity to be consulted on this matter.

RESOLVED that the proposed changes to public street lighting are noted.

9. ACCOUNTS

RESOLVED that the schedule of accounts are approved and authorised for payment.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the Press and Public are excluded from the Meeting and they be instructed to withdraw.

11. SHOPMOBILITY SCHEME

Consideration was given to a Report (Report No. 14) setting out for the Committee's information, discussions on the future of the Leamington Shopmobility scheme. The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made on the review to date.

RESOLVED that that the report is noted and received.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and ended at 8.05 pm

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 3RD SEPTEMBER 2012

LOCAL COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT -DISPENSATIONS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To agree a procedure to be adopted for the granting of dispensations to Members in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The 2011 Localism Act introduced a new standards regime with effect from 1 July 2012. Whereas previously the District Council was responsible for dealing with applications for dispensations by Town Councillors, under the new framework such applications are dealt with by the Town Council itself.
- 2.2 At the Council meeting on the 12th July, the Council agreed that the responsibility for considering and granting dispensations in cases of disclosable pecuniary interest should be undertaken by the Urgent Matters Committee.
- 2.3 A Member with a "disclosable pecuniary interest" can submit a written request to the Town Clerk for the Council to grant a dispensation to relieve the Member of the restrictions whereby that Member would otherwise be prohibited from taking part in the meeting. The Council may grant such a dispensation if, having had regard to all relevant circumstances, it considers that:
- (i) without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
 - (ii) without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
 - (iii) granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
 - (iv) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- 2.4 A dispensation must specify the period for which it has effect, and that period may not exceed four years. The dispensation can be granted to allow the member either to speak, or to vote, or to do both. Anything done for the purpose of deciding whether to grant a dispensation is not covered by the requirement that a member must not speak or vote on a matter where they have a "disclosable pecuniary interest". So, members who have a "disclosable pecuniary interest" can speak and vote at a meeting to determine whether or not a dispensation is granted.

3. DUAL-HATTED MEMBERS

- 3.1 In common with many Parish and Town Councils, several members of the Town Council are “dual-hatted” - being also members of Warwick District Council and/or Warwickshire County Council. Presently five members are in this position and two members are in the position of being the spouse of Warwick District Councillors.
- 3.2 Advice from monitoring officers, including the Head of Legal Services, Warwickshire County Council, is that, because Principal Council members are in receipt of allowances and expenses, this falls within the definition of ‘employment’ and is therefore one of the matters defined by the Secretary of State in the “Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012” as a matter which must by law be disclosed, and on which members who have such an interest cannot speak or vote unless they have been granted a dispensation.
- 3.3 Under the former system the District Council's Standards Committee had the power to grant dispensations to dual-hatted members on matters where the business of both authorities was linked. This power no longer continues under the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.4 It is therefore proposed that, under the criteria above, any ‘dual-hatted’ member who makes a prior written application should be granted a dispensation up to the date of the next full council elections in 2015, permitting that member to speak and to vote on any matter falling into the following three categories:
- (i) Any matter relating to any land transactions between the Town Council and Warwick District Council, or Warwickshire County Council;
 - (ii) Any matters relating to any financial transactions or grants between the Town Council and Warwick District Council or Warwickshire County Council
 - (iii) Any planning application or Local Plan matter where the promoter, applicant or landowner is Warwick District Council or Warwickshire County Council.

These are designed to be ‘catch-all’ so as to avoid the need for recurring dispensation requests from members on specific items which occur from time to time between the Councils on which the dual-hatted members serve.

4. COUNCIL APPOINTEES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

- 4.1 Within the Council's Code of Conduct are interests other than Pecuniary interests where a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or the financial position of the Member or the financial position or well-being of a “relevant person” to a greater extent than other Council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Council's area. These interests are one's upon which Councillors must register and disclose their interest and on which they are permitted to speak, but not to vote.

These include instances where a member is in a “position of general control or management” on an outside body and matters relating to that body come before the Council.

- 4.2 However, when the Council has itself appointed a member to such a body this is perhaps unduly restrictive, and it is therefore suggested that a blanket dispensation be granted, on written application, to permit a member to also vote on any matter relating to a body onto which they have been appointed by council and where it has been included on their register of interests. A suggested application form is enclosed at Appendix 1.

5. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH OTHER DISPENSATIONS

- 5.1 Apart from the circumstances described in paragraphs 3 and 4 above, applications for specific dispensations may occur from time to time. The Council has the power to grant such, but also has a general power, as with any matter other than setting the precept, to determine that such a function can be delegated to a committee, a sub-committee, or an officer.
- 5.2 It is suggested that, in addition to the Council itself, the power to grant dispensations be also delegated to the Council’s Planning Committee for any matter appearing on the agenda of that committee. This power would not however be delegated to any other committee, sub-committee, or officer. There does not need to be a special meeting to determine dispensations, so it is suggested that for all future full Council and Planning Committee meetings the current agenda item “Declarations of Interests” becomes “Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations” so that any such dispensations can be granted. (N.B. The member must still submit a prior written application to the Town Clerk seeking any such dispensation.)

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 The Council now has power under the Localism Act to grant dispensations to Members of the Council in certain circumstances where ordinarily if a dispensation were not available the Member would be unable to speak or take part in the business before the Meeting.
- 6.2 The application of the Code to Members in all circumstances where a disclosable pecuniary interest arises can impact on the business of the Council to an extent not intended by the provisions within the Act. It is therefore recommended that the Council adopts a protocol for dealing with dispensations in certain specified circumstances.

RECOMMENDED

(1) That subject to a member submitting a written application, the Council grant a dispensation for the period up to the next full Council elections in 2015 permitting any ‘dual-hatted’ member to speak and vote on:-

- (a) any matter relating to any land transactions between Leamington Spa Town Council and Warwick District Council, or Warwickshire County Council; and
- (b) any matters relating to any financial transactions or grants between Leamington Spa Town Council and Warwick District Council, or Warwickshire County Council; and
- (c) any planning application or Local Plan matter where the promoter, applicant or landowner is Warwick District Council or Warwickshire County Council

(2) That, subject to the member submitting a written application, the Council grant a dispensation for the period up to the next full Council elections in 2015 permitting any member to vote on any matters relating to the affairs of a body onto which they have been appointed or nominated by the Council and where such a body is included in that member's register of interests

(3) That delegated authority is granted to the Council's Planning Committee to grant dispensations to members for any matters appearing on the agenda of that meeting.

APPENDIX 1

APPLICATION FOR DISPENSATIONS
 (this form to be returned to the Town Clerk)

Councillor's name:

Date:

I apply for a dispensation to speak and/or to vote at all meetings of Royal Leamington Spa Town Council on those matters indicated below where I have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest which would otherwise prohibit me from speaking and voting.

Nature of Interest	Matter	Put "YES" in one box from (a) or (b) Or leave blank if you do not wish to apply for a dispensation	
		(a) speak only	(b) speak <u>and</u> vote
1. Member of Warwick District Council or Warwickshire County Council	<i>Any matter relating to any land transactions between Royal Leamington Spa Town Council and Warwick District Council, or Warwickshire County Council</i>		
	<i>Any matters relating to any financial transactions or grants between Royal Leamington Spa Town Council and Warwick District Council, or Warwickshire County Council</i>		
	<i>Any planning application or Local Plan matter where the promoter, applicant or landowner is Warwick District Council, or Warwickshire County Council</i>		
2. Any body onto which I have been appointed by Royal Leamington Spa Town Council and as listed in my register of interests	<i>Any matters relating to the affairs of that body</i>		
Any other matters where a dispensation is sought (please specify)			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Budget Head	Members Allowances	Salaries	Mayoral Transport	Civic Expenses	Administrative Expenses	Buildings	Mayor's Annual Award	Twining	Grants and Special Projects	Allotments	Elections	Income	Total
Budget	17800	94000	6220	16070	13362	21425	150	1550	143540	5400	10000	4600	324917
Expenditure at 31 07.12 (cash book)	5637	31439	2702	8066	3629	10396	60	289	52064	412	10000	102	124592
adjustments 2011/12 (see Notes)	1035	1690	117	1618	-2977				20602	-1454			20631
Budget remaining	13,198	64,251	3,635	9,622	6,756	11,029	90	1,261	112,078	3,534	0	4,498	220,956
% unspent or - overspent	74	68	58	60	51	51	60	81	78	65	0	98	68
Notes	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)									
Adjustments relate to expenditure or income within the accounts for 2012/13 which are budgeted in the previous financial year.													
Explanatory Notes													
1. Mayoral Transport	New lease agreement - additional initial payment of £874 will be off-set at year end by lower monthly payments												
2. Buildings	Includes balancing charge of £1845 for Town Hall running costs in 2011/12												
3. Grants/Projects	This budget incurs majority of expenditure following award of Community grants in November 2012												
4. Elections	2011 election costs met in full (£29,948). The effect on the budget is however limited to £10,000 which is an annual budgetary provision												

REPORT OF THE COUNTY LIBRARIAN TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 3rd SEPTEMBER 2012

LILLINGTON LIBRARY - ADDITIONAL 3 HOURS OF OPENING

Introduction

The County Council Cabinet report of 13 October 2011 agreed a reduction in opening hours from 37.5 hours to 20 hours. As a result of a revised staffing model delivered in partnership with Warwick District Council it was possible to increase the opening hours to 30 hours.

The Town Council of Royal Leamington Spa resolved to provide funding to increase the opening hours by a further 3 hours for the period April – September 2012, bringing the total to 33 hours. Warwickshire County Council was very grateful for this support.

The Library and Information Service consulted with residents about their preferred opening hours giving 2 options, and option B below was selected.

Mon 9:30 – 12:30, 13:30 – 16:30
Tue 9:30 – 12:30, 13:30 – 17:30
Wed Closed
Thu 9:30 – 12:30, 13:30 – 17:30
Fri 9:30 – 12:30, 13:30 – 17:30
Sat 9:30 – 12:30
Sun Closed

Lillington residents were consulted in addition on the preferred day and preferred time of day for the additional 3 hours. Based on the outcome of this consultation the following additional hours of opening:

- Mondays 4.30pm – 6.00 (previously open 4.30 – 5.30pm.)
- Thursdays 5.30pm – 7.00pm (same as previous hours.)

were selected as being the most popular.

The new hours commenced from Monday 2 April 2012. The hours are staffed by the experienced existing library staff, so continuity is assured.

The Town Council of Royal Leamington Spa requested an interim report after the first three months of the additional hours being implemented.

Report No. 9

Usage data

The following tables show usage for the additional 3 hours from April to June 2012.

Mondays	April		May		June		TOTAL	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
2011 - 4.30pm-5.30pm 2012 - 4.30pm-6.00pm								
Loans, reservations etc	101	67	50	61	134	100	285	228
Visits	**	80*	**	31	**	48	**	159
Enquiries	**	23	**	10	**	12	**	45
Public PC Usage	13	17	8	6	24	7	45	30

* Visits were distorted by children entering and exiting past the people counter

** Visits and enquiries data was not recorded separately for Monday evenings as there was no need prior to April 2012

Thursdays	April		May		June		TOTAL	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
2011 & 2012 5.30pm-7.00pm								
Loans, reservations etc	134	82	205	149	201	82	540	313
Visits	32	11	57	46	52	18	141	75
Enquiries	**	16	**	14	**	2	**	32
Public PC Usage	25	18	17	11	26	8	68	37

** Enquiries data was not recorded separately for Thursday evenings as there was no need prior to April 2012

Total	April		May		June		TOTAL	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
Mondays & Thursdays								
Loans, reservations etc	235	149	255	210	335	182	825	541
Visits	**	91	**	77	**	66	**	234
Enquiries	**	39	**	24	**	14	**	77
Public PC Usage	38	35	25	17	50	15	113	67

Virtual transactions ie renewals have not been included, we focused only on transactions where a customer has come into the Library.

Notes in relation to the above table

The tables above cover the period April – June 2011 and 2012 and in both years the number of bank holidays were the same. In the period covered there were 10 Mondays and 13 Thursdays.

The two day closure for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, plus Lillington's normal closure day of Wednesday resulted in Thursday 7 June being far busier than usual, which impacts on the above figures.

Summary

The data above indicates the following:

- 3 months may well be too short a period in which to assess the success of the new hours, this is evidenced by there being no fixed pattern of usage as customers are still learning about the additional hours.
- Following national guidance visits are recorded when a customer comes into the Library. It is not possible to know how long a person stays in the Library, it may well be that children coming in to do their homework may well not be leaving until later in the evening and are benefitting from the additional hours. Use of the PCs is quite steady during this period.
- Comparing the 1.5 additional hours on a Monday between April – June 2011 and April – June 2012 customer transactions have decreased by 20%. However, the Library was never open between 5.30 and 6pm, so this 30 minutes are completely new. It will obviously take time for usage to build up.
- Comparing the 1.5 additional hours on a Thursday between April – June 2011 and April – June 2012 customer loans have decreased by 42%.
- The average loans by hour open has increased by 2.3 loans per hour overall (5% increase). Therefore overall the new opening hours are a success in terms of the concentration of usage in the 33 hours in comparison to the previous opening hours of 37.5 hours. The 3 hours funded by the Town Council of Royal Leamington Spa are contributing to this success and if they were to be removed it may result in some customers finding they can no longer access the Service. Cllr Boad has indicated that there has been much enthusiasm in the community for these additional hours as it will enable school children to do their homework.

The Service will continue with the on-going programme of promoting the additional hours at Lillington Library until the 30 September 2012.

Next Steps

Cllr Sarah Boad has indicated that she will be requesting at the Town Council of Royal Leamington Spa meeting on 13 September that the pilot is extended for a further 6 months to run until 31 March 2013. This would enable a much fuller picture of the usage levels to be obtained. However, if funding is not granted for an extension of the pilot, the Service will need to inform customers that from Monday 1 October the additional 3 hours will cease.

Linda Smith
Head of Libraries - Operations
Warwickshire Library & Information Service
26 July 2012

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP HELD ON
21ST AUGUST 2012 AT THE TOWN HALL, PARADE, LEAMINGTON SPA**

Present: Councillors Bill Gifford, John Knight and Simon Lytton

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Tim Crockford.

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor John Knight is appointed Chairman of the Communications Working Group for the year 2012/13.

2. **NEWSLETTER**

The Town Clerk reported that since the Council had obtained Quality Status, the criteria relating to Communication and Engagement had been amended so that the earlier requirement to produce a Newsletter and distribute it to every household in the Parish at least once a year no longer applied. The criteria now were:-

- To produce and publish a regular Newsletter at least four times a year;
- Include in the Newsletter the contact details of the Councillors and the Clerk; and
- Ensure that the Newsletter is readily available at public sites across the Parish or Town (local shops, information points, libraries etc)

It was noted that the previous practice of circulating copies of the Newsletter via a local Newspaper would not be cost effective and this should be replaced with circulation on the basis of the Quality status criteria supplemented by placing a copy on the Council's website and circulation electronically. The Clerk confirmed that the Council's website now allowed for the creation of a web based news bulletin that could be emailed to anyone subscribing to it.

Consideration then took place of a draft Newsletter prepared by the Town Clerk for distribution in September. It was suggested that an article relating to the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to Gardening around Leamington Spa and, if possible, information relating to Members' surgeries is included.

RESOLVED that the draft Newsletter is approved for circulation via public information points and the website subject to the agreed amendments.

3. **WEBSITE**

The Group briefly discussed the website. It was noted that historic information relating to meetings was not currently displayed on the site. The website host, CRM, were aware of this matter and work was currently taking place to ensure that this information was accessible as soon as possible. It was agreed that a further reminder for completion of this work is sent to CRM after the meeting.

The Clerk also outlined a proposal to add the photographs of former Mayors of Leamington Spa to the website as these were frequently the subject of interest from members of the public. In addition it was no longer practicable to display hard copies of all the Mayoral photographs in the Town Hall. It was suggested that the sharing of photographic information through the medium of Flickr on the internet was an option to consider.

RESOLVED

(i) that a further reminder is sent to CRM to affect the reproduction of historic meeting information on the website as a matter of urgency;

(ii) that the Clerk, in discussion with CRM, proceeds with the addition of former Mayoral photographs on the website which should be available to members of the public to reproduce at no cost.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.25 pm.