



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

Our Ref: RN/

Your Ref:

27TH November 2013

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** will be held in Meeting Room 5A, Town Hall, Parade, Royal Leamington Spa on **TUESDAY 3RD DECEMBER, 2013 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, W.L. Gifford, D.A. Greenwood, S. Ingleby, J. Knight, S. Lytton, 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. **WARWICK CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

The Meeting will be attended by the Chairman and Manager of Warwick District Citizens Advice Bureau who will outline the use of funding provided by the Town Council in 2012/13 and the challenges facing the Advice Bureau.

5. **MINUTES**

To consider and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th October, 2013 (Report No. 5)

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Community Governance Review (Minute 35 (i))

Town Clerk to report orally.

(ii) Town Centre Action Plan (Minute 36)

To note progress since the last meeting.

(iii) Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (Minute 38)

To note the outcome of the AGM of WALC and the Council's resolution concerning the allocation of grant arising from Government support to Local Authority Council Tax Reduction schemes

7. GRIT CONTAINER PROVISION

To consider a request from Councillor Lytton that Grit containers are placed in the following areas:-

Newnham Road
Charnwood Way
Parklands Avenue/Cumberland Crescent

(estimated cost - £350)

8. BUDGET 2014/15

To consider the attached Report (Report No. 8)

9. WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – MINERALS PLAN UPDATE

To consider the updating of the Minerals Plan – formerly Minerals Core Strategy). Newsletter enclosed.

10. ACCOUNTS

To approve a schedule of accounts for payment.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON
16TH OCTOBER 2013 AT THE TOWN HALL, ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA**

Present: Councillors Ann Morrison (Chair), Heather Calver, (substituting for Councillor S. Boad), Bill Gifford, Sue Ingleby, John Knight, Yvonne Moore (substituting for Cllr D. Greenwood) and Alan Wilkinson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sarah Boad, David Greenwood and Simon Lytton.

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, the following declarations of pecuniary interest were made:

Councillor Bill Gifford – Town Centre Action Plan and Warwickshire Pension Fund
Councillor Alan Wilkinson – Town Centre Action Plan

34. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 3rd September 2013 are confirmed and signed as a correct record.

35. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Warwick District Mobility Ltd

The Chairman confirmed that the Company presently contracted to provide the Shopmobility service had tendered notice of termination to take effect from 31st December 2013. This matter and a response to ensure continuation of the service was to be considered by a meeting of the Board of Trustees on 22nd October and a full report would be made to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the report is noted.

(ii) Community Governance Review

The Town Clerk reported that the Council's submission under the Governance Review had been submitted to the District Council and a response was now awaited. It was noted that the proposal to re-align the boundary between Leamington Spa and Cubbington was likely to be resisted by Cubbington Parish Council as this would lead to a reduction in its tax base. Some members of the Committee commented that the proposed increase in the numbers of Councillors represented a challenge in terms of encouraging sufficient candidates to stand for election.

RESOLVED that the response of the District Council to the Council's proposals is awaited.

36. **TOWN CENTRE ACTION PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report (Report No.6) setting out proposals for the commissioning of a Town centre Strategy and Action plan for Leamington Town Centre.

The Town Clerk reported that the Consultant recommended by the District Council was locally based and prepared to work with the Council on this project for a reduced fee compared to standard rates. The Committee were supportive of the objectives contained within the proposed brief attached as an Appendix to the Report but emphasised the importance of ensuring that these were compatible with work currently being undertaken by the District Council in relation to the Local Development Framework and other Town centre based strategies including work undertaken by Leamington BID Ltd.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the proposal by Warwick Economics and Development is accepted in principle, subject to obtaining clarification from Warwick District Council on conformity of the Town Centre Action Plan brief with the Local Development Framework and other related Town centre Strategies; and.
- (ii) that the Report and project brief is approved.

Note: In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Councillors Gifford and Wilkinson having previously declared disclosable interests in the above item of business, remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion.

37. **TOWN COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

Consideration was given to a Report (Report No. 7) setting out key objectives for the Town Council for 2013/14 together with Committee responsibilities.

RESOLVED that the objectives contained in Report No.7 are adopted as a basis for further development of a work plan which will be reported periodically to the Policy and Resources Committee.

38. **WARWICKSHIRE AND WEST MIDLANDS ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS-
AGM – 13TH NOVEMBER 2013**

The Committee was reminded that the Annual General Meeting of the Association would be held on 13th November at Shire Hall at 7.30 pm. The meeting enabled the Council to make a direct appointment to the WALC County Committee (present appointment is Councillor John Knight) and to put forward any resolutions which were of interest to Member Councils. It was noted that there remained considerable uncertainty over the level of funding that might be received from the

District Council in relation to compensation for the reduction in the Council tax base arising from the introduction of the new Council tax discount regime. It was agreed that this should be put forward for discussion at the Annual General Meeting.

RESOLVED

(i) that Councillor John Knight is appointed as the Council's representative to the WALC County Committee for the period until May 2014 when, pending his appointment as Mayor, a new appointment will be considered.

(ii) that the following motion is put before the NALC Annual General Meeting:-

"This Association urges NALC to obtain clarification from the Government in terms of the financial support available to Local Councils as a result of the adjustments to the tax base to reflect the value of localised Council Tax support. It is this Associations' view that local Councils should be fully reimbursed the loss of income derived from the reduced tax base in order to continue to deliver services for local communities".

39. **STREET NAMING**

Consideration was given to the approval of names for new street developments on land at Queensway which had been suggested by Warwick District Council.

The Committee noted the proposed use of "Buckingham" "Sovereign" and "Monarch" for this development and wished to comment no further.

RESOLVED that the proposed names for the development at Queensway are noted.

40. **WARWICKSHIRE PENSION FUND**

The Committee was advised that the AGM of the Warwickshire Pension Fund was to be held on 28th November 2013 to which a representative of the Town Council was invited.

RESOLVED that Councillor David Greenwood is appointed as the Council's representative to attend the AGM of Warwickshire Pension Fund and any other meetings of the Fund during the remainder of the Municipal year.

Note: In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Councillor Gifford having previously declared a disclosable interest in the above item of business, remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion.

41. **PROPOSED PUFFIN CROSSING AND NEW BUS STANDS- A425- OLD WARWICK ROAD**

Consideration was given to proposals by Warwickshire County Council to install a new public pedestrian crossing and improve existing bus stops on the A425 near Leamington Spa Railway Station.

RESOLVED that the proposed pedestrian crossing and new bus stop arrangements on the A425, near Leamington Spa Railway station, are supported.

42. **ACCOUNTS**

Consideration was given to a schedule of accounts arising for payment since the last meeting.

RESOLVED that the schedule of accounts is approved for payment.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.45 pm.

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES AND COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON 3RD DECEMBER 2013

BUDGET 2014/15

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is required to set its budget in order to establish the level of income it wishes to "precept" upon the Council Tax for the financial year 2014/15. The date by which it must notify Warwick District Council (the collection authority) of the amount of its precept is 31st January 2014.
- 1.2 The calculation of the precept is arrived at by dividing the Council's total net budget requirement by the tax base for the Parish. This figure provides the level of Council Tax for each property at Band D within the Council tax property bandings. The tax base figure for Leamington Spa for 2014/15 is 15,487.83.
- 1.3 The Committee will be aware that in 2013/14, changes were introduced to Council Tax support which required each Principal collecting authority to introduce its own Council Tax Reduction scheme. The effect of the changes arising from such schemes is to reduce the Council Tax base by the number of properties eligible for Council Tax rebates. To compensate Authorities for this loss, the Government provides collection authorities with a recurring grant and in 2013/14 it published indicative amounts that it expected these Authorities to pass down to Parish and Town Councils in the spirit of Localism.
- 1.4 As in 2013-14, Warwick District Council has agreed to apportion this grant across all Parish and Town Councils in line with the reduced tax base. The amount of grant that Leamington Spa Town Council will receive in 2014/15 is £37,239. This figure is calculated to ensure that the impact on the Council's tax base and its capacity to raise a precept is not compromised and is cost neutral. The impact of the grant on the Council's budget and precept is shown in the accompanying Appendix.

2. REVENUE EXPENDITURE AND INCOME 2014/15

- 2.1 The Council's current budget, expenditure against budget as at 1st November 2013 and anticipated out-turn is set out in the Appendix in traditional format. As on previous occasions, any potential under or over spend has been allocated against the budget requirement for 2014/15 and is reflected in the level of the precept requirement. In 2013/14 there will be an over spend on the budget of approximately £8250 due principally to:
 - Town hall Maintenance charges – This is the consequence of a contribution to the cost of rewiring the Town Hall, currently estimated at £2545

- War Memorial - the completion of the renovation works is effectively funded from reserves as the Council made provision for this, less any grant from the War Memorials Trust, in 2012/13.
- Elections - the cost of the Manor Ward by election was unforeseen and unbudgeted and therefore will be funded either from the Council's reserves or from a commensurate increase in the precept for 2014/15

2.2 There are no new areas of expenditure introduced for 2014/15. Members are invited to consider any budget options for the year bearing in mind the implications for any increase in expenditure that may be viewed as excessive in the current financial climate. Though Town and Parish Council expenditure is not yet subject to the provisions of referendum if in excess of a prescribed percentage, it is likely that some form of control may be exercised over larger spending Town and Parish Councils in the future. It should be noted that Leamington Spa remains a small spending and comparatively low precept Authority.

3.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 The Committee is requested to consider the draft budget and identify any potential spending options or budget reductions for 2014/15 and recommend the Council accordingly.

DRAFT BUDGET 2014/2015		2013/14		Exp 01/1/2013	Out-turn 13/14	projected under/over spend (?)	Notes
		18100	9,782	18,000	100	18280	1% allowance
1. Member Allowances							
2. Employee Salaries and Honoraria		94800	56258	94,400	400	95400	1% allowance + supernann increase of 0.7%
3. Mayoral Transport							
Overtime/car hire	800	258	500	300	500		
Uniform	250	200	200	50	250		
Petrol	700	210	500	200	500		
Sundries	400	25	200	200	200		
Garage Rental	1040	579	745	295	395		
Lease Charges	3500	2039	3,500	0	3500		
4. Civic Expenses							
Regalia Maintenance	500	166	500	0	500		
Town Hall Mayoral Roll Board	90	98	98	-8	100		
Mayoral Photograph	300	375	375	-75	375		
Civic Service	500	0	500	0	500		
Remembrance Service	1600	275	1,600	0	1600		
Annual Parish Meeting	100	100	100	0	100		
Civic Regalia - Purchase	0	0	0	0	0		
Civic Evening	1100	167	1,100	0	1100		
Civic Visits	625	422	625	0	625		
Civic apparel	600	0	0	600	800	800 robes	
Contingency	300	0	300	0	300		
5. Administrative Expenses							
Insurance	3050	3427	3,427	-377	3500	Includes £153 for War Memorial	
Office Stationery/Equipment	600	250	600	0	400		
W.A.L.C. Membership	2052	2052	2,052	0	2093		
Audit fees	1050	1050	1,050	0	1050		
Conferences	0	0	0	0	0	No Conference attendance 2012/13	
Computer hardware renewal	250	0	250	0	250		

DRAFT BUDGET 2014/2015	2013/14		Exp		Out-turn		Projected		Notes
			01/11/2013	13/14	13/14	13/14	under/over spend (+/-)	2014/15	
Photocopying (inc Lease charges)	1000		356	750	750	250	900		
Postage	1200		590	1,200	1,200	0	1200		
Staff training	150		0	150	150	0	150		
Member training	400		70	300	300	100	400		
Web Site hosting	450		219	450	450	0	450		
Council Meetings - Catering	400		145	400	400	0	400		
Minute Binding etc	250		0	250	250	0	250		
Payroll Agency charges	1000		759	1,500	1,500	-500	1345		
BACS	230		129	230	230	0	230		
I.T. repair and support	200		35	200	200	0	200		
Staff recruitment - advertising	1000		0	0	0	1000	1000		
6. Property and Asset Maintenance									
Town Hall - Annual Rent	7505		5600	7,505	7,505	0	7685		
Town Hall - Maintenance Charge	11500		8969	14,045	14,045	-2545	11500		
Telephones & Broadband	700		273	600	600	100	700		
War Memorial	500		3,002	3,002	3,002	-2502	500		Balance of £2500 carried forward Project cost £5502 - grant £2500 War Memrs Trust
7. Mayor's Award									
	150		0	0	0	150	150		
8. Twinning									
	3000		688	1,000	1,000	2000	1000		
9. Friendship Links									
One World Link	1070		1070	1,070	1,070	0	1070		
10. Grants and related expenditure									
Citizens Advice Bureau	8000		8000	8,000	8,000	0	8000		see social cohesion fund
Town Centre Management Initiative	5950		0	5,959	5,959	-9	5959		
Christmas Lighting	14440		0	14,440	14,440	0	14440		
Leamington in Bloom	7100		1815	7,100	7,100	0	7100		
Leamington International Twinning Society	4200		0	4,200	4,200	0	4200		
Community Grants	42000		19827	42,000	42,000	0	42000		
Blue Plaques	500		414	515	515	-15	600		

DRAFT BUDGET 2014/2015		2013/14		Exp	Out-turn	projected	Notes	
		2013/14	01/11/2013	13/14	under/over	2014/15		
					spend (+)			
MELA Festival	1220	0	1,220	0	1220	0		
Fairtrade Town Working Group	1000	570	1,000	0	1000	0		
Transition Town	0	350	350	-350	0	0	No longer required	
Youth Initiative	4000	0	4,000	0	4000	0		
Leamington Music Festival	1660	1660	1,660	0	1660	0		
Tree Planting	4000	0	4,000	0	4000	0	Expenditure includes planting in 2012/13	
Street Furniture (Inc. Grift Bins)	1500	138	700	800	1500	800		
Music in the Park	3130	1940	1,940	1190	2500	2500	Underspend due to fewer bands	
Newsletter	1200	0	1,000	200	1000	1000	Reduction in hard copies as now available electronically	
Guild of Guides	500	534	534	-34	600	600		
Neighbourhood Watch Support	150	0	100	50	150	150		
District Shopmobility Scheme	22000	16500	22,000	0	22000	22000		
Social Cohesion Fund	8000	4000	8,000	0	8000	8000	Lillington Library and CAB	
Old Town Portas Bid	10000	0	10,000	0	0	0		
Community Planning	5000	0	5,000	0	1000	1000		
11. Elections	10000	9597	19,597	-9597	10000	10000	See Report	
12. Allotments	5400	3670	5,600	-200	5600	5600		
TOTALS	323,962	Budget under/overspend (projected)				307,977		
Less Projected Income	5,000	Less projected income				3500		
Less underspend	5,030	plus overspend				-8,227		
Total budget to be met by precept	313,932					312,704		
Less Contribution from reserves	0	Less Contribution from reserves					To be determined	
		Plus grant from WDC				37239		
Total budget requirement from Precept	313,932	Total budget requirement from Precept (before adjustment)				275,465		
Projected Precept at Band D	18.4	Projected Precept at Band D				£17.79		
Budget as % of 12/13 precept	103.24	Budget as Percentage of 13/14				99.61%		
Reserves(Balances) at April 2013	170,944							

Warwickshire County Council Minerals Plan update

November 2013

Warwickshire County Council will be restarting work shortly on its new Minerals Plan (previously called the 'Minerals Core Strategy'). The Council is required to produce a new plan to replace the 1995 Minerals Local Plan. The new plan will identify where new minerals sites should be located, and set out the policies to assess new minerals development proposals over the next 15 years. This newsletter will set out where we are now, what we will be working on over the coming months and how some of the key mineral planning issues are likely to be addressed.

Where did we get to?

At the last 'Minerals Core Strategy – Revised Spatial Options' stage, the Council consulted on three strategy options for locating new minerals development, a number of potential minerals sites and draft policies for guiding all minerals development in the County. 27 minerals sites in total were submitted by landowners and operators covering a variety of mineral types including sand and gravel, cement clay/limestone, shallow coal, Etruria marl brick clay and building stone. Views were sought on all submissions before detailed analysis of the sites was undertaken. However, the sites were assessed prior to the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and there is now a need to reassess the policies and proposals in light of the latest Government policy and guidance.



Where are we now?

Government guidance requires that Mineral Planning Authorities (MPAs) should plan for a steady and adequate supply of minerals including the provision of certain amounts of 'aggregates' i.e. sand and gravel and crushed rock. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that MPAs should prepare a Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) based on a rolling average of 10 years past sales and other relevant local information. As a result, the Council must now produce an LAA to determine how much sand and gravel and crushed rock is required over the plan period. The LAA will influence the emerging Minerals Plan, so a number of potential options will need to be assessed and consulted on to determine the best way forward.

What are the likely impacts for sand and gravel provision?

Warwickshire is required to provide for a sand and gravel landbank of at least 7 years of permitted reserves. Based on the latest 2011 West Midlands Aggregate Working Party Report, Warwickshire's landbank is well below this figure at 4.33 years. A number of sites have closed since 2008 and only two have been approved. The Council needs to ensure that there is enough sand and gravel to meet the county's construction and infrastructure needs for the whole plan period of 15 years. As there may not be enough sites currently available to sustain the county's economic growth, the County Council will be contacting operators and land owners to request further sites for consideration for sand and gravel extraction, as well confirmation that previously submitted sites are still to be considered. It is intended that the next Minerals Plan consultation document will only include sand and gravel sites as Preferred Options so there will not be site allocations for any other minerals.



What are the likely impacts for crushed rock provision?

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that MPAs should maintain a crushed rock landbank of at least 10 years. According to the latest figures as at 31.12.11, Warwickshire's crushed rock landbank remains healthy at 23.86 years. However, there is only one quarry producing crushed rock with limited reserves remaining and much of the county's main landbank is provided by other permitted, but not operational, sites. As part of the LAA consultation process, the Council will need to assess the potential deliverability of these sites as this may impact on the County's landbank and crushed rock provision over the plan period.



What about all other minerals?

All other minerals (including crushed rock, coal, Etruria marl, brick clay, cement raw materials etc.) will be addressed through specific planning policies rather than site allocations. The Council will be drafting these policies over the coming months and they will form part of the 'Preferred Options and Policies' document, due for consultation in 2014.



How will the issue of unconventional hydrocarbons such as shale gas 'fracking' be dealt with?

The Department for Communities and Local Government has recently issued planning practice guidance for onshore oil and gas and this includes shale gas hydraulic fracturing and coal bed methane. The guidance states that it is likely that Warwickshire County Council would be responsible for assessing planning applications in Warwickshire where planning permission is required. Although no proposals have come forward to date, there will need to be policies in the plan to deal with these development types if any proposals come forward over the plan period. The policies are yet to be drafted but they will need to accord with national planning policy guidance for the plan to be found 'sound'. The draft policies will be included in the 'Preferred Option and Policies' consultation document, due for consultation in 2014.

How will the issue of underground coal gasification (UCG) be dealt with?

UCG is a separate process to fracking and involves the burning of coal seams underground and using the resulting gas to produce energy. The Coal Authority is responsible for issuing licences granting the right to work the coal, but no UCG operations can take place until the applicant has secured all other necessary rights and permissions. This would include securing the necessary permission from Warwickshire County Council as the Mineral Planning Authority, as well as approval from the Environment Agency and the Health and Safety Executive. The Minerals Plan will need to contain a policy to ensure that UCG proposals can be adequately assessed and this will have to accord with national planning policy guidance for the plan to be found 'sound'. Again, a draft policy will be produced and the public will be invited to comment on the policy at the next consultation stage.

Where can I find out further information about the Minerals Plan?

Further updates and consultation information will be available on the Council's webpage at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/mineralsplan. Alternatively, please contact the Planning Policy team on 01926 41 2391 or email planningstrategy@warwickshire.gov.uk.