

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF ROYAL LEAMINGTON
SPA HELD ON 12 JULY 2012 AT THE TOWN HALL, PARADE,
ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA

Present: Councillors Judith Clarke (Chairman); Sarah Boad, Roger Copping, Tim Crockford, Gurpreet Dulay, Bill Gifford, Balvinder Gill, Sue Ingleby, John Knight, Simon Lytton, Ann Morrison, Mota Singh, Amanda Stevens and Alan Wilkinson.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Greenwood and Yvonne Moore.

In attendance: Mr Adrian Lewis (Defibfinder Organisation)

The Chairman welcomed Mr Adrian Lewis of the Defibfinder Organisation which was supporting the Heart of England Defibrillator campaign. It was agreed to consider the proposed installation of Automated External Defibrillator as the first item of business.

22. INSTALLATION OF AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)

Consideration was given to a report (Report No. 8) which detailed the proposal to install an AED on the exterior of the Town Hall for use in emergency situations.

Mr Lewis explained that AEDs were a nationally recognised piece of life-saving equipment and indicated the increased chances of survival if AEDs were used promptly. AEDs had already been agreed for installation by Whitnash Town Council and Warwickshire County Council. A number of local schools would also be acquiring the defibrillators.

The AEDs were easily recognisable by the bright green box and were self-contained units. They were powered by battery which would require checking on a fortnightly basis. The equipment was also fitted with a light for night-time use, a heater to regulate to the correct temperature and an alarm system. Currently the method of operation involved obtaining a code through the 999 system which would open the box and activate the AED.

Mr Lewis then gave a practical demonstration on the ease with which the equipment could be used. Clear instructions were given audibly together with the additional support of a visual display unit.

In response to a question Mr Lewis was quick to allay fears and advised that there was no physical risk to the general public in operating the equipment.

The point was made that the bright green colour of the box might be considered inappropriate when obtaining planning permission for the equipment to be installed on a Listed Building. However, Mr Lewis felt that the nationally recognised green colour should be retained.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that on the basis of funding for the AED having already been met by a grant from Royal Leamington Spa Round Table, the Town Council approves the provision of an AED installed on the exterior of the Town Hall, subject to discussion with and the agreement of the Warwick District Conservation Officer on retaining the original green colour for ease of recognition and obtaining Listed Building consent; and
- (ii) that the Policy & Resources Committee be delegated to agree the most suitable operational method for use of the equipment, appropriate access and maintenance procedures and to identify the source of funding required for erection of the cabinet and purchase of replacement batteries.

Mr Lewis was thanked for his clear and informative presentation and he left the meeting.

23. CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) Town Centre Management Partnership
In response to the Town Council's request to Warwick District Council to increase the membership of the Town Centre Management Partnership, a reply had been received from the Town Centre Development Officer indicating that to ensure a strong business focus within the Team it would be limiting officer and member numbers to one member per appointing body.

RESOLVED that the response is noted.

- (ii) Gardening Around Leamington Spa (GALS)
A letter had been received from GALS informing the Town Council that GALS had been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services, and expressing their sincere thanks to the Town Council for submitting the nomination.

RESOLVED that the letter is noted.

24. WARWICK DISTRICT PLAN

Consideration was given to a report (Report No. 6) setting out the process for agreeing a response to the preferred options within the Warwick District Local Plan. A proposal submitted by the Labour Group (Appendix 1) had been circulated and this was considered together with a number of proposed amendments, details of which had been circulated at the meeting.

Considerable discussion took place on the proposal and the amendments, principally on the area of Delivering Growth, with differing views being expressed on the location of the proposed growth and the impact this would

have on both North and South Leamington. The amendment suggested the removal of the first sentence “We welcome the broad location of growth” and substituted with “The Town Council believes that the District Council should robustly examine all possible options to enable the required growth to be achieved outside of the Green Belt so as to minimise the impact on the Green Belt to the North of Leamington”. The amendment was proposed by Councillor Gifford and seconded by Councillor Boad. A vote was taken and the amendment was lost.

It was proposed by Councillor Crockford and seconded by Councillor Lytton that an amendment be made to the defeated amendment to remove the words “to the North of Leamington”. A vote was taken and the amendment was lost.

It was then proposed by Councillor Wilkinson, seconded by Councillor Dulay that Delivering Growth (PO1 & PO3) would remain unaltered but that the suggested amendments to Mixed Communities (PO6), The Economy (PO8) and Transport (PO14) were accepted. In addition it was proposed to include a new section entitled Evening Economy, expressing the Town Council’s concern that the Policy on the Evening Economy had not been completed and was not available for consultation. On being put to the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED that the following response to the Local Plan (Preferred Options) is submitted:

Delivering Growth (PO1 & PO3)

We welcome the broad location of growth. We agree that an annual average increase of 600 new homes for the next 20 years is a reasonable and fair target. Many of the Wards in the Town are already densely populated, and we note that the Plan anticipates some growth in these areas.

Affordable housing (PO5)

We approve the requirement that 40% of new homes on developments of 10 or more dwellings, and 5 or more dwellings in the rural areas, should be affordable housing.

Mixed communities (PO6)

We approve the option for a mix of housing, and note that strategic sites will include Extra Care Housing. We believe in a balanced and mixed population and welcome families and single people in all our Wards.

Whilst the Town Council is proud of the diverse population in Leamington, we would request the District Council introduce a policy to restrict the number and density of Student Houses and Houses in Multiple Occupation to ensure that they do not adversely impact on the character of neighbourhoods to the detriment of family households. The Town Council requests close involvement in the input into the policy on mixed communities.

We would also welcome developments that demonstrate a more imaginative provision for students, that are not simply converting existing family housing.

Economy (PO8)

We welcome the proposals to ensure a wide range of employment. We particularly support the regeneration and enhancement of existing employment areas.

The Town Council believes that the Local Plan needs to encourage the continuing growth of the already successful Computer Games industry and the further development of Silicon Spa as the primary UK centre of excellence for the industry. The Local Plan also needs to support further growth in the innovative automotive industry much of which is based in the District or on the edge of the District as this is likely to provide future employment in the Leamington and Warwick conurbation.

Retailing and Town Centres (PO9)

We welcome the support for Town Centre retailing and a Town Centre first message. We believe that the 'Town' includes the whole town, and that developments should be considered in the area south of Regent Street, in the Parade and in Old Town.

The Town Council believes that we should promote and support Fair Trade initiatives.

We are committed to strategies that promote the town for retail provision, leisure, entertainment and eating establishments. We can promote our parks and green spaces as important attributes of the Town Centre.

However, we see that 'shopping' also includes local shops. The Town Council would prefer there to be a policy on where supermarkets should be located, and that local communities should be consulted about any new proposals for supermarket development.

Historic Environment (PO11)

We welcome the intention to protect the historic environment. We see that this includes the historic areas of the Old Town, and would be pleased to work with the District Council in listing the historic assets, and reviewing the Conservation Area. We are pleased to note the District Council's encouragement of regeneration of appropriate sites within the historic environment. We strongly affirm that the historical integrity of the area is threatened by sex entertainment establishments and oppose any such establishment, which we see as an inappropriate development. The Town Council supports the Blue Plaque scheme, and the Guild of Guides Walks.

Climate Change (PO12)

As a Transition Town, the Town Council welcomes the intention to include a policy on climate change.

Transport (PO14)

We support the option to minimise the need to travel, and to promote sustainable forms of transport. In addition to the proposals in the Plan, we believe that a higher priority should be given to cycle provision, and to ensuring that all new developments encourage ease of access by bicycles between areas of the District. This includes cycle lanes and provision to park cycles.

Residents should also be encouraged to travel by bus for work and leisure with the encouragement of more quality bus routes into and across Leamington.

Encourage the co-ordination of different forms of transport to encourage more residents to travel by foot, bus, train and bicycle.

Green Infrastructure (PO15)

We welcome the intention to protect and enhance the assets as identified in the Plan. We are pleased to see the introduction of “Green Wedges” as an alternative to areas of restraint.

We would also be in favour of consideration of a policy that considers garden preservation. We support greener neighbourhoods through our tree planting scheme, and through our support of Allotment Societies.

Culture and Tourism (PO17)

We support the intention to develop this appropriately and would welcome opportunities to share ideas on promoting the cultural facilities of Leamington. We believe there is scope for improving the visual impact for visitors to Leamington who arrive by rail or canal.

We are proud of the assets of the Town and are committed to maintaining them as welcoming and friendly venues for residents and visitors.

Evening Economy

The Town Council is concerned that the District Council's Policy on the Evening Economy has not yet been completed and so is not available for consultation. The evening economy is important to Leamington, but unless it is carefully considered it can produce public dangers, so it is important to the Town that there is a well-considered policy in place that takes account of the needs of residents, visitors, the businesses and public safety.

Note: In accordance with the National Code of Conduct, Councillors Roger Copping, Bill Gifford, Balvinder Gill and Alan Wilkinson declared personal interests by reason of being Warwick District Councillors, remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion and voting thereon.

25. CODE OF CONDUCT

Consideration was given to a report (Report No. 8) detailing the new Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011 which contains new provisions to replace the standards framework previously established by the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent secondary legislation, which regulates Parish Councillors' conduct, disclosure of interests and how complaints about their conduct will be handled.

The Localism act 2011 provides that every relevant authority in England must adopt a code of conduct which is consistent with the Nolan principles of conduct in public life and includes provisions which the authority considers appropriate in respect of the registration and disclosure of "pecuniary interests" and "interests other than pecuniary interests".

The Code of Conduct recommended by the District Council for adoption by all Parish and Town Councils in the District was shown as Appendix 1 of the report.

In addition Members of the Council (whether elected or co-opted) are required to register their disclosable interests with the Monitoring Officer of the District Council within a period of 28 days from the date of the adoption of the new code. Dispensations under the Code were now matters for this Council and it was suggested that this power is granted to the Urgent Matters Committee of the Council.

Suitable amendments to the Council's Standing Orders (Standing Order 31) were required to account for the adoption of the new Code and new provisions relating to pecuniary interests.

Members were advised that a training seminar would be held on 23 July.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Code of Conduct recommended by Warwick District Council is adopted as this Council's Code of Conduct as required by Section 27 of the Localism Act, with effect from 12 July 2011;
- (ii) that the power to grant dispensations in respect of disclosable pecuniary interests is granted to the Urgent Matters Committee of this Council: and
- (iii) that Standing Order 31 is amended to record the adoption of the new Code and provisions relating to declaring pecuniary interests at the Meetings of the Council.

26. MINUTES OF COUNCIL AND COUNCIL COMMITTEES

- (i) Planning Committee – 17 May and 6 June 2012

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning Committee held on 17 May and 6 June 2012 are received.

- (ii) Policy and Resources Committee – 21 June 2012

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 21 June 2012 are received; and
(ii) that £10,000 is set aside from balances as a provision in the event of a successful outcome for the Old Town Portas bid.

- (iii) Cultural and Community Committee – 31 May and 28 June 2012

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Cultural and Community Committee held on 31 May and 28 June 2012 are received.

- (iv) Council – 24 May 2012

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 24 May 2012 (Report No. 9 (f)) are confirmed and signed as a correct record.

27. ACCOUNTS

A schedule of accounts arising for payment since the last meeting was circulated and a copy is attached to the signed Minutes.

RESOLVED that the Schedule of Accounts is approved for payment.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and ended at 8.00pm

Chairman

Date