

COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON

THURSDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2014

Councillors Present: Howard Bairstow, Pamela Bale, Jeff Beck (Chairman), Jeff Brooks, Paul Bryant, George Chandler, Keith Chopping, Hilary Cole, Roger Croft, Richard Crumly, Adrian Edwards, Marcus Franks, Dave Goff, Manohar Gopal, John Horton, Carol Jackson-Doerge, Mike Johnston, Alan Law, Tony Linden, Mollie Lock, Royce Longton, Alan Macro, Gwen Mason, Geoff Mayes, Tim Metcalfe, Irene Neill, Graham Pask, James Podger, David Rendel, Garth Simpson, Anthony Stansfeld, Julian Swift-Hook, Ieuan Tuck, Virginia von Celsing, Quentin Webb, Keith Woodhams and Laszlo Zverko

Also Present: Liz Alexander (Team Leader - Planning Policy), Bill Blackett (Revs and Bens Manager), Nick Carter (Chief Executive), Sarah Clarke (Team Leader - Solicitor), Gary Lugg (Head of Planning & Countryside), Bryan Lyttle (Planning & Transport Policy Manager), Peta Stoddart-Crompton (Public Relations Officer) and Jim Sweeting (Arts & Leisure Information Officer), Stephen Chard (Policy Officer), Gillian Durrant (Group Executive (Lib Dems)), Honorary Alderman Geoff Findlay (Honorary Alderman), Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager), Robin Steel (Group Executive (Cons)), Jude Thomas and Jo Watt (Member Services Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor David Allen, Councillor Peter Argyle, Councillor Brian Bedwell, Councillor Dominic Boeck, Councillor Billy Drummond, Councillor Sheila Ellison, Councillor Paul Hewer, Councillor Roger Hunneman, Councillor Graham Jones, Councillor Gordon Lundie, Councillor Joe Mooney, Councillor Andrew Rowles, Honorary Alderman Alan Thorpe, Councillor Tony Vickers and Councillor Emma Webster

PART I

63. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman reported that he had attended 45 events since the September 2014 Council meeting and the Vice Chairman had attended three. He also thanked Councillors Adrian Edwards and Jeff Brooks, both of whom had attended an event each on his behalf.

The Chairman highlighted a number of events and drew Members' attention to the work undertaken by volunteers across the district. He noted that these volunteers undertook this work in a quiet and unassuming way and without their input a lot of activity within the District could not take place.

(Councillor George Chandler arrived at 7.10pm).

The Chairman also noted that he had attended a number of school awards ceremonies which brought home to him the excellent standards that were being achieved in the District's schools. He, and other Members, had also been privileged to attend a number of Remembrance Day Ceremonies in November which served as a reminder of the efforts of the armed forces in a historical context as well as the service they continued to provide to the country.

(Councillor Richard Crumly arrived at 7.12pm).

The Chairman thanked all those that had arranged and attended his very successful quiz in November which had raised a significant sum of money for his charity Cystic Fibrosis.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

The Chairman noted that he had recently attended the opening of the Newbury Museum. He thanked all those that had contributed financially to the project (including the Heritage Lottery Fund) and the Officers that had seen the project through.

64. **West Berkshire Community Champion Awards (C2898)**

(Councillor Jeff Brooks arrived at 7.17pm).

The Chairman on behalf of the Council presented the Community Champion Awards for 2014. Councillor Beck explained that the Awards were launched for the first time in September 2014. In addition to the pre-existing Junior Citizen Award, three new awards were created: the Community Group of the Year; Volunteer of the Year; and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Chairman reported that the Council had an excellent response and the standard of the nominations was outstanding.

A judging panel of independent representatives met to consider the nominations. One of the original panel members, Mrs Pat Eastop MBE, sadly passed away in September 2014 and, in honour of her dedication and enthusiasm, the Junior Citizen Award had been renamed the 'The Pat Eastop Junior Citizen of the Year Award'. The Chairman was pleased to announce that Pat's son and son in law were present that evening to help him present this award.

From its inception in 2001, Pat Eastop was heavily involved in the West Berkshire Council Junior Citizen Award. Pat was always extremely impressed by the achievements of the young people involved and her enthusiasm to promote their positive actions was infectious. Pat would be greatly missed by her fellow panel members and Officers at West Berkshire Council.

The winner of the *Pat Eastop Junior Citizen Award* was Lauren Boys from Thatcham who was nominated by Mr Richard Jennings, Volunteer Manager of Berkshire Youth. Lauren represented the views of young people, particularly young women, on the National Youth Council of the charity 'Ambition' and championed youth volunteering through her role as a Young Social Action Ambassador, which was a national government funded programme. Lauren also helped out with Berkshire Youth delivering sports and health sessions across the county in schools and youth clubs. In addition Lauren also volunteered at Pals, which was a youth club for children with sensory and learning disabilities.

The judging panel was very impressed by the high level of volunteering undertaken by Lauren and felt that she was clearly very highly thought of by Berkshire Youth and all those she helped in the various projects she supported.

The joint winners of the *Volunteer of the Year Award* were Angela Money from Newbury who was nominated by Penelope Lake, and Jonathan Poole from Upper Bucklebury who was nominated by John Morgan from Purley On Thames.

The Chairman reported that Angela Money was Chair of Newbury & Thatcham Neighbourhood Watch and the Neighbourhood Action Group. The judging panel was very impressed by the excellent work carried out by Angela Money in the local community over a sustained period of time. The panel was particularly impressed that Angela's significant contribution was all on a voluntary basis.

Mr Poole was a West Berkshire resident who formed 'Bucklebury Wolves', a free football Club for 4 and 5 year olds, in 2008. He started with himself as the one and only coach with 12 children registered, since then the Club had developed but had always been free to enter and participate.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

The judging panel found that the contribution made by Mr Poole in setting up and running Bucklebury Wolves FC was outstanding and felt that he had created a wonderful community spirit amongst those who took part.

The winner of the *Community Group of the Year* was 'Loose Ends' from Newbury who were nominated by Rowena Smyth.

The Chairman explained Loose Ends helped homeless and rootless people and was run by volunteers. In 2013/14 Loose Ends trained over 45 volunteers, helped 50 regular clients plus 30 occasional clients and prepared and served 6078 meals.

The judging panel was very impressed by the excellent work carried out, often in difficult circumstances, by Loose Ends in the local community over the last 25 years. The panel noted the wonderful service that was provided to homeless and rootless people and were particularly impressed by the partnership working undertaken with local organisations and businesses.

The final presentation was the *Lifetime Achievement Award* which was presented to Carolyn Evans from Thatcham who was nominated by Paul Flack.

The Chairman reported that Carolyn had joined the scouting movement in November 1979 and had dedicated much of her life to scouting within the West Berkshire community. She organised training for all the leaders in West Berkshire helping to enable them to lead other scout groups and was also a leader with 1st Thatcham cubs where she was known as Chil.

The judging panel were very impressed by the dedication and commitment to the scouting movement displayed by Mrs Evans for over 35 years.

The Chairman congratulated all the recipients and thanked the judging panel for their input into the process.

(The meeting was adjourned from 7.33pm to 7.38pm to allow guests that did not wish to stay for the entire meeting to leave).

65. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 18 September 2014 and 30 October 2014 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the inclusion of the following amendments:

Minutes of the 18 September 2014, Item 41, Chairman's Remarks, Page 2 date should be 2014 and not 2104.

Minutes of the 30 October 2014 – Councillor Alan Law was inadvertently listed as giving his apologies for this meeting.

66. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Keith Woodhams declared an interest in Agenda Item 17, but reported that, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Ieuan Tuck declared an interest in Agenda Item 18, but reported that, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

Councillor Tim Metcalfe declared an interest in Agenda Item 19, but reported that, as his interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, he determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on the matter.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

Councillors Gwen Mason, Keith Woodhams, Roger Croft, Royce Longton and Carole Jackson-Doerge declared an interest in Agenda Item 20, but reported that, as their interest was personal and not prejudicial or a disclosable pecuniary interest, they determined to remain to take part in the debate and vote on

67. **Petitions**

There were no petitions presented to the Council.

68. **Public Questions**

There were no public questions submitted.

69. **Membership of Committees**

The Deputy Monitoring Officer advised that there had been no changes to the membership of formal Committees since the previous Council meeting.

70. **Licensing Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Licensing Committee had not met.

71. **Personnel Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Personnel Committee had not met.

72. **Governance and Audit Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Governance and Audit Committee had met on 24th November 2014.

73. **District Planning Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the District Planning Committee had met on 3rd December 2014.

74. **Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission had met on 30th September 2014, 21st October 2014 and 2nd December 2014.

75. **Standards Committee**

The Council noted that, since the last meeting, the Standards Committee had met on 13th October 2014.

76. **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2015/16 (C2884)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 15) concerning the establishment of West Berkshire Council's 2015/16 Council Tax Reduction Scheme for taxpayers on low income.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Alan Law and seconded by Councillor Laszlo Zverko:

That:

“the Council Tax Reduction scheme adopted for 2014/15 continues for the year 2015/16 and that, apart from pensioners and vulnerable groups, the maximum amount of support will continue to be 90% of the claimant's council tax liability”.

Councillor Law in introducing the item reported that as of the 1st April 2013 the Government had handed responsibility to local authorities for setting their own scheme. Under the Council Tax Reduction process (which replaced the then Council Tax Benefit) the Council was required to re-adopt or revise its existing scheme on an annual basis.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

Officers were recommending that the existing scheme be retained for the 2015/16 financial year. Councillor Law noted that vulnerable people and pensioners would be exempt from the scheme.

Councillor Alan Macro noted that in the table on page 23 it was reported that 59 summonses had been issued to vulnerable people and 55 liability orders had been obtained. He therefore queried how vulnerable people were being protected under the scheme.

Councillor Law stated that it was interesting to note that collection and delinquency rates remained at a similar level to the past two years. He explained that a hardship fund was in place to provide assistance to residents in genuine need. There were currently 33 people on the hardship scheme. Previously expressed fears around the impact of this scheme had therefore not come to fruition.

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook returned to the issue of summonses issued to vulnerable people and queried why they were being issued if vulnerable people were supposed to be protected under the scheme.

In accordance with paragraph 4.13.18 (Officer's Advice) Bill Blackett explained that the issuing of liability orders were often a precursor to identifying an individual as vulnerable and any actions taken were adjusted accordingly as a result in order to support and meet the best interests of vulnerable people. The figures provided in the report of summonses issued would change through the different phases of the process.

Councillor Garth Simpson added that there were in excess of 66,000 council tax accounts and 11.5% of these were supported by the scheme which he commended. The statistics provided a snapshot position of summonses issued etc and as described by the Officer this was a phased process and many of the people listed as having a summons issued would be eligible for the hardship scheme.

Councillor Law in closing reported that the maximum support that was being offered was 90%, which meant that this was an excellent scheme which he urged Members to support.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

77. Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations (C2674)

(Councillor Anthony Stansfeld arrived at 7.55pm).

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 16) concerning a review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations in the District.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Roger Croft and seconded by Councillor David Goff:

That:

- “(1) all polling districts in the District continue to be designated as polling places.
- (2) the Electoral Registration Officer monitors the electoral imbalance within district council wards and if appropriate submits a further report to Council.
- (3) a total of 43 properties in polling district AA2 be transferred to polling district AA1.
- (4) the Returning Officer be requested to give detailed consideration to the situation of polling stations in Hungerford due to the fact that the current stations at the Town Hall and Croft Hall are in close proximity to each other.
- (5) the Returning Officer be requested to seek a new location for a polling station in Aldworth due to the redevelopment of the Village Hall.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

- (6) the new Village Halls in Boxford and Hermitage be used as polling stations.
- (7) the Returning Officer monitors the situation in regard to access arrangements to the new hall located adjacent to Enborne Church.
- (8) the Electoral Registration Officer creates a new polling district in the north of Newbury by dividing the existing NB6 polling district, and the Returning Officer be requested to use the Royal British Legion Hall in Pelican Lane as a polling station for this new polling district.
- (9) a new polling station be located in Greenham to serve the new development on the Racecourse and that the Returning Officer explore the possibility of a further new polling station in the south of Greenham.”

Councillor Croft in introducing the item noted that the Council was required under the provisions of Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 to carry out a review of polling districts and polling places every five years in advance of a Parliamentary election. The next scheduled elections in West Berkshire would be the election for the UK Parliament on 7th May 2015 which would be combined with the local Council elections.

Notice of the review was given on 1st July 2014 and interested parties were invited to submit comments by no later than 30th September 2014. Comments and observations had been received from a number of organisations and individuals (including six Parish Councils and the Acting Returning Officer in Reading West) and as a consequence a number of proposals had been put forward for consideration. These were set out in the report's recommendations.

Councillor Gwen Mason queried whether the new polling station in NB6 at the Royal British Legion Hall was going to replace the existing station or be in addition to it.

Councillor Croft agreed to provide Councillor Mason with a written response. *(Post meeting note: Councillor Mason was informed that the new polling station at the Royal British Legion would be in addition to the existing location.)*

Councillor Royce Longton stated that he supported Burghfield Parish Council's concerns about the use of Burghfield Community Sports Association. It was located along a country lane, about a mile from the highway, had no footways and was not serviced by a bus. He therefore could not support this report. Councillor Croft responded that St Mary's School had been considered as an alternative but had not been considered appropriate. Councillor Croft encouraged Councillor Longton and other Members to put forward an alternative that could be considered and he reassured Members that any alternatives would be investigated. He would ask Officer's to revisit this station.

(After the conclusion of the meeting Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge noted that she had a personal interest in this item by virtue of the fact that she was a Governor of St Mary's School. She was however not aware that the school would be mentioned until it arose during the discussion. She took part in the debate and voted on this item).

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

78. **Adoption of Supplementary Planning Document for Developer Contributions (C2822)**

(Councillor Keith Woodhams declared a personal interest in Agenda item 17 by virtue of the fact that his daughter was employed by a local developer . As his interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest he determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 17) which sought approval for the adoption of the new Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Developer Contributions, to be called Planning Obligations SPD.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Hilary Cole and seconded by Councillor Alan Law:

That the Council:

- “1. approves the consultation responses and resultant amendments to the SPD and to adopt the Planning Obligations SPD, to replace the current SPD 'Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development'. The adopted SPD will apply to any applications determined or appeals decided on or after April 1st 2015.
2. confirms delegated authority for non-material changes to the adopted SPD to the Head of Planning and Countryside in agreement with the Portfolio Member for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services, and Countryside”.

Councillor Cole in introducing the report noted that the Council currently sought developer contributions in accordance with the 'Delivering Investment from Sustainable Development' SPD. The SPD provided guidance to developers and set out the Council's approach for securing developer contributions from development of one new dwelling or more, or where commercial development would result in the need for ten or more new employees.

The current SPD for developer contributions had been adopted by Council in June 2013 and succeeded Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG4/04) which had first been adopted in 2004. Since 2004, the policy and its formulaic approach had been reviewed regularly and scrutinised by both Officers and Members, and by developers through the application and appeal process.

It had become necessary to update the SPD to:

- Ensure that the SPD remained effective once the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was implemented on 1 April 2015. Until that date the current adopted SPD would remain in place.
- Remove the formulaic approach from the SPD as it could no longer be used once CIL was implemented.
- Take account of new local and national planning policies.
- Take account of other updates.

Members were advised that if, since 6 April 2010, more than five planning obligations had been secured for a certain type of infrastructure, it would not be possible to use any further s106 agreements to require provision or contributions towards that type of infrastructure generally once CIL had been implemented on 1 April 2015. However, advice had been received that further obligations (up to five) could be sought to fund a specific project within that type of infrastructure.

It was proposed to change the title of the SPD to reflect its limited use and therefore its reduced ability to adequately mitigate the impact of development once CIL had been implemented.

The Council's Executive had approved the draft SPD on 24 July 2014 subject to a seven week consultation period which had taken place from 25 July 2014 to 12 September 2014. A total of 15 consultation responses had been received and these had been considered by Officers and proposed amendments had been made to the SPD as appropriate. The main changes were outlined in paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of the report and a table of proposed amendments to the SPD were set out in Appendix C.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

Councillor Alan Macro drew Members' attention to the table in paragraph 1.16 on page 96 of the agenda. He queried whether the new government guidance that had been issued would impact on the Authority's ability to implement the proposals in relation to affordable housing. Councillor Cole responded that at the present time the guidance only used the word 'should' and until this became 'must' or firm guidance was received the Council would continue with this proposal.

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook stated that in previous discussions with the Monitoring Officer he had been advised that the term 'should' should be taken to be an imperative and he queried why the interpretation was not the same in this instance. The Deputy Monitoring Officer responded that each piece of legislation needed to be considered on an individual basis. This guidance used the word should and this needed to be weighed up against other policies in planning terms.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

79. **Supplementary Planning Document - Sandleford Park Strategic Site: Proposed Amendments**

(Councillor Ieuan Tuck declared a personal interest in Agenda item 18 by virtue of the fact that he lived close to the Sandleford site. As his interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest he determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 18) concerning approval for the publication of an amended Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Sandleford Park Strategic Site for a seven week period of consultation.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Hilary Cole and seconded by Councillor Alan Law:

That the Council:

1. "approves the amended Sandleford Park Supplementary Planning Document and agrees that this be published for a seven week period of public consultation.
2. delegates authority to the Head of Planning and Countryside to agree any minor typographical and formatting refinements to the draft Supplementary Planning Document for Sandleford Park before publication."

Councillor Cole in introducing the item reported that land at Sandleford Park, on the southern edge of Newbury, had been allocated through the West Berkshire Core Strategy as a strategic site for up to 2,000 dwellings, 1,000 of which were due to be delivered within the Core Strategy period to 2026.

The principle for developing the site had been established through the Core Strategy and was set out in more detail through the Sandleford Park SPD which was adopted in September 2013. The amendments to the SPD set out a requirement for a single planning application for the site. This had always been envisaged, given that the site was promoted as a single site throughout the allocation and examination process. However, as this was not set out in either the policy or the adopted SPD, it was felt to be prudent to confirm this requirement in a manner which fully confirmed the Council's expectations for delivering the site comprehensively, in an effective way. This was necessary in order to ensure that the infrastructure was developed in a cohesive way.

The amended SPD would be subject to a formal seven week period of consultation in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

2012. The consultation would run from the 12 December 2014 to 30 January 2015 should Members be minded to approve this paper. The SPD would ultimately need to be adopted by Full Council in order to give it the necessary weight as a material consideration in the determination of any planning application that came forward for this site.

Councillor Hilary Cole also asked if she could take the opportunity to update all Members on the progress that was being made in respect of the Housing Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD). She reminded Members that a huge response had been received in relation to this consultation. Officers had now completed the process of logging and processing the responses and these had now been published on the Council's website. Officers were now starting to analyse the comments and where appropriate seeking expert advice on specific issues. Additional technical work was also being undertaken on areas including transport and infrastructure. Officers would then update the policy and set out how the sites would be developed and what supporting infrastructure was required. The submission version of the DPD would then be consulted on prior to submission to the Secretary of State in advance of the Public Examination by the Planning Inspectorate, She was however not in a position as yet to provide a definitive timetable of events.

Councillor Alan Macro noted that in the revised DPD references to plurals had been changed to the singular form. He queried if this would be carried forward if one outline planning application and several subsequent reserved matters applications were submitted.

In accordance with paragraph 4.13.18 (Officer's Advice) Gary Lugg explained that it would be referred to in the singular in the SPD and that the changes to the SPD were intended to result in a single outline application. This single outline application would be followed by several reserved matters applications.

Councillor Alan Macro noted that the document stated that two vehicular accesses would be provided and other accesses would be explored. He stated that this was the position stated in the original SPD produced a year ago and he felt that this issue should have been progressed by now as it was an area of great concern to local residents. Councillor Cole stated that the Council was committed to exploring accesses to the site to minimise the impact however this was a matter for discussion and negotiation with the developers and further work was still therefore required.

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook noted that the first recommendation was to approve the SPD and agree the consultation. On the basis that Members were being asked to agree the content of the SPD and for it to go out for consultation he could not support this recommendation.

Councillor Alan Law noted that the scheme would deliver 800 affordable homes and he therefore urged Members to support the recommendations.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

80. **Activity Team West Berkshire - Fees and Charges 2015/16 (C2889)**

(Councillor Tim Metcalfe declared a personal interest in Agenda item 19 by virtue of the fact that he and his wife were trustees of the Adventure Dolphin Charity. As his interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest he determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 19) concerning the fees and charges for the 2015/16 Activity Team West Berkshire programme in order to enable the service to

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

competitively advertise and promote activities and maximise advanced bookings and income.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Hilary Cole and seconded by Councillor Tim Metcalfe:

That the Council:

“approves the proposed increase in Fees and Charges for the Activity Team West Berkshire programme, hire of equipment and resources as set out in Appendix B of the report.”

Councillor Cole in introducing the report noted that paragraphs 4.1 and 5.1 of the report should refer to Council and not Corporate Board. Councillor Cole reported that a business plan had been developed which supported the Council’s intention for the Activity Team West Berkshire service to operate effectively and efficiently to achieve cost neutral delivery of non targeted universal activity. It was felt that the charges were competitive and compared favourably to the market price for similar activity centres elsewhere and they also reflected the true increases in expenditure experienced in 2014/15. The proposed fees and charges for the activities set out in the report therefore reflected a fair market price for commercially based traded activity through an average price increase of 2%. Proposed charges for activity, equipment and resource hire had been set out in Appendix B of the report.

The main increases were in relation to the registration fees payable per participant for the Duke of Edinburgh Award together with a charge per operating centre. These had now been introduced to the Activity Team West Berkshire’s fees and charges and represented a one-off increase of between 7% and 10%.

Councillor Cole asked Members to support the charges which were brought to the December meeting each year for approval so that they would be in place for the 01 April 2015 in order to maximise advance bookings.

Councillor Gwen Mason asked for more clarity around the increases in respect of the Duke of Edinburgh charges. In accordance with paragraph 4.13.18 (Officers Advice) Jim Sweeting explained that the Activity Team West Berkshire fees would now include a charge per operating centre which had been introduced by the Scheme organisers

Councillor Tim Metcalfe supported the revised charging schedule and noted that Adventure Dolphin were not proposing a price increase either.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

81. **Leisure Centres' Fees and Charges 2015 (C2888)**

(Councillor Gwen Mason declared a personal interest in Agenda item 20 by virtue of the fact that she was a member of Northcroft Leisure Centre and a member of their Customer Focus Group. As her interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest she determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

(Councillor Keith Woodhams declared a personal interest in Agenda item 20 by virtue of the fact that he was a member of the Kennet Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee. As his interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest he determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

(Councillor Roger Croft declared a personal interest in Agenda item 20 by virtue of the fact that he was a member of the Kennet Leisure Centre Joint Advisory Committee and also the President of the Newbury and District Swimming Club. As his interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest he determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

(Councillors Royce Longton and Carole Jackson-Doerge declared a personal interest in Agenda item 20 by virtue of the fact that they were members of the Willink Joint Advisory Committee. As their interest was personal and not a disclosable pecuniary interest they determined to take part in the debate and vote on the matter).

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 20) concerning the implementation of the contractual requirement for an annual review for 2015 for Legacy Leisure, to come into effect from 1st January 2015.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Hilary Cole and seconded by Councillor Virginia von Celsing:

That the Council:

“approves the proposed increase in Fees and Charges, as outlined in Appendix B to the report, for the Leisure Management Contract”.

Councillor Cole introduced the report which set out the contractual requirement for an annual price review for 2015 for Legacy Leisure which would come into effect from 1st January 2015.

The proposed fees and charges as set out in the report reflected an average increase of 1.5% across the contract as a whole which would take into account local variations based on market trends, local circumstances and nearest competition. The charges factored in the competition and market rates for West Berkshire centres in the east of the district which were within an easy travel time to Reading facilities.

The proposed increases in the level of charging had been presented to recent meetings of the Joint Advisory Committees and no objections had been made.

Councillor Cole noted that a differential rate for West Berkshire card holders would be retained. Discounts would remain in place for those on low incomes, people with disabilities and for those over the age of 60.

Councillor Mollie Lock noted that given that over the next two years changes were being made to the age at which young people would leave full time education she wondered if the lower age of 16 should rise to 18. Councillor Cole commented that this was a very good suggestion and that she would ask officers to look into this for future iterations of this scheme. She also asked Officers to explore what was happening nationally in respect of this issue.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

(Mollie Lock left the meeting at 8,29pm and returned at 8.32pm)

82. Changes to the Constitution - Parts 9 (Budget Policy Framework), 10 (Financial Rules of Procedure) and 12 (Personnel Rules of Procedure) (C2887)

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 21) concerning a review and proposed amendments to Parts 9 (Budget and Policy Framework), 10 (Finance Rules of Procedure) and 12 (Personnel Rules of Procedure) of the Council's Constitution in light of legislative changes, policy changes and recent government guidance.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Quentin Webb and seconded by Councillor Paul Bryant:

That the Council:

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

1. approves the amendments and any additional changes required to Parts 9,10 and 12 of the Constitution;
2. agrees that the changes will come into effect on the 12 December 2014”.

Councillor Webb reported that following an internal audit of the management of the Constitution in 2010 it was noted that one of the responsibilities of the Finance and Governance Group was to have ownership of the Council's Constitution. The content of the Local Code of Corporate Governance stated that there would be an annual review of the operation of the Constitution.

A timetable had been established for the Finance and Governance Group to review individual sections of the Constitution and a number of Officers had been involved in revising specific parts of the Constitution. This report proposed amendments to Parts 9 (Budget and Policy Framework), 10 (Finance Rules of Procedure) and 12 (Personnel Rules of Procedure) of the Council's Constitution in light of legislative changes, policy changes and recent government guidance.

The report set out the various changes which it was proposed to be made to each Part of the Constitution. Some text from Part 9 had been moved into Part 10. In Part 10 tables had been inserted which set out the rules for moving budgets between revenue cost centres (virements) and also for amendments to the approved Capital Programme. The proposed rules minimised the number of items which required Executive approval and in the main related to sums over £250k. Amendments to Part 12 were not significant and just brought the Constitution in line with existing policies. The changes had been discussed at the Governance and Audit Committee on the 24 November 2014 who had agreed the changes.

(Councillor Keith Chopping left the meeting at 8.29pm and returned at 8.31pm)

(Councillor Manohar Gopal left the meeting at 8.31pm and returned at 8.34pm)

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

83. **Proposed Member Induction and Development Programmes for 2015/16 (C2867)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 22) which sought agreement of the proposed Member Induction and Development Programmes for 2015/16.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Roger Croft and seconded by Councillor Gwen Mason:

That the Council:

“agrees the proposed Member Induction and Development Programmes for 2015/16”.

Councillor Roger Croft introduced the report and stated that as a new Member following the 2011 elections he had found the induction programme to be invaluable and he therefore felt that it was essential to have a programme in place especially for new Members. He thanked the Member Development Group for this excellent piece of work.

Councillor Alan Macro reported that the last time Council had considered the Development Programme he had requested that thought be given to including more e-learning in the programme.

Councillor Roger Croft explained that e-learning formed part of the package of items being piloted by a group of Members in advance of the May 2015 elections.

Councillor Paul Bryant stated that while he had some sympathy with Councillor Macro's view as a Member who regularly attended Member development sessions he found the interaction with other Members to be invaluable. He also stated that he wanted to

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

encourage all Members to attend all the sessions and noted his disappointment at some of the turnout at the training that was provided.

Councillor Adrian Edwards stated that as the Member Champion for Heritage he would like to see more heritage issues being included in the programme to support the excellent work being done by the Heritage Team.

Councillor Tony Linden stated that it would be useful if the training programme could be provided to all candidates in advance of the elections so that they could ensure that if they were elected the dates were in their diaries. Councillor Gwen Mason stated that the dates were included in the agenda and therefore could be circulated by the Groups to the prospective candidates. She noted that she supported the programme which had been discussed at length at both the March and October 2014 Member Development Group meetings. She drew Members' attention to the mandatory training which would need to be undertaken by both old and new Members.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

84. **2015/16 West Berkshire Council Timetable of Public Meetings (C2926)**

The Council considered a report (Agenda Item 23) concerning the timetable of public meetings for 2015/16.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Roger Croft and seconded by Councillor Quentin Webb:

That the Council:

“approves the timetable of public meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year”.

Councillor Roger Croft proposed that Members adopt the proposed timetable of meetings. Councillor Quentin Webb supported this recommendation and thanked Officers for providing the two-weekly update that was circulated to Members every week. Councillor Jeff Beck noted that a lot of work went into producing this timetable and he also thanked Officers.

The Motion was put to the meeting and duly **RESOLVED**.

85. **Notices of Motion**

The Council considered the under-mentioned Motion (Agenda item 24(a) refers) submitted in the name of Councillor Roger Croft relating to the devolution of power.

MOTION: Proposed by Councillor Roger Croft and seconded by Councillor Jeff Brooks:

That:

“Based on the proposals from Government to the Greater Manchester Authorities and the creation of The Cabinet Committee for Devolved Powers, this Council believes there are significant powers of competence and the relevant funding that we would like to see devolved to the Berkshire Unitary Authorities and we seek the engagement of government to support us in achieving this. This Council resolves to form a short life working group to define powers of competence for devolution and then to seek a meeting between the Berkshire Unitaries and The Rt Hon William Hague MP to discuss our requests”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared **CARRIED**.

86. **Members' Questions**

There were no Member questions submitted.

COUNCIL - 11 DECEMBER 2014 - MINUTES

(The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 9.05 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature