

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE
ON THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2024**

Present: Councillor Hayfield in the Chair

Councillors Barnett, Bates, Clews, Davey, Dirveiks, Farrow, Hobley, Humphreys, Jackson, Jarvis, Jenns, Melia, Osborne, Parsons, H Phillips, O Phillips, Reilly, Ridley, Ririe, Simpson, Singh, Smith, Stuart, Symonds, Turley, Watson, Whapples, A Wright and D Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bell, Chapman, Fowler, Gosling and Taylor

29 Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were declared at the meeting.

30 Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 19 June 2024

The minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 19 June 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

31 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor had attended:

- University of Warwick Summer 2024 Degree Celebration at Senate House, University of Warwick, Coventry;
- Mayor of Warwick's Civic Service at St Mary's Church, Warwick; and
- High Sheriff of Warwickshire's Legal Service at Collegiate Church of St Mary's, Warwick.

The Mayor had held his Civic Service at St Cuthbert's Church, Shustoke on 29 September 2024, hosted a Celebration of the Heritage of Northern Warwickshire at Merevale Hall on 5 October 2024 and would be attending the Mayor of Coleshill Town Council's Cheese & Wine Evening at Blyth Hall on 18 October 2024

The Deputy Mayor had attended:

- Polesworth Carnival
- Mayor of Tamworth's Civic Sunday at St Editha's Church, Tamworth
- The Mayor of Atherstone Town Council's Civic Service at St Mary's Church, Atherstone
- The Mayor of North Warwickshire Borough Council's Civic Service at St Cuthbert's Church, Shustoke

32 Questions Pursuant to Standing Order No 7

The following questions were received pursuant to Standing Order No 7:-

Question 1 - Councillor Simpson:

At a previous meeting, North Warwickshire Borough Council agreed to review the current Local Plan as soon as was practicable. Since that meeting, government policy on the number of new houses required in each area and protection of the green belt has been amended. In light of the current emerging national policy, could the Leader of the Council ask Officers to bring an update to the next LDF Sub-Committee, and then report to the Planning and Development Board and Executive Board, on the next steps for the review of the Local Plan? In particular could that review set out how the Green Belt and other protected designations can be assessed so that the control this Council has on where development should take place is strengthened as far as possible, despite the threat to this which has been raised by the Government in its draft revised policy?

The response from Councillor David Wright, Leader of the Council was:-

Councillor Simpson raises a very important point and the threat to the Green Belt from the Government's proposed changes to the national planning guidance is one of the main risks that the Borough faces at the moment.

This Council has a very good record at providing the development that is needed, both in terms of housing and employment, and works carefully to try to ensure development happens in the most appropriate locations. Key to this is the protections afforded by the Green Belt and our other landscape designations and if the Government is intent on putting that at risk then I agree with Councillor Simpson the Council should look very carefully at this. I've asked the Chief Executive to ensure a programme to do this is reported as suggested by Councillor Simpson.

Question 2 – Councillor Simpson:

In light of the recent, and on-going, partial closure of the main Atherstone to Coleshill Road at Shustoke, could the Council's leadership engage further with Severn Trent PLC to prevent further significant inconvenience to residents for what appears to be solely the company's operational convenience?

The response from Councillor David Wright, Leader of the Council was:-

Councillor Simpson raises another important issue. Members from across the Chamber have consistently raised the issue of the impact Severn Trent PLC's operations have on our Borough and its residents, which can often have a particular impact given the rural nature of our area, something that it does not always feel like Severn Trent appreciate.

Members will be aware that we have a Councillor workshop with Severn Trent's representatives at 5pm on the 4 December ahead of full Council that evening and this represents an excellent opportunity to raise matters such as these with them.

33 Minutes of Planning and Development Board – 8 July, 5 August, 2 September and 7 October 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Simpson, seconded by Councillor Jarvis and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Development Board held on 8 July, 5 August, 2 September and 7 October 2024 be approved and adopted.

34 Minutes of Executive Board – 17 July and 16 September 2024

It was proposed by Councillor D Wright, seconded by Councillor Simpson and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 17 July 2024 be approved and adopted, subject to:

a Environmental Crime Delegations

- i That delegated powers be given to the Environmental Health Manager, the Senior Pollution Control Officer and the Environmental Crime Officer, to act in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and**
- ii That regular update reports be submitted to the Community and Environment Board.**

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 16 September 2024 be approved and adopted, with the addition of it being noted that in respect of Minute No 28 (Local Councils' Charter) thanks were expressed to Richard Habgood, Chair of the North Warwickshire Area Committee for all his sterling work and help in producing the Charter and to Councillor Reilly who started the work across the County on the Charter, and subject to:

b Budgetary Control Report 2024/25 Period Ended 31 August 2024

That the Budgetary Control Report 2024/25 Period Ended 31 August 2024 be noted.

35 Minutes of Local Development Framework Sub-Committee held on – 24 July and 10 September 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Watson, seconded by Councillor Osborne and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee held on 24 July and 10 September 2024 be approved and adopted;

36 Minutes of Community and Environment Board – 20 August and 14 October 2024

It was proposed by Councillor A Wright, seconded by Councillor Melia and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Community and Environment Board held on 20 August and 14 October 2024 be approved and adopted.

37 Minutes of Resources Board – 3 September 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Symonds, seconded by Councillor Davey and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Board held on 3 September 2024 be approved and adopted.

38 Minutes of Taxi and General Licensing Committee – 2 October 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Jenns, seconded by Councillor Turley and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Board held on 3 September 2024 be approved and adopted, subject to:

Adoption of Taxi Licensing Policy and consultation on Pavement Licensing Policy

a That the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy be adopted; and

b That a consultation be carried out to introduce a Pavement Licensing Policy.

39 Minutes of Special Sub-Group – 8 October 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Clews, seconded by Councillor Watson and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Special Sub-Group held on 8 October 2024 be approved and adopted.

40 Notice of Motion under Standing Order No 10

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor D Wright and seconded by Councillor Davey

That the Council :

- Confirms its opposition to the reduction in winter fuel allowance which will have a significant impact on the elderly residents of the Borough;
- Endorses the work of the Financial Inclusion team with those residents who may be eligible for Pension Credit but who are not currently claiming it, as reported to this month's Executive Board; and
- Resolves to repurpose the remaining money in the Hardship Fund to projects by the Financial Inclusion team to assist elderly residents impacted by heating costs this winter

It was then proposed by Councillor D Wright and seconded by Councillor Davey by way of amendment

That the Council :

- Confirms its opposition to the reduction in winter fuel allowance which will have a significant impact on the elderly residents of the Borough and that the Leader of the Council writes to the Government setting out this Council's opposition to this decision;
- Endorses the work of the Financial Inclusion team with those residents who may be eligible for Pension Credit but who are not currently claiming it, as reported to September's Executive Board;
- Resolves to repurpose the remaining money in the Hardship Fund to assist elderly residents impacted by heating costs this winter by way of a direct payment of £100 to residents who are over 66 years old, will not receive the winter fuel payment, that are unable to qualify for pension credit or universal credit but are on a sufficiently low income so as to be in receipt of Council Tax Support and who have less than £3000 in savings;
- That an additional sum of £35,000 be made available from the New Burdens funding reserve for projects proposed by Councillors in Wards that have yet to use their full allocation under the existing Financial Hardship Fund scheme;
- That a Member Panel consisting of 3 Conservative Members, 2 Labour Members and 1 Dordon Independent Member be established to consider bids to that Fund;
- That revised criterion be considered by that Panel in order to ensure the Fund is used directly for the relief of financial hardship; and

- The Council acknowledges that these will have to be one off payments given the Council does not have the finances to permanently rectify the extremely regrettable decision to remove Winter Fuel allowances to so many elderly residents of the Borough.

It was then proposed by Councillor Stuart and seconded by Councillor Whapples, in accordance with Standing Order No 19b that the vote now be taken without discussion or right of reply.

Upon being put to the vote the Mayor declared Councillor Stuart's motion to be lost.

In accordance with Standing Order No 11(1) the recorded vote on the substantive motion was as follows:

For – Bates, Clews, Davey, Hayfield, Humphreys, Jarvis, Jenns, Melia, Reilly, Ridley, Simpson, Singh, Smith, Symonds, Watson, A Wright and D Wright.

Abstain – Barnett, Dirveiks, Farrow, Hobley, Jackson, Osborne, Parsons, H Phillips, O Phillips, Ririe, Stuart, Turley and Whapples.

Upon being put to the vote the Mayor declared the motion to be carried.

41 **Common Seal**

It was proposed by Councillor Hayfield and seconded by Councillor Simpson and

Resolved:

That the Chief Executive be authorised to affix the Common Seal to any Orders, Deeds and Documents as necessary to give effect to the decisions of the Council, including any passed during part of the meeting which is held in private, in accordance with Article 11.05 of the Articles of the Constitution.

42 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved:

That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

43 **Exempt Extract of the Minutes of the Executive Board – 17 July 2024**

It was proposed by Councillor D Wright, seconded by Councillor Humphreys and

Resolved:

That the exempt extract of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 17 July 2024, be approved and adopted.

44 Exempt Extract of the Minutes of the Resources Board – 3 September 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Symonds, seconded by Councillor Davey and

Resolved:

That the exempt extract of the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Board held on 3 September 2024 be approved and adopted.

45 Exempt Extract of the Minutes of the Planning and Development Board held on 7 October 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Simpson, seconded by Councillor Ridley and

Resolved:

That the exempt extract of the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Board held on 7 October 2024 be approved and adopted.

46 Exempt Extract of the Minutes of the Special Sub-Group held on 8 October 2024

It was proposed by Councillor Clews, seconded by Councillor Jenns and

Resolved:

That the exempt extract of the minutes of the meeting of the Special Sub-Group held on 8 October 2024 be approved and adopted.

**Chairman of the next ensuing meeting
of the Council**