

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE
ON WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2022**

Present: Councillor T Clews in the Chair

Councillors Bell, D Clews, Davey, Dirveiks, Farrow, Gosling, Hancocks, D Humphreys, M Humphreys, Jarvis, Jenns, Jordan, Macdonald, McLauchlan, Morson, Moss, K Parker, M Parker, H Phillips, Reilly, Simpson, L Smith, Symonds, A Wright and D Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chambers, Hayfield, Parsons, Osborne, O Phillips and S Smith.

32 Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were declared at the meeting.

33 Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 22 June and the Special Council Meetings held on 13 July and 14 September 2022

The minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 22 June and the Special Council Meetings held on 13 July and 14 September 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

34 Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor announced:

- That during the mourning period for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II he had the privilege and honour to represent North Warwickshire Borough Council. He and the Mayoress visited St Mary's Church Atherstone and St Mary's Church Warwick to pay their respects. He opened a book of condolence along with Councillors D Wright and Gosling, laid a wreath and read out the Proclamation of King Charles III in the Market Square in Atherstone. He passed on his thanks to Mr Maxey, Officers and staff of North Warwickshire Borough Council and Councillors for their support and attending church services within their own wards. Well done to Councillor Chambers and the Community Development team for the day that they put on at Ruby's Yard.

35 Questions Pursuant to Standing Order No 7

The following question was received pursuant to Standing Order No 7:-

M K Jewkes - Disability officer North Warks and Bedworth CLP

"Around 6 months ago I came and spoke here about the decision and impact of the closure of the Atherstone public toilets on the local disabled community since then I have also found other issues relating to disabled people where we have been promised resolution, or mitigations have been extremely poor, lacked

consultation or dismissed what was promised at consultation. I, therefore, feel it would be extremely useful for you and the disabled community if you follow through with your promise of examining and possibly testing a disability forum so that should issue that directly impact disabled people need mitigation due to accessibility or any other disability issues, we can advise on the best route based on experience and would help thus in creating a middle ground with our local authority. In Polesworth the things promised were a disabled accessible roundabout, swing, and a NEW park basically, and whilst yes it looks reasonable the promises by far exceeded what was installed. I received an email from an upset parent on the subject of this week

To Mike

Thank you for reaching out about the parks in the village.

I have a five-year-old autistic stepson and we can never really bring him down to any of the parks as there is nothing for him there. There is one swing we can put him in, but it's always taken up with toddlers (nothing wrong with that) he is very unsteady on his feet so has to be supervised all the time. It's not big enough so it's so busy. Also, the older children vandalize it as it's so close to the skate park and he has sensory issues with loud music, and people who let their dogs off the lead all the XXXXXX time scare the hell out of him.

I know that you can't do things for just one child but when planning these things it should include all children!

We take him to Leicester as the parks over there seem to do just that including all children but it should be we shouldn't have to put him in the car to take him to the park.

Instead of the ridiculous waste of money on pink whatever it is. Maybe a little sensory garden that can be a little bit of quiet for the kids that are not just autistic but feel like they need a little bit of quiet and calm?

Please tell the powers that be from me that they are wasting so much money in this time of need for free things for all children to do in their villages! And they should take a leaf out of Coalville Park.

Thank you for listening.

Now I am pleading for you to please instigate the preparations for a disability forum as nothing has been heard of this in the last 6 months when it was promised, with our assistance there could be much less of an issue with all of the above after all since we are the best people to advise on the issues we face in everyday life it surely would be logical to have our input to mitigate issues that we as disabled people face every day. Without listening to our concerns there is no guarantee that the attempts you may try to make will be effective or even that any attempts will be made.

Thank you all for listening, and I hope we can all work together to improve our constituency".

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

I would like to thank Mr Jewkes for his question and his continued interest in how our services are delivered for those with disabilities.

The Council works with EQulP, the Equality and Inclusion Partnership in Warwickshire, which is a charity working to address related issues across the County. They have agreed to work with the Council to establish a forum of the sort mentioned by Mr Jewkes. This will look at the wider issue of equalities but of course will include disability issues.

The Council would be happy to include Mr Jewkes in this undertaking and officers will be in touch when EQuIP are able to start this work.

With regard to the play area mentioned in the question, considerable consultation has taken place at each of the play areas before improvement works commence to ensure the needs of the local community are taken in to account. This is done in person on site, through the website, on social media and through local schools. Clearly this is balanced with what needs doing to existing equipment on the site identified through our external inspections, and what the budget is. It is not the case therefore that the needs of certain groups in our communities have been overlooked nor that the Council does not listen to the particular needs of certain groups. The Council has made considerable efforts to consult and engage widely before then making the balanced decisions necessary in these cases.

We also work with Accessible whose website allows people to find wheelchair friendly venues or establish what disabled access and facilities are available. As part of our renewed contract with them we aim to produce Access Guides for all of our play areas and recreation grounds, as well as asking them to advise on consequential recommendations to improve access

We aim therefore to make our sites as inclusive as possible taking into account a wide range of abilities.

At Abbey Green Park specifically we have been able to introduce a number of inclusive elements to the existing play area including:

- An inclusive swing seat.
- An Emoji Discus roundabout. The rocking and rotating motion, with good body support and security given by the dish shape, the angle of the dish and its height, make side transfer from a wheelchair possible and minimise the lifting required by helpers. The wide colour band offers visual stimulation with emoji faces cut into the surface as well as aiding access in and out of the dish.
- A Trio Rocker. This has got a 1m diameter soft rubber platform, is comfortable to sit on and provides a good transfer height from a wheelchair, making it inclusive whilst also providing good grip for those children standing and jumping on and off.
- Play panels. These are set at a height suitable for wheelchair users, which allows children of all ages and abilities to play together co-operatively. The 'shape shifter panel' also includes wetpour shapes set into the ground around the play area, so encourages children to work together to explore and find the shapes, and so playing together with their less able peers.

As well as these features, we have also installed a new zip wire and cobra swing to the grassed area which have proven a welcome addition to the site for slightly older children.

Just under £65k has been invested on Abbey Green play area, replacing the two gates, benches and bins inside the fenced area (including the additional equipment aforementioned), adding thermoplastic graphics on the path, adding 2 picnic benches and the additional equipment on the surrounding area.

36 Taxi and General Licensing Committee – 24 June 2022 and Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee – 18 July 2022

It was proposed by Councillor Jenns, seconded by Councillor L Smith and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Taxi and General Licensing Committee held on 24 June 2022 and Alcohol and Gambling Licensing Committee held on 18 July 2022 be approved and adopted.

37 Minutes of Planning and Development Board – 4 July, 1 August and 7 September 2022

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

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Development Board held on 4 July, 1 August and 7 September 2022 be approved and adopted.

38 Minutes of Special Sub-Group – 5 July 2022

It was proposed by Councillor D Clews seconded by Councillor Simpson and

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings of the Special Sub-Group held on 5 July 2022 be approved and adopted.

39 Minutes of the Executive Board – 20 July 2022

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

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 20 July 2022 be approved and adopted

40 Minutes of the Resources Board – 6 September 2022

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

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Resources Board held on 6 September 2022 be approved and adopted.

41 **Notice of Motion**

The Mayor was satisfied that the Motion was submitted prior to the deadline within the Council's Standing Orders and should therefore be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency in accordance with the usual practice for Motions submitted by Members.

The following Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Gosling and Seconded by Councillor D Wright:

"To honour the outstanding life and legacy of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the love and respect felt for her by the people of North Warwickshire by providing a permanent tribute (or collection of tributes), which will be identified following a wide-ranging consultation.

A Member Working Group of five Councillors would be established to oversee this work".

Upon being put to the meeting the Mayor declared the Motion to be carried.

42 **Common Seal**

It was proposed by Councillor D Wright and seconded by Councillor Jarvis 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.

43 **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.

44 **Confidential Extract of the Minutes of the Planning and Development Board – 4 July 2022**

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

Resolved:

That the confidential extract of the minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Development Board held on 4 July 2022 be approved and adopted.

45 **Confidential Extract of the Minutes of the Executive Board – 20 July 2022**

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

Resolved:

That the confidential extract of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 20 July 2022 be approved and adopted.

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