

**NOTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
AND TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS IN THE BOROUGH**

Held on Tuesday, 10 January 2012 at the Council House, South Street, Atherstone.

Present: Councillor M Stanley, Leader of North Warwickshire Borough Council
in the Chair.

Members and Officers from North Warwickshire Borough Council and representatives from the following Town/Parish Councils:

Ansley, Astley, Atherstone, Baddesley Ensor, Baxterley, Curdworth, Fillongley, Grendon, Kingsbury, Lea Marston, Mancetter, Middleton, Nether Whitacre, Newton Regis, Over Whitacre, Polesworth, Seckington and No Mans Heath and Shustoke.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barber, Freer, Hayfield, B Moss, Karen Meades and Jean Marshall (Mancetter Parish Council), Richard Freer, Ray Jarvis, Mejar Singh (Atherstone Town Council), Paulette Ross (Curdworth Parish Council), Hartshill Parish Council, Middleton Parish Council and Water Orton Parish Council.

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2010 were received and noted.

2 Matters Arising

Steve Maxey provided an update on a number of issues referred to in the minutes.

3 Community Hubs

Bob Trahern provided a short presentation on Community Hubs. He explained that 9 expressions of interest had been received in respect of developing Community Hubs from the original 16 and it was hoped that most would be live over the next 18 months with the intention that the first of the hubs would be up and running by the middle of 2012.

A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

4 Localism

Steve Maxey provided an update on the Localism Act which received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. Although the Act contains a number of

important measures, the finer details are still awaited. Some brief points from the presentation are highlighted below:

New rights and powers for communities and individuals

- The 'community right to challenge' gives groups, parish councils and employees the right to express an interest in running a local authority service. If the challenge is accepted the challenging organisation can bid as part of a procurement exercise.
- The 'community right to bid' gives community groups a chance to bid for assets listed as having 'community value.' Community groups that express an interest will have a limited amount of time to raise money to bid to buy the asset on the open market.
- If a council proposes to raise council tax by more than a threshold set by the Secretary of State it will have to hold a referendum to get approval from local voters.

Reform to the planning system

- The measures are wide ranging and include the abolition of regional strategies, a duty for public bodies to cooperate in planning matters, neighbourhood planning, the community right to build and a requirement for developers to consult communities before submitting certain planning applications.
- The Act contains some stronger planning enforcement powers, reform of the community infrastructure levy, reform of the way local plans are made. It also gives government ministers power to take decisions on nationally significant infrastructure projects.
- There are new proposals for neighbourhood planning ("An Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning" produced by Communities and Local Government is attached) to enable communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work.

Steve explained that as further information is provided regarding Localism and Code of Conduct more training can be provided as appropriate.

5 Plans for The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

Steve Maxey provided an update surrounding the plans made by the Borough Council for celebrations to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June this year.

He went on to explain that to assist community groups and individuals to come together and celebrate this occasion, a number of ideas are being developed and money will be available to encourage community based activities, such as fun days, carnivals, street parties etc. Further details can be obtained from Jaki Douglas (jakidouglas@northwarks.gov.uk or 01827 719492) and will subsequently be available from the Council's website.

All activities funded through any schemes would then be promoted through the Borough Council's website.

6 **Any Other Business**

HS2

The Government had made an announcement to go ahead with the High Speed (HS2) rail line, initially between London and Birmingham and then onto Leeds and Manchester. This follows consultation last year, during which this Council submitted a strongly worded response to Government ministers, criticising the 'seriously flawed business case' for HS2.

Lengthy discussion took place regarding this issue and the following specific issues were raised:

- Cross party support from the Borough Council against HS2.
- May look at possibility of legal challenge with the other Councils affected.
- The Borough Council will investigate best measures available and mitigation.
- Local Action groups will be consulted with every two months by HS2 Ltd.

Representatives from Town and Parish Councils present were invited to raise issues pertaining to their Council.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.