



Jayne Topham
Town Clerk

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FULL COUNCIL MEETING

13th SEPTEMBER 2017

MINUTES

Present: The Mayor, Cllr M Ashford, Cllr PS Birdi, Cllr Mrs L Bolton, Cllr J P Bromley, Cllr Mrs C Cross, Cllr D Da Cruz, Cllr Mrs MA Grainger, Cllr G Guest, Cllr J Holland, Cllr Mrs M Littlejohn, Cllr T Morris.

Cllr N Butler WDC.

Section A Council

148. Prayers

149. Apologies: It was resolved to accept the apologies from Cllr R Eddy, Cllr R Edgington and Cllr N Murphy

150. Declarations of Interest

Cllr PS Birdi & Cllr J Holland as County Councillors together with the Mayor & Cllrs M Ashford, Mrs MA Grainger and T Morris as District Councillors

151. Approve the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 27th July 2017 – it was resolved to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

152. Mayor's Announcements - The Mayor shared details on the engagements he had attended so far, this year. The first charity event, Mayor's charity fashion show is to be held in the ballroom on the 28th September 2017. The Mop also raises monies for his charities and will be held on the 14th October.

153. Reports to be received from District or County Councillors.

Cllr N Butler WDC provided a report to Councillors:

Linen Street Car Park:

Monthly reviews: Continue and minor remedial work is carried out as required. The good news is that deterioration continues to be slow.

Replacement Feasibility Study: is still progressing. 1 - The cost of demolition is high because of the position of the car park site; surrounded by residential accommodation on three sides at next to a busy road. 2 - Current regulations will mean that a like for like replacement will result in fewer car parking spaces down from 242 to just under 200.

Displacement Strategy: Is still being developed. The major change from the position as last reported is that the suggestion to put temporary car parking spaces on St Mary's Lands between Car Parks 3 and 4 has been dropped. This was the result of the feedback from the representatives of the Friends of St Mary's Lands on the St Mary's Lands Working Party who correctly pointed out this development, albeit temporary, was not in the masterplan.

The District Council has finally managed to secure a meeting with Sainsburys to discuss the possibility of using part of its carpark during the displacement period. It is hoped that an update on the strategy will be given to the Executive later this month.

Car Parking Strategy for the District: This will be published this week and the public consultation will start Friday 15th September and be open for 3 months. The Project Manager will be briefing key stakeholders and will be in touch with the Town Clerk to arrange to come to speak to the Town Council.

St Mary's Lands Masterplan: The masterplan was agreed by the Warwick District Council Executive in June and the Full District Council in August and is now Council policy. Progress there has been to date:

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The District's Asset Management Plan was approved at the last Executive meeting and sum's totalling £132.5k was committed to various initiatives on St Mary's Lands during the current financial year. This is addition to the funds given to the Corp of Drums last year to renovate its Head Quarters.

- Works to paths, fencing & structures to SML - £10,000
- Maintenance to SML car parks - £3,500
- Security enhancements to SML car parks - £18,000
- SML Public Realm improvements - £60,000
- Racing Club Warwick: Improvements to create public toilet facilities and loan to repair roof – £26,000
- Hill Close Gardens: Public Realm improvements (match funding) - £5,000
- Improvements to Hampton Road / Gog Brook footpath - £10,000

The proposal to bring the hotel on St Mary's Land to market was approved at the Executive meeting on 31st August. Work has already started on the repairs to the roof at Racing Club Warwick and improvements have been made to the toilets which will then be open to the public. Work has also begun on improving the area outside Hill Close Gardens though this will not be completed until the spring. Next month work will begin on the footpath along Gog Brook from the Hampton Road. At the end of October or early November work will begin on the new entrance to the racecourse. Work continues of the cycle route through the racecourse. An answer on the lighting of the route should be known by the 25th of this month.

Discussions also continue the proposed additional parking spaces in Bread & Meat Close. It is intended to have another meeting with the residents of B&M Close once full details are available. The initial safety audit highlighted many points that needed to be addressed and an amended plan is going to the County Council later this week which should satisfy them. Looking further ahead it is hoped that next year a playpark will be installed next to RCW. This is long overdue for this area.

The wooden fence that runs from the Saltisford entrance is to be moved back to the racecourse rail. This will open a large tract of green space to the public and allow direct access to Jubilee Wood from the Saltisford entrance. The work is expected to start next month. The masterplan is already bringing many benefits to St Mary's Lands

At the AGM of the Friends of St Mary's Lands, several of the committee members did not stand for re-election including its representatives on the St Mary's Lands Working Party and the new committee has adopted a confrontational attitude to the masterplan and the District Council. This has resulted in

statements being made which are either factually incorrect or where they are correct, are selective to the point of giving an incorrect impression of the situation.

Cllr Butler had offered to attend a meeting of the Friends for a Q & A session but this offer was refused. Therefore, a public meeting has been arranged at the Court House on Monday 25th September to allow the public to ask questions on the masterplan.

Cllr Mrs D DaCruz asked "There have been reports that Council land will be sold to the developers of the Hotel on St Mary's Lands?" Cllr Butler responded that this was an option along with many other options to be considered nothing had been agreed. Cllr T Morris clarified that any hotel would be subject to planning requirements.

Cllr Mrs MA Grainger asked, "What is the role of the St Mary's Lands working party going forward?" Cllr Butler advised that the working party continue with the fifth and final stage of implementation.

Cllr PS Birdi reported that as a new County Councillor he had been undergoing training during the last 3 months. Land between Europa Way and Myton road is being assessed by the flood risk management group. Community forums were advertised and a request for attendance given. New data protection laws are being applied in 2018. Councillors were advised to find out their requirements in this new law.

Cllr J Holland spoke of the presentations, the three County Councillors attended, to young readers, Library services challenged young people to read books during the summer holidays. Budget setting process is starting next year which is a difficult task. The consultation for the Children's Centres has received an overwhelming response. The future of Barrack Street is soon to be consulted.

154. Reports of Plans Committee

To receive and adopt the Reports of the Plans Committee meeting held on 8th August & 6th September 2017

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the planning meeting held on the 8th August & 6th September 2017

155. Reports of Committees

To receive and adopt the reports of the following committee's:

Finance & Policy 16th August 2017

Community & Culture 7th September 2017

Economic & Tourism 17th August 2017

Allotments 3rd July & 4th September 2017

It was resolved to accept the minutes for all the above committees.

156. To answer member's questions - none

Section B General Purposes

157. Public Question Time

1. Question raised regarding the changing of the name of St Mary's Lands. Cllr D Da Cruz responded stating that during a consultation it was raised as an option to change the name no changes have been suggested as yet. If they were it would be publicly consulted on.
2. "Have Councillors been consulted in the process of creating the St Mary's Land's Master plan?" The Mayor responded stating that Councillors had been consulted as part of a democratic process along with other bodies and members of the public. "Has the Town Council submitted

comments to the District Council” – the Mayor responded that the Town Council were part of the process.

3. “Are the Town Council fully confident that the Friends of St Mary’s Lands are aware of the changed proposals, meetings are held privately and the public are not consulted.” The Mayor responded that any questions should be taken to the 25th September Q & A meeting. Cllr Morris stated that he felt with all the recent email correspondence on this topic confusion had been caused and that attendance at the Q & A session would allow clear guidance to all.

158. Boundary Review - Review by the LGBCE of Warwick District Council Ward

Boundaries – Graham Leach WDC

Graham Leach gave a background to the review and directed Councillors to maps to demonstrate the proposals. The proposed Ward arrangements are the same as the County Council. The review is over two stages the number of Councillors remain unchanged and will incorporate future, know development.

Full Consultation starts in November 2017.

- 159. Assets Register** – review three quotations received and determine the Auctioneer/Valuer to be appointed. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed to appoint Steve Bruce Auctioneer. References had been obtained.

160. St Mary Land’s Working Party -Councillors reporting back on the decisions made by the working party.

Comment from Friends of St Mary Lands – Anne Mellor

St Marys Land Working Party

Cllr Mrs M A Grainger reported:

The St Mary’s Lands Working party was formed some 18 months ago by the District Council to renew and review the Management plans and to produce a Masterplan for the future of SML over the period of the Local Plan. A list of interested parties were asked to provide at least one member to attend the meetings which were to be facilitated by Colin Burden, from Plincke Consultants who had produced the previous Management Plan, so were able to review work yet to be completed and obviously knew SML.

This group has included The Marching Band, Racing Club Warwick, The Jockey Club, Hill Close Gardens, The Golf & Driving range, Friends of St Mary’s Land, The Warwick Society and members of each Council. To prevent the working party being a council driven body it was agreed that one of the core user group should Chair the meeting and Nigel Hamilton of the Friends group was elected as Chairman; at this point I would like to record my personal thanks for the way Nigel so skilfully Chaired the meetings and allowed all groups to feel happy to express their opinions, and helped us reach a collectively agreed set of proposals. Recently two further groups have been identified and will be joining the WP as they can now see the benefits of joining; they are the Model flyers and a group interested in the wildlife and flora of SML. Each WP meetings has been hosted in various groups premises.

Once several ideas and areas to be improved had been agreed then these outlined ideas went out for public consultation and again all the groups provided members to help at the various presentations. Plincke’s then analysed the consultation results and several ideas were presented to the WP to formulate and agree a final Masterplan. Having been supported by the WP the Masterplan has been approved and adopted by the WDC Executive who have agreed some funding as we have heard earlier to start the work and facilitate how a hotel could be bought forward.

As has been mentioned the provision of a hotel was the most unpopular proposal put forward during the consultation, but the main reason being Warwick residents wanted proof that a hotel was needed. The economic survey commissioned by WDC proved that a quality hotel was greatly needed

for Warwick. Having been aware of all the planning issues that the original hotel proposed by the Jockey Club, as few years ago the working party were happy to support the proposed new site within the Masterplan.

We haven't met as a group over the holiday period but will be meeting to move the plan along in October. To assist with keeping up the positive momentum WDC have extended Colin Burdens contract for a further 12 months, which is much appreciated by the WP.

Any other questions from Councillors – Cllr J Holland represented the group as a County Councillor and recapped the intention for the Cycle route he reiterated that there were three public consultations held last summer which were reviewed which included the St Mary's Land proposal. No other Councillors raised a question.

Anne Mellor spoke as a representative of Friends of St Mary's Lands. The Friends of St Mary's Lands were consulted in the Master Plan but the changes were not discussed with the group. The new proposals were not agreed and no notes were kept. The Friends of St Mary's Lands do not agree with the proposals for a new hotel, additional parking, changing the name or changes to the cycle route. A history to St Mary's Lands was given and details of the groups involvement reviewed.

Cllr Mrs MA Grainger responded – The areas that the Friends of St Mary's Lands are talking about are yet to be finalised and have not got any further than a basic discussion. Regarding the concerns about the "naming" – if everybody takes their representation to the working party, and they feel that something is a completely daft idea, they can use the democratic process where we can selectively and collectively agree things. The cycle route changes came about because of a working party made up of responsible people, one of them being Sustrans the Cycle specialists, for the County, suggesting the route that could be put forward if this was allowable would be a better route, open 24/7 and with lighting a very safe walk way into town. What is the point of having a cycle path if it is shut off on race days.

These are all part of the master plan – all up for discussion. Your representatives will be able to go along and take part and bring your opinions to the working party – that's how it works that is how the Town Council have been involved. We are no more of an important body than the Friends are or Hill Close gardens are or the Jockey Club – we are all consultees to a piece of work that the District Council are producing. We have all been involved with this piece of work – as have your members. Every group has had representation and have attended all the meetings.

It is not an issue that the Town Council have taken part as you have failed or been let down by your own representatives – that is an internal matter for an organisation to sort out themselves – going forward – ensure that your representatives attend meetings, bring your opinions and bring details back to your members. All meetings to date have been open using a democratic process and I am very sorry that you feel that you have been let down by. The only people you have been let down by are your own officers.

All Councillors had received copies of the Masterplan, as this had been approved by WDC it was not felt appropriate to approve a document that was not our own.

Signed..... Dated.....