

provider and the Secretary of State would make the decision. Mandy Coulter added that HEFT and Good Hope had already been working together for over a year by covering key executive posts, the public worry expressed about impact on services was already being protected and the aim was to enhance services and develop specialisms, travel to other sites for treatment was not envisaged further (unless it was already happening) and that the financial position was improving with the books likely to balance this year so no financial problem by bringing Good Hope Hospital into the Foundation Trust. Cllr Kettle asked if the existing facilities would be maintained e.g. general hospital and maternity and Ms. Coulter confirmed this fact.

6. Questions from the Public.

Standing Orders were suspended for a maximum period of 15 minutes so that members of the public could ask questions. Following an explanation of procedures by the Chairman, members of the public were invited to state their name and address prior to asking their question. A summary of this discussion appears as an appendix to these minutes. At the end of questions, **ON THE PROPOSITION OF** Cllr Scriven, the Chairman thanked the guest speakers for their presentation and the guest speakers and 2 members of the public left the meeting at this point.

7. Report of the Leisure Services Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Riordan, **SECONDED** by Cllr Pearce, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Leisure Services Committee held on Wednesday, 7th February 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

8. Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

ON THE PROPOSITION of Cllr Scriven, **SECONDED** by Cllr Knibb, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on Wednesday, 31st January and Wednesday, 14th February 2007, having been circulated, be received, approved and the recommendations contained therein be adopted.

9. Consultation – Code of Conduct for Councillors.

The consultation document was duly noted.

10. Police Base.

The Chairman believed that the theatre attraction was needed at Arden Hall with 2 dressing rooms to get income from the shows so consequently the police needed to think about eventually being based elsewhere. Cllr Scriven thought the Parish Council could ask for the room back as it had been underused but felt the car park ought to be made available if alternative police mobile resources could be used. Cllr Dutton acknowledged the letter from Sgt O'Reilly and recommended waiting until the new civic year (mid-May) to see if there were improvements in usage. The Chairman said that the two initial Parish Constables had used the base but when re-organisation happened, the usage became an issue – having a manned based was good but an empty room was not useful for parishioners. Cllr Kettle recalled the enthusiasm and good intentions of Chief Supt Joiner and Chief Supt McGinty but the problems with electrics, windows and other inspections had caused serious delays. Whatever intentions the senior officers may have had, there had to be full support for use of officers in the community and he was pleased that the letter confirmed their intentions and he hoped they would materialize. Cllr Riordan was against any hasty decision and preferred to redevelop Arden Hall so that the police base could be repositioned without ejecting them. He believed that if parishioners were given the choice they would appreciate having a local police base in preference to theatre shows. Cllr Pearce was sad not to see an officer in attendance at the meeting and thought there was a need for improved signage. The Chairman explained he was not suggesting they should be moved immediately and Cllr Riordan felt that a limited police presence was far better than none at all.

11. Delegated Powers.

The Chairman asked the Clerk to explain the background to this item and members were referred to her report and the WALC Good Practice Guidance notes for Committees and Working Parties. She clarified how decisions were reached under her delegated powers and members accepted

that it was not the Clerk's personal views that were used but decisions were made in line with council policy and based on previous decisions of the council where possible. The Clerk stressed that she was aware of the danger of setting precedents for the Parish Council and worked hard to avoid potential problems. She commended the extremely valuable work done by Working Parties that were a great assistance when undertaking projects. Cllr Kettle said that opinions from outside sources were valuable and experts were vital in making the work of the Council more efficient. Working Parties should investigate and gather recommendations and then refer decisions back to the Parish Council, via the relevant Committee. The Chairman replied that a group were developing a bid for the lottery and Cllr Mrs Haywood had pointed out the need for a Management Committee to include users of Arden Hall. He asked if the Working Party should be allowed to make decisions within certain limits (e.g. not spending money or agreeing to spend money)? He felt it was necessary to instruct the expert what the next steps were. Cllr Kettle understood this need and felt it was not unreasonable when free-of-charge advice was being given. The Chairman said no charges had been made yet and more investigation and detailed costings for refurbishment were required.

12. Representatives to Outside Bodies.

Cllr Knibb reported that on Thursday 15th February he had attended the Solihull Area Committee meeting of WALC at Fentham Hall in Hampton in Arden. The Local Council Charter had been discussed and thanks given to Cllr Roger Chapman of Hampton Parish Council for leading the development over recent weeks of the draft formations with Mr. Blamire-Brown, the Borough Solicitor. The wording had been tightened and each amendment scrutinised by the Committee with unanimous support. The Charter would then be put forward for acceptance and ratification by the Borough Council before it became a legally binding agreement between the Borough Council and all Parish and Town Councils within the boundary. The Charter would be monitored annually and then formally reviewed every 4 years by both parties. The next meeting would be held on 7th June, again at Hampton in Arden.

The Chairman informed members he had received a letter from Chelmsley Wood CAB regarding alterations in the roles of representatives being changed to Directors. As Cllr Riordan was on the Trustee Board, the Chairman suggested he become the representative for the Parish Council but it was explained this would be a conflict of interest and not possible. Cllr Scriven said his role as representative to the Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens Trust had required him to serve as a Trustee and reassured the Chairman that this was not the first time changes had been necessary. The Chairman said he was reluctant to become a Director for personal reasons and Cllr Knibb volunteered to take this responsibility on. The letter was passed to Cllr Knibb for information and would be placed on a future agenda for formal consideration.

13. Report of the Officer of the Council.

The Clerk informed members that under her delegated powers, she had sanctioned replacement of several emergency lights that had failed in Arden Hall costing approximately £560 and requested a quotation for replacement of some fire extinguishers and blankets due to new European legislation. She recommended the WALC briefing day and asked members for a prompt response to enable a booking to be placed. Information had been supplied to the Borough Council regarding the increase to the precept (as outlined to members). Each year, an opportunity was given by WALC to nominate a serving councillor to attend a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace and the Chairman explained that he felt he did not meet the criteria of unstinting service. After discussion, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Scriven, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Dutton, accompanied by his daughter and it was hoped the application might be successful this time. Under confidential terms, the Clerk asked to defer a staffing matter to the end of the meeting and this was agreed.

14. Report of the Chairman.

The Chairman reported that even though the Acorns event on 9th February had not been well supported, The Sheridans had provided an entertaining evening and a cheque for £1000 had been presented by Margaret and Albert Turner. He urged members to support their events in future. He had also greatly enjoyed the Thinking Day service and found it very friendly and a nice occasion

held at a good centre. He had met with the Headteacher of Castle Bromwich Junior School and discussed their suggestion for a wooden “Pauline Gray Memorial Board” in the school entrance which would record the names of annual recipients for ‘citizenship’ achievements before they left the school. The school was reluctant to have bookplates as they awarded book tokens instead. The school was willing to meet members of the family and the board could accommodate up to 25 names.

The Chairman reported on the successful soccer coaching and presentation evening, which he had attended with Ian Clarkson, ex-professional footballer. There was a football project in Solihull called Fusion which the organisers wanted to bring into Castle Bromwich and Waterloo Housing were happy to fund. The Chairman had agreed to waive any cost for using the playing field but hoped members would retrospectively endorse the decision he had independently taken. **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Kettle, **IT WAS RESOLVED** to refer this matter to the Leisure Services Committee for their consideration and then back to full Council at the next meeting as the appropriate course of action.

Following a question by Cllr Dutton, the Chairman was pleased to report that the Quiz Night had been successfully held and as he had decided not to enter a team he had provided a waiter service for drinks instead. He commended Natalie Ratcliffe’s contribution to the evening as she had worked very hard. Cllr Mrs. Haywood asked how often this success could be repeated and when would the next quiz be? The Chairman suggested every other month. Members were also asked by the Chairman to attend the forthcoming Bridal Fayre on Sunday 25th March, between 10 am and 4 pm.

Cllr Kettle asked for the Council to return to the confidential matter requested by the Clerk in her report and the remaining members of the public left the meeting at this stage.