



Coventry City Council

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## **Council Meeting**

31 October 2006

**Booklet 3**

Recommendation Minutes

## **CABINET**

**31<sup>st</sup> October 2006**

### **Cabinet Members**

#### **Present:-**

Councillor Arrowsmith  
Councillor Blundell  
Councillor Foster  
Councillor Mrs Johnson  
Councillor Matchet  
Councillor H Noonan  
Councillor O'Neill  
Councillor Ridley  
Councillor Taylor (Chair)

### **Non-Voting Opposition**

#### **Representatives present:-**

Councillor Benefield  
Councillor Duggins  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Nellist

### **Other Members**

#### **Present:-**

Councillor Gazey

### **Employees Present:-**

T. Auty (City Development Directorate)  
M. Baxter (Children, Learning and Young Peoples Directorate)  
J. Bolton (Director of Community Services)  
L. Bull (Community Services Directorate)  
G. Carey (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)  
A. Carr (Community Services Directorate)  
N. Chamberlain (Finance and ICT Directorate)  
S. Clements (Community Services Directorate)  
N. Clews (City Development Directorate)  
F. Collingham (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
J. Crook (Interim Director of Children, Learning and Young People)  
A. Davey (Community Services Directorate)  
D. Elliott (City Development Directorate)  
M. Godfrey (Community Services Directorate)  
A. Green (Community Services Directorate)  
J. McGuigan (Director of City Development)  
B. Parker (Children, Learning and Young Peoples Directorate)  
A. Ridgwell (Director of Finance and ICT)  
D. Shoker (City Development Directorate)  
C. Swann (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)  
M. Trewinnard (City Development Directorate)  
C. West (Finance and ICT Directorate)  
L. Wroe (City Development Directorate)

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 110. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor H Noonan declared a prejudicial interest in the item referred to Minute 116/06 below, headed 'Public Safety Zones at Coventry Airport'. She left the meeting during the consideration of this item and the voting thereon.

Councillor Blundell declared an interest in the item referred to Minute 125/06 below, headed 'Belgrade Theatre Redevelopment Scheme'. As this interest arose from his being a City Council appointed Director of the Belgrade Theatre Board of Directors, in accordance with Paragraph 5.1.3.3.2(c) of the City Council's Constitution, the interest was not regarded as being prejudicial.

As a parent of an employee of Sure Start, Councillor Benefield declared a personal interest in a matter referred to in Minute 119/06, headed 'Early Years and Childcare Strategic Plan' and in a matter referred to Minute 121/06 headed 'Lease Terms for New Academy to Replace Woodway Park School'.

### 113. **Adoption of Coventry's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of City Development advising on the outcome of the binding report by the Planning Inspectorate following the independent examination of the submission version of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), and seeking the Cabinet and the City Council's approval for the adoption of the revised SCI.

The report indicated that SCIs are required by the Government as part of the new planning system introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Coventry's SCI explains, in clear terms, how people and organisations can get involved in the preparation of planning policies and in specific proposals and planning applications. The Council is also obliged to adhere to the recommendations set out in the binding report. The submission draft of the SCI has been prepared against a broad backdrop of consultation activity.

It was noted that, in May 2005, an informal consultation exercise comprised of a citywide newspaper questionnaire, featured in the Coventry Observer, and a leaflet questionnaire sent to local community and resident groups, statutory consultees and partner organisations. In July 2005, a formal six week period of statutory consultation generated numerous comments on the draft SCI. A significant amount of information and comment was considered as a result of the consultation process that was used to improve the SCI. This culminated in a further draft that was submitted to the Government for independent examination.

It was further noted that the purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement is to set out Coventry City Council's policy for involving the community in the preparation and revision of all Local Development Documents and in consultations on planning applications. The Statement of Community Involvement:

- is a clear public statement enabling the community to know when and how they can get involved in the preparation of local development documents, and how they will be consulted on planning applications; and
- sets out the standards to be achieved and how the minimum legal requirements for consultation will be met or exceeded.

The report further indicated:-

- (a) That effective community involvement in the planning system brings several benefits, which includes:-
- helping to promote planning as a strategic, proactive force for delivering sustainable development;
  - leading to outcomes that better reflect the views, aspirations and needs of the wider community in all its diversity
  - improving the quality and efficiency of planning decisions, by drawing on local knowledge and reducing conflict; and
  - promoting social cohesion by making connections with communities and offering them a tangible stake in decision making.
- (b) The vision of the SCI is that:-
- people and organisations from all backgrounds and communities are able to engage in planning for sustainable development;
  - the knowledge and foresight of residents and planners is combined to prioritise and detail planning policy to meet current and future needs;
  - all stakeholders, Elected Members and officers have a high level of awareness of planning policy and processes and built environment quality issues;
  - highly skilled staff with a commitment to community engagement facilitate an open, transparent and accessible process;
  - shared values, enshrined in agreed policy, underline a spirit of partnership between stakeholders; and
  - leading to a user-friendly, attractive and sustainable City.

The report further indicated that Coventry's Statement of Community Involvement has five objectives that say what the City Council will aim to do to fulfil their vision of engaging people and organisations in planning Coventry's future. The City Council aim to:-

- help make the planning system transparent, by making plans, policies, development proposals and planning decisions available in a form which is easily understood and accessible;
- make the planning system proactive by combining the knowledge of residents and planners to provide greater foresight in anticipating and satisfying future needs for planning policy;
- promote participation and involvement by presenting clear opportunities for people to make their views known and to take part in the planning

process, and by demonstrating that people's views have been considered by decision-makers;

- make the planning system accessible and inclusive, by removing barriers to involvement and by reaching out to groups that have been less engaged in the past; and
- to be accountable, by clearly identifying decision-makers and processes and ensuring that people get feedback about progress and outcomes.

It was noted that failure to meet the standards as set out in the final version of the SCI could result in Development Plan Documents being unable to progress through to the adoption stage and leave Supplementary Planning Documents open to challenge. The primary test for Development Plan Documents, when subject to Examination is that they are 'sound', as defined in government guidance. One test of soundness is that the document has been prepared in accordance with the approved Statement of Community Involvement (or the relevant Regulations if the Statement of Community Involvement is not yet adopted).

A number of principles have been developed through the Coventry Community Plan, the Coventry Corporate Plan, National Policy Statements and examples of good practice across the City and beyond in planning and regeneration activities. These are:-

- **EARLY ENGAGEMENT** - "Front-loading", beginning consultation at the earliest opportunity, to ensure that people recognise they have the opportunity to make a difference to plans and proposals, and that they experience a sense of ownership throughout the planning process. It is not sufficient to invite them to comment once proposals have been worked up. Involvement at the formative stage of policy development and review or a particular development proposal, is essential to achieve a sense of community ownership over the policies that will shape the future development of the City and improve the quality of development.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FIT FOR PURPOSE** - Arrangements should be built on a clear understanding of the communities' needs and aspirations, depending on the nature of the planning purpose. It is essential that all main interest groups and key stakeholders are aware and respect a common understanding of the approach adopted. This is particularly relevant in communities where they may be sceptical of others trying to gain territorial advantage. People will want to be involved for a variety of reasons including, curiosity, fear of change, financial gain, neighbourliness, professional duty, protection of interests or socialising. The need to recognise different agendas is important so that the consultation technique(s) employed can aim to embrace all sections of the community.
- **TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS** - The process of consultation and people's roles should be clear and transparent at all levels of engagement, so people know when they will be able to participate, and seeks to ensure participation extends beyond those who are familiar with the planning system. Being open and straightforward about the nature of the activity will generally mean communities will participate more freely as

they may have a greater understanding and trust of the process. This also means being clear about what is 'on offer'. Clear explanations as to what can and cannot be influenced and how the results will be used and what feedback will be given are essential.

- **BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY AND TRUST** - Genuine long-term community sustainability depends on developing local links and partnerships. The continuing opportunities to develop local skills and involve local people in surveying their own situation, running their own programmes and managing local assets cannot, and should not be underestimated.
- **INVOLVEMENT OF ALL THOSE AFFECTED ACROSS ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY** - Planning tends to work best if all parties are committed to the process. Activities in which key players (such as landowners or planners) sit on the sidelines are all too common and rarely achieve their objectives completely. Investment in time spent winning over cynics before formal consultation can be worthwhile. If there are people or groups, who cannot be convinced at the outset, keep them informed and give them the option of joining in later on. Planning documents need to be in plain language, satisfying clear print standards and available in different formats to encourage wide readership. Paper and electronic versions will be necessary in languages other than English, and large print, audio and Braille versions should be provided on request wherever practicable. Techniques and practical arrangements need to be tailored to engage the relevant parts of the community. Locations and venues for document inspection, exhibitions and meetings must be accessible for disabled people and convenient for the target communities and neighbourhoods. Meetings must be inclusive in the way that they are organised.
- **EMPLOYING A MIXTURE OF METHODS** - The choice of involvement methods will be crucial, as different people will want to take part in different ways. For instance, some will be happy to write letters, others will prefer to make comments at an exhibition or take part in workshop sessions. A flexible approach needs to be adopted in selecting different techniques and methods of engagement. Consideration needs to be given as to which people may be affected and how people will get involved, what facilities are available and how to work with agencies such as Planning Aid, to help communities let their voice be heard.
- **BUILDING CONSENSUS AND ACCEPTING DISAGREEMENT** - The process of engagement aims to build as wide as possible consensus around plans for the future of the City and individual development proposals. It is recognised, however, that the nature of planning involves choices and implies decisions as to the weight attached to conflicting economic, social and environmental objectives. All partners enter the process understanding that consensus may not be achieved and that final plans or decisions may disappoint them. Disagreement with particular plans or decisions should not undermine the spirit of partnership or imply disloyalty to the City. It must be recognised by all that the role of Councillors represent the community and they are accountable through the ballot box. They have the statutory responsibility for decision making.

- PROVIDING FEEDBACK - It is essential for building trust and ensuring future engagement, as well as being a courtesy to those who have been involved, that the contribution of participants in consultation is acknowledged and that they are able to track the influence that their views had on the final outcomes.
- MONITORING AND EVALUATING CONSULTATIONS - It is essential that mechanisms are put in place to feedback from communities on the process of engagement, and to monitor its effectiveness and its effect on built environment quality and the efficiency of the planning system. Methods used need to be evaluated by partners to inform future practice and the review of this Statement of Community Involvement. A Coventry Compact Code of Practice on Consultation has been developed that amplifies these objectives

The report indicated that SCI details the key players engaged and also identifies the forums already provided (i.e. Ward (Area) Forums; the Coventry by Design Forum; the Development Forum and the Residents Liaison Forum. The report also identified tools and commitments used to engage with communities on the formulation of policy and in respect of individual planning applications. Tables appended to the report provided a summary of techniques used.

The report confirmed that the SCI was formally submitted to the Secretary of State on 4 April 2006. From 10 April 2006 to Monday 22 May 2006, the Council invited representations on the submitted version of the SCI, which resulted in nine representations being received, and four of these considered the SCI not to be sound. All representations were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration as part of the examination. Table 3 (as circulated at the Cabinet meeting and attached as an appendix to these minutes) provides a summary of the representations and the responses made to the Inspector considering the soundness of the SCI through the consideration of written representations. The examination was held in August 2006, which culminated in the Council being sent the Inspectors Report on 30 August 2006. The report is binding, as are all Inspectors Reports under the new planning system. It states that, subject to amendment in accordance with the recommendations made, Coventry's Statement of Community Involvement is sound. The recommendations made were:

- In Appendix A, at the end of the first paragraph, add a final sentence as follows: "Please note, the list of bodies in this Appendix is not exhaustive and also relates to successor bodies where re-organisations occur."
- Add a footnote or an additional text box to Figure 2 (Page 49) to read: "An additional period of 6 weeks consultation is allowed after submission but before the examination in the event of site allocation representations being made."
- At Paragraph 6.17, add a final sentence as follows: "LDF documents and any related literature can be made available in a variety of formats e.g. Braille, large print, audio cassette, languages other than English. Documents in other formats can be obtained from: The Development Plans Team, Civic Centre 4,

Floor 6, Much Park Street, Coventry CV1 2PY. Tel: (024) 7683 1298 Fax: (024) 7683 1259 E-mail: [development.policy@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:development.policy@coventry.gov.uk)".

- In Paragraph 8.10 after the first sentence, add an additional sentence: "(However, bodies such as English Nature will be allowed a longer period of time to comment on applications where this is prescribed by legislation)."
- In table 2 (Page 58), under the heading Significant Planning Applications in the Pre-application category, remove the tick from the Public Meetings column.
- The Council should remove all references to previous stages of this document and replace any preface containing such references with a statement of adoption.

It was considered that the SCI presented a significant step in the Council preparing its Local Development Framework and would provide the foundations for the Council's planning service to continue to seek to develop best practice in community involvement.

**RESOLVED that the City Council be recommended to adopt the final version of Coventry's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).**

#### 114. **The City of Coventry (Swanswell No 1) Compulsory Purchase Order 2005**

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Director of City Development and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, which had also been considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2006, (their Minute 83/06 refers) advising on the outcome of the Planning Inspectors report, following the recent Public Local Inquiry into this Compulsory Purchase Order. The report also gave an update on progress on the relocation of residents affected by the Compulsory Purchase Order.

The report indicated that, on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005, the Cabinet approved the compulsory acquisition of property and interests to enable the delivery of the Swanswell Initiative Learning Quarter scheme, and referred the matter for consideration to the City Council for consideration at their meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2005. In approving the recommendations in the report, the City Council also gave a commitment that the Council would ensure that the tenants of those properties specially built for the disabled would be adequately re-housed in the area, if they wished to stay there, and that the properties would be replaced before the residents move to vacate their existing properties, with properties of a similar, if not better, specification, as soon as possible. It was also agreed that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee (SCRUCO) would monitor this issue closely to ensure that the development was carried out in line with this commitment. Consequently, progress reports have been submitted to SCRUCO on a regular basis to fully appraise them on how the City Council has been meeting this commitment.

The report confirmed that the City Council has been working with Orbit Housing Association, the owner of Orwell and Cygnet Courts, the properties with specially built accommodation for the disabled, to identify alternative living accommodation for those affected by the proposal. This has included looking thoroughly at all available options in the locality, and having discussions with other Registered



Social Landlords (RSL's) and private developers who own property and/are developing property in the area.

The report indicated that Phase 2 of the new City College development required the site of Orwell and Cygnet Courts in January 2007. This development currently houses both tenants with disabilities (at ground floor level), with 'general needs' flats above. If the Council does not deliver vacant possession of these buildings to City College in January 2007, then the College's development programme would have to slip by a whole academic year. This would have a massive impact on the College, involving additional costs of at least £2m being incurred by them owing to legal, construction and operational reasons. There is no funding provision for these additional. Consequently, there is also the real risk that the whole of Phase 2 of the scheme could be aborted.

It was noted that the Compulsory Purchase Order also includes the Industrial Estate off Adelaide Street required for the construction of a 400 space Multi Storey Car Park to satisfy conditions on the planning permission for the College Phase 2 development, and that a doctor's surgery in Swanswell Street, is also required for Phase 1.

The report indicated that the Council pursued the CPO route because there was no alternative option in order to enable Phase 2 of the proposed new City College (comprising of the development of the College and the new secondary school on one site, to create the new Learning Quarter, to proceed.) Upon the recommendation of the Planning Inspector, the First Secretary of State has confirmed the CPO, without modification, (the full report was attached as an appendix to the report) and the objectors have been advised accordingly.

The report further confirmed that a Council owned site on the corner of Raglan St and Canterbury Street has been provisionally allocated to Orbit Housing Association for the specific purpose of carrying out a similar development to Orwell and Cygnet Courts, and that Orbit has recently submitted a detailed planning application, which is programmed to be submitted to the Planning Committee in late November/early December. Discussions with planning officers indicate that the scheme complies with planning policies, and is likely to be supported. This new development is programmed for completion in late 2007, but this does not allow the City Council's commitment to adequately rehouse residents being displaced by the effects of the CPO before being required to vacate their existing properties. Under the circumstances, the 'general needs' tenants of Orbit and Cygnet Courts have already been found alternative accommodation successfully, by private agreement. With regard to the needs of the residents with disabilities, five Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant bungalows are currently being built at Daimler Green by Accord Housing Association, which are due for completion in mid November 2006. The Council is using its nomination rights to secure these, from Accord Housing Association, for the disabled residents concerned, until the properties at Raglan Street are completed. The disabled residents will be given the opportunity to either remain at Daimler Green, or transfer to the Raglan Street development when built.

Of the four disabled residents affected, one has agreed to relocate to Daimler Green on a permanent basis and one has been offered a ground floor flat in the

Hillfields area. Following the confirmation of the CPO, one more resident expressed an interest in viewing the Daimler Green properties. The Council and Orbit are continuing to liaise with the remaining residents about relocation, including the possibility of other options that they have recently suggested. The Council has invested additional funding of £35,000 in the Daimler Green properties to adapt the bathrooms and bedrooms to better suit the individual needs of the disabled residents concerned. Community Services are also providing full back-up support services for the individuals concerned regarding their needs for moving, and integration and familiarisation with the new location and its local services etc. The residents will now have received a relocation options pack, detailing the various elements of the total offer from the Council and its partners, including their compensation entitlement.

Accord Housing Association (as managers of such specialist accommodation) have also confirmed that the Daimler Green units meet the requirements of the DDA. These units are slightly larger than the units at Cygnet and Orwell Courts and are built to higher thermal insulation etc standards. They are new, well landscaped, with adjacent car ports, in an attractive location, and near to a full range of local amenities. SCRUCO have overseen the analysis of a range of options sites to date, and concluded that the package of the Daimler Green Units, and the proposed development at Raglan Street is the best solution deliverable within the City College development timescale.

The Cabinet noted that a public meeting to discuss the proposals had been held on 27 September attended by residents of the area affected, appropriate Ward Councillors, other Elected Members, including the Leader of the City Council (Councillor Ken Taylor). In addition, Councillor Taylor had also met with two residents of Cygnet Court to discuss their particular concerns.

It was considered that both Elected Members and appropriate officers were, together with the relevant partners, doing everything within their powers to ensure that the proposed relocations would be as seamless as is possible, and that the back-up care and support required by the residents concerned are fully in place.

SCRUCO, at their meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> October agreed to fully support the recommendations contained in the report, and indicated that they were especially pleased with the approach taken with this work, and that the involvement of Elected Members at all stages demonstrated good working both across Directorates and between officers and Elected Members.

The Cabinet noted the proposed timetable for implementing the CPO and that the timetable for relocating the residents of Cygnet and Orwell Courts would be as follows:-

- The new properties at Daimler Green would be completed by November 2006.
- Vacant possession of Cygnet and Orwell Courts would be sought in early January 2007 and the affected residents moved to Daimler Green.

- Appropriate tenants would be re-located (if they wished) to the new development at Raglan Court, upon completion in December 2007.

**RESOLVED that, having considered the revised arrangements for the relocation of the appropriate residents affected by Phase 2 of the Swanswell Initiative Learning Quarter development, the City Council, further to their decision taken in respect of this matter at their meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2005, be recommended to support and approve the residents' relocation package as detailed in the report.**

#### 116. **Public Safety Zones at Coventry Airport**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of City Development, which had also been considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee (SCRUCO) at their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2006 (their Minute 97/06 refers), advising that the Department for Transport (DfT) are proposing the establishment of Public Safety Zones (PSZs) for Coventry Airport, and recommending that these be supported.

The report indicated that, during the course of the Public Inquiries into the development of the interim passenger facility and the permanent terminal development at Coventry Airport, over the last two years, comments had been made regarding the lack of PSZs at the Airport. Earlier this year, the City Council were approached informally by DfT and site meetings were held to examine the parts of the City that were likely to be affected, prior to a formal proposal document being issued in August 2006, with a closing date for responses of 17th November 2006. The document was sent to a number of key stakeholders, including the City Council, and any residents or businesses within the proposed PSZ's. The report set out general information about PSZ's, details of proposed PSZ's for Coventry Airport, the extent of development that is permitted within PSZ's and referred to the crash of an aircraft at Willenhall Wood on approach to the Airport in 1994.

The report explained, generally, that:-

- PSZs are areas of land at the ends of runways within which development is restricted in order to control the number of people on the ground at risk of death or injury in the event of an aircraft accident on take-off or landing;
- the risk to people on the ground as a result of an aircraft accident is very low;
- there should be no increase in the number of people living, working or congregating within the PSZs and that, over time, this number should be reduced as circumstances allow;
- the risks are assessed using a computer model which takes into account; the numbers and types of aircraft predicted to be using a runway in 15 years time; the likely location of any crash; and the probable size of any crash site. This model is then applied to both ends of the runway at Coventry Airport;
- the DfT believe that the model overstates the actual risk because it is based on world-wide accident data rather than UK specific accident data. It therefore includes some considerably more risky locations than the generally tightly controlled situations in the UK;

- the PSZs indicate the 1 in 100,000 annual risk of an individual being killed as a result of an aircraft accident. For comparison, the annual risk of being killed in the home is assessed at 1 in 13,000 (about 8 times more likely) and on the road at 1 in 17,000 (about 6 times more likely);
- a higher risk area of the 1 in 10,000 chance of an individual being killed as a result of an aircraft accident in a year is also established. This is the same standard as that generally used by the Health and Safety Executive and, until recently, was the risk of being killed on the road;
- around 30 airports in the UK already have established PSZs;
- PSZs are reviewed about every 7 years.

The document stated that Coventry Airport now requires the establishment of PSZs because of the level of traffic using it. This is based on the Airport operator's figures relating to aircraft movements (i.e. landings and take-offs) per year by 2014. This would reflect the current use of the interim passenger facility and the current proposal for a permanent passenger terminal and its anticipated throughput by 2014.

Plans for the PSZs at either end of the runway were included in the document. This covers parts of Willenhall and runs as far as the southern end of the Binley Industrial Estate, which is within the City's administrative area. It includes about 50 dwellings and 10 small industrial units. Some of the land is within the City Council's ownership. A plan of the areas covered by the PSZ was attached to this report.

The document concluded that:-

- there are short lengths of Siskin Drive, Rowleys Lane and the Toll Bar End roundabout but no buildings within the higher risk 1 in 10,000 area;
- there is no need for people living or working within the PSZ to move away;
- there is no significant risk to people travelling along the A45, A46 or across the Toll Bar End roundabout as they will only be within the high risk area for short periods of time;
- it is not necessary to modify these roads or limit their use; and
- the Highways Agency should take the PSZ into account in the design of the replacement junction to ensure that there is no queuing within the higher risk 1 in 10,000 area.

The document quoted the relevant DfT Circular (1/2002), which makes it clear that there should be a presumption against any form of new or replacement development or change of use that increases the number of people living, working or congregating within the PSZ. Certain forms of development which do not

increase the number of people living, working or congregating in them are, however, allowed. Examples of such development given in the Circular include:

- domestic extensions;
- small extensions to non-domestic premises;
- long stay/employee car parking;
- open storage;
- certain types of warehousing; and
- public open space where there will not be large numbers of people.

This would restrict the development or redevelopment of:

- houses just south of the Toll Bar End junction on London Road;
- the southern edge of the Orchards Retail Park and the site behind it;
- some houses/flats in the Middle Ride area;
- parts of the open land both south and north of the Coventry-Rugby railway line including open space at Grange Avenue; and
- the southern edge of the Binley Industrial Estate.

The report indicated that, when the PSZ is established, it would become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Circular states that an appropriate Policy referring to PSZs should be included in Local Development Plans and restrictions on development should be set out. If a planning application were to be refused solely on the basis of the PSZ, it is possible that a claim for compensation or a purchase notice could be served on the City Council. Your officers consider, however, that currently this is very unlikely as there will inevitably be other substantive reasons for refusal.

The PSZs have been drawn up in accordance with the DfT's normal procedures and answer the point made in the past that a risk assessment of Coventry Airport's operations ought to be carried out. There is no logical reason not to support the establishment of the PSZs.

It was noted that, notwithstanding an exercise in the local newspapers, only one approach from a member of the public appears to have been made, a resident of Binley Woods, who supports the proposal. There has also been some correspondence with a local Ward Councillor.

SCRUCO, at their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006, referred the report to the Cabinet and the City Council without comment.

**RESOLVED that the City Council be recommended to support the establishment of Public Safety Zones for Coventry Airport as indicated in the Department of Transport document.**

117. **The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2006-2010**

The Cabinet considered a report of The Director of Finance and ICT, which had also been considered by Scrutiny Board 1 at their meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006 (their Minute 31/06 refers), presenting a Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2006-2010 for adoption by the City Council. A copy of the full Strategy was appended to the report. It was noted that the City Council has operated medium term financial planning for many years and had formally approved the current medium term financial strategy in December 2005. This report recommended that the updated strategy be adopted to support the medium term policy and financial planning process that is at the heart of setting the City Council's revenue and capital budgets.

The report indicated that the Strategy has the following two main objectives:-

- To enable our financial plans to support the delivery of the objectives laid out in the corporate plan.
- To set a sound financial planning framework to underpin the effective financial management of the Council.

It was reported that this revised version of the Strategy is more concise than previous versions and excludes some of the more detailed technical aspects. Instead, the Strategy concentrates on the strategic direction of our financial planning framework, as highlighted in the report.

The report indicated that the Strategy is intended to improve the financial planning process, to enable the Council to achieve the best fit of resources to policies and to maximise the transparency of our financial plans. The completion of and adherence to the Strategy will help the Council continue to improve its services and the quality of life in the City while offering the people of Coventry the best possible value for money.

It was reported that a broad overview of the Strategy would conclude that there is continual pressure on the City Council's budgets, caused by ever increasing policy expectations and service pressures at both a local and national level, without any clear indication of the resources to support these expectations and pressures. In order to produce a balanced medium term financial programme the Council will need to continue to identify savings on an ongoing basis. This will be achieved through robust scrutiny of our budgetary position, resource switching between areas of expenditure and through securing greater value for money in the way we deliver services.

Other broad principles that underpin the Strategy include

- Budget setting that is driven by our Corporate objectives
- Planned Council Tax increases in the range of 2% to 5% over the

medium term

- Increased efficiency and reduced costs so that we can continue to set a Council Tax rise below the metropolitan district council average.
- Maintaining reserves at a minimum level consistent with implementing specific policy outcomes and protecting against known or anticipated liabilities.
- Moving towards a golden rule of not using one-off resources to support ongoing expenditure.
- Delivering financial programmes in a corporate way at officer level through the Management Board.
- Operating a formal objective framework for establishing our Capital Programme to help move towards presenting a balanced position into the medium term.

It was noted that the Medium Strategy had been submitted to the Cabinet for recommendation to the City Council in accordance with the relevant provisions of the City Council's Constitution. It was also noted that Scrutiny Board 1, at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October, had made a number of changes to the report in response to points raised at that meeting. These were included in a briefing note that had been circulated separately.

**RESOLVED that the City Council be recommended to approve the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy document, as appended to the report, subject to the inclusion of those amendments requested by Scrutiny Board 1 at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2006, included the briefing note circulated separately.**

**Table 3: Summary of Main Issues Raised**

**Cabinet 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2006 Appendix to Minute 113/06**

Issue	Reference	Changes Sought	Council Response
Pre-application discussions.	Section 8 – Para 8.2/cross reference to Table 2.	1st bullet point suggests that every application for more than 10 dwellings (or 10,000sqm) should be subject of a pre-application public meeting by virtue of comprising a 'significant' application. Where pre-application consultation is specified by virtue of size alone, we consider the policy should apply only to strategic applications.	Agree. Remove the tick (✓) from Table 2, which suggests that for significant planning applications, public meetings are required at pre-application stage.
Bureaucratic jargon.	All.	The SCI is written using bureaucratic jargon including words that are not in the dictionary. The general public who do not know this jargon cannot understand it properly. The SCI should be re-written in plain English so that the community it is aimed at can understand it. It is recommended you submit the document for a Crystal Mark for plain English and take their advice on readability.	Agree. It would be useful to submit the SCI to the Plain English Campaign to overcome this issue.
Front loading.	Section 4 - Para 4.9.	The answer might be to bring in some independent arbiter should this situation occur? Certainly the paragraph could be re-worded to be less 'aggressive'. If public consultation is to mean anything other than 'debate' then at the end of the day they must surely have a say in the final decisions or the whole process is pointless.	Para 4.9 aims to highlight the importance of democracy in the decision-making process. It was carefully worded to state that Councillors make decisions on behalf of the community they serve and are accountable through the ballot box. No change is recommended to Para 4.9.
Notification procedures.	Section 8	Sport England would like to receive a copy of the planning decision, where it has been consulted. This is because Sport England is required by the Department of Culture Media and Sport to maintain a database of planning applications affecting sports facilities indoor and outdoor. If draft conditions have been imposed to overcome Sport England's objection then we would like to be consulted on the final wording of any conditions and where a S106/planning obligation is to be prepared, again to overcome Sport England's objection, we would like to be involved in the drafting of that agreement. This is to ensure that our role as statutory consultee has been properly fulfilled and that we can report back to DCMS on our performance in the planning process.	It should be possible to trigger a letter detailing the decision and send to Sport England. The Council is not inclined to agree in Sport England being consulted in the final wording of any conditions and in preparing a S106 agreement, as this should not be necessary if there is clarity as to what Sport England are recommending in the first instance i.e. during consultation.



