

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COVENTRY

30 June 2008

PRESENT

Lord Mayor (Councillor Matchet)

Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Harrison)

Councillor Adalat	Councillor Lapsa
Councillor Andrews	Councillor Lee
Councillor Arrowsmith	Councillor Mrs Lucas
Councillor Bailey	Councillor Maton
Councillor Bains	Councillor McNicholas
Councillor Mrs. Bigham	Councillor Mulhall
Councillor Blundell	Councillor J. Mutton
Councillor Charley	Councillor Mrs. M. Mutton
Councillor Chater	Councillor Nellist
Councillor Cliffe	Councillor Noonan
Councillor Clifford	Councillor O'Boyle
Councillor Crookes	Councillor O'Neill
Councillor Mrs. Dixon	Councillor Miss Reece
Councillor Duggins	Councillor Ridge
Councillor Field	Councillor Ridley
Councillor Foster	Councillor Ruane
Councillor Gazey	Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Harvard	Councillor Skinner
Councillor Mrs. Johnson	Councillor Skipper
Councillor Kelly	Councillor Smith
Councillor Kelsey	Councillor Taylor
Councillor Khan	Councillor Townshend
Councillor Lakha	Councillor Mrs. Waters
Councillor Lancaster	Councillor Williams

Apologies: Councillor Asif  
Councillor Auluck  
Councillor Sweet

**18. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 15 and 27 May 2008 were signed as true records, subject to an amendment to Minute 10/08, (Return of Persons Elected as Councillors for the city on 1 May 2008), 15 May 2008. The minute contained a typographical error and should read that Councillor Gary Ridley was elected in the Sherbourne Ward and Councillor Dave Nellist was elected in the St Michaels Ward.

## **19. Coventry Good Citizen Award – Professor Yvonne Carter, OBE DL MD FRCGP FMedSci**

On behalf of the Council, the Lord Mayor and His Honour Judge Hodson, Honorary Recorder, presented Professor Yvonne Carter with the Citizen of the Month Award for June 2008.

Yvonne was Dean of Warwick Medical School, Pro-Vice Chancellor at the University of Warwick and Vice Chair of University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, combining these important roles, until very recently with that of a working GP in one of the most deprived areas of the City.

In 2000, she received an OBE for services to health service research, and, during her career she has been awarded research grants and contracts for around £10 million, has been a member or has chaired committees awarding funding for academic careers in health and published many important research papers that have furthered our understanding of key areas of medical health. In May she was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for the County of West Midlands.

She was also the winner of the science award at the 2006 Confederation of British Industry Real Business First Women Awards – receiving the award for making her mark in the upper reaches of medicine.

Yvonne was a magnificent ambassador for Coventry, helping to raise its profile through the national and international reputation of the University of Warwick Medical School and the many other roles she holds in the region. Her work as a local GP has brought her into contact with hundreds of Coventry people who love and respect her for her skills, knowledge and the way she has cared for them over the past few years.

## **20. Birthday Honours**

The Lord Mayor referred to the awards made to the following people associated with the City in the Queen's Birthday Honours List:

- **CBE:** To Frank Sheehan, Chief Fire Officer for the West Midlands Fire Service, for services to local government.
- **MBE:** To Cyrille Regis for services to the voluntary sector and to football.
- **MBE:** To Michael Linton, Manufacturing Director of NP Aerospace, for services to the Armed Forces.

Members noted that letters of congratulations had been sent, on behalf of the City Council, to all recipients.

## **21. Sir Robert Taylor**

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Sir Robert Taylor, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for the West Midlands for 13 years.

Members noted that a letter had been sent to Lady Taylor expressing the Council's sincere condolences to her and her family.

## **22. Nelson Mandela**

The Lord Mayor referred to the forthcoming 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of Nelson Mandela on 18 July 2008.

Members noted that a letter conveying their warmest good wishes and congratulations would be sent.

## **23. Wife of Former Councillor**

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Trevor Webb's wife Shirley.

Members noted that a letter had been sent to Trevor expressing the Council's sincere condolences to him and his family.

## **24. Petitions**

**RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate City Council body or external organisation:**

- (a) Road Crossing on Barker Butts Lane – 304 signatures presented by Councillor Skipper.**
- (b) Licensing Vehicles and Drivers of Coventry Taxis and Private Hire – 1275 signatures presented by Councillor Foster.**
- (c) Traffic Problems in St Ives Road – 140 signatures presented by Councillor Mrs Dixon.**
- (d) Request for Pelican Crossing/Traffic Calming on Cannon Hill Road – 110 signatures presented by Councillor Blundell.**
- (e) Request for installation of CCTV cameras at junction of Valley Road, Portwinkle Avenue, Achilles Road and Blackberry Lane – 58 signatures presented by Councillor Bains.**
- (f) Request for traffic calming on Alfall Road – 96 signatures presented by Councillor Field.**
- (g) Requesting closure of access to the public footpath at the rear of the estate at Cole Court/Duckham Court – 62 signatures presented by Councillor Ridley.**
- (h) Requesting traffic calming measures outside Southfields School – 140 signatures presented by Councillor Nellist.**

## 25. **Declarations of Interest**

The following Members declared interests in the matters referred to in the minutes indicated. The relevant minutes, and recorded decisions, also record where appropriate, the actions that the Members decided to take at the meeting indicated, having regard to the National Code of Local Government Conduct and the City Council's Constitution:

### **Interest in Recommendations**

#### **Personal**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Minute Number</b>
Councillor Nellist	29
Councillor Townshend	26, 27 and 28

#### **Interests in Debates**

<b>Personal</b>	<b>Minute Number</b>
Councillor Cliffe	40
Councillor Ms Reece	40

#### **Prejudicial**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Minute Number</b>
Councillor Kelsey	40
Councillor Ridley	40
Councillor Smith	40

## 26. **Proposed Amendments to the Constitution – Conference Approvals**

Further to Minute 31/07 of the Standards Committee, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services which proposed a change to the Constitution in relation to the approval of foreign travel by employees where the direct cost to the City Council was less than £100.

Part 5.6 of the City Council's Constitution contained a Protocol for the approval of foreign travel and conference attendance for Councillors and employees. The purpose of the Protocol was to ensure that there was clarity and transparency in the process for authorising foreign travel by both Councillors and employees, and for authorising Councillors to attend conferences, (including seminars or fact-finding visits or inspections) in the U.K. The Protocol required that a report outlining the benefits of attendance was submitted to the appropriate Scrutiny Board within two months of the conference.

For Councillors attending conferences both in and outside the U.K., and for

employees attending outside the U.K. only, (or if accompanying a Councillor inside the U.K.), a form had to be completed and formally considered by the relevant Cabinet Member or Cabinet. Whilst formal approval was not required for Councillors attending at conference etc where the direct cost to the City Council did not exceed £100, the Protocol required that employees gained approval for all cases of foreign travel.

The Cabinet had requested that the Constitution Working Group consider amending the Constitution to allow authority to be delegated to Directors to give approval for foreign travel by employees, where the costs involved were below a "certain level". The Constitution Working Group considered this request at their meeting on 27 November 2007 and, noting that the requirement to submit a report to Scrutiny outlining the benefits of attendance would be retained, agreed to recommend the amendment of the Constitution to allow authority to be delegated to Directors to give approval for foreign travel by employees, where the direct cost to the City Council did not exceed £100.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the amendment to the Constitution that authority was delegated to Directors to approve foreign travel by employees, where the direct cost to the City Council did not exceed £100.**

## **27. Proposed Amendments to the Constitution – Planning Committee Issues**

Further to Minute 38/07 of the Standards Committee, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services which proposed changes to the Constitution in relation to receipt of petitions for Planning Committee and the right of reply by an applicant (or nominee) at the Committee in response to a petition spokesperson's speech.

Under Part 4.9 of the Constitution, the Councillor presenting a petition and the petition spokesperson were entitled to attend and speak at meetings where the particular issue was being considered. Difficulties had been experienced at Planning Committee when petitions had been received after the agenda had been despatched. Over recent months, there had been a number of occasions when petitions relating to planning applications had been submitted as late as on the day of Planning Committee itself. This had resulted in planning applications being deferred as there had not been enough time to notify the relevant people.

Not only had this been extremely inconvenient for members of the public who attend Planning Committee expecting an application to be considered but there were also serious implications for the Council. The Government's Best Value targets included measuring the speed of determining the applications and these were monitored and contributed to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. Meeting the minimum target for the speed and determination of applications (eight weeks for all but major applications) was also taken into account in the new Housing and Planning Delivery Grant and monies would be withheld if those targets were not met.

The Constitution Working Group had recommended to the Standards Committee that only those petitions received by 9.00 a.m. on the day before the Planning Committee meeting (i.e. on the Wednesday, where Planning Committee meets on a Thursday) would be treated as a petition, with the Councillor presenting the petition, the petition spokesperson and the applicant (or their agent/ representative) being invited to attend and speak at the meeting; and that any "petition" received after this deadline be treated as a "late representation" and summarised by the City Planning Manager on the "late

representations" report, which was tabled at the meeting. The Working Group had also requested that this be monitored and reviewed 12 months after it comes into operation.

In accordance with paragraph 4.1.45 of the Constitution, Councillor Gazey, in moving this recommendation, altered the time of receipt of petitions from 9.00 am to 12 noon.

The Working Group also recommended to Standards Committee a resolution of the current anomaly whereby petition spokespersons may speak for up to three minutes (in line with the public speaking scheme), but an applicant (or nominee) may speak without limit of time in response to a petition spokesperson speech by amending the Constitution to give the Chair discretion to ensure that any right of reply was of a proportionate amount of time.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approves the amendments to Part 4.9 of the Constitution relating to petition procedural rules as follows:**

- (a) That, in relation to the receipt of petitions to Planning Committee, only those petitions received by 12 noon on the day before the meeting be treated as a petition with the Councillor presenting the petition, the petition spokesperson and the applicant (or their agent/ representative) being invited to attend and speak at the meeting; and that any "petition" received after this deadline be treated as a "late representation" and summarised by the City Planning Manager on the "late representations" report, which is tabled at the meeting.**
- (b) That the Chair of Planning Committee has discretion to ensure that any right of reply by an applicant (or nominee) in response to a petition spokesperson speech (which is limited to three minutes) is of a proportionate amount of time.**

## **28. Terms of Reference for Standards Committee**

Further to Minute 1/08 of the Standards Committee, the City Council considered a report of the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer that proposed revised Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 made amendments to Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000. Those amendments included making changes to the roles and responsibilities of local authority Standards Committees.

The additional roles and responsibilities included that, as from 8 May 2008, anyone could make a complaint against a member or co-opted member of the Council directly to the Standards Committee. The complaint must relate to an alleged breach of the Member Code of Conduct that had been adopted by the Council. Previously such complaints against members were made to the Standards Board for England.

The process of making a complaint to the Council required an initial assessment of the complaint to determine whether it should be investigated either by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Standards Board for England, or that no action be taken. At the Council meeting held on 15 May 2008 it was resolved that Standards Committee be authorised to determine the local assessment of complaints. Where a decision is made that no further action be taken, the complainant could request a review of that decision.

As a result of the changes to the complaints process set out above, it was necessary to change the composition of the Standards Committee by increasing the number of independent members from 6 to 8 and parish councillors from 1 to 2. The number of councillors remained the same at 3.

Other new roles and responsibilities of the Standards Committee resulted from changes made to Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 that required Standards Committee to consider and determine applications for exemptions from politically restricted posts and making appropriate directions to the Council in this regard.

A person holding a politically restricted post was prevented from being a local member, Member of Parliament or standing for election. The Council was required to maintain a list of certain of those politically restricted posts. A person whose post was included (or proposed to be included) in this list may be exempted from the restrictions. In addition, an application could be made to direct that the Council include a post on the list. These powers were previously carried out by an independent adjudicator appointed by the Secretary of State, however, these had now been transferred to the Standards Committee.

It was also proposed to remove from the Terms of Reference the requirement for substitute members for Council members. This change was as a result of guidance on this matter from the Standards Board.

The Monitoring Officer would be required to submit to the Standards Board for England details of the Council's ethical governance following the changes made to the Standards Committees roles and responsibilities. As a result of this, it was also recommended that the findings of the report were presented to Council on an annual basis. In view of this, it was also recommended that a Councillor from the Standards Committee be nominated to attend Council meetings to answer any questions on the report or other associated matters that would not be of a private or confidential nature.

As a result of the changes, the composition and terms of reference for the Standards Committee required amendment and these were set out at Appendix 1 of the report submitted.

**RESOLVED that the City Council:**

**(a) Approve and adopt the revised Terms of Reference for the Standards**

**Committee as set out in Appendix 1 of the report submitted and that the Constitution be updated accordingly.**

- (b) Authorise Councillor Gazey to answer any questions on the annual ethical report to the Standards Board for England or associated matters that are not of a private or confidential nature in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraph 4.1.21 of the Constitution.**

**29. Coventry City Council's Response to the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Consultation on the draft National 'Part Budgeting Strategy'**

Further to Minute 10/08 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Chief Executive which outlined the proposed response to the Government consultation on the draft national Participatory Budgeting Strategy.

The DCLG published a draft national strategy on participatory budgeting for consultation. Participatory budgets would give local people a direct say in deciding how some of their local public services budget should be spent. The purpose of the consultation exercise was to seek views on the draft strategy as a plan to achieve the Government's ambition for participatory budgeting to be used in all local authority areas by 2012. The draft strategy was also part of the Government's Empowerment agenda and had clear linkages to the new Community Empowerment Bill, which was to be enacted in the next Parliamentary session.

The deadline for comments to the DCLG was 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008. As a result it had not been possible for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee to consider the proposed response prior to the meeting of Cabinet or for the response to be considered by Council prior to its submission to the DCLG. However, the response was considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting scheduled for 4 June 2008.

A copy of the full proposed response was appended to the report submitted. In summary, the Council's view was that Coventry had a strong history of involving local people and communities in the decision making process and developing services. Examples of these included the annual budget setting process, the redesign of the Looked After Children Service, which was undertaken with service users themselves, and the long-term engagement with local communities in the Coventry Partnership. However, there were clear costs attached to community engagement processes generally and to participatory budget setting in particular, so any process adopted to deliver participatory budgeting needed to take this into account. Appropriate governance arrangements also needed to be put in place to ensure equality of access to any participatory budgeting process and to ensure that funds were allocated in a fair and equitable manner.

The Cabinet decided to approve the document attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted as the Council's response to the DCLG consultation paper on the draft national 'Participatory Budgeting Strategy' and authorised the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Finance, Procurement and Value for Money), to amend the response in light of any appropriate views expressed by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the response which, in order to meet the consultation deadline of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2008, had been sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government by the due date, with the proviso that it was**



**subject to formal subsequent approval by the Council.**

### **30. Chief Executive Recruitment and Selection Process**

Further to Minute 23/08 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services proposing the arrangements for recruitment to the post of Chief Executive following the formal notification to the City Council of the resignation of the current Chief Executive (Ms S Manzie) in order to take up the post of Director General (Finance and Corporate Services) for the Scottish Government.

The recruitment and selection process for the Chief Executive ("Head of the Paid Service") was detailed at Rule 4.8.4.2 of the Council's Constitution and the Director of Customer and Workforce Services was currently undertaking the preparatory work of drawing up the job description, person specification and advertisement requirements.

The report indicated that it was now common practice for senior level posts in large organisations to be handled by a recruitment agency and the reasons for this were outlined in the report.

A specification for this work had been drawn up and an invitation to tender had been sent out to six agencies in the market which undertook this type of work, in line with the Council's procurement arrangements. Following this tendering exercise, SOLACE Enterprises won the contract, subject to approval from Cabinet to appoint.

The salary of this post had not been reviewed since 2000. As part of the brief for this assignment, the agency had been asked (a) to undertake market research and assess the current salary level of the post to ensure that it will attract suitable candidates and (b) to make any recommendations as appropriate.

As regards the appointment of Chief Executive (detailed in Rule 4.8.2 of the Council's Constitution), the report stated that the Appointments Panel for the appointment of the Chief Executive must include at least one member of the Cabinet and would comprise at least the following:

- The Leader and the Deputy Leader of the Council or their respective nominees
- The Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee or nominee
- Such other opposition member(s) of Scrutiny to ensure the political balance

The quorum for the Appointments Panel for the Chief Executive would be three members and it was proposed that the Panel would be advised by the Director of Customer and Workforce Services and the above-mentioned external professional advisers from SOLACE Enterprises.

In accordance with Rule 4.8.4.1 of the Constitution, the full Council would approve the appointment of the Chief Executive following the recommendation of the Appointments Panel. This was scheduled for Council on 16 September 2008 with the anticipated start date of the successful candidate being January 2009. The indicative recruitment timescale was outlined in the in the report

As regards the financial implications of the process, the report identified the cost of

using SOLACE Enterprises as approximately £20,000 and indicated that, in addition, there would be costs associated with the advertising of the post that would depend upon the media, national press and trade magazines to be used, it being anticipated that this would be in the region of £20,000.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve:**

- (a) The appointment of SOLACE Enterprises (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) to act as the professional advisors to the recruitment process.**
- (b) The establishment of the Appointments Panel for the appointment of the Chief Executive as detailed in Section 4.2 of the report submitted.**
- (c) The proposed timetable for the process as detailed in the report.**

### **31. Statement of Accounts**

Further to Minute 4/08 of the Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Board 1 and the Audit Sub-Committee, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services that set out the 2007/08 Statement of Accounts together with accompanying notes. It was noted that the documentation was set out in a prescribed format and that the City Council's Auditors, the Audit Commission, would be auditing the statement over the next few months. The Statement had been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounting Code of Practice (ACOP) which defined proper accounting practices for Local Authorities. In 2006 the former Consolidated Revenue Account was replaced with an Income and Expenditure Account and a Statement of Movement on the General Fund. The result of this was a deficit of £45.2m on the Income and Expenditure Account; this did not reflect the genuine position with the Council's General Fund which was a break even situation.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the Statement of Accounts for 2007/08 and authorise the Lord Mayor of the Council to sign them on behalf of the City Council.**

### **32. Annual Governance Statement 2007/08**

Further to Minute 2/08 of the Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Board 1 and the Audit Sub-Group, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services that set out the Annual Governance Statement that formed part of the 2007/08 Statement of Accounts. Best Practice as reflected in the Corporate Performance Assessment Use of Resources required that the consideration/approval of this statement was separate to the consideration/approval of the Statement of Accounts.

The City Council had a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions were exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging this responsibility the City Council was responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including arrangements for the management of risk. In 2006/07, the Council discharged this responsibility via the production of a Statement on Internal Control and included this statement within its annual accounts. For 2007/08, the requirement had changed and the

Council was now required to produce an Annual Governance Statement instead, this incorporated the Statement on Internal Control.

A key part of the new requirement was for the Council to assess the effectiveness of its own governance arrangements. To aid this process, The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), in conjunction with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) had published 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework'. This Framework, and the accompanying guidance notes, replaced the previous CIPFA/SOLACE Framework, 'Corporate Governance in Local Government – A Keystone for Community Governance: A Framework', which was published in 2001. 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework' replaced the requirement for a Statement of Internal Control with an Annual Governance Statement. The assurance gathering process was detailed in the report.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2007/08 (attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted) and authorise the Leader and the Chief Executive to sign it on behalf of the City Council.**

**33. Performance Report 2007/08**

Further to Minute 28/08 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which sought approval for the Performance Report 2007/08.

The Government introduced a new performance management framework for local authorities from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. A new National Indicator Set was to form the basis of the performance reporting from 2008/09 onward and would replace the existing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

The provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, which introduced this change, had removed the requirement for best value authorities to compile and publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). This Plan provided the mechanism for local authorities to publish outturn performance against BVPIs for the preceding year. The removal of this requirement left a gap in the reporting of performance data.

As a result, a saving provision had been made which required Best Value authorities to compile a BVPP for a further year, by the end of June 2008. The required content of this document was restricted to include the reporting authorities' outturn performance against 2007/08 BVPIs and a statement certifying that individual contracts entered into during 2007/08, which involved a transfer of staff, complied with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.

In previous years, the performance report had formed the second part of an overall BVPP for the Council. The first part, the Council's Corporate Plan, was the 3-year plan that described the Council's Vision, Values and Corporate Objectives. It included a statement of Management Objectives that supported these and a series of performance indicators and targets for each objective.

This year, the revision of the Corporate Plan was to be considered separately, to take account of the impacts of the new performance framework. This had introduced the requirement for local authorities and their partners to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and a Local Area Agreement (LAA) to set out long and short-term priorities for their area. The Council approved Coventry's Sustainable Community Strategy at their

meeting on 18 March 2008 and the Local Area Agreement at the meeting held on 27 May 2008. The Cabinet noted that the LAA was due to be signed off by Ministers by the end of June 2008.

The report indicated that the Council had a key part to play in delivering the objectives and targets in the SCS and the LAA and once Ministers had signed off the LAA, the current Corporate Plan, which ran from 2007/08 to 2009/10, was to be revised to ensure that the priorities were reflected.

As in previous years, a seminar had been held for all elected members on the performance report, so that it could be discussed in greater detail and employees questioned on the content. A copy of the full performance report was appended to the report submitted.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the Performance Report 2007/08, (attached as an appendix to the report submitted), and that authority be delegated to the Assistant Chief Executive to make any final minor amendments, corrections or additions prior to its publication.**

#### **34. Consultation on "Eco-towns: Living a Greener Future"**

Further to Minute 29/08 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of City Development which sought approval of the Council's response to the consultation document "Eco-towns: Living a Greener Future" which was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 3 April 2008.

Scrutiny Board 3 had also considered the report, at their meeting held on 18 June 2008. A briefing note detailing the recommendations made by Scrutiny Board 3 was also considered.

The Government had, for some time, been pressing for accelerated house building. This stemmed from the 2004 Barker Review of House-building, which concluded that the housing affordability problem was as a result of supply side market failure and, as such, could be ameliorated by increasing the supply of housing.

The Regional Assembly had been reviewing the 2004 Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the Phase II revision had looked at how the projected growth in households should be distributed through the region. The Phase II revision draft was submitted to Government in December 2007 and indicated how 365,000 new households should be distributed throughout the region to best fit with the urban renaissance principles of the RSS. The period of public consultation was originally to be from 7 January to 28 March 2008, but this had been extended to 8 December 2008. This developed the theme of the RSS and identified four major challenges in the areas of Urban Renaissance; Rural Renaissance; Diversifying and modernising the Region's economy; and Modernising the transport infrastructure of the West Midlands.

The RSS strategy focused growth on the Major Urban Areas (MUAs), and closely reflected the Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire (CSW) sub-regional strategy endorsed by all 8 Authorities at the CSW Forum in July 2007.

The Government agenda was increasingly demanding more housing to be provided and it had commissioned NLP (Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners) to undertake a further study to investigate further opportunities. It had also promoted its growth point

initiative and latterly the eco-towns.

Eco-towns were intended to be new, free-standing settlements to tackle climate change; the need for sustainable living; and to increase housing supply. The key criteria for eco towns included a minimum of 5,000 new homes, as new settlements separate and distinct from, but well linked to, existing towns; the development as a whole should reach zero carbon standards, and each eco-town should be an exemplar in at least one other area of 'sustainability'; they should provide a good range of facilities, including schools, shops, business and leisure; and between 30% and 50% of the housing should be affordable, with an emphasis on larger family homes.

The current consultation sought views on the 15 short-listed locations for eco-towns, two of which were located in the West Midlands region at Middle Quinton (also known as Long Marston) in Stratford District and Curborough (Fradley) in Lichfield District. The report submitted detailed the description, proposed benefits, and an initial summary of challenges and constraints for each of these two sites.

The consultation indicated that following preliminary views on eco-towns and the short-listed locations, there would be a Sustainability Appraisal of each location and a draft planning policy statement on eco-towns and that they were likely to be published in the summer of 2008. Later in 2008, a final list of locations with potential to be an extension and a final policy would then form the basis for the co-ordination of planning applications for individual schemes. The consultation was not clear on whether or not it was intended that eco-towns were to contribute to existing RSS figures.

The consultation document asked a number of specific questions about the eco-towns proposals, and these were mostly variations on a 'sustainability' theme. Employees were very concerned that the proposals for eco-towns in the West Midlands region were wholly inconsistent with the RSS draft and fundamentally threaten the strategy of Urban Renaissance. This could be illustrated by the potential impacts on the City's growth agenda for a number of reasons, which were detailed in the report submitted.

Many of the principles outlined in the consultation could be supported, as they should be applied to all new developments. They included desires that development as a whole should reach zero carbon standards; affordable housing should make up between 30 and 50 per cent of the total, with a particular emphasis on larger family homes; higher standards of design should be achieved; travel plans should promote an increased proportion of journeys on foot, by cycle and by public transport; imaginative proposals to create additional green infrastructure be promoted; water management and efficiency measures be adopted; and communities be empowered and manage community assets.

A copy of the full proposed response to each of the questions raised within the consultation document was appended to the report submitted.

The Cabinet had agreed the proposed response, subject to the inclusion of the recommendations detailed within the briefing note from Scrutiny Board 3.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the response to the "Eco-towns: Living a Greener Future" consultation for submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government.**

Note: In respect of the above, a recorded vote was required in accordance with paragraph 4.1.71 of the City Council's Constitution. The Councillors voting for and against the recommendations were as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Councillor Adalat	Councillor Bains	
Councillor Andrews	Councillor Bigham	
Councillor Arrowsmith	Councillor Chater	
Councillor Bailey	Councillor Clifford	
Councillor Blundell	Councillor Duggins	
Councillor Charley	Councillor Harrison	
Councillor Cliffe	Councillor Harvard	

Councillor Crookes	Councillor Kelly
Councillor Mrs Dixon	Councillor Khan
Councillor Field	Councillor Lakha
Councillor Foster	Councillor Ms Lancaster
Councillor Gazey	Councillor McNicholas
Councillor Mrs Johnson	Councillor Maton
Councillor Kelsey	Councillor Mulhall
Councillor Lapsa	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor Nellist	Councillor O'Boyle
Councillor Noonan	Councillor Ruane
Councillor O'Neill	Councillor Townshend
Councillor Miss Reece	
Councillor Ridge	
Councillor Ridley	
Councillor Sawdon	
Councillor Skinner	
Councillor Smith	
Councillor Taylor	
Councillor Mrs Waters	
Councillor Williams	
Councillor Windsor	
Lord Mayor	

Result:           29 for  
                   18 against  
                   0 abstentions

### 35. **Appointment of Proper Officers**

Further to Minute 30/08 of Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Chief Executive which sought approval of the implementation of interim Chief Executive, Proper Officer and other electoral arrangements following the resignation of the Chief Executive.

Following the resignation of the Chief Executive, it was necessary for interim Chief Executive arrangements to be put in place until the recruitment process for a permanent replacement had been successfully completed. In this regard, it was proposed that Bev Messinger (Director of Customer and Workforce Services) and John McGuigan (Director of City Development) both assume the role of joint Acting Chief Executive.

In addition, the report indicated that, under the legislation governing elections, the Council had to appoint both an Electoral Registration Officer to be responsible for the electoral rolls and also a Returning Officer who was responsible for the conduct of local elections. The Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer was the Chief Executive, who was leaving the authority in August but whose last working day would be 27<sup>th</sup> June 2008. It was proposed that, with effect from 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008, the Director of Customer and Workforce Services become the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer until a new Chief Executive had been appointed and was in post.

**RESOLVED that, with effect from 30 June 2008, the City Council:**

- (a) Appoint Bev Messinger (Director of Customer and Workforce Services) and John McGuigan (Director of City Development) as joint**

**Acting Chief Executives for the Council until such time as a new Chief Executive has been appointed and is in post.**

- (b) Appoint the Director of Customer and Workforce Services as the City Council's Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer until such time as a new Chief Executive has been recruited and is in post.**
- (c) Make appropriate changes to the Council's Constitution to reflect the above recommendations.**

### **36. Adjustments to Appointments to Outside Bodies**

The City Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services which amended a number of appointments to Outside Bodies made at the City Council's annual meeting on 15 May 2008. Appendix A to the report set out the changes and the reasons for the changes.

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve the following changes to Outside Body memberships:**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Annual Meeting Nomination</b>	<b>Proposed Change</b>
<b>Sure Start West</b>	<b>Councillor Lee</b>	<b>Remove and replace with Councillor Lapsa</b>
<b>Coventry School Admissions Forum</b>	<b>Councillor Lee</b>	<b>Remove and replace with Councillor Andrews</b>
<b>West Midlands Superannuation Committee</b>	<b>Councillor Mrs Dixon</b>	<b>Remove and replace with Councillor Mrs Johnson</b>
<b>Museum of British Road Transport</b>	<b>Councillor Sawdon</b>	<b>Remove and replace with Councillor Ridley</b>
<b>University of Warwick Science Park Concepts Limited</b>	<b>No nomination made</b>	<b>Nominate Councillor Ridley and Crookes</b>
<b>Engineering Contract Partnering Board</b>	<b>No nomination made</b>	<b>Nominate: Cabinet Member (City Services) Councillor Noonan Cabinet Member (City Development) Councillor Ridley Cabinet Member (Finance, Procurement and Value for Money) Councillor Foster Councillor Ridge Councillor Bains Councillor Mulhall Councillor Townshend</b>
<b>Warwickshire Rural Community Council</b>	<b>No nomination made</b>	<b>Nominate Councillor Gazey</b>



**37. Amendments to Cabinet Portfolios and Membership of Scrutiny Board 3**

The City Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services which sought approval to amend two of the Cabinet Portfolios appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 15 May 2008 and to replace Councillor Mrs Waters on Scrutiny Board 3 with Councillor Andrews.

In accordance with paragraph 4.1.45 of the Constitution, Councillor Taylor, in moving this recommendation, altered the proposed portfolio title from 'Cabinet Member (Finance, Legal Services, Procurement and Value for Money)' to 'Cabinet Member (Finance and Value for Money)'

**RESOLVED that the City Council approve with immediate effect:**

- (a) The transfer of Legal Services from the Cabinet Member (Customer, Workforce and Legal Services) portfolio (to be renamed 'Cabinet Member (Customer and Workforce Services)', into the newly named 'Cabinet Member (Finance and Value for Money)' portfolio.**
- (b) The replacement of Councillor Mrs Waters on Scrutiny Board 3 with Councillor Andrews.**

**38. Appointments to Outside Bodies – Trust School Governing Bodies**

The City Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services seeking to nominate an elected member as the City Council's nominee as trustee/company director to each of the five proposed trust schools.

At its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2008, Cabinet agreed that nominations to position of Trustee/Company Director of each of the five Trust Schools which were the subject of current proposals in the City should take the form of an appointment to an outside body. The nominated Councillor would then seek nomination from their Trust to be the Trust Foundation Governor on the school's Governing Body whenever possible. The Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) would appoint Local Authority Governors to the five Governing Bodies.

The City Council would be a member of the Trust of each the five schools which were at varying stages of the statutory process of acquiring trust school status. All five schools were seeking to establish their Trusts between June and October 2008.

**RESOLVED that the City Council nominate the following Councillors to act as trustee/company director on the trust of each of the five trust schools as detailed below, for the period until the Annual Meeting of the City Council in May 2009:**

**Barrs Hill School - Councillor Smith  
Lyng Hall School – Councillor Field  
Stoke Park School – Councillor Bains  
The Westwood School – Councillor Lee  
Whitley Abbey School – Councillor Foster**

39. **Debate – The City Council's Application for Capitalisation Direction**

Councillor Duggins moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Kelly:

"This Council notes with concern the City Council's application for Capitalisation Direction the proposed amount of which is £54 million.

Furthermore this Council believes that the application raises far reaching issues in respect to Governance and the financial health of the Authority, and specifically the possible adverse impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy"

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Foster and seconded by Councillor Taylor:

*Paragraph 1, line 1, after "This Council notes", delete "with concern" and after "the City Council's application for" insert "a".*

*Paragraph 1, line 2, after "£54 million" delete the full stop and insert "and regrets the necessity of it due to the Labour Government's failure to provide specific funding to local authorities to meet the costs of implementation of equal pay under the 1997 National Single Status agreement, as they have done with the NHS".*

*Delete the whole of paragraph 2 and replace it with "Furthermore, this Council notes the intention of the Council leadership to arrange a meeting of other local authorities affected by this issue to discuss ways of lobbying the Government on this point."*

The above amendment was carried giving rise to the following substantive motion:

"This Council notes the City Council's application for a Capitalisation Direction, the proposed amount of which is £54 million, and regrets the necessity of it due to the Labour Government's failure to provide specific funding to local authorities to meet the costs of implementation of equal pay under the 1997 National Single Status agreement, as they have done with the NHS.

Furthermore, this Council notes the intention of the Council leadership to arrange a meeting of other local authorities affected by this issue to discuss ways of lobbying the Government on this point."

**RESOLVED that the substantive motion, as set out above, be adopted.**

40. **Debate – Cost of Fuel and Utilities**

Councillor Windsor moved the following motion, which was seconded by Councillor Nellist:

"This Council is deeply concerned about the projected steep rise in the cost of fuel and utilities and resolves to take the following steps to prevent the poverty that these will cause especially amongst the elderly and vulnerable.

Council agrees to meet all utility suppliers operating in the city to lobby against these increases.

Council agrees to lobby and support other groups campaigning against fuel disconnection.

Council also agrees to take the impact of any steep utility costs into account when dealing with it's own revenue collection in the city."

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Duggins and seconded by Councillor Townshend:

*Delete 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph.*

*Amend 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph to read "Council agrees to lobby and support other groups campaigning against indiscriminate and unjust fuel disconnection"*

*Add "That this Council is seeks a meeting with Energy Minister, Malcolm Wicks, on behalf of the people of Coventry under the Council's well being duties to enable him to understand the hardship current energy prices are causing the people of this city and what the awful consequences would be of the projected rise of up to 40% of energy bills later in this year".*

The above amendment was carried giving rise to the following substantive motion:

"This Council is deeply concerned about the projected steep rise in the cost of fuel prices and utilities and resolved to take the following steps to prevent the poverty that these will cause especially amongst the elderly and vulnerable.

Council agrees to lobby and support other groups campaigning against indiscriminate and unjust fuel disconnection.

This Council seeks a meeting with Energy Minister Malcolm Wicks on behalf of the people of Coventry under the Council's well being duties to enable him to understand the hardship current energy prices are causing the people of this City and what the awful consequences would be of the projected rise of up to 40% of energy bills later in this year."

**RESOLVED that the substantive motion, as set out above, be adopted.**

#### 40. Question Time

The appropriate Members provided a written response to all the questions set out in the Questions Booklet, together with an oral response to supplementary questions put to them at the meeting.

The following Members answered oral questions put to them by other Members as set out below, together with supplementary questions on the same matters:

<b>Number</b>	<b>Question Asked By</b>	<b>Question Put To</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>
1	Councillor Chater	Councillor Noonan	Coventry & Warwickshire Waste Disposal Company – update on cost implications, post PFI
2	Councillor O'Boyle	Councillor Sawdon	Hillfields Library - funding
3	Councillor Townshend	Councillor Mrs	Legal costs in connection

		Dixon	with employment tribunals
4	Councillor O'Boyle	Councillor Sawdon	Fee Swimming for over 60s
5	Councillor Field	Councillor Ridley	Hot food takeaways in Clay Lane
6	Councillor O'Boyle	Councillor Ridley	Assistance for struggling traders in City Arcade
7	Councillor O'Boyle	Councillor Sawdon	Costs relating to objections to Godiva Festival

**RESOLVED** that in relation to Questions 1, 3, and 7 above, a written response be submitted to all Members of the Council in accordance with Paragraph 4.1.24 of the City Council's Constitution.

(Meeting Closed: 10.45 p.m.)