

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COVENTRY

29 June 2009

PRESENT

Lord Mayor (Councillor Harrison)

Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Kelsey)

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

Apologies: Councillor Field
Councillor Kelly

12. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 19th and 20th May 2009 were signed as true records.

13. Coventry Good Citizen Award

On behalf of the Council, the Lord Mayor and his Honour Judge Hodson, the Honorary Recorder, presented Chris Roddis with the Coventry Good Citizen Award. Her citation read: -

"Chris Roddis has raised thousands of pounds over a twenty-year period for a variety of charitable causes including Myton Hospice, Cancer Research and hospital

psychiatric and stroke units.

Chris has also made life easier for private individuals such as raising money to pay for a special wheelchair for a young boy to continue his education at Corpus Christie School. On another occasion, she provided a voice box for a child at Sherbourne Fields School.

She has organised various fund-raising events including a charity ball, garden parties, and golf days to help others.

Chris has gone through the pain barrier herself, having suffered two strokes and lost close relatives, but she continues to work hard raising cash and always putting others first.

She is always cheerful, is very selfless and deserves to receive the Good Citizen Award."

14. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business referred to in Minute 32 below relating to "Methodist Homes for the Aged – Single Negotiated Tender" on the grounds that that item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

15 Birthday Honours List

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 Yvonne Carter, Dean of Warwick Medical School, for services to medical education. She also received the Council's Good Citizen Award in June 2008.
- **CBE:** To Maggie Galliers, former Principal of Henley College, for services to local and national further education.
- **MBE:** To Alfred Youell, a Coventry builder, for services to charitable causes.

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

16 Former Councillor Arthur White

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Arthur White.

Arthur served on the Council in the 1970's as a member of the Conservative Group representing Longford and Wyken Wards.

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

17 Departure of Stephen Pickering

Members noted that Stephen Pickering leaves the City Council at the end of August and that this would be his last full Council Meeting. Stephen has been the Director of City Services since February 2003 and has made a huge contribution during his time at the City Council.

Members expressed their thanks to Stephen and wished him every success for the future.

18. Civic Engagements

The Lord Mayor informed the Council of his recent civic engagements, including visits from various ambassadors and other civic dignitaries, together with arrangements that will be put in place to ensure that, in future, the Civic Office has the appropriate level of information provided to enable it to participate fully in the promotion of the City.

19. Petitions

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

- (a) The issuing of Taxi Permits – 308 signatures presented by Councillor Adalat**
- (b) Road Safety measure in Catherine Street and Nicholls Street – 94 signatures submitted by Councillor O'Boyle**
- (c) Upgrade of Herrick Road – 53 signatures presented by Councillor Townshend**
- (d) Parking in Keppell Street – 16 signatures presented by Councillor O'Boyle**
- (e) Crossing on Beake Avenue and Burnaby Road – 584 signatures presented by Councillor Mulhall**
- (f) Opposition to additional Off-Licences on Sunbury Road – 575 signatures presented by Councillor Mutton**
- (g) Anti-Social Behaviour in Lady Herbert's Garden – 21 signatures presented by Councillor O'Boyle**
- (h) Objection to planning application #54975 – 139 signatures presented by Councillor Mutton**
- (i) Traffic problems on Morland Road – 31 signatures presented by Councillor Lucas**
- (j) Opposition to house building in Kings Hill – 308 signatures presented by Councillors Bigham and Blundell (It was noted that this petition had already been considered at Cabinet at their meeting on 29th June)**

(k) Opposition to charges on street furniture and advertising boards in Hay Lane – 71 signatures presented by Councillor Windsor

20. 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

Member	Minute Number
Councillor Matchet	28
Councillor Skipper	28

Prejudicial

Member	Minute Number
Councillor Chater	21 and 32

(Councillor Chater left the meeting for consideration of these items)

21. Methodist Homes for the Aged – Single Negotiated Tender

Further to Minute 7/09 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Community Services, which sought approval to enter into a Single Negotiated Tender with Methodist Homes for the Aged for the purchase of nursing care residential services.

A corresponding private report, detailing commercially confidential and financial aspects of this proposal was also submitted to this meeting (Minute 32 below refers).

The report indicated that nursing care residential services were an essential element in the provision of social care and support. The services provide care and support, primarily to older people, who were no longer able to live independently and required a level of assistance including trained nurses at all times. It was noted that it was important that the Council ensured that there was an adequate level of service and choice in the City for this group of older people such as where nursing care and residential care were required due to a cognitive impairment such as dementia.

In Coventry, a total of 12 nursing care residential homes provided a total capacity of 380 beds. One third of these homes were equipped for cognitive impairments, such as dementia, providing 119 beds. Services were purchased primarily by either the Council or NHS Coventry with the level of Council purchase in 2008 varying between 221 beds and

244 beds at any one time. There were also a number of people who funded their own care. Vacancy levels across the City generally varied between 2% and 5%, with particular pressure on this service area being experienced over winter periods where the capacity was increasingly used to facilitate hospital discharge.

In 2005 Methodist Homes for the Aged purchased four care homes with nursing from ExtraCare Charitable Trust which made them the largest single provider of nursing residential care services in Coventry. Methodist Homes for the Aged is a charitable body, which is nationally recognised for its nursing and dementia care services.

They also operate Charnwood House residential dementia care, which opened in 2004, and was developed under the New Homes for Old strategy and with whom the Council had a separate contract for Intermediate Care and Dementia Residential services.

Following this acquisition, the Council and NHS Coventry (formerly Coventry Teaching Primary Care Trust) opened discussions with Methodist Homes for the Aged with a view to entering into Single Negotiated Tenders for nursing care services. The outcome of these negotiations was that from 1st April 2006 the City Council entered into a contract for a three-year period for 76 beds. In addition, NHS Coventry also entered into contracts for the provision of Intermediate Care services at Stoneleigh House (14 beds) and end-of-life care at Abbey Park (17 beds).

Since the contract between the City Council and Methodist Homes for the Aged commenced in 2006, there had been a shift in the balance of purchasing of nursing residential care services, with NHS Coventry being responsible for purchasing a larger proportion than was previously the case. This was as a result of the introduction of national guidance on Continuing Healthcare in October 2007. This guidance sought to clarify the circumstances in which a person is eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare based on the existence of a 'primary health need'. Where a person is assessed as being eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare, NHS Coventry was responsible for fully funding the service. The Council and NHS Coventry have worked together in the application of this new guidance.

Subsequent to this changed purchasing pattern, the Council and NHS Coventry entered into a series of joint discussions with Methodist Homes for the Aged to reach a new position, which would meet the changing requirements of all three organisations. As a result, the Council now wished to complete a new contract for the block purchase of 61 beds, a reduced level of provision, for a period of two years.

It was noted that NHS Coventry would continue to purchase the Intermediate Care Services and end-of-life care beds. In addition, they would also purchase 10 dementia nursing beds and 5 frail elderly nursing beds. It was the intention of NHS Coventry to tender for these services during 2009/2010.

Although it would be usual practice that a contract of this kind would only be awarded following a full tender process, due to a number of exceptional circumstances it was proposed that this be pursued under a Single Negotiated Tender.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- (1) Approve the award of a contract to Methodist Homes for the Aged under a single negotiated tender, under standing order F9, for the purchase of 61 nursing care residential beds at the homes operated**

by Methodist Homes for the Aged.

- (2) Have regard to the contents of this report when considering the recommendations contained in the report relating to this matter in the private part of the agenda for the meeting.**

22. Statement of Accounts

Further to Minute 4/09 of the Audit Committee, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services that set out the 2008/09 Statement of Accounts together with accompanying notes. The report was scheduled to be considered by the City Council at their meeting on 29th June 2009. 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 was prepared in accordance with requirements of the Accounting Code of Practice (ACOP), which defined proper accounting practice for local authorities. Members have been informed previously of changes in how the accounts were presented brought about by the move to compliance with UK Generally Accepted Accounting Policies (UKGAAP) accounting. These changes included replacing the Consolidated Revenue Account with an Income and Expenditure Account and a Statement of Movement on the General Fund. The result of these changes is that the Council's Income and Expenditure Account shows a deficit of £114.7m. This deficit does not reflect the genuine position of the Council's General Fund, which had a £44,000 overspend. The difference between the Income and Expenditure Account and the General Fund was explained in Section 4 of the report.

The Council noted that the Audit Committee had considered the following key elements from the Statement of Accounts:

- The Income and Expenditure Account recorded how much the Council had spent and received for the day to day spending on its services (revenue expenditure and income). It also showed how that net expenditure had been funded – from the combination of Council Tax, National Non Domestic Rates and Central Government Grant (the Revenue Support Grant). The City Council deficit for 2008/09 was £114.7m.
- The Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance. This statement showed how the deficit on the Council's Income and Expenditure Account for the year reconciled to the surplus/deficit for the year on the General Fund.
- Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses. This statement brought together all the gains and losses of the Council for the year.
- The Balance Sheet, a snap shot of the Council's financial position as at 31 March 2009, showing the Council's assets, liabilities, and reserves and balances as at that date. At the end of 2008/09 the City Council's net assets were £448m.
- The Cash Flow Statement showed actual cash received and spent by the Council as a result of revenue and capital transactions with third parties.
- The Council was required to maintain a separate account that records the

- Group Accounts statements consolidate the City Council's accounts with those companies considered to be part of our group. For 2008/09 those companies were North Coventry Holdings Ltd, Coventry North Regeneration, Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company and the Arena Coventry Ltd.
- The Statement of Accounting Policies explained the main accounting policies the City Council used to produce the figures in the accounts. The general principles applied are those set out in the Accounting Code of Practice.

The 2008/09 Revenue and Capital Outturn report described the recent downgrading of the credit ratings of many financial institutions that has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of institutions that the City Council can invest with and limited the scope for managing City Council investments. The City Council currently has a £20m limit for the amount that can be placed with the Government Debt Management Office (DMO) – effectively the Bank of England. This limit was set largely for technical reasons. As the DMO is effectively the deposit taker of last resort for local authorities, it is proposed that no limit be set to the amount that can be deposited with the DMO. The effect of applying a limit to the DMO could be perverse in risk management terms, in that the City Council could in practice be forced to make a more risky investment in order to comply with a technical limit. It should be noted that in April 2009 the DMO was effectively used as the deposit take of last resort with a total of £24m being placed with the DMO. As a result, this report recommended that the Council should revise the Treasury Management and Investment Policy to remove the limit on the amount that can be invested with the Government's Debt Management Office.

RESOLVED that the City Council approve:

- 1) The Statement of Accounts for 2008/09 and authorise the Lord Mayor of the Council to sign them on behalf of the City Council.**
- 2) Revisions to the Treasury Management and Investment Policy to remove the limit on the amount that can be invested with the Government's Debt Management Office as detailed in Section 5.1 of the report.**

23. Annual Governance Statement

Further to Minute 5/09 of the Audit Committee, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services which sought approval for the Annual Governance Statement, which formed part of the 2008-09 Statement of Accounts. Best practice, as reflected in the Corporate Performance Assessment of Use of Resources, required that the approval of this Statement be considered separately from the Statement of Accounts (Minute 22/09 above refers).

The City Council was responsible for ensuring that its business was conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money was safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The City

Council also had a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 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 overall responsibility, the Council was responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which included arrangements for the management of risk.

In discharging this responsibility, the Council was previously required to produce a Statement on Internal Control (SIC) and include this statement within its annual accounts. This changed with effect from 2007-08 with local authorities required to produce an Annual Governance Statement instead. This requirement was based on guidance issued by CIPFA in conjunction with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) titled 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: A Framework' in 2007.

The assurance gathering process developed to inform the Annual Governance Statement for 2008-09 included:

- Internal Audit work around the area of Corporate Governance including assessing the Council's compliance against the CIPFA / SOLACE Framework.
- An annual assessment of the adequacy of internal controls / governance arrangements by each Director.
- The outputs from the Internal Audit Service which are reflected in an annual report which will identify those issues, which in the opinion of the Audit and Risk Manager, should be considered when producing the Annual Governance Statement.
- A review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of Internal Audit.
- Reports from external bodies received in the year, including those from the Council's external auditors, the Audit Commission.

The Committee considered those areas highlighted in the report that were viewed as significant governance issues. All significant governance issues were included on the Council's corporate and directorate risk registers. These registers also include appropriate management actions to minimise the risk. The Corporate Risk Register is also subject to regular review by the Council's Management Board, Cabinet and the Audit Committee.

The Council was seeking to continuously improve its management arrangements to improve service delivery, efficiency and value for money, whilst achieving its objectives. Key challenges included:

- a) Ensuring the delivery of the Council's vision and corporate objectives in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- b) Working closely with partners and Government to deliver the Local Area Agreement.
- c) The Council's approach to delivering improved value for money, which was derived from its Value for Money Strategy, approved in 2006.
- d) Addressing the actions highlighted in Internal Audit's review of the Council's governance arrangements including:

- Governance arrangements for partnership working.
- Defining the level of awareness/understanding it expects its employees to have around key Corporate Governance guidance such as the Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy and then taking action to ensure this expectation is met.
- The need to enhance both local and corporate systems to ensure effective arrangements exist to cover corporate governance arrangements with the Council.

The review of internal control had also highlighted a number of areas for improvement. In each case, actions plans have been agreed to address issues identified. These include:

- a) Ensuring that all Coventry schools comply with the Financial Management Standard in Schools by the target date of March 2010.
- b) Continuing to develop a formal Council-wide framework for information security management.
- c) Ensuring that the Council had effective governance/project management arrangements in place to oversee all significant Council projects.
- d) Ensuring that that there was effective awareness of roles and responsibilities for Business Continuity Management (BCM) and that service BCM plans were tested to ensure that they were fit for purpose.

The Committee questioned officers on aspects of the report and arising from discussions around defining awareness and understanding of Corporate Governance guidance asked for a briefing at a future meeting on what systems and rules were in place in relation to expenses.

RESOLVED that the City Council be recommended to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2008-09 (attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted) and to authorise the Leader and Chief Executive to sign it on behalf of the City Council.

24 Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan – Performance Report 2008/09

Further to Minute 19/09 of the Cabinet, the Council considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, which provided a review of performance at the end of 2008/09 against the Local Area Agreement Performance Indicators and the Corporate Plan management objectives.

The Council and Coventry Partnership agreed Coventry's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) in March 2008. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) was signed off by Government in June 2008, with a refresh of some targets agreed in March 2009. These documents set out the vision and priorities for Coventry.

In September, the Council adopted its Corporate Plan 2008-11, aligning its corporate objectives with the SCS and building the LAA indicators into its performance

management framework. In addition, a new set of national performance indicators was introduced for 2008/09, covering the activities of local authorities and partner organisations. Indicators included in the LAA were selected from this set.

Half year progress on the LAA was presented to Cabinet on 16th December. A new report format was introduced to help focus on significant issues and any action required. The report had been updated to reflect the position at the end of 2008/09 and was attached as an appendix to the report submitted.

The report indicated that the Council was developing a data management system in conjunction with the Coventry Partnership to improve the quality, timeliness and accessibility of information to support decision-making and performance management. The new performance management software had been piloted for the first time to support production of the end of year report. This involved lead officers and data collectors updating information and performance commentaries direct to the system. The pilot had been a learning exercise and it was noted that some changes to format and presentation may be needed for the future.

The City Council agreed its new Corporate Plan in September 2008, aligning its corporate objectives with the priorities in the SCS. As part of this process, the supporting performance indicators were significantly revised to include measures from the new national indicator set and a number of gaps were identified where other measures needed to be developed. Some smaller amendments were made to the management objectives and accompanying indicators to reflect performance priorities that had emerged during the last year.

The summary of progress for SCS themes based on the LAA indicators provided a partial overview of progress against the Council's corporate objectives and a full review would be carried out at the end of the first year of the plan in September. A full report on the Council's management objectives was attached as an appendix to the report.

At the meeting of the Cabinet it was noted that the preparation of the report had been challenging for a number of reasons, mainly to do with the introduction of the new National Indicator Set. The report reviewed the progress made in delivering the priorities set out in the Local Area Agreement and the management objectives of the Corporate Plan. The information would be used to identify further action that needed to be taken to improve performance and services to the people of Coventry and provide performance information to assist in the budget setting process. The full performance tables for the national indicator set would be made available on the Council's website.

The information included in this report and subsequent updates will be used to inform performance management of the objectives and priorities in the Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan. Information from the performance report will be considered by Scrutiny to help shape its work programme for the year. The Local Public Service Board will use the performance report on the LAA to drive its performance management of the targets over the coming year.

RESOLVED that, progress made on the Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan be noted and to take this information be taken into account when considering future proposals including budget setting.

Sidney Stringer Academy

Further to Minute 19/09 of the Cabinet, the Council considered a joint report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People and the Director of Finance and Legal Services, which provided an update on the progress of the Sidney Stringer Academy and sought approval to appoint a preferred bidder to advance the design and construction of the new Academy and the appropriation of the development land at the corner of Primrose Hill Street and Vine Street and the site north of Primrose Hill Street.

In December 2006, the Cabinet approved the submission of the Expression of Interest (EoI) to develop the Sidney Stringer Academy. This development formed part of the Swanswell Learning Quarter, to replace the current Sidney Stringer School. This approval led to significant feasibility work, resulting in the preparation of an Outline Business Case (OBC) for submission to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and Partnerships for Schools (PFS). The OBC received approval from DCSF in December 2008, establishing the budgetary parameters for the Academy capital investment.

This approval allowed commencement of the procurement of a contractor-led delivery team from the PFS Academy Framework. This work commenced in January 2009 and culminated in the submission of comprehensive bid proposals on 11th May 2009. Bid submissions were requested and subsequently received from Kier and Laing O'Rourke.

In line with the nationally recognised model for Academy developments, the Sidney Stringer Academy will be managed by a new legal entity – the "Sidney Stringer Academy Trust". This body, representative of the four sponsors of the Academy (Coventry City Council, City College Coventry, Coventry University and Jaguar Cars), would become responsible for all operational aspects of the new Academy. The Government's Academy model also required the Trust to have a long lease on the Academy site.

An Evaluation Team, comprising of representatives of Coventry City Council, City College, Sidney Stringer Academy Trust, predecessor school and external technical advisors, had, over the Invitation to Tender (ITT) period, worked with two competing bidders to develop proposals which deliver against the vision, objectives and technical brief established for the Academy building.

This team undertook a detailed evaluation of the bid submissions, using the PFS standard evaluation documentation and focused on the areas of design, works, handover and price. Both submissions were considered to be of a high quality. However, Kier's proposal appeared to respond to the educational vision better and offer greater value for money. The bidders scored were detailed within the report submitted.

The land to be transferred to the Academy Trust included the existing Sidney Stringer School site, a tranche of land on the north side of Primrose Hill Street, and the land that was occupied by the Neighbourhood Management building at the corner of Primrose Hill Street and Vine Street. Parts of this land, not currently occupied by the school, would need to be appropriated for educational purposes.

Once the contractor was selected the first stage was that the Trust would be granted a short three-year lease of the current Sidney Stringer School and a development agreement obliging the Council to construct the new academy. On practical completion of the development a long lease of the new academy would be granted to the Trust.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- (1) Approve the changes to the land to be transferred to the Academy Trust, which were detailed in section 4.4 of the report submitted.**
- (2) Endorse the Evaluation Panel's recommendation to appoint Kier as preferred bidder to deliver the new Academy facilities, noting that there were no financial commitments on the Council at this stage and that further reports would be brought to Cabinet, seeking approval of the Full Business Case, award of contract and contract management structure to implement the building of the Sidney Stringer Academy.**
- (3) Note the intention to enter in a development agreement with the Trust and the grant of leases on the terms detailed in section 5.8 of the report.**

26 Multi-Area Agreement on Employment and Skills

Further to Minute 20/09 of the Cabinet, the Council considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of City Development, which sought agreement of a Multi Area Agreement on Employment and Skills between the Council and its partners with central Government.

The report indicated that Central government had recognised that some economic issues are addressed most effectively at a sub-regional basis to reflect local economic geography and labour markets that are not necessarily reflected by local authority boundaries and was encouraging local authorities to tackle issues together through Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs). Multi-Area Agreements were agreed between central government and a number of individual local authorities with the aim of achieving a number of agreed shared outcomes.

For the last two years Coventry has been one of the partners in a City Strategy Pathfinder Programme with the other six West Midlands Metropolitan District Councils, Telford and Wrekin Unitary Authority and other partners including JobCentre Plus; the Learning and Skills Council and local businesses.

Key features of the City Strategy approach were the development of a single offer for clients and employers within a local area with the aim of both getting local people into jobs at the same time as providing skills training and employer support. This included the production of Neighbourhood Employment and Skills Plans for each of the wards in the city region covered by the pathfinder and the development of an Employers' Board – which in Coventry's case encompassed Warwickshire to reflect its labour market and also its strengthening links within the Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire sub-region.

City Strategy Pathfinder activity was focused on the areas with the highest levels of worklessness across the city region, which included six wards in Coventry. The pathfinder was evaluated and found to be successful and was to be carried on for a further two years and be rolled out to other areas in the City.

At the meeting of the Cabinet, it was noted that, it was proposed that the successful local City Strategy pathfinder programme should be developed into a formal four-year sub-regional Multi-Area Agreement with central government. Employees in the

Council's Regeneration Services had been actively engaged in supporting the development of the employment and skills MAA and would continue to provide advice and support to enable it to operate effectively ensuring that benefits to Coventry were realised over the next three years.

A draft Multi Area Agreement document was considered by Scrutiny and Cabinet and then approved for submission to Government at the Council meeting on 17th March 2009. Following further negotiations between local partners and Government, particularly around more local control of commissioning services, the final MAA document had been produced and was appended to the report submitted.

The proposals in the Multi Area Agreement had been agreed with Government and it was expected that, subject to approval by each local authority, the agreement would be formally signed by all parties in mid-July 2009.

The proposed Multi Area Agreement covered the eight local authority areas of Coventry; Birmingham; Solihull; Sandwell; Dudley; Walsall; Wolverhampton and Telford and Wrekin. The eight local authorities would each be joint signatories to the MAA with Government. Warwickshire County Council has collaborated with the development of the MAA.

The aim of the Agreement is to have more people in sustainable employment and training across the metropolitan area of the West Midlands and Telford. This would be achieved by removing a number of barriers, inflexibilities and inconsistencies in the way that employment and skills services were delivered locally and through the delegation of decision making and funding from national and regional agencies to local partners.

As a result of the recession, unemployment had risen steeply in the West Midlands so that it was the region with the highest level in the UK and the need for activity and support included within the proposed MAA had increased.

It was acknowledged that initial targets had been developed for the MAA but that these would be reviewed after a year as the effects of the recession and changing economic conditions had meant it had been difficult to assess targets for the four years of the MAA.

Targets for local authority areas would be developed and would identify priority groups and areas on which each local area wished to focus employment and skills interventions and in turn these would inform the development, specification and commissioning of employment and skills programmes and the use of resources.

It was noted that overall governance of the Multi Area Agreement would sit with the City Region Growth and Prosperity Board of which Coventry was a member. Local governance mechanisms included an Employment and Skills Board for Coventry (including Warwickshire), which was made up of a range of employers and representatives from local authorities, JobCentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council. It would be formally linked to the Coventry Partnership. The Council and its partners in the Coventry Economy Learning Skills and Employment Group would ensure that the development of the MAA complemented other activity in the City.

An Employment and Skills Strategic Management Board would be responsible for the day to day delivery of the MAA and would be made up of chairs from the four Employment and Skills Boards in the city region and two local authority leaders and four

ex-officio places on the Board would be allocated to the Regional Directors of Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council/Skills Funding Agency and the Young People's Learning Agency and one local authority Chief Executive.

RESOLVED that, the City Council agree the Multi Area Agreement on Employment and Skills with central government as set out in appendix 1 of the report submitted.

27 Amendments to the Membership of Scrutiny Board (3), Remits of Scrutiny Boards and Appointment to Outside Bodies

The Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services which detailed proposed amendments to the membership of Scrutiny Board (3), changes in the remits of Scrutiny Board (1), (2) and (4) and alterations to the appointments made to outside bodies.

The report proposed to change the remit of the Scrutiny Boards to take account of the provisions in the Police and Justice Act 2006 relating to the scrutiny of crime and disorder issues and to make the Scrutiny Board remits more equitable.

The Act requires that one of a local authority's overview and scrutiny committees is designated as scrutinising crime and disorder issues. The proposal in the report was that the scrutiny of the Cabinet Member (Neighbourhoods and Community Safety) portfolio which includes crime and disorder issues, be moved from Scrutiny Board (4) to Scrutiny Board (1).

To further balance the workload of Scrutiny Boards the report also proposed to move the scrutiny of the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure and Libraries) portfolio from Scrutiny Board (4) to Scrutiny Board (2).

The report further described amendments to the membership of Scrutiny Board (3) and changes to the appointments made to outside bodies.

RESOLVED that: -

- (1) The City Council, approve with immediate effect:**
 - (i) The changes to the remit of Scrutiny Boards shown in paragraph 4.1 of the report**
 - (ii) The replacement of Councillor Mrs Waters on Scrutiny Board (3) with Councillor Andrews.**
 - (iii) The following change to appointments to outside bodies: -**

Coventry Refugee Centre – Councillor Andrew Williams to replace Councillor Heather Johnson
 - (iv) The following correction to the appointments to outside bodies: -**

City Wide Business Improvement District (BID) Board – Barry Hastie to replace Councillor Gary Ridley
- (2) The Director of Customer and Workforce Services be advised of the representative to the Coventry and Solihull Valuation Tribunal for the term of office expiring in May 2011 to replace Mrs. S. Forte who has resigned.**

28 Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee

The Council considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services which sought approval for the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee.

At the meeting of the Council of 17th March 2009, the Council gave approval for the establishment of an Independent Audit Committee from the start of the Municipal Year 2009/10.

Previously, the Chair of the Audit Sub-Group had not received any extra remuneration as they also served as Chair of Scrutiny Board (1). In the new arrangements, the terms of reference for the Audit Committee, as outlined in the Constitution, state that the Chair and Deputy Chair should be free from any Executive function or Scrutiny Chair or Deputy Chair role. This results in the Chair and Deputy Chair not having any current entitlement to a SRA.

The report indicated that in accordance with the Constitution, the issue of the amount of any SRA payable should be considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel. However, no date had been set as to when the Panel could be convened. The report therefore proposed that the Council approve a SRA for the Chair of Audit Committee of £6204 per annum and a SRA for the Deputy Chair of £2,484 per annum, as is in line with the amounts already approved for the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny Boards, Planning Committee and Licensing and Regulatory Committee, in advance of the Independent Remuneration Panel when it is convened.

Whilst not objecting to the principle of a SRA for the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Audit Committee, concern was expressed that the matter had not been considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel prior to its consideration by Council.

RESOLVED that, in light of the concerns now raised, the matter be withdrawn and referred to the Independent Remuneration Panel for consideration.

29. **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:

Number	Question Asked By	Question Put To	Subject Matter
1	Councillor Skipper	Councillor Williams	Re-scheduling of reports due for June Cabinet Member meeting
2	Councillor Townshend	Councillor Mrs. Dixon	Agency Worker spend in quarter 4 of 2008/09

RESOLVED that in relation to Questions 2, above, a written response be submitted to all Members of the Council in accordance with Paragraph 4.1.25 of the City Council's Constitution.

30. **Statement by the Leader of the Council – City of Sanctuary**

Councillor Taylor addressed the City Council on Coventry as a City of Sanctuary. The Statement read:

"Coventry has a long and proud history of welcoming communities to its city from all over the world – these communities have helped us gain our international reputation as a city of peace and reconciliation.

Over the centuries Coventry has welcomed people who need a place of safety, or who are fleeing persecution or danger in their own country. As a result of many people from different countries and cultures making this city their home and bringing their skills and talents here to benefit the local economy Coventry has become the unique and special place it is today.

The City of Sanctuary movement works to build a culture of welcome and appreciation for people in need of safety, and has gained wide support from individuals, towns and cities across the country. As a city we would all want to support the view that it is important to take pride in the hospitality we offer to people in need of safety, so that refugees and people seeking asylum can contribute fully to life in our communities.

The Council already works closely with partner agencies and community organisations across the city to ensure our diverse communities continue to welcome people making a new home here, and is committed to continuing this work. We will develop links with the City of Sanctuary movement to explore new ways of working that will further enhance our role and reputation as a city of peace and reconciliation with flourishing and diverse communities that contribute so much to Coventry."

31. **Debate – Promotion of Ricoh Arena as a Venue Within England's Bids for the Rugby and Football World Cups**

Councillor Ridley moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor Smith:

"The City Council calls upon the City and all our key partners to promote the Ricoh Arena as an important venue within England's bids for the Rugby and Football World Cups."

RESOLVED that the Motion as set out above be adopted.

Private Business

32. **Methodist Homes for the Aged – Single Negotiated Tender**

Further to Minute 21 above relating to the public aspects of this matter, the Council considered a report of the Director of Community Services, which sought approval to enter into a Single Negotiated Tender with Methodist Homes for the Aged for the purchase of nursing care residential services and contained contractual and financial considerations.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the City Council approves the award of a contract to Methodist Homes for the Aged under a single negotiated tender, under standing order F9, for the purchase of 61 nursing care residential beds at the homes operated by Methodist Homes for the Aged and at the costs indicated in section 7 of the report submitted.

33. **Video - "Coventry – My City"**

The Council viewed the above video, presented by the Lord Mayor.

(Meeting Closed: 6.45 p.m.)