

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COVENTRY

20 October 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 Mrs Sweet
Councillor Kelly	Councillor Taylor
Councillor Lakha	Councillor Townshend
Councillor Lancaster	Councillor Mrs. Waters
Councillor Lapsa	Councillor Williams
Councillor Lee	Councillor Windsor

Apologies: Councillor Field
Councillor Khan

Public Business

57. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2009 were signed as a true record.

58. Coventry Good Citizen Award

On behalf of the Council, the Lord Mayor and his Honour Judge Hodson, the Honorary Recorder, presented representatives from the Earlsdon Echo with the Coventry Good Citizen Award. His citation read:

" The Earlsdon Echo was first published in April 1979 and was printed eleven times a year. The community newspaper was produced by a regular team of volunteers but also welcomed additional material from local people and organisations. The team believed that the essence of a community newspaper was that it was open to anyone who had a contribution to make.

The team wrote the articles, managed the advertising, dealt with the distribution and sales to over 20 outlets and also gave talks in other parts of the city to groups and organisations about the Earlsdon Echo.

The newspaper provided a source of information, comment and entertainment to the Earlsdon, Chapelfields, Hearsall and Spon End districts of Coventry.

The Echo was produced entirely by volunteers as a non-profit making service to the community, being independently financed by sales and advertising.

This team of volunteers deserved to be called Good Citizens of Coventry, especially in this their 30th year of publication."

59. Death of Professor Yvonne Carter

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Professor Yvonne Carter.

60. Death of Roger Tipton

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Roger Tipton who worked on the New Deal for Communities project.

61. Civic Engagements

The Lord Mayor informed the Council of his recent civic engagements, including admitting Freeman of the City, supporting Local Democracy Week by hosting Lord Mayor for the Day, visit to HMS Diamond in Glasgow, visit to Belgrade in Serbia.

62. Petitions

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

(a) Petition for the clearing and cleaning of unkempt land – 97 signatures

presented by Councillor Auluck.

(b) Coventry Alliance Garage and Brandon Skip Hire to cease trading – 86 signatures submitted by Councillor Mrs Sweet.

63. 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:

(a) Interests in Recommendations

Personnal

Member	Minute Number
Councillor Harrison	65
Councillor Ridley	65

(b) Interests in Debate

Personnal

Member	Minute Number
Councillor Mrs Bigham	70
Councillor Clifford	70
Councillor Duggins	70
Councillor Harrison	70
Councillor Kelly	70
Councillor Lakha	70
Councillor Mrs Lucas	70
Councillor McNicholas	70
Councillor Mulhall	70
Councillor Nellist	70
Councillor Noonan	70
Councillor O'Boyle	70

64. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2010-2013

Further to Minute 59/09 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services which presented a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2010-2013 for adoption by the City Council. The previous strategy was approved in January 2009. The Strategy underpinned the medium term policy and financial planning process that was at the heart of setting our revenue and capital budgets.

The Strategy was put forward at a time of considerable challenges being faced by our national and local economies and when we face a significant reduction in the real level of revenue and capital resources available to local government.

The Council had already begun to implement some of the significant change needed

to prepare the financial base to deal with this situation in the form of the Transformation Programme and the bringing forward of the budget setting process.

It was clear from the financial position that the City Council would need to achieve significant revenue savings over the medium term and set a significantly restricted capital programme. At this point, with no Comprehensive Spending Review completed by Government and none expected until after the election, the impact of Government spending on the Council could only be estimated.

The Strategy had three main objectives;

- To provide a stable medium term financial base from which to deliver the Council's priorities and transformation/ABC agenda.
- To move the Council towards a more strategic longer-term approach to delivering our revenue and capital plans.
- To set a sound financial planning framework to underpin the effective financial management of the Council.

The Strategy (which was appended to the report in full) was set within the context of the Council's commitment to delivering the Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan. Although the Council was awarded 4 star status in March 2009 it recognised the need to further improve the quality of its services. This would be particularly challenging at a time when a much lower level of funding would be available to local authorities through Government grant and Council Tax.

In order to deliver better services the Council had embarked on a Transformation Programme that would affect every area of the City Council and all the services we deliver over the next few years. The report noted that over the course of the 3 year strategy the ABC programme would incorporate a number of fundamental developments to the way we work which included the delivery of more efficient and flexible services, greater collaboration with city and sub-regional partners, taking some difficult decisions and increasing focus on our core business and policy priorities.

The assumptions and principles outlined in the report and the Strategy were consistent with those being applied to the Pre-Budget Report and would be used in setting the 2010/11 budget proposals.

The Cabinet noted that the report would be considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 14 October 2009.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Council agree the Medium Term Financial Strategy appended to the report and approve the Strategy as the basis of the City Council's medium term financial planning process.

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:

For

Against

Abstain

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

Councillor Nellist
Councillor Windsor

Result: 49 for
2 against
0 abstentions

65. Extension of the Contract Term for the Connexions Service

Further to Minute 61 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which asked the Council to consider an extension of the contract with Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership for the delivery of Connexions for a further 12 months, until 31st March 2011.

The report noted that Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership currently delivered the Connexions Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) Service under contract until 31st March 2010, to both Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council. The report sought approval to extend the term of the contract to enable completion of work looking at various re-commissioning options for the future delivery of this service.

Connexions provided impartial careers information, advice and guidance for all Coventry young people aged 13-19. In addition Connexions provided support to help young people progress to further and higher education, vocational training or work with training and employment. The service also provided more intensive and targeted support to the most vulnerable young people who were at greater risk of not securing either employment, education or training opportunities. The Connexions Service aimed to remove barriers to learning and progression, and ensure young people made a smooth transition to adulthood and working life.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Council approve an extension of the contract with Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership for the delivery of Connexions for a further 12 months, until 31st March 2011 to allow sufficient time for the completion of the joint commissioning work, the decision making process and preparation for implementation of the preferred option.

66. Charging Policy

Further to Minute 63 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Legal Services which introduced a new Charging Policy which would impact on the fees and charges levied for all services across the Council.

The report noted that, with the medium term financial pressures facing the Council, there would be significant challenges to meet in order to deliver a balanced revenue programme over the coming years. Setting the appropriate level for fees and charges was an important element in balancing the Council's revenue budget.

The former Value for Money Partnership Board commissioned a review of income generation opportunities, a number of which have been taken into account in the 2009-10 budget setting process, and also decided that it would be appropriate to establish a Charging Policy, against which the setting of all fees and charges should be measured in the future. The Policy was contained within the report submitted.

The Cabinet noted that Scrutiny Co-ordination had considered this matter at their meeting held on 22nd September 2009 and had supported the recommendations contained within the report.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Council:

- (1) Approve the Charging Policy for implementation across the Council**
- (2) Note that the Corporate Management Team (CMT) was being charged with the task of exercising governance over charging arrangements, and that a working group of CMT was being tasked with reviewing all the Council's fees and charges, and the way in which the concessions policy should be applied across the Council.**

67. Green Paper – Shaping the Future of Care Together – Consultation Response

Further to Minute 68 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Community Services, which sought approval of a proposed response to the Government consultation "Shaping the Future of Care Together".

The Green Paper was published by the Government on 14th July 2009 and described as a 'once in a generation review' of how social care in England was to be organised and funded. It invited consultation on the principles for improving the delivery of care, and on a number of options for reform of the current funding system. The Green Paper set out a number of consultation questions, which had each been addressed within the City Council's response which was appended to the report submitted.

The Green Paper identified a range of options for the future funding and structure of adult social care, including a 'partnership' model of funding to give all those in need a basic minimum entitlement funded through taxation – a 'National Care Service' – combined with payments made by individuals who could afford to contribute to their own care. Options also included the addition of some form of 'insurance' to cover the required individual contributions.

The consultation process was to close on 13th November 2009. The Government had committed to establish a 'national leadership group' to ensure the momentum for reform was sustained, and a White Paper on care and support was expected to be published in 2010, although it was considered that a lack of Parliamentary time may frustrate this.

The report had also been considered by Scrutiny Board 4 at its meeting on 14th October 2009, and a briefing note detailing their decision on this matter was circulated to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the options and proposals contained in the report and matters referred to at the meeting, the Council approve the consultation response for submission to the Government.

68. 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:

No	Question Asked By	Question Put To	Subject Matter
1	Councillor Auluck	Councillor Blundell	John Gulson School Buildings
2	Councillor Mrs Mutton	Councillor Mrs Dixon	Delegation Visit Regarding Clean Working
3	Councillor Smith	Councillor Ridley	Metro Bar and Grill at Belgrade Plaza.
4.	Councillor Townshend	Councillor Ridley	Promoting Economic Development especially at County Hall.
5.	Councillor Nellist	Councillor Ridley	Closure of Historic Buildings

69. Statement by the Leader of the Council

There was no statement.

70. Debate – Job Losses in the Motor Industry

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

"This Council notes with concern recent announcements by LTI, and Jaguar Land Rover that may result in further job losses in Coventry's motor industry. Council believes that both companies have a shared heritage with Coventry and are an important part of our economy.

Council notes that leading members have already demanded talks with both companies to discuss their plans and resolves to do what it can to keep jobs in Coventry"

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Mutton, seconded by Councillor Duggins, and lost:

"In the second paragraph after the word "Council" delete "notes that leading members have already demanded talks with both companies to discuss their plans and"

So the second paragraph now reads:

"Council resolves to do what it can to keep jobs in Coventry"

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

Private Business

Nil

(Meeting Closed: 6.45 p.m.)