



Coventry City Council

Council Meeting

3rd July 2012

Booklet 2

Answers to Written Questions

1.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor Hammon

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor J. Mutton, Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance)

TEXT OF QUESTION:

What extra security, with the influx of visitors over the next 3 months, is being put in place for the city centre?

Answer:

Coventry Security Planning during the Olympics

- Security issues have been considered at:
 - the City of Coventry stadium,
 - Godiva festival,
 - Torch relay evening celebration and morning departure
 - Godiva awakes cultural Olympiad
 - Live siteas well as in the City Centre and routes to the Stadium.
- City Council officers have been working closely with West Midlands and Warwickshire Police, LOCOG, and Cabinet Office representatives to determine the level of security needed for all of the locations.
- Visitors to the city will be reassured by an increased police presence at Coventry Railway Station. There will be extra mobile resources in the city centre specifically on match days & local officers will be patrolling around key areas such as Broadgate & the Live site throughout the Olympic period.
- Event specific Safety Advisory Groups have been established for all major events, bringing together all blue light services together with voluntary and community sector representatives.
- Traffic management plans have been put in place and agreed with the police.
- Over 300 Olympic Ambassadors have been recruited to support council staff in welcoming visitors to the city and to act as stewards for key events.

- Resilience plans have been drawn up locally and regionally to ensure command, coordination and communication systems are understood in the event of an incident.
- Police leave and shift patterns have been revised to enable the Police to support events in the West Midlands as well as providing support to London.
- Locally we have undertaken a multi-agency risk assessment and gap analysis of our resilience arrangements and plans have been put in place to address any identified gaps.
- The West Midlands Local Resilience Forum chaired by Assistant Chief Constable Garry Forsythe has signed off our resilience arrangements and sent formal assurance to LOCOG that our arrangements are fit for purpose.

2.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor Hammon

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor Harvard, Cabinet Member (City Services)

TEXT OF QUESTION:

Can the Cabinet Member for City Services outline what steps he is taking to ensure that Coventry streets and the City centre are clean and clear of litter for the forthcoming Olympic Games and beyond?

Answer:

Streetpride are carrying out numerous deep cleans before the start of the Olympics and have liaised with neighbouring Authorities to do likewise.

The A444 has been deep cleaned (18th June - 28th June) and will be done again if required prior to the football starting in the City.

The Inner Ring Road is scheduled to be cleaned over four nights during the week commencing 16th July.

The inbound and outbound Torch routes have been cleaned prior to and will be cleaned during the procession.

The area around the City of Coventry Stadium will be deep cleaned during the four weeks leading up to the start of the games and continually maintained during the period of the games. This will include the deployment of an additional 50 (temporary) litter bins. The routes will be litter picked prior to each game and will be cleansed either directly after the crowds have left or very early the next morning (5am). On days when there are double headers, a team will also cleanse the routes whilst the games are in progress. A team will also

be available should any emergencies arise (RTA's etc).

It is anticipated that the staff from Streetpride will work in excess of 2500 additional hours to make the city look its best.

Moving beyond the Games we are continually monitoring our schedules and will alter them to suit demands around the City. If any Member has any particular problem areas please ask them to contact Streetpride direct who will try to assist.

3.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor Hammon

TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor Kelly, Cabinet Member (City Development)

TEXT OF QUESTION:

Can you estimate how many square feet of office space are vacant in the city at this present time?

Answer:

Whilst the Council is not required to maintain a complete record of all vacant property in the city the Inward Investment team hold a database which allows an estimate to be made. Currently it is believed that approximately 1.1 million square feet of vacant office space exists within the city boundary. Much of this space is situated in business parks on the edge of the city such as Westwood or Coventry Triangle.

Approximately 450,000 square feet of vacant office space is within the city centre (including the station environs).

It should be pointed out that much of the office stock within the city centre is of 1960's and 70's vintage and completely un-suited to modern occupation due to low floor to ceiling heights, no air-conditioning, poor insulation, poor DDA (disability discrimination Act) compliance and lack of parking.

As part of the proposals for the City Centre South development, Coventry Point, the largest single office block in the city will be demolished.

4.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY: Councillor Blundell

**TO BE ANSWERED BY: Councillor Ruane, Cabinet Member
(Neighbourhood Action, Housing, Leisure and Culture)**

TEXT OF QUESTION:

Would the Cabinet Member please update Council on what discussions have taken place with the 3 cultural and heritage trusts within the City (The Transport Museum, Coventry Heritage and Arts Trust and The Belgrade) with regard to a potential merger and / or rationalisation?

Answer:

I have met with all three trusts to investigate methods in which the overall budget paid out to the trusts can be reduced in a structured way which will provide certainty as to the level of funding to the trusts in the medium term and will maintain the overall service provision. This work is currently underway and at present there are weekly meetings with the Trusts and individual staff. The discussions will look at the implications of any savings and what possible rationalisation measures can be put in place to accommodate this including potentially the reduction of the number of trusts.

The level of savings has not been set, however it is clear that in line with all of the Council's activities it is important to establish that we obtain savings whilst attempting to maintain little or no reduction in the cultural offer of the city and whilst it is probably not unreasonable to expect that in line with other area savings in the region of 25% are made. The work currently being undertaken will highlight the implications of any such savings and the rationale behind them.

It is intended that following the current discussions a model will be produced in July, it is then intended to report back to Cabinet in October with an appropriate recommendation as to the model and appropriate ongoing savings.

With a budget precipice of £14m next year and £27m the year after, it is important we get our house in order now to ensure that we model appropriately and perhaps more importantly the trusts are able to forecast the level of funding going forward so that they have the best chance of securing funding from other third parties such as the Arts Council England, any report in October has the ability to be factored into the budget setting process in November.