

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

5th March, 2008

Scrutiny Co-ordination
Committee and
Substitute Members

Present:-

Councillor Arrowsmith
Councillor Clifford (Substitute for Councillor Mutton)
Councillor Crookes (Substitute for Councillor Williams)
Councillor Lee
Councillor Maton
Councillor Ridge

Cabinet Member

Present:-

Councillor Blundell (Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People))

Employees Present:-

C. Green (Director of Children, Learning and Young People)
A. Simpson (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
R. Snow (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. Townsend (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Venn (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies:-

Councillor Ms. Hunter
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Williams

152. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Maton declared an interest in the matter the subject of Minute 157 below headed "Cabinet/Cabinet Member Items of Urgent Public Business – Swanswell Academy" as he was a Governor at City College, one of the sponsors of the Academy. The appointment was a City Council nomination and so the interest was not regarded as prejudicial and Councillor Maton remained in the meeting during consideration of this matter.

153. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 6th and 13th February, 2008, were signed as true records.

154. **Call-ins Stage 1**

The Committee noted that no call-ins had been received yet that week. The deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 25th February, 2008, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday 7th March, 2008. Any call-ins received after this meeting and before that deadline would be considered for validity by the

Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in consultation with the Director of Customer and Workforce Services (Paragraph 5.4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

155. Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement

With reference to Minute 69/07, the Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive that set out the proposed Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy together with a set of indicators for the new Local Area Agreements as the basis for further negotiation with central Government. The report was scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 11th March, 2008.

The development of a Local Sustainable Community Strategy was a Government requirement and was the subject of National Government guidance and inspection. It was the responsibility of Coventry City Council as the Local Authority to ensure that the strategy was developed and adopted.

The Committee questioned the Officer on aspects of the report, in particular the means by which it would be updated, the data contained within the strategy document in particular the need to ensure that this was correct and opportunities to involve social enterprise organisations wherever possible. There was concern that the statistics within the Strategy relating to levels of teenage pregnancy were lower than had recently been quoted to Scrutiny Board (2). It was agreed that it was likely that the figures had changed since the report was initially drafted, the officer explained how figures in the strategy would be updated. The Committee commented that where ever possible, opportunities (particularly employment opportunities) should be made available to social enterprise organisations.

RESOLVED that the Committee:-

- (1) support the Coventry Sustainable Community strategy document and the proposed indicators set for the Local Area Agreement**
- (2) request that the comments, outlined above, be forwarded to Cabinet prior to their formal consideration of the document.**

156. Support to Voluntary Organisations

With reference to Minute 78/07, the Committee considered a briefing note of the Head of Neighbourhood Management that outlined how Officers proposed to deal with the request by this Committee to examine the funding position of voluntary organisations, in particular WATCH and WEETC.

It was proposed that Officers would undertake a desk review of the current activities and associated funding streams of WATCH and WEETC give consideration to which, if any, services provided by those organisations and potentially any other similar organisations, would fall within the core responsibility of the City Council if the organisations were to no longer provide those services. It was expected that the work would be completed by the end of April, 2008, after which a report would be made to this Committee.

RESOLVED that the approach set out above for the review of voluntary organisations be agreed.

157. Cabinet/Cabinet Member Item of Urgent Public Business – Swanswell Academy

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People that provided feedback on the consultation to establish an academy to replace the current Sidney Stringer School and set out the proposed next steps. The report was scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) at his meeting later that day. The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee had been requested to consider the report, in particular, the need to allow the matter to proceed and meet the deadline for finalising funding agreements for the academy without delay, and to agree that call-in should not apply.

The Committee questioned the Officer and Cabinet Member on aspects of the report, in particular the consultation process and whether the Cabinet Member felt that this was sufficient to allow him to make a decision. The Cabinet Member responded that he was content that he was in a position to take the decision; he had been kept updated on the process by Officers and had met with both the Trades Unions and Scrutiny Board (2) on the matter.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and agreed the reasons for urgency and agree that call-in should not apply; this decision to be reported to the Cabinet Member at his meeting later that day.

158. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – Museum of British Road Transport Trust (Coventry) Limited (MBRT)

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure and Libraries) that detailed the work of the Museum of British Road Transport over the previous 12 months and the included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at meetings of the Trust Board. The Committee asked that a series of further questions be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for his response.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to the Museum of British Road Transport.**
- (2) That Officers be requested to forward the questions to the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure and Libraries) for his response.**

159. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – New Deal for Communities Partnership Board

The Committee considered a report of Councillor Foster that detailed the work of the New Deal for Communities Partnership Board over the previous 12 months and included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at meetings of the Board.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to the New Deal for Communities Partnership Board.

160. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – West Midlands Joint Committee

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) that detailed the work of the West Midlands Joint Committee over the previous 12 months and included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to the West Midlands Joint Committee.

161. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – Connexions Strategic Partnership Board

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) that detailed the work of the Connexions Strategic Partnership Board over the previous 12 months and included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at meetings of the Board.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to the Connexions Strategic Partnership Board.

162. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – Coventry School Admissions Forum

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) that detailed the work of the Coventry School Admissions Forum over the previous 12 months and included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at meetings of the organisation.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to the Coventry School Admissions Forum.

163. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – West Midlands Local Government Association Regional Planning Partnership

The Committee considered a report of the Cabinet Member (City Development) that detailed the work of the West Midlands Local Government Association Regional Planning Partnership over the previous 12 months and included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at the meetings of the Partnership.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to the West Midlands Local Government Association Regional Planning Partnership.

164. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – SureStart – North East

The Committee considered a report of Councillor Mrs. Dixon that detailed the work of SureStart North East over the previous 12 months and included attendance records for the City Council's nominees at meetings of the organisation.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-Ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to nominate to SureStart – North East.

165. Report Back on the Work of Outside Bodies – West Midlands Police Authority

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Cabinet Member (Finance, Procurement and Value for Money) that detailed the work of the West Midlands Police Authority over the previous 12 months and included attendance records and remuneration details for the nominee at meetings of the organisation. The Committee noted that this appointment was not made by the City Council but via the West Midlands Joint Committee.

166. Outstanding Issues

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested in order that Members could monitor progress.

167. Work Programme 2007/08

The Committee considered and noted the Work Programme for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee for the 2007/08 Municipal Year.

168. Other Business

There were no other items of public or private business.