

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 7 March 2017

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor L Bigham
Councillor F Abbott
Councillor K Caan
Councillor J Innes
Councillor A Khan
Councillor K Maton
Councillor J Mutton
Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor E Ruane

Non-Voting Deputy
Cabinet Members: Councillor R Ali
Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor P Seaman

Non-Voting Opposition
Members: Councillor J Blundell
Councillor G Crookes

Non-Voting Scrutiny
Chairs: Councillor Akhtar
Councillor McNicholas

Other Non-Voting
Members In Attendance: Councillor R Bailey
Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor G Williams

Employees (by Directorate):

Chief Executive M Reeves (Chief Executive), J Moynihan

People K Nelson (Director of Education), P Barnett, B Barrett, A Coles,
L Commane, J Essex, C Hickin, M McGinty

Place M Yardley (Executive Director), M Andrews, D Cockroft,
B Hastie, C Knight, H Lynch, L Nagle, M Salmon, R Sugars

Apologies: Councillor L Kelly
Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor C Thomas
Councillor D Welsh

Public Business

116. Declarations of Interest

Councillor R Lakha declared an other interest in the matter referred to in Minute 119 below, headed 'Connecting Communities – Phase 2 Outcome of Consultation'. He withdrew from the meeting during the consideration of this item.

Councillor R Lakha declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Councillors F Abbott and L Bigham declared an other interest, in the matters referred to in Minutes 127 and 131 below headed 'Workforce Reform'. They withdrew from the meeting during the consideration of these items.

117. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of Cabinet on 3rd and 24th January 2017 and 21st February 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

118. Exclusion of Press And Public

RESOLVED that the Cabinet agrees to exclude the press and public under Sections 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the private reports in minute 131 below headed 'Workforce Reforms' on the grounds that it refers to information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority and in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

119. Connecting Communities - Phase 2 Outcome of Consultation

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of People, that had also been considered by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 3rd March 2017 (their minute 64/16 referred), that provided an update on consultation feedback and the outcome of engagement with local communities to explore how services might be delivered differently in the future for Phase 2 of the Connecting Communities proposals. Phase 2 comprised two overarching proposals to reshape the way that support was delivered to children and young people aged 0 to 19 years and the provision of library services in the city.

Connecting Communities was an ambitious approach to redesigning services through collaboration with local communities. Phase 1 of Connecting Communities focused on ten specific proposals, all of which were on track to deliver the £1m savings target set for 2016/2017 and £1.2m ongoing.

Phase 2 of Connecting Communities focused on how services and support could be delivered differently in local communities with the greatest need, within the resources that were available. As a consequence of cuts, a target of £3.8m was set for this work. Across all phases of Connecting Communities a total of £5m savings must be achieved, in line with the total requirement set for the original City

Centre First programme, which had now been incorporated into the wider Connecting Communities change programme.

The grant Coventry received from central Government had reduced by 49% from 2010/2011 to 2017/2018 and by 2020 this was estimated to reduce further to a 55% reduction. Due to the increase in the city's population this equated to a 51% reduction per person from 2010/2011 to 2017/2018. The budget for the People Directorate was 70% of the Council's net budget and so the services provided by the People Directorate needed to contribute significantly towards those savings.

The scale of grant cuts meant the current way in which services were delivered was no longer sustainable. The financial position and the needs of residents needed to be balanced alongside making radical changes in the delivery of services. This meant working closely with residents and partners in new ways to maximise the total public funding that remained to support the most vulnerable in the city. Part of the Council's strategy was also to work with organisations that could draw upon resources that the Council cannot access and to enable this to happen as far as possible. The delivery of the savings programme detailed in the report contributed to the total savings required of £35m by 2017/2018.

Coventry's long-term strategy was to focus on avoiding crude cuts through closer partnership working with statutory and voluntary agencies, and communities. The Connecting Communities approach was to work with others to redesign services that could be delivered within the resources available, focusing on supporting those areas that were most in need. Connecting Communities was the overarching transformational change programme for the Council's People Directorate which delivered a wide range of key frontline services to Coventry residents and as such further phases were likely to be forthcoming at a later point.

In August 2016, Cabinet approved public consultation on two proposals (their minute 24/16 referred), with a number of key elements from 12 September 2016 to 12 December 2016.

A number of council services were included within the scope of Connecting Communities including libraries, children's centres, nurseries and the youth service. The list was by no means exhaustive and was expected to eventually comprise of all elements of People Directorate, and possibly wider service transformation to deliver broader savings targets.

The Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting on 3rd March 2017, and a briefing note setting out their recommendations was circulated at the meeting. The Committee recommended that the Cabinet agrees:

1. To Involve Ward Councillors in further discussions about the implementation of the proposals.
2. To provide Ward Councillors with mapping information so they can see how the proposed changes affect theirs and surrounding wards.

3. That no childcare or children's centre provision is closed without outreach services in place to support vulnerable families and ensure that there are no gaps in provision.
4. That before any umbrella organisation is considered for youth provision in the city, careful consideration is made as to how this would operate, the impact it would have and the potential cost of delivery.

The Cabinet also noted that petitions submitted as part of the Connecting Communities consultation had been considered by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on 28th February 2017 and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills on 6th March 2017 and a briefing note setting out their recommendations was circulated at the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People recommended that:

- i) Cabinet take account of the issues raised through the petitions, submitted as part of the Connecting Communities consultation on the 'Family Hubs' proposal, when considering the Connecting Communities report at their meeting on 7th March 2017.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills recommended that the Cabinet:

- i) Takes into account the issues raised through the petitions submitted as part of the Connecting Communities consultation on Library proposals when considering the Connecting Communities report at their meeting on 7th March, 2017.
- ii) Recognising the high level of community support and interest in maintaining libraries, recommends that the Cabinet considers using that level of support to campaign for increased Government funding.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1. Agrees to the additional recommendations from the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.**
- 2. Agrees to the additional recommendation from the Cabinet Member Children and Young People**
- 3. Agrees to the additional recommendations from the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.**
- 4. Notes that 10 petitions were considered by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in relation to the proposals, at their respective meetings on 28th February 2017 and 6th March 2017, and have been considered as part of the consultation process and outcomes.**
- 5. Notes the outcomes of the consultation and the resulting equality impacts and the updated Equality Consultation Analyses detailed in Appendix A to the report.**

6. Approves the implementation of the proposals detailed in Appendix B to the report:-

I - Family Hubs

- i. To develop eight integrated family hubs for 0 to 19 year olds from the current children's centres and youth services, located in areas of highest need, specifically at the following current children's centres: Bell Green, Foleshill, Tile Hill, Radford, Moat House (Wood End), Middle Ride (Willenhall), Gosford Park and Hillfields by September 2017.**
- ii. For the Council to end children's centre provision from the following six children's centres: Barley Lea (Stoke Aldermoor), Canley, St Augustine (Radford), Stoke Heath, Richard Lee (Wyken) and Spon Gate (Spon End) by September 2017.**
- iii. To end children's centre contracts with private, voluntary and independent providers at Tommies, Flutterbies and Valley House by May 2017.**
- iv. To end all Council directly provided term-time nursery provision in 9 children's centres (Foleshill, Tile Hill, Radford, Moat House (Wood End), Middle Ride, Bell Green, Barley Lea (Stoke Aldermoor), Canley and Stoke Heath) by September 2017.**
- v. To proceed to implementation of a new operational model for delivery of nursery provision by the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector, for two, three and four year olds in current children's centre buildings by September 2017.**
- vi. To retain Council delivery of a targeted and specialist youth offer focused on young people who are hardest to reach and most vulnerable as part of the family hub model.**
- vii. To end Council provided universal youth work provision in the following 16 locations: Youth Centres: African Caribbean Centre for Young People (Freehold Street, Hillfields), Hillfields Young People's Centre (Yardley Street, Hillfields), Jardine Crescent Young People's Centre, On Target Youth Centre (Doe Bank Lane, Spon End), People's Place (Acorn Street, Stoke Aldermoor), Stoke Park Youth Centre, Whoberley Youth Centre, Wood End Youth Centre (The Venny); and Community venues at Bell Green Community Centre, Cheylesmore Community Centre, Hagard Community Centre, Henley Green Community Centre, Jubilee Crescent Community Centre, Stoke Heath Community Centre, Xcel Leisure Centre (Canley) and Baginton Fields School by September 2017.**

- viii. To retain Hillfields Young People's Centre as a Children's Resource Centre and to retain On Target Youth Centre but further explore the transfer of this building to the voluntary youth sector.

II - Libraries

- i. To develop sustainable, modern and comprehensive libraries as community hubs in three broad categories: core libraries, partnership libraries and community libraries.
 - ii. To retain five core library services; Central Library, Bell Green, Foleshill, Stoke and Tile Hill with a reduced budget and increased self-service and volunteering opportunities as well as seeking to share space with partners wherever possible with the development of Stoke Library as a Library and Learning Centre as part of Connecting Communities.
 - iii. To retain Aldermoor library and Allesley Park as partnership libraries in their existing locations with reduced budgets by September 2017.
 - iv. To retain Canley library as a partnership library and continue developments to relocate to the Charter Primary School site as part of the existing children's centre space by September 2017.
 - v. To retain Hillfields as a partnership library and relocate to the WATCH building with a reduced budget from October 2017.
 - vi. To retain Jubilee Crescent library as a partnership library with a reduced budget by September 2017 and take forward plans to redevelop the site including library provision with a reduced budget.
 - vii. To work with community groups to enable the transition of Cheylesmore, Earlsdon and Finham libraries to become community-led by September 2017.
 - viii. To work with Caludon Castle School to enable the transition to a community-led library by September 2017.
 - ix. To defer and develop options for the future delivery of a library service in Coundon as part of Connecting Communities to be included in Phase 3 plans.
- 7. Approves the following recommendations for the Transition Fund:**
- i. The award of up to £20k to Cheylesmore Community Association limited to enable the transition to become a community-led library service.
 - ii. The award of up to £20k to WATCH Ltd to enable the delivery of a partnership library in Hillfields.

- iii. **The outline process for award of Transition Fund to enable further development of youth sector universal youth services, including identification of a lead voluntary sector organisation to provide infrastructure support for future provision (detailed in Appendix C to the report).**
 - iv. **To agree that future awards under the Transition Fund be approved by the Director of Finance and Corporate Services as S151 officer, following consultation with relevant Cabinet Members.**
8. **Delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, as appropriate, to approve subsequent variations to the proposals outlined in Appendix B to the report.**

120. **Education Travel Assistance - outcome of public consultation**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of People that detailed the findings from the public consultation and recommendations for the implementation of revised policies for Education Travel Assistance.

Coventry City Council had statutory responsibilities for travel assistance for eligible children and young people. However, it currently over-provided traditional forms of transport for children and young people compared to statutory duties and the provision made by other local authorities.

There were two key consequences of this. Some children and young people were missing out on the opportunity to develop independent travel skills. Independent travel skills gained in adolescence could be taken forward into adult life. There was also significant forecast overspend on the Council's Home to School Transport budget (2016/2017 forecast £3.6m spend against a £3.1m budget). Current policies and practice were not aligned with national statutory duties.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved a public consultation at his meeting on 10th November 2016 (his minute 3/16 referred). A public consultation took place from 21st November 2016 to 31st January 2017.

The report set out the findings from the public consultation and recommended the implementation of revised travel policies (attached as an appendix to the report). Where this led to travel assistance stopping for some children and young people, alternatives would be discussed with family, including particular consideration of independent travel as appropriate.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves:

1. **A revised Travel Assistance Policy (Statutory School Age Children) which aligns the statutory walking distance eligibility criteria to national levels and has a stronger focus on the Council's travel assistance on public transport and innovative travel options aimed at reducing dependence on minibus and taxi options as appropriate.**

- 2. A new Travel Assistance Policy for post 16 and post 19 students that fully reflects current statutory requirements. This policy includes a contributory charge towards the cost of travel assistance for all post-16 students whose families do not meet the criteria for low income household concessions.**

121. **Redesign of Internal Children's Residential Care Provision**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of People that sought approval of Children's Internal Residential Care Redesign to improve the quality of children's homes provided by the Council.

The Ofsted Inspection of Coventry's Children's Services published in March 2014 judged the three areas of 'Looked After Children', 'Leaving Care' and 'Adoption Performance' as requiring improvement. The Improvement Notice issued to Coventry City Council on 30th June 2014 included the requirement to address the areas of improvement identified by the inspection of services for children undertaken by Ofsted, including services for children looked after.

In response to the need to improve Children's Services in Coventry, The Children's Services Strategy 2016 – 2018 was developed, this set out a Vision for Children's Services and a detailed transformation programme that supported the improvement of Children's Services.

The improvement of these services sat within the context of a significant savings pressure for Children's Services with a requirement to achieve in excess of £4 million in 2017/2018, rising to in excess of £11 million from 2018/2019.

The Children's Services Transformation Programme converted the vision for the service into action that would ensure sustainable service improvement in Coventry. The programme comprised of eight discrete projects, largely falling under the two broad themes of workforce redesign and looked after children placements.

Children's Internal Residential Care Redesign was one of the eight projects and set out to improve the quality of children's homes provided by the Council, whilst realising revenue benefits. It was planned that the redesign of the service would reduce spend on external residential provision by creating additional internal capacity, utilising the existing resource tied up in the current provision. The proposal was to provide homes with additional capacity, higher levels of occupancy and improved quality of care that represented better value for money.

A stakeholder consultation process on the proposal, approved by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People at his meeting on 16th November 2016 (his minute 5/16 referred), took place between 1 December 2016 and 13 January 2017.

The report set out the primary business drivers for the reconfiguration of Gravel Hill and The Grange children's homes in Coventry into 4 smaller group homes which would present a more coherent, modern and suitable model of provision for

the future care of Coventry's children and young people who required a residential base for their time in care.

Both current homes would be de-commissioned and The Grange children's home sold, with a re-investment of the capital proceeds in the purchase of three new properties which would be registered with Ofsted as children's homes providing 12 residential placements in total. In addition, Gravel Hill would be subjected to a short phase of refurbishment and re-modelling so as to be re-opened as a new 4 bed home giving a total in-house provision of 16 beds.

The re-location of Coventry's children's homes presented the opportunity to adopt a new model of residential care which was modern, progressive and fit for the future.

Though this proposal has been formulated primarily to improve practice and outcomes for children living in residential care, it was nevertheless anticipated that financial benefits would accrue. These were currently estimated to be up to £879k per annum, derived from having a greater in-house capacity and a corresponding reduction in the number of external placements needing to be purchased.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet agrees:

- 1. The newly configured model for children's residential care outlined in the report.**
- 2. The sale of The Grange children's home and the re-investment of the capital proceeds into the purchase of three new homes which will be registered with Ofsted as four bed children's homes.**
- 3. The re-modelling and refurbishment of Gravel Hill children's home as one of the new homes, as a more cost-effective option for the council.**
- 4. The purchase of the three new homes using corporate capital resources pending capital receipt from disposal of The Grange.**

122. National Schools and High Needs Funding Formula Consultation Response

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Education, Libraries and Adult Learning, that was also being considered by Council on 14th March 2017, that set out the context and financial implications of proposed changes to funding for schools and the Council's proposed response to the consultations on the reformed funding formula.

In January 2016 the Department for Education (DfE) set out their intention to reform funding for schools and high needs through a consultation on the principles that should guide the funding for those two areas. In December 2016 the DfE launched a second stage consultation, which provided further detail, financial impact and timelines.

The report set out the context and financial implications of the proposed changes and proposed a response to the two consultations, attached as appendices to the report, to be submitted by the 22nd March 2017. The Schools Forum would also

make a response to the consultation and it was expected that individual schools and governing bodies would also make a response.

The dedicated schools grant (DSG) funded the majority of the education system, in 2016/2017 the total amount of grant for Coventry was £275M. This was spent across three blocks/areas: Early Years; Schools; and High Needs. The majority of the resource funded provision for children and pupils across the city, although approximately £10M supported Local Authority infrastructure and specialist support services provided to the education sector.

There was always a forecast that the Local Authority would lose resource as part of this reform. Prior to the introduction of the DSG, the funding was allocated using a formula as part of the Local Authority settlement funding assessment. The introduction of the DSG removed resource from Local Authority control and transferred it into a ring-fenced grant. Coventry had traditionally topped up the schools funding recognising education as a local policy priority. When monies were transferred into the DSG this was done at the level of spend, locking this additionality put in by Coventry into the national allocation system. This meant that money raised through council tax in Coventry, could be funding provision in other parts of England. So, although this sought to equalise school funding nationally, it reduced fairness within the overall system.

As part of the consultation, high level financial implications had been published which showed the financial impact of the funding reform. These show that in Coventry the schools block would lose £2.8M in 2018/2019 rising to £5.4M (2.4%) by 2019/2020, whereas the High Needs block would increase by approximately £0.9M in 2018/2019 rising to £1.8M (5%) by 2019/2020. Individual school funding allocations would be calculated using a national methodology, and the Authority would no longer be required to run its local funding formula after 2018/2019. The published information showed that all schools in Coventry would lose funding under the new formula with the exception of 4; most between -1.1% and -1.5% per pupil by 2018/2019 and -2.6% and -2.9% per pupil by 2019/2020.

The published financial implications did not show the impact past 2019/2020 for losing schools and local authorities. Only 54% of schools nationally will have reached their new formula allocation by 2019/2020. This was because the new schools funding formula included a funding floor of 3% so no school could lose more than 3% per pupil. Further decisions in relation to the operation of a funding floor would be subject to decisions made at future spending reviews. The financial implications for Coventry schools if there was no protection and the 3% funding floor was removed, would be in excess of a £11M reduction.

The published financial implications for the high needs block did show the impact past 2019/2020 for gaining local authorities. These indicated that Coventry would have a further £1.8M increase on the high needs block, but that this would also be subject to decisions at future spending reviews.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1. Encourages individual schools and governing bodies in Coventry to make a response to the consultation by sharing the City Council response.**

2. Recommends that Council approves the consultation response to the National Schools and High Needs funding formula consultations.

123. Proposed Modifications to the Coventry City Council Draft Local Plan and City Centre Area Action Plan

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place, that was also being considered by Council on 14th March 2017, detailing proposed modifications to the Coventry City Council Draft Local Plan and City Centre Area Action Plan.

The Coventry Draft Local Plan and City Centre Area Action Plan were submitted to the Secretary of State (SoS) on 1st April 2016. Following its submission, the SoS appointed an independent Inspector – Rebecca Phillips – to oversee the public examination of the Plans and their evidence base. The public examination hearing sessions took place between July 2016 and January 2017.

Following this examination process the Inspector had indicated that the Council should consult on proposed modifications in order to ensure both Plans could be considered ‘sound’ in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012). The majority of the proposed modifications were minor in their nature and none of them fundamentally affect either Plan or their overall objectives or direction. The vast majority of proposed changes reflected Action Points raised by the Inspector during the hearing sessions or consultation responses received during the statutory period of consultation in early 2016. Proposed modifications could only reflect changes to the Plan that made technical or factual corrections, responded to consultation responses or issues that had been raised during the examination process. For example:

- The introduction sections to both Plans are updated to reflect the movement of Plans from consultation stages to possible adoption;
- Although the most recent national data continues to show the city’s housing need is increasing this is offset by need across Warwickshire falling. As such, need at the Coventry and Warwickshire level remains stable with no significant change. This is explained within the proposed modifications;
- A review mechanism is added to the Plan should any issues arise with delivery of new development or a fundamental failing of either Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);
- A new Masterplan principles policy is added to guide new development proposals with a specific focus on sites at Whitley, Keresley and Eastern Green;
- The threshold for Health Impact Assessments increases to 150 dwellings and sites over 5ha. This reflects national legislation;
- References to Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), its supply chain and the Universities are strengthened to highlight their importance to the local economy;
- The list of proposed site allocations remains unchanged although some small adjustments to site boundaries are proposed at Keresley, Eastern Green, Cromwell Lane, London Road / Allard Way and the Browns Lane Nursery Site (Appendix 3);

- Infrastructure requirements and considerations for site allocations are strengthened and clarified – especially around highway improvements. This is also reflected in an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- The new Parish Council status at Finham is recognised;
- The threshold for retail impact assessments is increased to 1,000sq.m;
- Additional references are added to strengthen the protection of ecology and biodiversity value as well as overall green infrastructure;
- The management of Local Green Space is strengthened within Policy GB1. The boundaries for Local Green Space have also been slightly amended to reflect the presence of existing development and to correct historic cartographical errors. These are set out in Appendix 3;
- Policy GB2 is amended to reference ‘safeguarded land’ as opposed to ‘reserved land’. This relates to a small number of land parcels on the city’s southern boundary;
- Heritage policies are strengthened to reflect the city centre’s Heritage Action Zone status, with additional clarification added around the Heritage Park proposals;
- Additional clarity is added around transport infrastructure and the links to regional strategies such as Midlands Connect. Additional references are also added to strengthen the importance of public transport provisions and city wide connectivity;
- Flood risk, drainage and water resources policies have been strengthened in partnership with the Environment Agency. This reflects the most up to date national guidance;
- References to deculverting are increased with such proposals being encouraged where appropriate and viable;
- A new policy is to be added to cover non-mineral developments within mineral safeguarding areas. This will ensure consistency with national guidance; and
- Both monitoring frameworks have been updated to ensure appropriate indicators and targets are identified.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommends that the Council:

- 1. Approves the Proposed Modifications to the "Local Plan Publication Draft (2011-2031)" and the "City Centre Area Action Plan Publication Draft (2011-2031)".**
- 2. Authorises a period of statutory public consultation beginning on 15th March 2017 and ending on 28th April 2017.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Development, the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and the Chair of Planning Committee, to take full account of the responses received to the statutory period of public consultation, propose any further minor amendments to both Plans (where this is necessary to correct any errors and aid clarity) and submit the Plans back to the Secretary of State’s nominated Inspector for her final consideration.**

124. **Public Space Protection Order - City Centre**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place, that had also been considered by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 3rd March 2017 (their minute 63/16 referred), that sought the approval and implementation of a Public Space Protection Order for Coventry City Centre.

In order to ensure that the City Centre was an attractive destination for residents, shoppers and businesses, it was necessary to minimise any behaviours that may be detrimental to the quality of life in this locality and potentially deter people from visiting the City Centre.

A City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) would assist in this matter and simplify the response of officers from the Police and the Council in dealing with various anti-social activities. The order would recognise that some of those considered to be causing issues had their own vulnerabilities and would seek to offer support and assistance, rather than simply rely on enforcement.

Permission was granted to consult with the public and key partners and organisations. The report summarised the results of the consultation, set out the conditions of the PSPO that best suited what was needed for the City Centre and was reflective of the responses received from partners and the public.

The initial order as proposed had been left largely unchanged apart from two amendments. These related to begging, cycling and skateboarding. The amendments were made in response to the consultation.

The Cabinet noted that the report had been considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting on 3rd March 2017, and a briefing note setting out their recommendations was circulated at the meeting. The Committee recommended that the Cabinet:-

- i. Monitor levels of begging outside of the city centre to ensure there is no displacement effect of the PSPO.
- ii. As part of the redesign of city centre car parks, carefully consider the location of payment machines to discourage begging and improve safety.
- iii. Ensure a standard, multiagency procedure is offered when supporting vulnerable people with multiple complex needs, who may be begging or rough sleeping in the city centre.
- iv. Identify a clear and transparent way for members of the public to complain about anti-social activities that are covered by the PSPO.
- v. Support the development of a city centre skatepark and continue to work with partners to enable this to happen.
- vi. Develop a clear cycle plan for the city centre, so both cyclists and pedestrians are aware of suitable and appropriate cycle routes through the city centre.

Having considered the recommendations of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, Cabinet agreed that the matters in recommendations 1) – 4) above were already being pursued and also agreed to additional recommendations 3) and 4) below.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1. Approves the wording of the proposed Public Space Protection Order and the suggested area to be covered by the Order, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.**
- 2. Authorises officers to bring the order into effect at the earliest practicable date.**
- 3. Supports the consideration of a city centre skatepark and continue to work with partners to enable this to happen.**
- 4. Supports the further consideration of a clear cycle plan for the city centre, so that both cyclists and pedestrians are aware of suitable and appropriate cycle routes through the city centre.**

125. 2017/18 Transportation & Highway Maintenance Capital Programme

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place detailing an integrated capital programme for the maintenance and enhancement of the City's highways and transport infrastructure. All sources of funding for the programme had been considered including the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan, Corporate Capital Resources, Section 106 monies and other specific grants. This approach would ensure that opportunities for 'joining up' schemes to get the best value for money could be identified. A description of all Maintenance, Integrated Transport & Challenge Fund schemes, the breakdown of the Structural Maintenance Programme, the breakdown of the Road Maintenance Programme including verges, the proposed Safety Schemes Programme, the proposed Traffic Management Programme and the proposed Urban Traffic Management Control programme, were detailed in appendices to the report.

The basic principles for this year's maintenance and integrated transport programme were:

- i. Continue the programme of rectifying damage and maintaining the City's roads, through a prioritised programme based on road condition surveys.
- ii. Continue to invest in preventative/proactive maintenance.
- iii. Carry out packages of complementary schemes to support the continued growth of the city, such as road safety, traffic management schemes and Public Realm works, which where possible will be linked to maintenance projects to maximise savings and the efficiency of implementation.
- iv. Provide a programme of footway improvements funded from the Whitefriars Housing Group as part of a £3m investment which will be delivered over the next financial year.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves:

- 1. The 2017/2018 capital programme of schemes for maintenance and integrated transport as detailed in table 4 of the report; and,**
- 2. The schemes designated 'A' for construction in 2017/2018 as indicated in table 4 of the report, and delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for City Services to approve the schemes not designated 'A' in table 4 of the report.**

126. Coventry and Warwickshire Duplex Fund

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place, that was also being considered by Council on 14th March 2017, that sought approval for capital investment in the Coventry and Warwickshire Duplex Fund.

The Duplex Fund would provide a new type of financial product to small businesses that combined grants and loans. The net effect for the applicant was a loan at a very attractive rate. The fund would be managed by Coventry and Warwickshire Reinvestment Trust (CWRT), a local “community bank” that lent to businesses which struggled to access finance from banks. As loans to applicants were repaid, this would make cash available for new loans later in the lifetime of the fund. An important benefit of the proposal was that grant funding, which under normal circumstances would be used once, would form part of a ten-year programme of business support. The grant element of the funding would come from UK Government sources such as Growth Deal.

The Council proposed to offer CWRT a loan for up to £2m as its contribution towards the fund for supporting Coventry businesses. Warwickshire County Council were currently considering a proposal for a comparable investment in the fund to provide complete Coventry and Warwickshire coverage. Grant funding worth £5.4m would also be allocated, bringing total public investment in the fund to just under £10m. This would allow £20m in financial support to be offered to businesses as the fund recycled itself over a ten year period.

The Council’s investment would be protected by having a strong presence on the credit committee which would award funding from the scheme, setting an interest rate in the loan arrangement that reflected the risk, and by seeking appropriate security from CWRT. In addition, a business support fund like this could also be protected by a government-backed guarantee scheme.

Over the ten-year life of the fund, it aimed to:

- Provide £20m in financial assistance to Coventry and Warwickshire Businesses
- Create just over 1400 jobs
- Support over 360 small and medium businesses

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommend that the Council:

- 1. Agrees to capital investment of £2m in the Coventry and Warwickshire Duplex Fund in the form of a loan arrangement.**

2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director Place and the Section 151 Officer, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, to:

- **Negotiate the detailed terms of the loan arrangement and appropriate security, ensuring state aid compliance.**
- **Make such amendment and variations to the loan arrangement as is deemed necessary over the lifetime of the loan period subject to the overall capital investment not exceeding the sum of £2 million pounds.**

127. Workforce Reforms

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of People that provided an overview of the due diligence process that it was intended be followed as part of a programme of workforce reform to deliver our workforce strategy. The totality of the programme and reform would support City Council employees to be more confident and feel better equipped to deliver services for the people of Coventry. The programme would seek to deliver on the savings target of £5 million by 2019/2020 which was to be achieved by reducing employment costs in line with other public sector organisations.

This part of the workforce delivery programme included seeking to improve governance of employment costs, put in place fairer pay, recognition and reward systems and seek to adopt modern employment policies and practices.

Cabinet was not asked to make any decisions on the proposed reforms, which were non-executive functions, but to note the process that was to be followed leading up to decisions being made later in the year.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet notes the process that is to be followed in delivering the programme of workforce reform to deliver the Council's workforce strategy.

128. Outstanding Issues

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place that contained the list of outstanding issues and summarised the current position in respect of each item.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves the dates for future consideration of matters relating to the outstanding issues items listed in the report.

129. Council Tax Discretionary Scheme

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director of Place that sought approval for the Council to exercise discretion to reduce council tax liability for individuals or prescribed groups. The Council exercised discretion, in accordance

with section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, in respect of local council tax support and for ad hoc cases of extreme financial hardship.

The Council proposed to exercise its discretionary powers to award a 100 per cent Council Tax discount for Coventry care leavers between the ages of 18 and 21 residing in the city. The rationale for supporting care leavers in this way was to help them make an effective social and financial transition from Local Authority care and, ultimately, to help to improve the life chances of looked after children.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves the exercise of the Council's discretionary powers to award a 100 per cent Council Tax discount for Coventry care leavers between the ages of 18 and 21, residing in the city, based on the principles set out in the report.

130. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of public business.

131. **Workforce Reforms**

Further to Minute 127 above, the Cabinet considered a private report of the Executive Director of Place that set out confidential aspects of proposals for the programme of workforce reform to deliver the Council's workforce strategy.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet notes the process that is to be followed in delivering the programme of workforce reform to deliver the Council's workforce strategy.

132. **Any other items of private business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 3.35 pm)