

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.00 am on
Friday, 3 March 2017

Present:

Members: Councillor R Lancaster (Chair)
Councillor R Singh (Deputy Chair)
Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor D Gannon
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor R Singh
Councillor K Taylor (substitute for Councillor J Blundell)

Cabinet Member and
Deputy Cabinet Members: Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor Ruane
Councillor Seaman

Employees (by Directorate):

P Barnett, People Directorate
J Brooks, People Directorate
C Hickin, People Directorate
G Holmes, Resources Directorate
P Longden, People Directorate
M McGinty, People Directorate
L Nagle, People Directorate

Invited: B Harper – Coventry Older Voices
D Walmsley – Coventry Skatepark Project

Apologies: Councillor J Blundell
Councillor G Crookes
Councillor L Kelly

Public Business

61. Declarations of Interest

In relation to Minute 65 below relating to “Connecting Communities Phase 1” the Committee noted that Councillors Lancaster and Clifford had links to an organisation that was involved in Connecting Communities Phase 1.

62. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th February, 2017 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

63. **Creation of a City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order**

The Committee considered a report of Executive Director for Place which contained a proposal to be considered by Cabinet on 7th March, 2017 regarding the creation of a City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO).

The report proposed that in order to ensure that the City Centre was an attractive destination for residents, shoppers and businesses, Coventry needed 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 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.

The report summarised the results of the consultation, set out conditions of the PSPO that was proposed would best suit 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 Committee heard contributions from Councillor P Akhtar the Deputy Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, officers and members of the public representing Coventry Skatepark Project and Coventry Older Voices. The perception of danger and fear in a pedestrianised area was recognised as a problem and those present were keen to find solutions to this through intergenerational dialogue and consideration of suitable facilities which would benefit the community. The Coventry Skatepark Project video available on the internet referred to during the discussion would be circulated to Members.

The Committee questioned those present on the following:

- Police support for the PSPO, enforcement and fines
- Displacement of activity to areas outside of the city centre as a result of the order
- Whether prostitution and curb-crawling could be addressed via a PSPO
- Flexibility and discretion in implementing the PSPO, especially regarding buskers and performers in the city centre.
- Current powers regarding prohibiting cycling in the city centre
- The issue of encouraging more people to cycle, but also wanting to restrict dangerous cycling.
- Support to vulnerable people who are begging as well as enforcing the PSPO
- Code of conduct for charity subscription collectors to ensure they don't target vulnerable people
- How evidence to support extending or enhancing the PSPO can be gathered and how members of the public and the Council can do this.
- Other Local Authorities with PSPO's

- Use of CCTV footage
- Damage to property

RESOLVED that

- 1) **The Committee requested that a further report be presented in 12 months' time to review progress.**
- 2) **Cabinet be recommended to consider:**
 - i. **Monitoring 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, to carefully consider the location of payment machines, to discourage begging and improve safety.**
 - iii. **To 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. **To identify a clear and transparent way for members of the public to complain about anti-social activities that are covered by the PSPO.**
 - v. **To support the development of a city centre skatepark and continue to work with partners to enable this to happen.**
 - vi. **To 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.**

64. Connecting Communities Phase 2

Further to Minute 34/16 the Committee considered a report of the Executive Director for People regarding Connecting Communities Phase 2. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee had requested the outcome of consultation prior to consideration at Cabinet, which was due to take place on 7th March, 2017.

The report noted that the grant Coventry received from central Government had reduced by 49% from 2010/11 to 2017/18 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 2010/11 to 2017/18. 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.

Connecting Communities was recognised as an ambitious approach to redesigning services through collaboration with local communities. Phase 1 of Connecting Communities focused on ten specific proposals. These proposals were on track to deliver the £1m savings target set for 2016/17 and £1.2m ongoing.

The report noted that 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.

Phase 2 comprised of 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.

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 must 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 described in this report contributed to the total savings required of £35m by 2017/18.

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, with a number of key elements from 12 September 2016 to 12 December 2016 (their minute 24/16 refers). This report 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.

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 not 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 Member and Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People discussed the need for new ideas and working with the voluntary sector and communities to find positive solutions.

Officers representing Involvement and Partnerships, Children's Services, Youth Services and the Library Service presented to the Committee regarding emerging messages, positive responses and concerns, the proposal and the position after consultation.

The Committee questioned officers on the following:

- Physical space to deliver the services from Family Hubs and what the hub and spoke model would look like

- Support for community organisations who would be involved in delivering library services, especially in terms of financial viability
- Contingency if community and voluntary organisations were unable to continue, both in partnership and community library models
- That more emphasis on the grant reductions should be made to explain the reasons for the changes.
- Support for vulnerable families in areas where Children's Centre services were being withdrawn and packages of support for the transition to the Family Hub model, particularly for those families who were going to have to travel further.
- Details on reduction of posts and whether these would be voluntary or compulsory redundancies.
- Involving Ward Councillors in changes and a map which visually highlights changes within wards
- Further detail regarding the umbrella organisation idea within the new youth provision
- Phase 3

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend Cabinet consider:

- 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.**

65. Connecting Communities Phase 1 - Implementation Report

Further to minute 34/16 the Committee considered a briefing note that they had requested on the outcomes and achievements of Connecting Communities Phase 1. The consultation process on these Phase 1 proposals commenced on 7th December 2015 and ended on 1st February 2016.

The report noted that all proposals were on track to deliver the £1.2m savings target associated with Connecting Communities (Phase 1). Appended to the report were an outline of delivery progress to date for each proposal following approval from Cabinet in February 2016. An update on any Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECA) impact was also provided.

Learning from Connecting Communities Phase 1 implementation had informed Connecting Communities Phase 2 proposals, particularly in relation to ensuring that sufficient time was allowed for implementation of any proposed changes.

Ongoing communication was required between all parties to embed the changes that result from a different way of delivering services.

Initial Equality Consultation Analysis (ECA) documents were produced prior to the start of the Phase 1 consultation process. Each proposal would be reviewed and updated 6-12 months after the relevant implementation dates to reflect any additional information received about the potential impact of the proposals; specifically on those groups of people with protected characteristics.

RESOLVED that Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee noted the Phase 1 implementation and request a report back at an appropriate time with comments from partner organisations.

66. Civic Visit to Volgograd, 29th October to 2nd November, 2016

The Committee considered a report of the Lord Mayor, Councillor L Harvard concerning his visit to Volgograd, Russia from 29th October, 2016 to 2nd November, 2016 for the attendance at “Volgograd International People’s Diplomacy Forum: Dialogue Upon the Volga: Peace and Mutual Understanding in the 21st Century”.

The report detailed costs and benefits of attendance.

RESOLVED that the visit to Volgograd be endorsed.

67. Outstanding Issues

The Committee received and noted a report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator which outlined the approach to be taken on progress, outcomes and responses to recommendations and actions made by the committee.

68. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2016/2017

The Committee considered their work programme for the current municipal year.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted and updated to include a report back on the Public Space Protection Order (minute 63 refers) and Connecting Communities Phase 1 (minute 65 refers).

69. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no additional items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.15 pm)