

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Community Development held at
10.30 am on Tuesday, 30 January 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Leader)
 Councillor R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)
 Councillor C Thomas (Deputy Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

People: K Lees, J Harrison, J Mann, H Shankster

Place: M Andrews, R Haigh, A Millar, T Miller, R Moon, R Parkes,
 U Patel, A Walimia

In attendance: Isabelle Osbourne (Manager, Coventry & District Credit
 Union)

Apologies: Councillor L Bigham

Public Business

46. Statement by the Leader of the Council - Councillor Duggins

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Duggins, made the following statement:

“In accordance with the Constitution, I have informed the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that on those occasions when Councillor Bigham is unable to act as the Cabinet Member for Community Development, I will be undertaking any necessary action required in relation to the Community Development Portfolio, including Charing this meeting”.

47. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

48. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

49. Foleshill Community Centre Update

The Leader considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which provided an update on the expressions of interest exercise which was conducted July/August 2017.

Foleshill Community Centre (“the Centre”) has been owned by the Council since 1948/1949 and the Council had managed the Centre remotely since April 2015. In

March 2017, approval was given to seek expressions of interest from community organisations to run the Centre for the benefit of the whole community after securing vacant possession.

In August 2017, community groups were invited to submit 'expressions' of interest' by filling out a form online. There were 29 initial enquiries, 26 organisations made appointments to view the centre and a total 13 organisations submitted online forms for the first part of the exercise. This included producing information on their proposals, previous experience, financial plan and any other information they wished to include.

Six organisations were invited to an interview where their online submission was discussed and considered further. During this stage, organisations had the opportunity to produce details of their proposals and further demonstrate how they plan to run and manage the centre.

The six organisations were subsequently scored on their interview and of the six, two were invited for a second interview. The interview required them to demonstrate that they would be able to manage the Centre appropriately without the need of any further assistance, had a sound financial plan, and that the whole community within Foleshill and beyond were able to use the centre at all reasonable times. The interview panel was made up of councillors and officers.

Unfortunately, the panel were unable to appoint an organisation following the two interviews.

The report sought approval to invite community groups once again to express their interest to run and manage Foleshill Community Centre. It was vital to appoint the right organisation for the benefit of all residents and the whole of Foleshill Community. The main criteria for the organisation would be to demonstrate a sound financial plan, previous building management experience and the proposal must include the facility to include all members of the community, regardless of age, sex, religion and socio-economic backgrounds.

RESOLVED that the Leader:

- 1. Authorises officers from the Place Directorate to seek expressions of interest in the building.**
- 2. Requests officers to report back on the results of the above exercise and conducting interviews in consultation with Cabinet Member for Community Development, Foleshill Ward Members and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources.**

50. Coventry and District Credit Union - Grant Aid Agreement Year 3 Progress Report

The Leader considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) which provided a progress report on year 3 of the Grant Aid Agreement made to the Coventry and District Credit Union.

Coventry and District Credit Union (CDCU) Limited signed a 3 year Grant Aid Agreement with Coventry City Council on 15th September 2014. The purpose of the grant was to support and enhance the provision of credit union services to Coventry residents. The period of grant aid agreement had now come to an end and grant had ceased.

The Council supported CDCU to provide a sustainable and effective alternative to the high interest borrowing typical of pay day loan companies. More generally credit unions provided an ethical and community-based approach to personal finance which, it was hoped, would benefit residents and the city over the longer term.

The objective of the three year grant was to enable CDCU to build their business and loan book in order to generate increased revenue, thus facilitating long term sustainability. This grant enabled CDCU to operate in an office at 144 Walsgrave Road, Coventry, Prior to this the credit union did not have a commercial property from which to operate.

Following the conclusion of the Council grant, CDCU have returned to operating a more community based service and have relocated to Holbrooks.

The manager of the CDCU attended the meeting and reported that the projection for this year showed that they would break even. She stated that the nature of the scheme meant that their success was dependent on clients being able to repay their loan in a timely manner. In addition, changes introduced by the Financial Conduct Authority had resulted in depleted reserves. She stated that the transition back into the community was inevitable to cut costs and said that a transitional grant of £5000 would help enormously with purchasing basic equipment which would free up valuable officer time. The Leader requested officers to explore the feasibility of a £5000 transitional grant.

RESOLVED that the Leader endorses the progress made by Coventry and District Credit Union Limited during the third year of the Grant Aid Agreement.

51. **Community Capacity and Resilience**

The Leader of the Council considered a report of the Acting Director of Public Health which provided information on the proposal to establish a Community Capacity and Resilience Grant.

Coventry City Council's long term strategy was to increase collaboration with voluntary and community organisations to tackle complex issues, deliver services differently and achieve better outcomes. The Council was working to enable Coventry people to take positive action with their communities, especially by providing informal support to protect those who are most vulnerable from falling into crisis and to improve their wellbeing. Existing programmes led by the Council and partner organisation were seeking to empower communities to increase their own capacity and resilience in challenging times.

A key barrier to achieving this was the financial viability and long-term sustainability of community and voluntary organisations. Although many do

excellent and impactful work, they often lack the skills and experience needed to operate sustainably, or to grow and increase their reach. Cash grants from public bodies over many years had resulted in these organisations becoming financially dependent on Coventry City Council, a practice which was never sustainable and was no longer affordable.

This paper outlines proposals to increase the viability and long-term sustainability of such organisations through the creation of a grant fund specifically targeted at growing the skills for business development. The grant funds would not be used to pay for overheads or day-to-day operating costs of voluntary and community organisations, but to increase their potential to self-fund in future.

The money for this grant would come from an existing budget line. The proposal outlined in the report was a pilot and would run for one year. After that time it would be reconsidered historically alongside other voluntary and community sector grants as part of future annual budget setting.

RESOLVED that the Leader:

- 1. Approves the proposal made in the report (option 4) for the creation of the Community Capacity and Resilience Grant administered by the Council.**
- 2. Grants delegated authority to the Insight Manager (Engagement) to administer the grant funds over one year (totalling £103,000).**
- 3. Approves quarterly informal updates to be made to the Cabinet Member for Community Development from the Insight Manager (Engagement) on the activity and impact of the grant.**

52. DRAFT Urban Extensions Draft Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Leader of the Council considered a report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which outlined the Draft Urban Extensions Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SDP) which provided draft technical guidance that support the newly adopted Local Plan.

This SPD was intended to provide technical guidance and support to the relevant policies within the new Local Plan that related directly to the Allocated Urban Extensions at Keresley and Eastern Green. For the avoidance of doubt, this primarily related to Policies DS4 and H2. The Design Guidance could also be applied to other site allocations within Policy H2, especially those situated within the wider Arden Landscape. The Local Plan provides the framework for determining planning applications across Coventry following its adoption on the 6th December 2017. This SPD was developed in partnership with various Council departments, including Highways, Drainage and Public Health and was intended to support all infrastructure and design matters going forward.

The SPD was structured to provide specific design guidance around key areas of development. This primarily included new homes, but also related to employment

provision and community/commercial buildings. The design guidance also covered green infrastructure, highways and parking provisions.

Alongside the SPD a specific appendix was being issued to provide a high level, Indicative Masterplan for the Keresley Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE). This reflected the fact that this SUE was split across multiple land ownerships and numerous development phases. The Indicative Masterplan was reflective of the original shortlisted development plots in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2016) and the discussions that were held around this at the Local Plan examinations. It was intended to help site promoters and developers link these respective phases through design, access and infrastructure. It also highlighted key infrastructure features including the green corridor, protected ancient woodlands and a high-level interpretation of the link road.

RESOLVED that the Leader approves an initial round of consultation on the DRAFT Urban Extensions Design Guidance SPD. The consultation was proposed to run for a 6 week period between Monday 12 February 2018 to Monday 26 March 2018.

53. **DRAFT Coventry Connected Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

The Leader of the Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which detailed the Draft Coventry Connected Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which provided draft technical guidance that supports the newly adopted Local Plan.

This SPD was intended to provide technical guidance and support to the Accessibility policies set out in Chapter 10 of the new Local Plan. The Local Plan provided the framework for determining planning applications across Coventry following its adoption on 6th December 2017. This SPD had been developed in partnership between the Council's Planning and Highways functions and was intended to support ongoing joint working on all matters of transport considerations through the Planning process.

The SPD was structured to cover each of the Accessibility policies in turn (Policy AC1-AC7). This covered supporting technical detail around matters of:

- Transport Assessments
- Travel Plans (including Green Travel Plans)
- Highway impacts
- Promotion of walking, cycling and public transport (including Rapid Transit and rail improvements)
- Assessment of freight suitability

Alongside the SPD the Parking Standards Appendix to the Local Plan was being re-issued with 2 minor amendments. The changes reflect points of clarification around parking standards for HiMO's and purpose built student accommodation.

RESOLVED that the Leader:

- 1. Approves an initial round of consultation on the draft Coventry Connected SPD. The consultation is proposed to run for a 6 week period between 12 February 2018 and Monday 26 March 2018.**
- 2. Notes the updated Local Plan Appendix covering parking standards.**

54. Health Impact Assessments Supplementary Planning Document

The Leader of the Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which outlined the Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Department which provided draft technical guidance that supported the newly adopted Local Plan.

Following a period of public examination of the Coventry Local Plan and the issuing of the Inspector's report in November 2017, the Coventry Local Plan was adopted by Council 5 December 2017. The Coventry Local Plan became the basis for determining planning applications from 6 December 2017.

The Coventry Local Plan included policy HW1, which stated that "*All major development proposals will be required to demonstrate that they would have an acceptable impact on health and wellbeing...*" and that *..."All Health Impact Assessments shall be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document...."*

This SPD was intended to provide technical guidance and support to Policy HW1 of the new Local Plan and the delivery of Health Impact Assessments, This would help deliver one of the overall objectives of the Plan which was to help improve the health and wellbeing of Coventry people.

The Health Impact Assessment Supplementary Planning Document and the accompanying appendices were attached as Appendix A(i) of the report.

RESOLVED that the Leader approves an initial round of consultation on the draft Health Impact Assessment SPD. The consultation is proposed to run for a 6 week period from Monday 12 February 2018 and Monday 26th March 2018.

55. Willenhall Neighbourhood Plan - Examiners Report and Referendum

The Leader of the Council considered a report of the Director of Street Scene and Regulatory Services (Place) which provided information on the Willenhall Neighbourhood Plan – Examiners Report and Referendum.

The 2011 Localism Act introduced a right for communities to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan which was supported through national regulatory control. This provided an opportunity for local communities to get more actively involved in planning in their areas. Local Planning Authorities were expected to play a positive role in facilitating and supporting this process.

In July 2017, the Willenhall Neighbourhood Planning Forum submitted their Neighbourhood Plan to the City Council. In addition, they submitted a suite of other documents which included the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Assessment.

Neighbourhood Development Plans must also be examined by a suitably qualified independent person, appointed by the Council and agreed by the qualifying body (Willenhall Neighbourhood Planning Forum). Neighbourhood Plans must also pass a referendum of local voters by a simple majority. If a Plan passes referendum, the Council must adopt it, unless it breaches EU obligations or human rights legislation. Work was currently being developed to organise the referendum with the Council's electoral services team and was scheduled to take place on 3rd May 2018 at the same time as Council local elections.

The Willenhall Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Report was received by the Council and was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 2 of the report sets out a Decision Statement which included the Council's proposed response to the Examiner's recommended modifications. The report sought approval to agree to the Examiner's recommendation to enable the Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to a referendum.

RESOLVED that the Leader:

- 1. Notes the Examiners Report and agrees the recommended modifications to the Willenhall Neighbourhood Plan (Appendix 1);**
- 2. Agrees the Willenhall Neighbourhood Plan as modified by recommendation 1 (above) and endorses it to proceed to a local referendum; and**
- 3. Approves the Decision Statement attached at Appendix 2 to be published on the Council's website.**

56. Outstanding Issues Report

The Leader noted a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding so that progress could be monitored.

RESOLVED that with regards to the items listed below, officers be requested to provide an update as to progress and if need be the items be removed from the outstanding issues report:

- 1. Coventry Homefinder – customer survey**
- 2. 12 Month Progress Report following the opening of the Priory Visitor Centre.**

57. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.15 am)