

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 15 October 2019

Present:

Members: Councillor L Bigham (Chair)

Councillor F Abbott	Councillor M Lapsa
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor M Ali	Councillor A Lucas
Councillor R Ali	Councillor P Male
Councillor A Andrews	Councillor K Maton
Councillor R Auluck	Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor R Bailey	Councillor C Miks
Councillor J Birdi	Councillor J Mutton
Councillor J Blundell	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor R Brown	Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor K Caan	Councillor G Ridley
Councillor J Clifford	Councillor K Sandhu
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor L Harvard	Councillor P Seaman
Councillor M Heaven	Councillor B Singh
Councillor P Hetherton	Councillor R Singh
Councillor T Jandu	Councillor D Skinner
Councillor L Kelly	Councillor R Thay
Councillor T Khan	Councillor C Thomas
Councillor AS Khan	Councillor S Walsh
Councillor R Lakha	Councillor G Williams
Councillor R Lancaster	

Honorary Alderman: H Fitzpatrick, K Taylor and J Wright

Apologies: Councillor S Bains, B Gittins, J Innes, B Kaur, T Mayer, E Ruane, H Sweet and D Welsh

Public Business

46. Minutes of the Extraordinary and Ordinary Meetings of Council held on 3 September 2019

The minutes of the Extraordinary and Ordinary meetings held on 3 September 2019 were signed as a true record.

47. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the private report on 'B&M Stores, Ansty Road, Walsgrave, Coventry – Investment Acquisition' (Minute 67 below refers), on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of information defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and that in all of the

circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

48. **Return of Councillor Mattie Heaven, elected as Councillor for Wainbody Ward in the City, on 5 September 2019**

The City Council noted that Councillor Mattie Heaven was returned as the elected member for Wainbody Ward in the City on 5 September 2019.

49. **Coventry Good Citizen Award**

On behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor presented Melanie Griffin with the Good Citizen Award. Her citation read:

“Over the years Melanie has worked tirelessly, balancing the demands of a young family while also volunteering for SOBS (Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide), she is part of a dedicated team who offer support to residents of Coventry whose lives have been affected by suicide. Melanie offers her time by holding a support group with the aim to provide a safe, confidential environment within which the bereaved can share their experiences and feelings, giving and gaining support from one other. In addition, she also uses various social media platforms to reach out to people and provide solace.

Melanie also works for Papyrus (Prevention of Young Suicide) and uses this position to engage with the vulnerable young people of Coventry and where possible signposting them to attend at her support meetings.

Additionally, to increase awareness and raise funds for the charity, Melanie partners up with local business to arrange bake sales, bag packs and the running of a suicide awareness day in local parks. With surplus monies donated to SOBS Melanie has created a small library of educational leaflets and books that survivors can borrow and return for continued work at home. She involves her family with her fundraising activities and has so far raised £8,500 to go towards Young Minds Mental Health charity with Coventry.

The work that Melanie does to help the bereaved within Coventry is fundamental to their recovery and she has assisted so many in their hours, months and often years of need. Her actions truly reflect her character and she is a worthy recipient of this Coventry Good Citizen Award.”

50. **Correspondence and Announcements of the Lord Mayor**

(a) Dennis Davison

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Dennis Davison. Dennis was one of Coventry’s treasures as a D-Day veteran, he was the founder of the national charity Normandy Day UK and one of his legacies was the creation of the Coventry Peace Orchard.

Members noted that a letter conveying the City Council’s sincerest condolences had been sent to Dennis’s family.

(b) City of Volgograd

The Council noted that the Lord Mayor and Councillor Abdul Khan would be travelling to the City of Volgograd at the end of the month to their Annual International Peace Forum and attend events to mark the 75th anniversary of our friendship links.

As part of the celebrations, on behalf of the City Council and, with Council's agreement, the Lord Mayor moved the following Motion without Notice which was seconded by Councillor A S Khan:

"The friendship between Coventry and Volgograd was cemented as a result of both cities experiencing the devastation of the Second World War.

In 1942 Volgograd, formerly Stalingrad, was reduced to rubble when it was subjected to one of the largest and bloodiest battles in the history of warfare. Women from Coventry sent messages of hope to the women of Stalingrad having experienced the Coventry Blitz just a few years earlier.

On the 75th Anniversary of Friendship and Twinning it is:

RESOLVED unanimously that the Council extends to the City of Volgograd a message of peace and wishes to reaffirm its commitment for the future as we continue to work towards a more peaceful world. It is inspiring to think that a bond formed through hardship and at a time when friendship was not the first reaction of many, is still so strong 75 years later – and that it enriches so many lives.

Thank You to the City of Volgograd for everything you have done for Coventry over the past 75 years and we look forward to continuing our long, historic and significant relationship for many more years."

(c) National Democracy Week

Members noted that as it was National Democracy Week, the City Council were hosting a series of events aimed at encouraging democratic engagement, especially amongst younger people. The Lord Mayor welcomed the students in the public gallery who were observing the meeting.

51. **Petitions**

RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate City Council bodies:

- (a) **Request the Council seek ways to reduce irresponsible parking in Stonehouse Land and Sedgemoor Road – 34 signatures, presented by Councillor R Ali.**

- (b) Request residents parking scheme in Kings Grove, Coventry – 18 signatures, presented by Councillor C Miks.
- (c) Opposing the Coundon Academy School’s opening of the entrance on Hollyfast Road, opposite the Norman Place Road junction – 53 signatures, presented by Councillor G Williams.
- (d) Request that any major development planning application must be resolved in an open public session – 10 signatures, presented by Councillor G Williams
- (e) “Stop the Kings Hill Access Road”: objection to planning application for roundabout in Green Lane – 910 signatures, presented by Councillor M Heaven.

52. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

53. **Greenspace Strategy April 2019 - March 2024**

Further to Minute 36 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which set out the Greenspace Strategy for 2019 to 2024.

The importance of Local Authorities developing a strategy for greenspaces was well recognised and key to ensuring that parks and greenspaces continue to meet transforming needs and demands placed on them, such as social and economic changes and that they keep providing value and benefit to diverse communities into the future.

The City Council’s second Greenspace Strategy terminated on the 31st March 2018 after a period of ten years during which it delivered a number of significant achievements. A new greenspace strategy had now been developed, building on the foundations set by the previous strategy and its successes, setting the scene for the management and development of the City’s parks and open spaces for the next 5 years.

The strategy had been developed through a number of defined stages which included a review of national and local policies influencing green provision, an assessment of greenspace quality, quantity and accessibility within the City, stakeholder consultation of the review of findings, analysis and evaluation.

A number of recommendations were presented which sought to improve the safety, use and access of greenspace, addressed deficiencies in both the quantity and the quality of greenspace, developed partner engagement and income regeneration and contribute positively to increased biodiversity.

From these recommendations, a five-year action plan had been produced which would enable the identification of priorities and progress on the implementation and delivery of the strategy to be monitored and tracked.

The draft strategy had been considered by the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) and it had made recommendations. The Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities had reviewed and accepted these recommendations and

they had had been incorporated into the strategy that was now submitted for adoption.

RESOLVED that the City Council:

- 1. Note that the draft Greenspace Strategy had been considered by the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) and the Board's recommendations had been approved by the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities and incorporated into the draft strategy document.**
- 2. Approve the adoption of Coventry Greenspace Strategy 2019-2024.**
- 3. Approve the Coventry Greenspace Strategy 5-year Action Plan**
- 4. Delegate authority to the Head of Streetpride and Greenspaces to deliver the actions identified in the strategy.**

54. UK Battery Industrialisation Centre - Loan from WMCA

Further to Minute 37 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which detailed a loan from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) in relation to the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC).

The report indicated that more car manufacturers were announcing their intention to move towards building electric cars and the demand for batteries would increase sharply over the next ten to twenty years. Currently, expertise in battery development was concentrated in Asia, Germany and the United States and the UK was lagging behind.

The UK Government announced the Faraday Challenge, part of the Industrial Strategy Fund, during the summer 2017. It aimed to fund battery research and development work to ensure that the demand for batteries leads to the creation of jobs here in the UK rather than overseas in battery manufacturing. One of the strands of the Faraday Challenge aimed to bridge the gap between battery research in universities and large-scale battery production by car manufacturers.

In November 2017, as part of a national competition £80m of Faraday Challenge funding was awarded to the consortium of Coventry City Council, Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG), University of Warwick to develop a manufacturing scale-up facility in the West Midlands region. The funding was awarded through an open competition run by the Advanced Propulsion Centre (APC) and Innovate UK.

This funding award was approved by Cabinet and Council in November 2017 with the authorisation to accept £80m of Faraday Challenge funding and up to £40m of local match funding, which at the time formed part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Devolution Deal 2 bid to central Government. Since then the Devolution Deal 2 has not materialised the project has been looking to secure other sources of local match funding.

Earlier this year the project scope was enhanced in response to industry demand and the full cost rose to £126m. In response, Innovate UK awarded an additional £28m through the Faraday Challenge on the condition that a newly revised local contribution of £18m was found to match the Faraday Challenge grant investment.

The UKBIC Partnership (CWLEP, WMG and Coventry City Council) has managed to secure the £18m from the WMCA in the form of a repayable grant. This funding will be secured against UKBIC assets and repaid using UKBIC Ltd surpluses over time. The funding will be of no cost to the Council.

The UKBIC programme was part-way through development and progressing well. The programme was due for completion in March 2020 when the UKBIC facility would open for business.

RESOLVED that the City Council:

- 1) Authorise the Council to act as Accountable Body and accept the £18m contribution from the WMCA as a repayable grant and to make the necessary adjustment to the Capital Programme.**
- 2) Delegate authority to the Director of Business Investment and Culture, the Finance Manager (Corporate Resources) and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate the terms and conditions of the funding agreement with the WMCA and also enter into the necessary agreement.**
- 3) Delegate authority to the Director of Business Investment and Culture and the Finance Manager (Corporate Resources) following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources (in the event that the legal documentation are not completed before the end of October) to commit the necessary agreed funding in recommendation 1 above up to a value of £5m for the delivery of the Project.**
- 4) Delegate authority to the Director of Business Investment and Culture, the Finance Manager (Corporate Resources) and the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to finalise the terms of the transfer of the funding to UKBIC and the repayment mechanism back to the Council.**

55. B&M Stores, Ansty Road, Walsgrave, Coventry - Investment Acquisition

Further to Minute 38 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which set out proposals for the investment acquisition of Band M Stores, Ansty Road, Walsgrave, Coventry.

A corresponding private report was also submitted to the meeting setting out the commercially confidential matters of the proposals. (Minute 62 below refers).

The Council was committed to investing capital receipts in order to increase revenue income, supporting services it seeks to deliver. An opportunity had been presented to the Council to acquire property to create income.

The property comprises a purpose built A1 (non-food) stand alone, first generation former Focus DIY / Homebase Store retail warehouse unit. The property provided approximately 2907 sqm (31,300 sqft) of internal accommodation, much of the accommodation being on the ground floor providing the trading space, with a small area of accommodation at first floor. The total site extends to 2.28 acres

The property was currently let to B&M Retail Limited for a term of 15 years from 8th December 2014, expiring on 7th December 2029 leaving an unexpired term of just over 10 years.

The report indicated that the Council already owned just under 50% of the site which was let out on two ground leases generating a total of six pence per annum. The opportunity is to acquire the Freehold land adjacent and benefit from the income generated from the occupational lease to B&M Stores.

RESOLVED that the City Council approve the necessary adjustment to the Capital programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of the Ansty Road interest.

56. **Coventry Award of Merit**

Further to Minute 16 of the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which set out details of a nomination for the Coventry Award of Merit.

The Coventry Award of Merit was established by the City Council in the 1960's as a means of acknowledging and honouring personal behaviour reflecting the highest ideals of citizenship or outstanding performance in any field of human endeavour which enhances the good name of Coventry and affords inspiration to its citizens.

The report indicated that a nomination had been received for the City of Volgograd to receive the Award of Merit. The Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities Award of Merit Advisory Panel had considered the nomination and had supported it unanimously. The Advisory Panel noted that, whilst a City has never been granted the Award before, the long, historic and significant relationship between the two Cities totally captures the spirit of the award. This relationship enhances Coventry's renowned reputation as the City of peace and reconciliation.

The City of Volgograd has been twinned with Coventry for 75 years and, as one of the original United Nations 'International Peace Messenger Cities', continues to work hard to promote peace and understanding between nations.

RESOLVED that City Council grants the Coventry Award of Merit to the City of Volgograd.

57. **Appointments of the City Council**

The City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive, Place, which sought to:

- (a) Amend appointments to outside bodies and Council bodies made at the Annual Meeting of the City Council in May 2019 following the death of Councillor Gary Crookes and the subsequent election of Councillor M Heaven as a Wainbody Ward Councillor
- (b) A change to the appointment of the City Council's representative on the Birmingham Airport Consultative Committee

RESOLVED that the City Council:

- 1. Approves the following appointments to outside bodies in place of the late Councillor G Crookes:**
 - i) Councillor T Jandu as the City Council nominee as a Trustee on the Coventry General Charities Trustees for the remainder of the 4-year term of office which expires in May 2020.**
 - ii) Councillor M Heaven as a City Council representative on the John Friends Memorial Fund Management Committee for the remainder of the 3-year term of office which expires in May 2020**
 - iii) Councillor M Heaven as a City Council representative on the Sir Charles Barratt Memorial Foundation for the remainder of the annual term of office which expires in May 2020**
- 2. Approves the appointment of Councillor C Miks as the City Council representative on the Birmingham Airport Consultative Committee for the remainder of the 2-year term of office which expires in May 2021, in place of Councillor J McNicholas.**
- 3. Approves the following appointments to Committees and Scrutiny Boards left vacant by the death of Councillor G Crookes:**
 - i) Councillor G Ridley as a member of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee**
 - ii) Councillor A Andrews as a member of Planning Committee**
 - iii) Councillor P Male as a member of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)**
- 4. Approves the following amendments to appointments to Scrutiny Boards:**
 - i) The appointment of Councillor J Blundell as a member of the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) in place of Councillor P Male**
 - ii) The appointment of Councillor M Heaven as a member of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) in place of Councillor J Birdi**

iii) **The appointment of Councillor J Birdi as a member of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) in place of Councillor J Blundell**

5. Approves the appointment of Councillor J Blundell to the Corporate Parenting Board in place of Councillor P Male.

58. Question Time

Councillors Maton, T Khan, P Hetheron, K Caan and A Khan provided written answers to the questions set out in the Questions Booklet together with oral responses to supplementary questions put to them at the meeting.

The following Members answered oral questions put to them by other Member as set out below, together with supplementary questions on the same matters:

No	Questions asked by	Question put to	Subject matter
1	Councillor G Williams	Councillor A Khan	Impact on air quality by idling vehicles
2	Councillor D Skinner	Councillor J O'Boyle	Car park at Tile Hill Station
3	Councillor J Blundell	Councillor P Hetheron	Christmas waste collection
4	Councillor P Male	Councillor A Khan	Minutes in respect of CIL meeting
5	Councillor A Andrews	Councillor A Khan	Support for City-wide knife amnesty

59. Statements

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor P Seaman, made a Statement in respect of "Children's Services Improvement Plan".

Councillor J Lepoidevin responded to the Statement.

60. Debate - Railway Stations re-opening

The following Motion was moved by Councillor P Male and seconded by Councillor G Ridley:

"This Council will work with the WMCA to develop a feasibility study to determine the viability of re-opening Coundon Railway Station and a new station in the east of the city".

The following amendment was moved by Councillor G Duggins and seconded by Councillor J O'Boyle

"In the second line after the work "Coundon" insert "and Foleshill" and add an 's' onto the word 'station'.

At the end of the Debate delete the full stop and insert “specifically Binley and Willenhall”

Add the following paragraph:

“And call upon the Department to confirm that there will continue to be three express trains an hour between Coventry and London; that a direct rail link will be opened up between Coventry and the East Midlands; that the Coventry to Leamington railway line be double tracked and the Coventry to Nuneaton railway line will be electrified.

The amended Motion now to read:

“This Council will work with the WMCA to develop a feasibility study to determine the viability of re-opening Coundon and Foleshill railway stations and a new station in the east of the City.

And call upon the Department of Transport to confirm that there will continue to be three express trains an hour between Coventry and London; that a direct rail link will be opened up between Coventry and the East Midlands; that the Coventry to Leamington railway line be double tracked and the Coventry to Nuneaton railway line will be electrified.

RESOLVED that the amended Motion, as set out above, be unanimously adopted.

61. **Debate - Education System**

The following motion was moved by Councillor K Maton and seconded by Councillor M Mutton:

“This Council recognises that every child is unique and wants an education system that enables each student to find their learning pathway through a wide choice of courses and qualifications. The current mish-mash of school types, limited curriculum options for many and decreasing accountability to local communities is not in the best interests of this City’s young people.

Cuts by Central Government to early years and school budgets have undermined the ability of the school system in Coventry to maximise the potential of all our children.

It is to the credit of all involved in our state funded education provision that City schools have been able to maintain high standards of education and achievement.

However, our schools want to achieve more but are being held back by cuts to finance and remote, unsympathetic and uninformed control from Central Government and its agencies such as Ofsted.

Coventry is well placed to demonstrate an alternative, more local, collaborative and mutually supportive approach. Our peer review arrangements are just one example. They have been shown to deliver

school improvement, led by the experts in our schools, who have shown how it is possible to achieve more working together for the common good.

For these reasons this Council supports and will campaign for:

- **The restoration of previous funding levels, and their eventual improvement for all schools and sixth form colleges.**
- **The restoration and extension of the ‘Sure Start’ programme.**
- **The abolition of Ofsted and the re-establishment of local accountability for education, including oversight of school admissions and funding, including that for students with educational special needs, and the reintegration of free schools and academies into a locally run and democratic system of education.**
- **Allowing local Councils like Coventry to oversee high standards of school-based assessment that puts students at the centre of a system that helps incentivise students and gives parents and carers clear information.**
- **A review of the secondary curriculum and examination arrangements that currently limit the range of learning opportunities and place an over-emphasis on memory-based testing rather than developing transferable skills and knowledge applicable in post 16 training and education and employment.**

The following amendment to the motions was moved by Councillor J Blundell, seconded by Councillor P Male and lost:

That the debate as set out as item 16.2 on the agenda be amended as follows:

In the first paragraph after ‘courses and qualifications’ delete the remainder of that paragraph and all of the second paragraph.

In the first sentence of paragraph four after the words ‘achieve more’, delete the remainder of the sentence and insert the words ‘and welcome the additional funding recently announced by the Conservative Government.’

In the first sentence of paragraph five after the word ‘demonstrate’ insert the word ‘a’ and delete the words ‘an alternative’. After the second sentence insert the words ‘They have been shown to deliver school improvement, led by the experts in our schools, who have shown how it is possible to achieve more working together for the common good’.

In paragraph six after the words ‘this Council’ delete the remainder of the sentence and insert the word ‘welcomes’. Delete the remainder of the paragraphs and replace with the following:

- The additional funding recently announced by the Conservative Government
- Free childcare entitlements for 2 to 4 year olds, 30 hours of free childcare and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare for children in foster care.
- The recent changes to OFSTED including an overall quality of education judgment; the de-intensification of inspection focus on performance data and more emphasis on the substance of education and what is significant to pupils and teachers. This will enable OFSTED to take an holistic approach to consider the quality of education.

- Continue to allow councils like Coventry to work alongside schools to offer and guidance on the pedagogy and curriculum development and to intervene where schools are deemed to be failing.
- To continue to support academic and vocational subjects and courses and ensure that examination arrangements are fit for workplace in the 21st century.

The amended debate then to read:

This Council recognises that every child is unique and wants an education system that enables each student to find their learning pathway through a wide choice of courses and qualifications.

It is to the credit of all involved in our state funded education provision that City schools have been able to maintain high standards of education and achievement. However, our schools want to achieve more and welcome the additional funding recently announced by the Conservative Government. Coventry is well placed to demonstrate a more local, collaborative and mutually supportive approach. Our peer review arrangements are just one example. They have been shown to deliver school improvement, led by the experts in our schools, who have shown how it is possible to achieve more working together for the common good.

For these reasons this Council welcomes

- The additional funding recently announced by the Conservative Government.
- Free childcare entitlements for 2 to 4 year olds, 30 hours of free childcare and the introduction of 30 hours free childcare for children in foster care.
- The recent changes to OFSTED including an overall quality of education judgment; the de-intensification of inspection focus on performance data and more emphasis on the substance of education and what is significant to pupils and teachers. This will enable OFSTED to take a holistic approach to consider the quality of education.
- Continue to allow councils like Coventry to work alongside schools to offer advice and guidance on the pedagogy and curriculum development and to intervene where schools are deemed to be failing.
- To continue to support academic and vocational subjects and courses and ensure that examination arrangements are fit for the workplace in the 21st century.

RESOLVED that the substantive motion (above in bold) be adopted.

62. **B&M Stores, Ansty Road, Walsgrave, Coventry - Investment Acquisitions**

Further to Minute 55 above, the City Council considered a private report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), setting out the commercially confidential matters relating to the investment acquisition of B&M Stores, Ansty Road, Walsgrave, Coventry.

RESOLVED that the City Council approve the necessary adjustment to the Capital programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of the Ansty Road interest.

(Meeting closed at 6.10 pm)