

**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Tuesday, 12th April 2022

Place

Council Chamber - Council House, Coventry CV1 5RR

Please note that in line with current City Council guidelines in relation to Covid, there may be reduced public access to some meetings to manage numbers attending safely. If you wish to attend in person, please contact the Governance Services Officer indicated at the end of the agenda.

Public business

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 12)
 - (a) To agree the minutes from the meeting of Cabinet on 15th March 2022
 - (b) Matters arising
4. **Report of the Scrutiny Autism Task and Finish Group** (Pages 13 - 34)

Report of the Director of Law and Governance
5. **Renewal of a Public Spaces Protection Order for St Michaels and Surrounding Areas** (Pages 35 - 50)

Report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services
6. **Approval of Sport England Commonwealth Active Communities Funding Awarded to Coventry City Council** (Pages 51 - 60)

Report of the Director of Business, Investment and Culture
7. **Outstanding Issues**

There are no outstanding issues
8. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

Private business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

Monday, 4 April 2022

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Michelle Salmon, Governance Services, Email: michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk

Membership

Cabinet Members:

Councillors R Brown, K Caan, G Duggins (Chair), P Hetherton, A S Khan (Deputy Chair), M Mutton, J O'Boyle, K Sandhu, P Seaman and D Welsh

Non-voting Deputy Cabinet Members:

Councillors P Akhtar, B Gittins, G Hayre and G Lloyd

By invitation:

Councillors P Male and G Ridley (Non-voting Opposition representatives)

Public Access

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<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

Michelle Salmon

Governance Services

Email: michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk

Agenda Item 3

Coventry City Council Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 15 March 2022

Present:

Cabinet Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor A S Khan (Deputy Chair)
Councillor K Caan
Councillor M Mutton
Councillor P Seaman
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor D Welsh

Non-Voting Deputy
Cabinet Members: Councillor P Akhtar

Non-Voting Opposition
Members: Councillor P Male
Councillor G Ridley

Other Non-Voting
Members: Councillor J Clifford
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor C Thomas

Employees (by Directorate):

Adult Services and
Housing P Fahy (Director of Adult Services and Housing),
J Crawshaw, M Donovan

Education and Skills K Nelson (Director of Education and Skills), A Coles,
L Holland

Finance B Hastie (Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer)),
E Dewar

Law and Governance O Aremu, L Knight

Streetscene and
Regulatory Services D Butler

Transportation and
Highways C Knight (Director of Transportation and Highways),
N Cowper

Apologies: Councillors R Brown, J O'Boyle, K Sandhu, B Gittins, G Lloyd,
L Bigham, R Singh

Public Business

86. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

87. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 15th and 22nd February 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

88. **Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2022: Acceptance of Grant**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Partnerships Officer / Director of Education and Skills, that sought approval for acceptance of the Department for Education Holiday Activity and Food Programme grant allocation for the 2022/23 financial year.

The Government's Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) is an enrichment programme for disadvantaged children which includes the provision of health food. The programme is primarily for pupils of statutory school age, who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals. The programme allows for 15% discretionary spend on children who are not within the category of benefits-related free school meals. Initially the programme was funding for the 2021/22 financial year only and operated through the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays. The delivery details were set out in a report approved by the Cabinet on 9th March 2021 and Council on 16th March 2021.

The Government confirmed that the programme would be extended to the end of March 2025. Coventry received an allocation of £1,514,770 for the 2022/23 financial year, subject to meeting the conditions of the grant determination letter. It was anticipated that funding would be at an equivalent level for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The aim for each child attending the provision would be for them to:

- eat healthily;
- be active;
- take part in engaging and enriching activities which support the development of resilience, character and wellbeing along with wider educational attainment;
- be safe and not socially isolated;
- have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition; and
- be more engaged with school and other local services.

The aim for parents and carers of children participating in the programme would be to:

- develop their understanding of nutrition and food budgeting; and
- be signposted to other information and support (for example: health, employment and education).

Attendance on the programme would be voluntary. Each eligible school-age child would be entitled to access the provision for one week during the Easter and Christmas holiday periods and four weeks during the summer. One HAF week was defined as being a total of four, four hourly sessions per week.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Approve the acceptance of the Department for Education Holiday Activity and Food Programme grant allocation of up to £1,514,770 for the 2022/23 financial year.**
- 2. Delegate authority for decisions about the planning and delivery of the Holiday Activity and Food Programme in 2022/23 to the Director of Education and Skills, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills. The City Council will centrally co-ordinate the award monies to relevant organisations to deliver the programme to a high standard.**

89. 2022/2023 Transportation and Highways Maintenance Capital Programme

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Transportation and Highways, that brought together a £15.9m capital programme for the maintenance and enhancement of the City's highways and transport infrastructure. The programme would be funded through City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, City Council resources, External Funding and Citizen Housing Right to Buy receipts.

As a result of the increased funding negotiated through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, this year's maintenance and transport programmes had been extended in comparison to previous years. This, coupled with the addition of the innovative JCB Pothole Pro machine, would enable a significant improvement in the speed and efficiency of road repairs.

In addition, the report highlighted the ambitious range and scale of major projects to be delivered in the City, from sustainable transport improvements supporting the Gigafactory and other developments, to Coventry Very Light Rail, a pioneering project that showcases Coventry as a city at the forefront of innovation.

These projects would not only benefit the residents of the City and encourage continued growth and investment, they would also provide sustainable solutions to support the tackling of climate change and inequalities by widening travel choice and promoting active travel.

With continued success in attracting external funding, the Council would be able to develop and deliver schemes and infrastructure that enable transformation and progression, laying the foundations for a vibrant and cutting-edge city to be proud of.

The report set out individual allocations and the various sources of funding in Table 4 and the specific details of each project were detailed in Appendices 1 to 3 to the report.

As with previous programmes, there was an emphasis on making the best use of existing infrastructure rather than creating new. The maintenance programme would focus on ensuring that the worst affected roads and pavements across the City were properly repaired and preventative maintenance carried out. This was a key theme in the West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan and was driven by the City Council's Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Policy and Strategy (January 2016).

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Approve the 2022/23 programme of Transportation and Highway schemes marked A in Table 2 of the report.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Services to approve a programme of scheme development, Section 106 and externally funded schemes, marked B in Table 2 of the report.**

90. Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Homeless Families Through Property Acquisition

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing, that sought approval to add £6m to the Council's capital programme to purchase, refurbish and manage 25 properties to use as temporary accommodation for homeless families.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households who are eligible and have a priority need. In order to meet demand from homeless families who require temporary accommodation of 3 or more bedrooms, it was proposed to initially add £6m to the Council's capital programme to purchase, refurbish and manage 25 properties for use as temporary accommodation for homeless families. Subject to review, once the 25 properties had been achieved and / or £6m resource used, the programme may be increased by a further 25 properties, bringing the total to 50 properties. In completing the programme of work the City Council would focus on bringing as many Houses of Multiple Occupation back into family use for temporary accommodation as possible within the delivery timescales.

In addition, the Council would seek nomination agreements for a further 25 properties of 3 or more bedrooms for use as temporary accommodation from existing approved budgets.

There remained a significant demand for temporary accommodation from families and as of 11th February 2022 there were 83 families in 3 and 4 bedroomed nightly temporary accommodation. There was no indication that this number would reduce. Previous programmes of work undertaken within the Housing and Homelessness Service had focussed on temporary accommodation for smaller families requiring 1 or 2 bedrooms and accommodation for single people. These initiatives had resulted in both a reduced cost and improved supply of temporary accommodation. The proposals within the report submitted aim to deliver a similar set of outcomes to those achieved for smaller families and single people through both reducing the cost and improving the supply of temporary accommodation.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet recommend that Council:

- 1. That capital resource of up to £6m is added to the capital programme to purchase, refurbish and manage 25 properties which are 3 or more bedrooms to use as temporary housing for homeless families.**
- 2. That approval is sought to enable Nomination Agreements to be entered into for 25 properties which have 3 or more bedrooms for use as temporary housing for homeless families using existing approved budgets.**
- 3. A further £7m to purchase, refurbish and manage properties to use as temporary housing for homeless families to be added to the capital programme once the £6m has been expended and / or 25 properties have been purchased in recommendation 1 above, and authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer), following consultation with the Director of Adult Services and Housing, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, to ensure it continues to deliver value for money in purchasing properties to use as temporary housing for homeless families.**
- 4. Delegate authority to the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer), following consultation with the Director of Adult Services and Housing, the Cabinet member for Housing and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources to finalise and agree the detailed terms of the acquisitions. The authority under this delegation shall also include the power to enter into the necessary legal agreements and subsequently the power to negotiate and agree variations to the terms of such agreements.**

91. Transforming Mental Health Services

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Adult Services and Housing, which sought approval to enter into a partnership agreement with Coventry & Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust.

The ambitions set out in the Mental Health Implementation Plan 2019/20–2023/24, remain the foundation for the transformation of local mental health services across the Coventry and Warwickshire footprint.

To support driving that change it was proposed that the Council enter into a partnership agreement with Coventry and Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust. This would be a partnership agreement whereby NHS organisations and local authorities contribute an agreed level of resource into a single pot (the pooled budget) that would then be used to drive the integration and improvement of existing services.

City Council budgets would not be part of this proposed pooling arrangement, with the pooled sums being provided by Coventry and Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust. The Council would provide officer time and the fulfilment of hosting responsibilities.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet recommend that Council:

- 1. Approve entering into a partnership agreement with Coventry and Warwickshire Commissioning Group and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust to support the transformation of mental health services.**
- 2. Approve that the Council is the host for the pooled budget to support the partnership arrangement.**

92. Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) Methodology

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, which sought adoption of the proposed Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment Methodology.

Coventry and Warwickshire Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a long history of constructively working together to address a range of strategic planning matters. This relationship enabled the LPAs to achieve sound Local Plans. Shared evidence and a collaborative approach was a vital element of being able to fulfil the statutory Duty to Co-operate and needed to be demonstrated to Planning Inspectors when Local Plans were examined.

The evidence base which informed the development of a Local Plan needs to be regularly reviewed and updated. Many of the Local Plans in the Coventry and Warwickshire area are currently being reviewed and updated, all running at different timescales. In delivering sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified requirements it was important that each Local Authority keep an up-to-date database of sites, which needs to be assessed to see if they were suitable, available and could realistically be delivered to meet the needs of the area. This would be especially important in order to be able to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing sites (one of the government's key indicators for measuring success of a Local Authority's planning policies in delivering its stated ambitions for housing growth) and in encouraging brownfield opportunities to come forward and reduce pressure upon land which had not previously been developed. It was also important in understanding which sites would be promoted for potential economic use, so that a balanced and sustainable local economy could be achieved across the area.

The database of sites was known as the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). In order to keep this essential evidence up to date, each Local Authority would run its own 'call for sites' process, which in effect would be an invitation for land owners, developers and their agents to express their interest in having their site considered for a range of uses such as housing, employment or even a range of other uses they wish to be considered through the local plan process. Inclusion in the HELAA document did not mean they would be

developed, that would be for the Local Authority to determine through their assessment process. However, it was important that Local Authorities worked together to make sure that they operated consistently. This would be especially important when addressing areas where there are strong strategic relationships which stretch across different administrative boundaries such those relating to housing and the economy.

It was therefore essential that when Local Authorities looked at the detail of how they plan for growth, they did it in line with a common methodology to ensure consistency of approach and understanding. The methodology, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, had been prepared by Coventry and Warwickshire Local Planning Authorities to ensure that sites would be assessed within a common framework which accorded with the most up to date National Planning Policy and guidance. It updated the previous agreed version which was now out of date.

This methodology would be used when assessing proposed employment or housing sites in terms of whether or not they would be suitable for development, which was an essential part of the Local Plan process. The methodology would also be used by the other Warwickshire District and Borough authorities who form part of the Housing Market Area (HMA) and who would be working together under the statutory Duty to Co-operate. The adoption of the methodology would enable the Council to proceed with a Call for Brownfield sites in order to update the evidence base to support a Local Plan review.

Consultation took place between 10th November and 22nd December 2021, running concurrently between the six Local Authorities. Representations were jointly considered, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, and the methodology amended accordingly. The final version was agreed at the CSWAP0 (Duty to Co-operate) meeting on 9th February 2022, with each Local Authority to then take the final document through their own Councils for approval.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Adopt the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment Methodology contained in Appendix 1 of the report submitted.**
- 2. Authorise the launch of a Call for Brownfield Sites to run for a period of ten weeks in Spring 2022.**

93. Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, that sought approval to adopt the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following public consultation which was undertaken between 30th November 2021 and 18th January 2022.

SPDs add further detail to the policies in the development plan but could not introduce new policy. SPDs provide additional guidance for development and would be capable of being a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

Delivering sufficient affordable homes over the Plan period to 2031 was a key objective of the adopted Coventry Local Plan. The aim of this SPD was to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes as set out in the Plan and in compliance with the most up to date national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

The additional guidance provided within the SPD set out the different types of affordable housing, as defined by Government, and provided the detail on how these should be delivered. This included setting out the process in agreeing affordable housing delivery, affordability types and tenures, dwelling design, management structures and Section 106 Agreements for securing delivery.

Responses to the consultation had been analysed and taken into account when amending the SPD. The proposed final version was attached as Appendix 1 to the report and a summary of the representations received and proposed amendments was provided at Appendix 2.

Once adopted, the SPD would replace the outdated Affordable Housing Guidance which was adopted in February 2006.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Adopt the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead (Planning), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, any necessary further non-substantive (minor) changes to the document.**

94. Open Space Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, that sought approval to adopt the Open Space Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following public consultation which was undertaken between 30th November 2021 and 18th January 2022.

SPDs add further detail to the policies in the development plan but could not introduce new policy. SPDs provide additional guidance for development and would be capable of being a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

The purpose of the Open Space SPD was to set out the Council's approach towards the provision of public open space in new residential development. It supplements Policy GE1 of the adopted Local Plan, which states that: "new development proposals should make provision for green infrastructure to ensure that such development is integrated into the landscape and contributes to improvements in connectivity and public access, biodiversity, landscape conservation, design, archaeology and recreation".

The additional guidance provided within the SPD aimed to provide clear information for applicants about policy requirements, which developments would trigger a requirement for open space provision, how much open space should be provided, what kind of open space would be needed, and clear expectations in terms of design and delivery.

Responses to the consultation had been analysed and taken account of when amending the SPD. The proposed final version was attached at Appendix 1 of the report and a summary of representations along with responses and proposed amendments was provided at Appendix 2.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1. Adopt the Open Space Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead (Planning), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, any necessary further non-substantive (minor) changes to the document.**

95. Energy Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services, that sought approval to adopt the Energy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following public consultation which was undertaken between 30th November 2021 and 18th January 2022.

SPDs add further detail to the policies in the development plan but could not introduce new policy. SPDs provide additional guidance for development and would be capable of being a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

Providing further guidance on building standards as they relate to carbon reduction and climate change over the plan period to 2031 is a key commitment set out in Policy EM2 (Building Standards) of the adopted Coventry Local Plan. The aim of the SPD was to provide technical guidance on energy standards and requirements to improve the environmental sustainability of new developments in the city.

The additional guidance provided within the SPD aimed to provide clear information for applicants about policy requirements and expectations, clearly set out what detail the Council expects developers to provide to assist the decision making process and to encourage developers to promote excellence and best practice in sustainable development.

Responses to the consultation had been analysed and taken account of when amending the SPD. The proposed final version was attached at Appendix 1 of the report submitted and a summary of representations along with responses and proposed amendments were provided at Appendix 2.

Once adopted, the SPD would replace the Delivering a More Sustainable City SPD which was adopted in January 2009.

RESOLVED that, the Cabinet:

- 1. Adopt the Energy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead (Planning), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, any necessary further non-substantive (minor) changes to the document.**

96. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

97. 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.

(Meeting closed at 2.30 pm)



Cabinet

12 April 2022

Name of Scrutiny Chair:

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) – Councillor J Clifford

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Law and Governance

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Report of the Scrutiny Autism Task and Finish Group

Is this a key decision?

Yes - the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on residents or businesses in two or more electoral wards in the City.

Executive summary:

At the start of the 2021/22 municipal year, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) agreed to set up a task and finish group to look at support for autistic children and young people. This work was prompted by concerns raised regarding the wait times for assessments and diagnosis. The Task and Finish group wanted to understand the reason for the waits and what support was available during the waiting time without a diagnosis, particularly for Children and Young People.

At their meeting on 11 March 2020 the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) considered an item on the Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) Pathway and Support to Children and Young People in Coventry. The Chair identified that more in-depth consideration needed to be made of some of the issues and invited Members to join a task and finish group. Members of the Education and Children's Services were invited to join the task and finish group due to the cross over in the remit of the two Boards regarding autism.

Cabinet is now requested to consider the recommendations identified by the task and finish group to address issues around the assessment process and support for children and young people who are referred for an autism assessment, and their families, as well as transition into adult service, inclusion and other aspects of autism and neurodiversity.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is requested to agree the following recommendations:

- 1) That the Council work with partners to identify sustainable, long-term funding as there is currently only funding available for the first year of the All-Age Autism Strategy delivery plan.
- 2) Ensure tackling health inequalities for autistic people is prioritised for delivery as part of the All-Age Autism Strategy implementation plan to improve physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- 3) Work with partners to accelerate and build on existing workstreams, to reduce the unacceptably long waiting times for diagnostic assessment
- 4) The Council and health partners work with schools, colleges and universities to ensure that all educational professionals (teachers, senior leaders, early career teachers, support staff) have a good understanding of the needs which may present for autistic and neurodiverse pupils and provide appropriate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to ensure high quality provision at both whole class and individual intervention level.
- 5) The Council strengthen data sharing, alongside all relevant partners, between organisations to enable evidence gathered through assessments to be used by other professionals as part of the autism assessment process, to assist and expedite diagnosis with the necessary data protection safeguards put in place.
- 6) Support the Education and Childrens' Service Scrutiny Board undertaking a task and finish group during the 2022/23 municipal year to look at the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.
- 7) Health partners review the referral process for diagnosis to simplify it and enable electronic submission of referral forms.
- 8) Health partners to include schools in correspondence about appointments where schools were involved in the referral process. This will enable schools to support pupils and families through the diagnostic process.
- 9) The Council work with partners to ensure information on referral and support pathways is accessible to parents, carers, young people and professionals.
- 10) Community support services should be offered in the wider context of neurodiversity rather than limited to those with an autism diagnosis. Services should be titled and described to reflect that not all services require a diagnosis to access them.
- 11) The Council, with partners develop a holistic approach to support for families post diagnosis which includes emotional as well as clinical support and access to training.
- 12) To continue the Council's participation in the Employ Autism scheme, or the development of an inhouse equivalent and ensure there is appropriate resource for it to be delivered.
- 13) For the Council to lead by example and become an inclusive employer including for autism and neurodiversity.
- 14) Support SCRUCO including a future item on skills resilience pathways into employment for those with disabilities, including neurodiversity
- 15) The Council works towards Coventry becoming a city which celebrates, supports and accepts autism and neurodiversity. This would include
 - a. the introduction of more inclusive spaces and autism friendly environments throughout the City including in the City Centre, Parks and Open Spaces
 - b. safe spaces/low sensory stimulus areas to enable autistic people to decompression throughout the City.
 - c. public realm designs should include inclusive spaces including Autism friendly environments.
- 16) The Council resource and pursue digital opportunities including the development and rollout of a Neurodiversity Support App for Coventry

17) Support Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board receiving an update in 6 months-time on progress towards the recommendations, particularly the impact of measures to reduce waiting times for diagnostic assessments with regular briefings to the Chair in-between.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - Report back of the Autism Task and Finish Group to Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) on 23rd March 2022.

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy 2021-2026

<https://edemocracy.coventry.gov.uk/documents/s52433/Coventry%20and%20Warwickshire%20All%20Age%20Autism%20Strategy%202021-2026.pdf>

Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny?

No – Although this report is not being considered by Scrutiny, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) with Education and Childrens' Services Scrutiny Board (2) invited on 23rd March 2022, considered the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

Has it or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Report of the Scrutiny Autism Task and Finish Group

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 At the start of the 2021/22 municipal year, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) agreed to set up a task and finish group to look at support for autistic children and young people. This work was prompted by concerns raised regarding the wait times for assessments and diagnosis. The Task and Finish group wanted to understand the reason for the waits and what support was available during the waiting time without a diagnosis, particularly for Children and Young People.
- 1.2 At their meeting on 11 March 2020 the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) considered an item on the Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) Pathway and Support to Children and Young People in Coventry. The Chair identified that more in-depth consideration needed to be made of some of the issues and invited Members to join a task and finish group. Members of the Education and Children's Services were invited to join the task and finish group due to the cross over in the remit of the two Boards regarding autism.
- 1.3 Due to delays caused by Covid-19 the task and finish group had their first meeting on 11th October 2021 and met 5 times.

2. Task and Finish Group Membership and Participation

- 2.1 The Task and Finish Group Membership was Cllr Clifford (Chair), Cllr Innes, Cllr Heaven, and Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Co-optees - Sybil Hanson and Kellie Jones.
- 2.2 Cllr Brown and Sarah McGarry were invited to the meetings as Experts by Experience.
- 2.3 Officers from the City Council attended to provide evidence including Children's Services, Education, Adult Services, Human Resources, ICT and Warwickshire County Council, Coventry and Warwickshire CCG Joint Commissioning Team.
- 2.4 Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust also participated in the group.
- 2.5 The Task and Finish Group also met virtually with around 80 Members of the City's Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCo) network.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Refer Option 1: Do nothing
- 3.2 After hearing evidence and considering the background information, Members identified that there was further work to be done to support autistic people in the City. Therefore doing nothing was not considered as a viable option.
- 3.3 Option 2: Make recommendations to Cabinet and Partners
- 3.4 Following evidence gathered during the task and finish group meetings, Members of the Board were able to identify a number of recommendations that could help to improve the quality of life experienced by autistic people in the Coventry.

4. Results of consultation undertaken

- 4.1 No formal consultation has taken place, however the Task and Finish Group did engage with a number of internal and external partners, as well as Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENDCos). Their comments and experiences were considered as part of the report to Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) which can be found at Appendix 1.

5. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 5.1 There are no specific timescales for the implementation of these recommendations, however the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) will request a progress report in six months of the recommendations being agreed.

6. Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Governance

6.1 Financial Implications

For the majority of the recommendations, there are no direct cost implications as they will be delivered using existing officer, member and partner time.

As highlighted in recommendation 1, funding has currently only been identified for the first year of the strategy. Further work will be required across all partners to identify any additional funding required for new schemes and initiatives following the first year.

6.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report at this stage, as the report is asking Cabinet to undertake further work on the recommendations. Any issues would be identified at that point and can be considered by Legal if required.

7. Other implications

7.1 How will this contribute to the achievement of the council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan / scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS)?

The Strategy supports the Council Plan by contributing to the following objectives:

- Improving the quality of life for Coventry people
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Protecting our most vulnerable people
- Reducing health inequalities
- Enabling active communities and empowered citizens

7.2 How is risk being managed?

There are no specific risks to consider as a result of the recommendations. If any of the recommendations are accepted, a review of risk would be taken as the recommendations were appraised.

7.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The impact on the organisation is dependent on which of the recommendations the Cabinet decide to proceed with. The recommendations have been developed to compliment and amplify the Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy.

7.4 Equalities / EIA?

The difficulties autistic people experience with communication, interaction, and social imagination lead to inequalities in health, education and social outcomes for autistic people. The recommendations within this report aim to reduce some of these inequalities.

If the recommendations within the report are accepted and require a further Cabinet report, an EIA would be undertaken at that stage.

7.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

There are no impacts on the environment.

7.6 Implications for partner organisations?

There are recommendations and therefore implications for health partners. Specific impacts including reviewing funding streams and simplifying referral processes.

Report author(s):

Victoria Castree – Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Gennie Holmes – Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Service:

Law and Governance

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Enquiries should be directed to the above people

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Law and Governance	17/3/2022	17/3/2022
Names of approvers: (officers and members)				
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Councillor J Clifford	Chair – Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)	-	17/03/22	21/03/22

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Briefing note

To: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)

Date: 23rd March 2022

Subject: Autism Task and Finish Group Recommendations

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) of the recommendations identified by the task and finish group established from members of the Education and Childrens' Services Scrutiny Board (2) and the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) to initially consider issues around the assessment process and support for children and young people who are referred for an autism assessment, and their families. As the task and finish group progressed, it expanded to include transition into adult services, inclusion and other aspects of neurodiversity.
- 1.2 Education and Childrens' Services Scrutiny Board (2) with support from Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) are recommended to undertake further work 2022/23 municipal year to look at the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.
- 1.3 Throughout this report, we will use the word **autism** and identity-first terminology ("**autistic people**" rather than "people with autism") when referring to autistic people - children, young people and adults. More information on this is provided in paragraph 5.4.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board are recommended to make the following recommendations:
 - 1) The Council to work with partners to identify sustainable, long-term funding as there is currently only funding available for the first year of the All Age Autism Strategy delivery plan.
 - 2) Ensure tackling health inequalities for autistic people is prioritised for delivery as part of the All Age Autism Strategy implementation plan to improve physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing.
 - 3) Partners to accelerate and build on existing workstreams, to reduce the unacceptably long waiting times for diagnostic assessment
 - 4) The Council and health partners to work with schools, colleges and universities to ensure that all educational professionals (teachers, senior leaders, early career teachers, support staff) have a good understanding of the needs which may present for autistic and neurodiverse pupils and provide appropriate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to ensure high quality provision at both whole class and individual intervention level.

- 5) All partners work to strengthen data sharing between organisations to enable evidence gathered through assessments to be used by other professionals as part of the autism assessment process, to assist and expedite diagnosis with the necessary data protection safeguards put in place.
- 6) That the Education and Childrens' Service Scrutiny Board undertake a task and finish group during the 2022/23 municipal year to look at the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.
- 7) Health partners review the referral process for diagnosis to simplify it and enable electronic submission of referral forms.
- 8) Health partners to include schools in correspondence about appointments where schools were involved in the referral process. This will enable schools to support pupils and families through the diagnostic process.
- 9) Partners to ensure information on referral and support pathways is accessible to parents, carers, young people and professionals.
- 10) Community support services should be offered in the wider context of neurodiversity rather than limited to those with an autism diagnosis. Services should be titled and described to reflect that not all services require a diagnosis to access them.
- 11) Partners to develop a holistic approach to support for families post diagnosis which includes emotional as well as clinical support and access to training.
- 12) To continue the Council's participation in the Employ Autism scheme, or the development of an inhouse equivalent and ensure there is appropriate resource for it to be delivered.
- 13) For the Council to lead by example and become an inclusive employer including for autism and neurodiversity.
- 14) That SCRUCO include a future item on skills resilience pathways into employment for those with disabilities, including neurodiversity
- 15) The Council works towards Coventry becoming a city which celebrates, supports and accepts autism and neurodiversity. This would include
 - a) the introduction of more inclusive spaces and autism friendly environments throughout the City including in the City Centre, Parks and Open Spaces
 - b) safe spaces/low sensory stimulus areas to enable autistic people to decompression throughout the City.
 - c) public realm designs should include inclusive spaces including Autism friendly environments.
- 16) The Council resource and pursue digital opportunities including the development and rollout of a Neurodiversity Support App for Coventry
- 17) That Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board receive an update in 6months time on progress towards the recommendations, particularly the impact of measures to reduce waiting times for diagnostic assessments with regular briefings to the Chair in-between.

3 Background and Information

- 3.1 At the start of the 2021/22 municipal year, the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) agreed to set up a task and finish group to look at support for children and young people, and their families, who had been referred for an autism

assessment. This work was prompted by concerns raised regarding the wait times for assessments and diagnosis. The Task and Finish group wanted to understand the reason for the lengthy waits and what support was available during that time, particularly for children and young people.

- 3.2 At their meeting on 11 March 2020 the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board considered an item on the Autism Pathway and Support to Children and Young People in Coventry. The Board identified that more in-depth consideration needed to be made of some of the issues and invited Members to join a task and finish group
- 3.3 Due to delays caused by Covid-19 the task and finish group had their first meeting on 11th October 2021 and met 5 times.

4 Task and Finish Group Membership

- 4.1 The Task and Finish Group membership was Cllr Clifford (Chair), Cllr Innes, Cllr Heaven, and Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) Co-optees, Sybil Hanson and Kellie Jones.
- 4.2 Cllr Brown and Sarah McGarry attended the meetings as Experts by Experience.
- 4.3 Officers from a range of Coventry Council services attended meetings to provide evidence including Childrens' Services, Education, Adult Services, Human Resources, ICT and in addition Officers from Warwickshire County Council and representatives from Coventry and Warwickshire CCG Joint Commissioning Team.
- 4.4 Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust also participated in the meetings.
- 4.5 Task and Finish Group members attended a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) Briefing. There were representatives of around 80 schools present who shared their views from an educational perspective about the support to autistic children and young people and their families including those awaiting assessment.
- 4.6 The Task and Finish Group would like to thank all those who took part in and contributed to the work of the task and finish group.

5 Defining Autism and Neurodiversity

- 5.1 Autism is not a medical condition with treatments or a "cure", but autistic people often need person centred support to varying levels across and within four main areas: social communication, social interaction, social imagination and sensory processing. No two people with autism will necessarily be alike or will necessarily benefit from the same type and level of support. Lack of appropriate support during childhood can result in the need for additional support during adulthood. There is a higher prevalence of anxiety, depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in autistic adults than the neurotypical population.
- 5.2 This video from the National Autistic Society provides further information about Autism <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lk4qs8jGN4U>
- 5.3 As the work of the task and finish group developed, it became apparent that many of the recommendations being made by the task and finish group would also apply to other neurodiverse people. Neurodiversity is a term used to describe a variation in normal human evolution which means some people think differently to others and experience the world in a different way. Neurodiverse conditions include autism,

attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, dyspraxia, Tourette's syndrome and complex tic disorders¹.

- 5.4 Throughout this report, we will use the word **autism** and identity-first terminology ("**autistic people**" rather than "people with autism") when referring to autistic people - children, young people and adults. This reflects research published in the Autism journal in 2015 which looked at the preferences of UK autistic community members – autistic people, their families, friends and professionals around the language used to describe autism. This mirrors the language used in the Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy.
- 5.5 Partners referred to in recommendations include Council services, health service commissioners, service providers and third sector organisations involved in the delivery of services to autistic children, young people and adults.

6 Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy

- 6.1 The Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy was being developed and finalised during the period that the task and finish group met. The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board scrutinised the draft strategy at their meeting on 2nd December, which was approved at Cabinet on 15th February 2022.
- 6.2 Members endorsed the aims of the strategy which are to:
- 6.2.1 **C&W Priority 1:** Support autistic people and people with social, communication and emotional health needs to help themselves pre and post diagnosis
- 6.2.2 **C&W Priority 2:** Reduce inequalities for autistic people and make Coventry and Warwickshire an autism friendly place to live
- 6.2.3 **C&W Priority 3:** Develop a range of organisations and services locally with the skills to support autistic people
- 6.2.4 **C&W Priority 4:** Develop the all age autism specialist support offer
- 6.2.5 **C&W Priority 5:** Co-produce, work together and learn about autism
- 6.3 Members appreciated that the strategy would help to address some of the issues raised throughout the task and finish group but were concerned that funding had only been identified for the first year of the delivery plan.
- 6.4 **Recommendation 1:** The Council to work with partners to identify sustainable, long-term funding as there is currently only funding available for the first year of the All Age Autism Strategy delivery plan.
- 6.5 Members were concerned about the extent of health inequalities and rates of premature death experienced by autistic people and welcomed priority 2 of the Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy. However, the task and finish group wanted to ensure that the importance of delivering on this priority for all organisations.
- 6.6 **Recommendation 2:** Ensure tackling health inequalities for autistic people is prioritised for delivery as part of the All Age Autism Strategy implementation plan to improve physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing.

7 National Autism Strategy (2021-2026)

¹ <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/autism-and/#:~:text=Neurodiversity%20is%20a%20term%20used,syndrome%20and%20complex%20tic%20disorders.>

7.1 A National Autism Strategy (2021-2026) has also been published. The Local strategy is designed to complement the national strategy. The aims of the national strategy are:

7.1.1 **National Priority 1:** Improving understanding and acceptance within society

7.1.2 **National Priority 2:** Improving access to education and supporting positive transition into adulthood

7.1.3 **National Priority 3:** Supporting more autistic people into employment

7.1.4 **National Priority 4:** Tackling health and care inequalities

7.1.5 **National Priority 5:** Building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care

7.1.6 **National Priority 6:** Improving support within the criminal and youth justice service

8 Coventry Context

8.1 There is no register of autistic people nationally or locally and so the true level of occurrence of autism in Coventry is unknown.

8.2 Autism predicted occurrence by local place-based Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) area indicates a higher density of expected cases in Coventry urban areas, compared with less densely populated areas of Warwickshire but more overall cases in Warwickshire than Coventry.

8.3 Evidence suggests that Coventry has a higher proportion of Special Educational Needs (SEN) support for autism across all state-funded school settings - primary, secondary and special schools – compared to England, the West Midlands, Warwickshire and Derby. The reasons for this are not clear but options to be considered include:

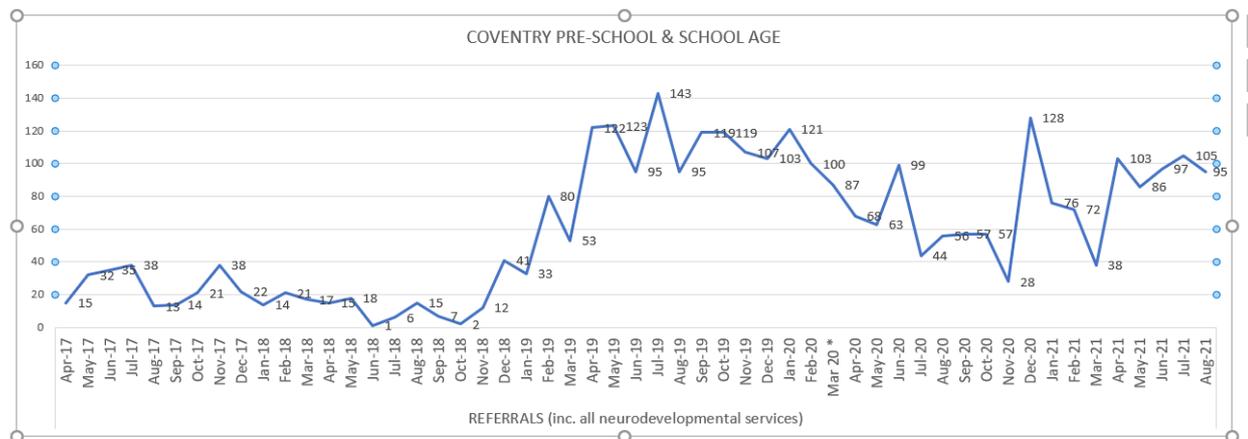
- Higher occurrence of autism in Coventry than nationally or in similar areas, due to unknown factors or chance variation
- Higher autism need based on wider socio-economic or a variety of other factors (e.g. training of teachers and approach within schools, support provided for families etc.), meaning autistic pupils in Coventry require more help than those elsewhere to manage their autism in an education setting.
- A combination of higher occurrence and higher needs to thrive at school than other areas
- A higher proportion of new autism cases receiving a diagnosis in school in Coventry compared with other areas, leading to increased access to support
- A lower threshold criteria for SEN/EHCP support for Coventry pupils with autism than other areas.

8.4 Members were concerned that because there was no fully accurate register of autistic people in the city, it was difficult to plan services effectively to meet the needs of all people affected. It was thought that it would be useful if health partners developed a process to record the numbers of autistic people diagnosed in the City to enable planning and service delivery.

9 Waiting Times for Assessment and Diagnosis

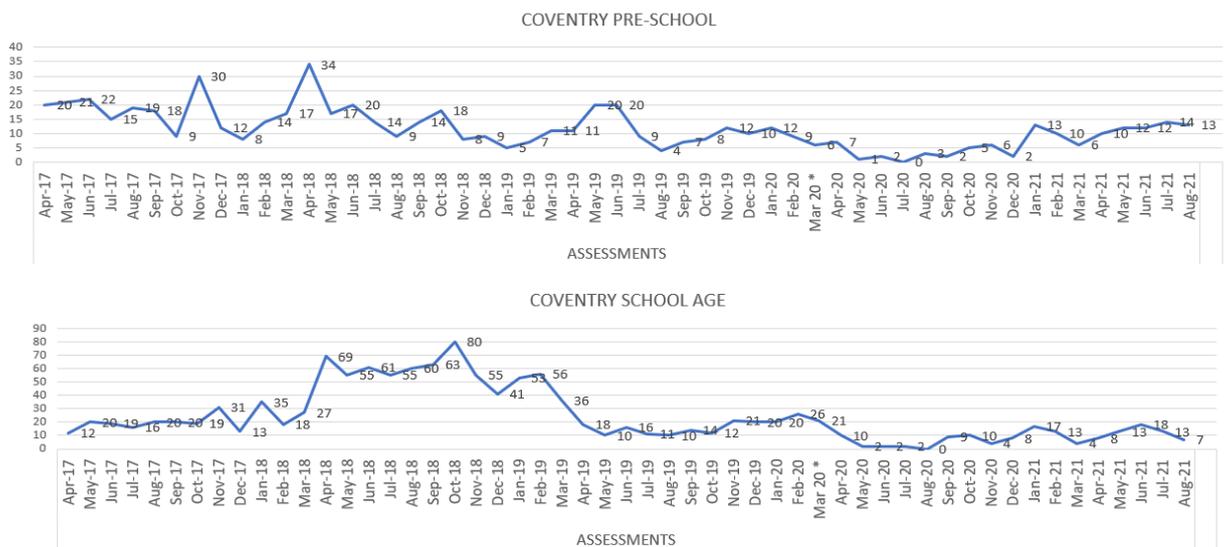
9.1 Information was shared with the task and finish group at their October meeting on the number of referrals made for pre-school and School age children (see graphs below).

Number of referrals made between April 2017 and August 2021 – Children and Young People



9.2

Number of assessments undertaken between April 2017 and August 2021 - Children and Young People

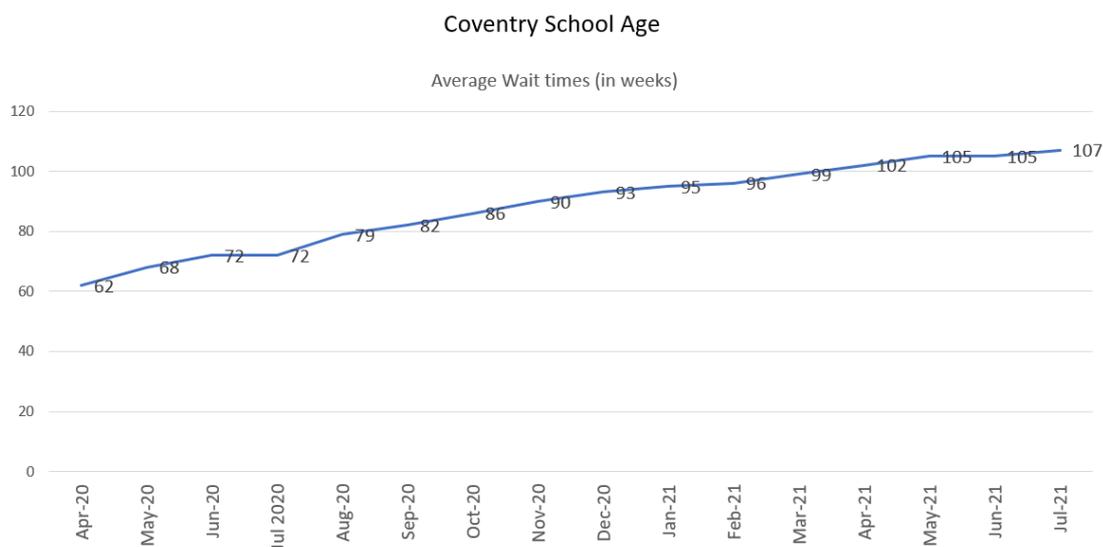


9.3 As of August 2021. There were 185 pre-school children in Coventry awaiting assessment and 1343 children and young people of school age. The system had identified priority groups via school years – these priority groups were pre-school, Year 6, Year 10 and Year 11.

9.4 As of July 2021, the average wait for assessment for a Coventry Pre-school child was 42 weeks which was a reduction from 56 weeks at its peak in March 2021. This reduction was being made as resource had been prioritised for pre-school assessments.

9.5 However, there had been a steady increase in the average wait times of Coventry school age children – up to 107 weeks as of July 2021. Across Coventry and Warwickshire, 598 children and young people had been waiting over 3 years for an assessment, with 10 waiting 4 years and 1 having been on the waiting list for 5 years, as per the graph below.

Current Referral Demand and Assessment Delivery



9.6 The Task and Finish Group heard about the work being done to reduce waiting times as well as the challenges which included difficulties in recruiting specialist staff. Whilst this work was acknowledged, Members stressed that the waiting times were still unacceptable.

9.7 **Recommendation 3:** Partners to accelerate and build on existing workstreams, to reduce the unacceptably long waiting times for diagnostic assessment

10 Early Intervention in Education and Statutory Support (including Education, Health and Care Plan)

10.1 The Task and Finish group heard about Early Intervention in Education and Statutory Support including Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). This includes a description of the targeted nursery support package and a group offer, parenting sessions for the carers focussing on the developmental profile for each child, plus interaction, play skills and strategies to use at home if required in Early Years.

10.2 There is transition support from Nursery into Reception provided by a Higher Level Teaching Assistant for the first term of the child's move into primary school.

10.3 The core offer for school age children and young people is outlined below in 4 key blocks.

Quality First Teaching	Universal Provision Guidance	SENCo Network	Autism in Schools Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce sensory stimulus • Agree a regular seating position • Clear and specific instructions • Emotional Literacy Word Bank • Visual cues and timetable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local agreement about the support available across schools and settings without an EHCP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available for all maintained schools and academies. • Peer support, training and resource sharing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing resources to help Autistic young people develop their identity. • Strengthening co-production between settings and families.

10.4 Following a discussion about how to improve and widen the support in schools, the Task and Finish Group discussed opportunities to work with schools, colleges and universities to encourage them to promote and deliver enhanced training for supporting autism in the classroom. This would help empower staff across the whole school to support autistic children and young people. The skills and knowledge of SENCOs within school could also be better utilised to help staff gain the skills to support autistic children and young people. This led to the following recommendation:

10.5 **Recommendation 4:** The Council and health partners to work with schools, colleges and universities to ensure that all educational professionals (teachers, senior leaders, early career teachers, support staff) have a good understanding of the needs which may present for autistic and neurodiverse pupils and provide appropriate CPD to ensure high quality provision at both whole class and individual intervention level. Good teaching for autistic pupils is good teaching for all.

10.6 Members heard there was a Complex Communication Team who provided training to whole settings on autism as well as bespoke training, including Lego therapy. This team also offered individual and group support.

10.7 The role of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) was outlined. They were introduced in 2015 and are subject to review as part of the SEND Green paper published in March 2022. To be eligible for a plan the individual would have severe and complex needs requiring provision that is over and above what is 'ordinarily available' in the local area and focussed on the barriers to learning. A diagnosis of autism is not required to access the assessment which leads to an EHCP.

10.8 The Educational Psychology Team provide complex case support as well as assessment, formulation and consultation. They work in partnership with young people and their families. One of the issues raised was that the observations and findings from the work undertaken by educational psychologists did not contribute to the autism assessment process. It was discussed that there was an opportunity for the observations of other professionals to be included in the autism assessment process. This could help speed up the diagnostic process, reduce duplication in the system and potentially reduce undue stress on the young person and their family by them having to go through another observation process.

Recommendation 5: All partners work to strengthen data sharing between organisations to enable evidence gathered through assessments to be used by

other professionals as part of the autism assessment process, to assist and expedite diagnosis with the necessary Data Protection Safeguards put in place.

11 Education – Feedback from Special Education Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs)

- 11.1 Task and Finish Group members were invited to attend a SENCO meeting on 15th February. There were representatives from around 80 schools present.
- 11.2 This meeting was held virtually, and participants were asked to submit their views on four questions via a Google Jamboard. The questions asked were:
1. What works well in the system? Things that you value (keepers)
 2. What's missing or doesn't work well? (gaps, areas to improve, things we could stop)
 3. Thinking about the child's experience and the challenges they face in school - if you could change three things to improve support, provision and outcomes, what would you do?
 4. Do you have any other comments?
- 11.3 The opportunity for SENCOs to comment on this topic was well received with over 400 comments made in response to the questions above. This exceeded expectations and the quality and breadth of data collected was phenomenal. Therefore, the Task and Finish group recommend that this data is reviewed in depth by a separate task and finish group in the new municipal year.
- 11.4 **Recommendation 6:** That the Education and Childrens' Service Scrutiny Board undertake a task and finish group during the 2022/23 municipal year to look at the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.
- 11.5 In light of the above recommendation, high level data analysis has been done and a number of key themes identified. Key issues raised included
- 11.6 **The referral process** – there were concerns that the form took too long to complete and by the time a young person was seen, it was out of date and therefore had to be filled in again. The referral form was a paper document which had to be returned by post/fax with no confirmation provided it had been received.
- 11.7 **Recommendation 7:** Health partners review the referral process for diagnosis to simplify it and enable electronic submission of referral forms.
- 11.8 There were significant concerns about the length of wait for assessments, and regarding the support received by parents both pre and post diagnosis. This is addressed in recommendation 4 above.
- 11.9 Concerns were raised about the communication between NHS services and schools – it was difficult for schools to speak to health services about their pupils. A dedicated phonenumber for schools was suggested as an option to explore. There were also issues whereby parents missed appointments, in some cases as they were unable to read the letter offering an appointment, and therefore the referral process had to restart. Issues such as this could be mitigated if the school was copied into appointment letters. Parents and schools struggled to get a dialogue with CAMHS even after a diagnosis.
- 11.10 **Recommendation 8:** Health partners to include schools in correspondence about appointments where schools were involved in the referral process. This will enable schools to support pupils and families through the diagnostic process.

- 11.11 Schools wanted to be able to provide more support to parents whilst they waited for an assessment including how to help the young person at home for example with sleep, food and sensory issues.
- 11.12 SENCo's also flagged the need to improve understanding and support for mental health issues being experienced by pupils, some of which may co-present with autism and some which can lead to similar presentations, for example anxiety.
- 11.13 The recommendation identified by the task and finish group to become an Autism Friendly City, was supported by the schools. They wanted schools to become more autism friendly by increasing understanding amongst pupils, parents and all staff about autism to improve inclusivity and the introduction of quiet, low sensory spaces.
- 11.14 Concerns were raised about the lack of capacity in specialist settings for children and young people who would do better in specialist provision than a mainstream setting.
- 11.15 The increase in the numbers of children and young people presenting with autism was also flagged alongside concerns about the impact this has on resources within the school to ensure support is provided.
- 11.16 There was significant praise and support for the Council's Complex Communications Team who provide support whilst children and young people are awaiting assessment.

12 Pathways and Support Services

- 12.1 The complexity of the services on offer and the pathways to access support became clear as the task and finish group progressed. Sometimes the support was available but it was hard for the young people or their carers to know whether it was the right service for them to access or not. Some services could be accessed without a diagnosis if required. Therefore, it is recommended that:
 - 12.2 **Recommendation 9:** Partners to ensure information on referral and support pathways is accessible to parents, carers, young people and professionals.
 - 12.3 **Recommendation 10** Community support services should be offered in the wider context of neurodiversity rather than limited to those with an autism diagnosis. Services should be titled and described to reflect that not all services require a diagnosis to access them.

13 Impact of Diagnosis

- 13.1 The Task and Finish Group discussed the impact of a diagnosis on the child, young person and their families.
- 13.2 Members were told that whilst a diagnosis was not always required to access services, for some people gaining a diagnosis helped them to understand themselves better. It could provide families with a reason why their child/young person experienced the world differently to others.
- 13.3 However, for some families, a diagnosis brings a sense of grief as they worry about their child's or young person's future. In the past there had been emotional support provided following a diagnosis as well as clinical support, however this was no longer offered. The task and finish group felt this was a gap and therefore recommended:

13.4 **Recommendation 11:** Partners to develop a holistic approach to support for families post diagnosis which includes emotional as well as clinical support and access to training.

14 Preparing for Adulthood

- 14.1 The Task and Finish Group heard about the transition process from Children's Service to Adult services. There was an agreed pathway for preparing for adulthood, outlined within a Transitions Protocol. Referrals were being more consistently sent to Adult Services from age 14 and there were monthly Pre-Transitions Panels supporting early identification and planning for all children and young people. There were regular transition meetings and a transition tracker to help monitor progress. Performance indicators were being developed to help strengthen service delivery.
- 14.2 Services available through Adult Services varied depending on whether the individual needs met Care Act eligibility criteria or not. Those who were eligible for services could access a range of services according to their needs including Promoting Independence Service; Home support; Supported Living; Employment Support; Day Opportunities; Care home; Aids and adaptations/digital solutions and Support for family carers.
- 14.3 Those who did not meet the nationally prescribed eligibility criteria were able to access information and advice/signposting/social prescribing; Mind; Grapevine; Employment Support (Disability Confident Employers); Support for Family Carers and Housing Related Support.
- 14.4 It was recognised by the Task and Finish group that the threshold for eligibility in Adult Services was much higher than that for children and young people through Education or Children's Services, and fewer autistic people would have the level of need required to access specialist provision as an adult.
- 14.5 Adult Services had been reviewing areas for improvement and had identified areas for development. They had undertaken a survey in December 2021 with young people and initial feedback identified that discussions around transition usually start at 14-16 years, but young people and families struggle to understand the changes to the service. There were still times when referrals to Adult Services were made too late. Adult Social Workers were not consistently identified early enough, although this had improved, in particular for children with complex needs and disabilities
- 14.6 There were a number of actions being implemented to improve the transition process. These included the weekly monitoring of performance indicators; completion of Preparing for Adulthood leaflet for children, young people and their families to support their understanding around changes to services; Care Act assessments to be consistently completed by 17.5 years; Adult Social Workers to be identified consistently at 16 years to support planning and enable families to understand the change in provision at 18 years.

15 Employ Autism Higher Education Network Project

- 15.1 Coventry City Council had participated in the Employ Autism employability programme which offered 8-week summer internships for up to 5 autistic students and graduates per organisation.
- 15.2 This was a pilot programme which was delivered in partnership with Ambitious about Autism and Coventry University between July and September 2021. The pilot was a fully-funded programme – with the intern’s, who worked at the Council, having their salaries paid by Santander Universities UK, making it zero-cost for the Council.
- 15.3 The project included two free training sessions delivered by Ambitious about Autism on recruiting, onboarding and working with autistic students and graduates. This training was mandatory for all line managers and buddies participating in the programme.
- 15.4 Benefits for the Council included access to a pool of untapped, diverse talent; the promotion of diversity of thought and problem-solving; reflection on the diverse communities we serve; the removal of structural barriers to employment (traditional application and interview processes) and facilitation of a positive cultural change by raising awareness of conditions required for an inclusive team
- 15.5 The interns gained work readiness skills and ability to move into employment; enhanced confidence to contribute as an employee within a team; found barriers were broken down and they had a chance to expand their networks. It also empowered the interns to self-advocate in the workplace.
- 15.6 There was some learning from the programme which included the interns suggesting that they would like internships to last for 12 weeks rather than the 8 weeks offered, or to be paired up with other interns, if the programme were to run again.
- 15.7 Ambitious about Autism are currently evaluating the pilot programme using feedback from participating employers and interns and a decision is expected soon regarding the future of the programme and whether Santander Universities will continue to fund it moving forward
- 15.8 The Council is working with Ambitious about Autism and Coventry University to explore other ways to continue the project moving forward, if the funding is withdrawn.
- 15.9 The Task and Finish group were impressed with the opportunities offered by participating in the scheme and therefore made the following recommendation
- 15.10 **Recommendation 12:** To continue the Council’s participation in the Employ Autism scheme, or the development of an inhouse equivalent and ensure there is appropriate resource for it to be delivered
- 15.11 Further to the recommendation above, Members felt that the Council should lead by example and become an autism friendly employer and showcase to employers across the City the benefit of employing autistic people.
- 15.12 **Recommendation 13:** For the Council to lead by example and become an inclusive employer including for autism and neurodiversity.

15.13 It was also discussed that barriers to employment are an issue for people with a range of disabilities. SCRUCO would be considering an item on skills resilience in 2022/23 and the task and finish group recommended that:

15.14 **Recommendation 14:** That SCRUCO include in a future item on skills resilience pathways into employment for those with disabilities, including neurodiversity

16 Autism Friendly City

16.1 There are already initiatives taking place to make the city autism friendly however, there is more that can be done to make Coventry a city which celebrates, supports and accepts autism and neurodiversity.

16.2 There is a proposal to develop a Coventry Autism App. The app would have a range of functions which could include information on autism friendly retailers, sign posting to green spaces and free of charge charging points, locations of disabled toilets, social stories to support travel, relaxation games, notification of autism friendly, low sensory sessions as well as identification of large events in the city such as carnivals which autistic people may wish to avoid.

16.3 Potential benefits of the app would be to increase independence of autistic people by reducing sensory overload, providing social stories for travel and reduce dependence on carers

16.4 Whilst the app has been scoped, to be able to develop it and roll it out, possible funding sources, partners, sponsors and suppliers need to be identified and resource allocated to make it happen.

16.5 Through forthcoming public realm works, there are opportunities to design inclusive spaces through the capital works which includes creating environments which are autism friendly.

16.6 Existing buildings and spaces could be adapted to become safe spaces which provide low sensory stimulus areas for autistic people to decompress. Any safe spaces which are introduced, need to be promoted and also included on the Coventry Autism App should development progress.

16.7 **Recommendation 15:** The Council works towards Coventry becoming a city which celebrates, supports and accepts autism and neurodiversity. This would include

- a) the introduction of more inclusive spaces and autism friendly environments throughout the City including in the City Centre, Parks and Open Spaces
- b) safe spaces/low sensory stimulus areas to enable autistic people to decompression throughout the City.
- c) public realm designs should include inclusive spaces including Autism friendly environments.

16.8 **Recommendation 16:** The Council resource and pursue digital opportunities including the development and rollout of a Neurodiversity Support App for Coventry

17 Next Steps

17.1 If the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board support the recommendations of the task and finish group a report will be taken to Cabinet on 12th April 2022 to consider the recommendations.

17.2 Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board will monitor progress on the implementation of the recommendations

17.3 **Recommendation 17:** That Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board receive an update in 6months time on progress towards the recommendations, particularly the impact of measures to reduce waiting times for diagnostic assessments with regular briefings to the Chair in-between.

18 Health Inequalities Impact

18.1 The following paragraph from the Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy outlines some of the health inequalities suffered by autistic people

18.2 *“The difficulties autistic people experience with communication, interaction, and social imagination lead to inequalities in health, education and social outcomes for autistic people compared to non-autistic groups for almost all conditions studied. This includes mortality, obesity, smoking, bullying, social isolation, education, criminal justice, employment, and homelessness. 80% of autistic adults and 70% of autistic children will experience mental health conditions including anxiety and depression, leading to higher rates of self-harm, suicide, and admissions to mental health hospital. In Coventry, the largest proportion of children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans have a primary need of Autism.”*

18.3 Many of these adverse health outcomes are avoidable and can be addressed through appropriate levels of preventative care, support and lifestyle interventions. For this reason it is important that timely access to diagnostic assessments is provided so needs can be identified and addressed.

18.4 The recommendations in this report compliment the Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy 2021-26 and the National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026 which strive the reduce the health inequalities experienced by autistic people.

Victoria Castree
Gennie Holmes
Scrutiny Team

Appendix 1: Recommendations ordered by responsible organisation/ partnership

Recommendation to:	Recommendation Number	Recommendation
Cabinet	1	That the Council work with partners to identify sustainable, long-term funding as there is currently only funding available for the first year of the All Age Autism Strategy delivery plan.
	2	Ensure tackling health inequalities for autistic people is prioritised for delivery as part of the All Age Autism Strategy implementation plan to improve physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing.
	3	The Council work with partners to accelerate and build on existing workstreams, to reduce the unacceptably long waiting times for diagnostic assessment
	4	The Council and health partners work with schools, colleges and universities to ensure that all educational professionals (teachers, senior leaders, early career teachers, support staff) have a good understanding of the needs which may present for autistic and neurodiverse pupils and provide appropriate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to ensure high quality provision at both whole class and individual intervention level.
	5	The Council strengthen data sharing, alongside all relevant partners, to enable evidence gathered through assessments to be used by other professionals as part of the autism assessment process, to assist and expedite diagnosis with the necessary data protection safeguards put in place.
	9	The Council to work with partners to ensure information on referral and support pathways is accessible to parents, carers, young people and professionals.
	11	The Council, with partners develop a holistic approach to support for families post diagnosis which includes emotional as well as clinical support and access to training.
	12	To continue the Council's participation in the Employ Autism scheme, or the development of an inhouse equivalent and ensure there is appropriate resource for it to be delivered.
	13	For the Council to lead by example and become an inclusive employer including for autism and neurodiversity.

	15	The Council works towards Coventry becoming a city which celebrates, supports and accepts autism and neurodiversity. This would include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) the introduction of more inclusive spaces and autism friendly environments throughout the City including in the City Centre, Parks and Open Spaces e) safe spaces/low sensory stimulus areas to enable autistic people to decompression throughout the City. f) public realm designs should include inclusive spaces including Autism friendly environments.
	16	The Council resource and pursue digital opportunities including the development and rollout of a Neurodiversity Support App for Coventry
Health Partners	7	Health partners review the referral process for diagnosis to simplify it and enable electronic submission of referral forms.
	8	Health partners to include schools in correspondence about appointments where schools were involved in the referral process. This will enable schools to support pupils and families through the diagnostic process.
	10	Community support services should be offered in the wider context of neurodiversity rather than limited to those with an autism diagnosis. Services should be titled and described to reflect that not all services require a diagnosis to access them.
Scrutiny	6	That the Education and Childrens' Service Scrutiny Board undertake a task and finish group during the 2022/23 municipal year to look at the in-depth challenges facing schools in providing support to children, young people and their families who are on the autism assessment pathway.
	14	That SCRUCO include a future item on skills resilience pathways into employment for those with disabilities, including neurodiversity
	17	That Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board receive an update in 6months time on progress towards the recommendations, particularly the impact of measures to reduce waiting times for diagnostic assessments with regular briefings to the Chair in-between.



Cabinet

12 April 2022

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities – Councillor A S Khan

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director Streetscene and Regulatory Services

Ward(s) affected:

St Michaels, Radford, Foleshill, Sherbourne, Lower Stoke

Title: Renewal of a Public Spaces Protection Order for St Michaels and surrounding areas

Is this a key decision?

Yes – the proposals affect more than two wards in the City

Executive Summary:

In 2019 a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was created for St Michael ward and surrounding areas. The order was granted following public consultation that was overwhelmingly in favour of the order being granted. The matter was also discussed by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

The original reason for the order being sought was in response to the serious instances of public place violence witnessed in the City and criminal exploitation of young people.

We are fortunate that recently we have seen a downwards trend in the seriousness of these incidents; we can point to some excellent partnership work to address matters, but we cannot discount that some reduction was as a result of the COVID-19. pandemic, and as such it is still felt that there is justification for the renewal of the order.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1) Renew the Public Spaces Protection Order for St Michaels and surrounding areas.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 – Draft Public Space Protection Order for St Michaels and surrounding areas

Appendix 2 – Map outlining the area covered by the PSPO

Appendix 3 – Partner Impact Statements

Appendix 4 – St Michaels Crime Statistics

Background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Although this report hasn't been considered by Scrutiny, the original PSPO was considered by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 17th April 2019.

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Renewal of a Public Spaces Protection Order for St Michaels and Surrounding Areas

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 In recent years Coventry has seen serious incidents of public place violence and criminal exploitation of young people. This order was specifically created to help address aspects of that.
- 1.2 Significant resources have been allocated to address matters, both regionally and locally. We have seen a decrease in gang related activity and public place violence related to gangs. We cannot be certain of the specific reason for this as it is virtually impossible to analyse the impact of just one aspect of the enforcement toolkit used in the city, but partner agencies value the ability to have the powers to use if needed.
- 1.3 Due to the COVID -19 pandemic and subsequent 'lockdowns' it makes year on year comparison very difficult. The order came into use prior to the first lockdown and as such, the next year(s) saw decreases in most criminal acts. The last year has seen us come out of lockdown and as such, year on year data is showing increasing crime rates, but this is to be expected now that societal restrictions have been lifted.
- 1.4 In Appendix 4 to the report there are details of crime statistics for St Michaels ward. Members should note that all potential criminal acts addressed by the order will not only occur solely in St Michaels ward. Gangs will carry out criminal acts elsewhere in the City and outside the City boundaries. It can be seen from the statistics that behaviours are erratic during the life of the order, making inferences by statistics very difficult.
- 1.5 Last year approximately 25 injunctions were successfully obtained against key individuals thought to be active in gangs. These injunctions have been very effective in controlling the behaviour of these individuals and breaches of these injunctions have seen custodial sentences. However, we know many others are still criminally active and as such this order is still needed to help Police quickly address operational issues in key locations within the geographical limits specified in this Order.
- 1.6 The order is an "informed order" this means that someone will be informed that there is an order in place and that their behaviour is unacceptable. Should they accept an officer's instruction, there is no further action taken. Should they refuse then that will be a breach of the order.
- 1.7 In the three years of operation there have been 49 breach notices issued. Breach notices allow further assessment to decide upon the most appropriate sanction. This may be a formal warning, a referral to other agencies regarding drug or alcohol use or it may result in a fixed penalty notice or a referral to court. Most individuals are only encountered once and as such we do not often issue fixed penalty notices or refer to court.
- 1.8 Police colleagues are looking to create a system of recording each interaction with the public under this power, so we can better assess the number of interactions as well as breaches. All encounters will be recorded on body worn cameras and as such if people have a complaint regarding the use of the powers, this can be assessed.
- 1.9 The Police regularly meet with faith and community groups to discuss community relations and the use of their enforcement powers. No concerns regarding the use of this power have been formally raised, through community groups, or any other route.

2 Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 **Do nothing (not recommended).** The Police and local authority, in some cases, already have powers to deal with certain adverse behaviour covered in the proposed PSPO. However, these current powers are viewed as being overly bureaucratic and could quickly result in offenders obtaining criminal records, which may adversely affect their future employment prospects. It is believed that the new additional powers will assist the Police in efficiently addressing the relevant issues.
- 2.2 **Approve the Public Spaces Protection Order for St Michaels and surrounding areas (recommended).** The introduction of a specific PSPO for the designated area would provide useful powers for Police officers, to address adverse behaviours in the designated area. It is quick and easy to use, which is an important consideration when organisations are facing reductions in resources.
- 2.3 The PSPO can be enforced by simply informing someone that their behaviour is unacceptable and advising them to move on. An offence and further action only apply if they refuse. It also has the added benefit of enabling the offender to accept a fixed penalty notice rather than appear in court and receive a criminal record if enforcement is necessary. The wording of the proposed PSPO can be seen in Appendix 1 to the report. The operation of the PSPO will be in line with Home Office guidelines

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Formal public consultation was carried out in 2019 and the results saw over 90% of respondents in favour of the creation of the PSPO. As this is a renewal of an existing order and no changes have been made to the original order we are only required to consult with key partners, their impact statements can be found in Appendix 3 to the report.

4 Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Should the order be approved by Cabinet it will be implemented one day prior to the expiry of the previous order, as indicated in the draft order in appendix 1.

5 Comments from the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

No additional resource will be required to implement the proposed PSPO. Any additional income generated by the introduction of a PSPO will contribute towards Council resources.

5.2 Legal implications

Under sections 59-75 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2104, local authorities have powers to make PSPO's for a period of up to three years.

The Council can only make a PSPO when it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the activities carried out or likely to be carried out in a public place have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the area and are persistent, continuing and unreasonable. The Council would also need to be satisfied that the restrictions imposed were justified

PSPO's can only apply to public places. This means any place to which the public, and / or sections of the public, on payment or otherwise, have access to as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission.

In line with other PSPO's in Coventry, any Fixed Penalty Notice for non-compliance with a PSPO will be set at £100 reduced to £60 if paid within 14 days. If the Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid, it is the Council's policy to prosecute the offender in the Magistrates' Court, where the maximum fine is currently £1000 (level 3 on the standard scale)

6 Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Crime and Disorder

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership working is central to the delivery of the Community Safety Plan and Strategic Assessment.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Police and City Council Officers continue to incorporate the area in their patrol strategies/ work schedules, and they will monitor the behaviour of individuals in these specific locations.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA

An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the creation of the original PSPO. This assessment declared that it was not considered necessary to take any actions to prevent any negative impacts on any protected groups as a result of the renewal of this PSPO.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

The purpose of taking action is to address adverse behaviours in the City Centre, in an attempt to protect and improve the environment and wellbeing of the community.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

Powers granted will be available to West Midlands Police.

Report author(s):

Liam Nagle

Name and job title:

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Service:

Streetscene and Regulatory Services

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Davina Blackburn	Strategic Lead of Regulation	Streetscene and Regulatory Services	10/03/22	11/03/22
Richard Moon	Director of Property Services and Development	-	10/03/22	14/03/22
Lara Knight	Governance Services Coordinator	Law and Governance	10/03/22	11/03/22
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Andrew Walster	Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services	-	10/03/22	11/03/22
Councillor A S Khan	Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities	-	10/03/22	10/03/22

This report is published on the Council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

APPENDIX 1

PSPO for St Michaels Ward and associated areas

COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER ST MICHAELS AREA ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

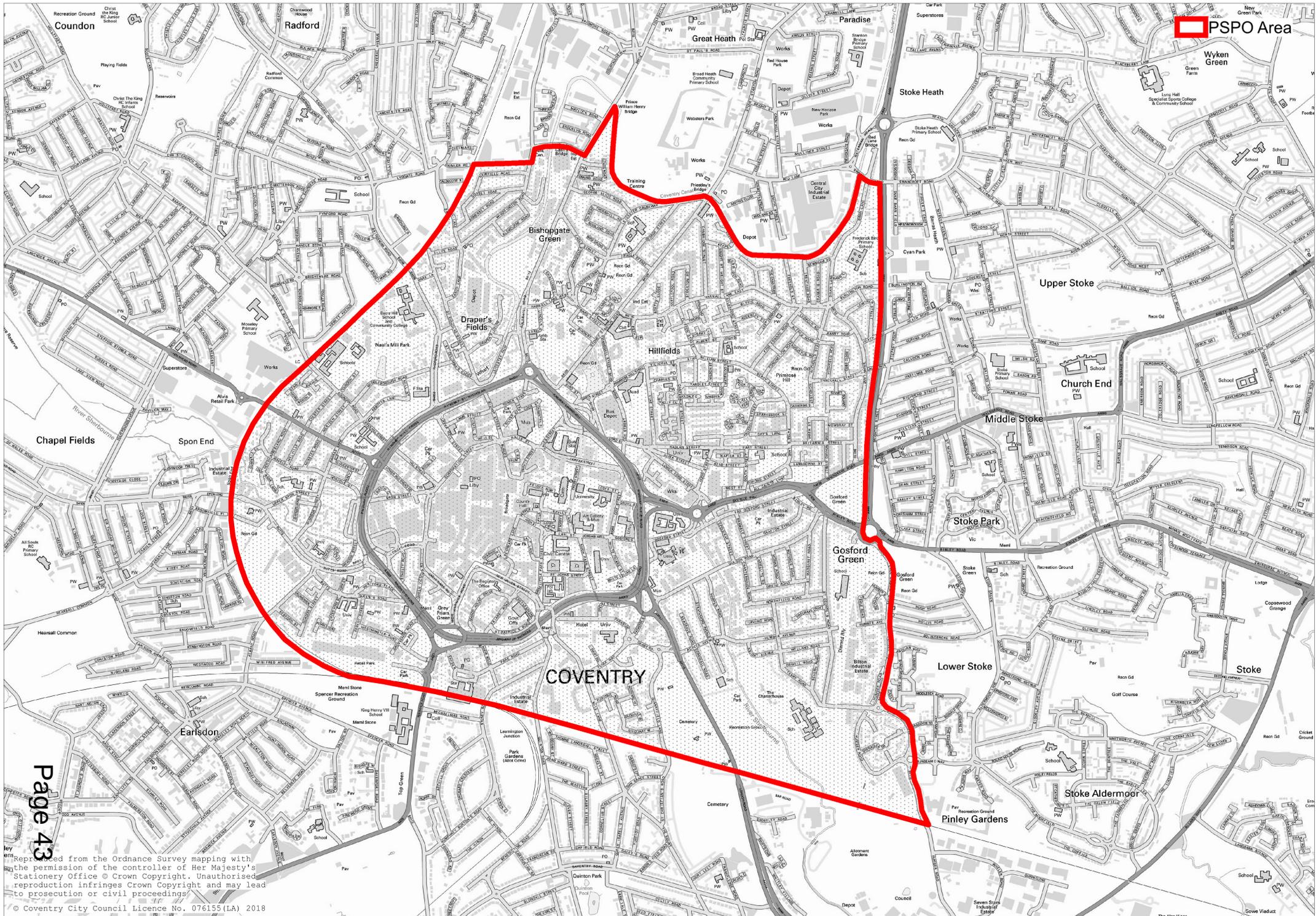
The Council of the City of Coventry (“the Council”) hereby makes the following Public Spaces Protection Order (St Michaels Area Park Anti-Social Behaviour) under Sections 59 to 75 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

1. This Order shall come into operation on 10th June 2022 and shall have effect for a period of 3 years thereafter, unless extended by further orders under the Council’s statutory powers.
2. This Order relates to St Michael Ward and connected areas (see map).
3. The purpose of this order is to prevent any activities associated with Child Exploitation, both sexual and criminal and any other type of anti-social behaviour in the Designated Area including but not limited to violence, including the use of weapons such as knives, alcohol misuse, drug taking and dealing, and abusive and intimidating behaviour and language.

The Council makes this Order because it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that groups of people within the Designated Area are and have carried out anti-social activities including the procurement of young people for criminal and sexual activities. These activities are persistent and continuing and have resulted in members of the community feeling intimidated and unsafe.

4. The effect of this Order is to prohibit the congregation of groups of 2 or more persons in the Designated Area where the behaviour of some or all members of the group has or is likely to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the community.
5. This order was agreed by Cabinet on 12th April 2022

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PSPO Area

COVENTRY

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APPENDIX 3

Impact Statement – West Midlands Police

My Name is Daryl Lyon, I am employed as a Chief Inspector for West Midlands Police, working in Coventry with responsibility for addressing gang issues and serious public place violence and prior to that I was the Neighbourhood Policing Chief Inspector for the City.

In recent years Coventry has had significant issues with public place violence, most of it related to gangs, criminal exploitation and drug dealing. As I understand the history of this Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) it was introduced in direct response to these concerns.

Whilst some very good work across the partnership has seen a downwards trend in serious incidents in the City we cannot get complacent, particularly as it's hard to assess how the pandemic and lockdowns have affected the picture.

Last summer we successfully obtained approximately 25 injunctions against known gang nominals. This indicates the size of the issue and that we could satisfy a judge to place restrictions on who they can associate with and where. What it will not do is address the behaviours of those not injunctioned but still problematic and posing a risk to the community and others, whereas the PSPO can help.

Whilst we know no tool on its own will address all matters, we are supportive of the renewal of this PSPO. It will greatly assist my officers to be able to use these powers, when proportionate and necessary, to address matters within the City to reduce issues with gangs and public place violence.

I would conclude by saying that the power is there as a potential tool to help keep and maintain order in public spaces. As with any power conferred on the police there must a clear and legitimate need to use that power. That being the case, elected members can always be assured that just because the power is there, we will only deploy it when circumstances dictate that it is lawful, necessary and proportionate pursuant to a legitimate policing objective. Any use of force will also be subject to scrutiny and will be recorded on body worn video apparatus.

Impact Statement – Parks and Streetscene

My name is Tim Fox, I am employed by Coventry City Council and part of my responsibilities relates to the cleaning and maintenance of the streets and green spaces within the City Centre.

Certain parts of the City Centre can experience issues different to others, and many of these issues may be seasonal and weather related, but it is fair to say that an area that consistently causes some concern relates to the area containing Millennium Place, Lady Herbert's gardens and the surrounding area.

We are spending a large sum of money on re-stocking the planting in the garden to enhance it and encourage more use, also supporting Historic Coventry Trust with their events in the garden this coming year.

Streetpride operatives often see congregations of groups that are behaving in a manner likely to be detrimental to the general public and the City as a whole. This can range from large groups intimidating others, street drinking, public urination and similar.

Whilst there is a Citywide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) that addresses street drinking, this particular PSPO gives officers the powers to disperse those groups acting in an antisocial manner and spoiling many people's experience of visiting the City Centre. This enables matters to be dealt with in a far quicker manner than alternative resolutions.

As such I would like to support the application to renew this order.

Impact Statement – Business Improvement District (BID)

My name is Adrian Woolford and I am employed by Coventry Business Improvement District (BID) Limited as Operations Manager.

Coventry BID is committed to supporting local businesses, encouraging people to visit the City and ensuring all visitors and employees of those businesses are kept safe.

Any incidents that cause bad publicity for the City or that can be described as making the City Centre a less attractive place to visit can be harmful to the reputation and economic well being of the City.

There was great concern amongst City Centre businesses a few years ago when Coventry was in the news for murders and serious incidents. We feel this would have put some people off visiting the City when they otherwise may have therefore causing financial loss to the businesses within the City Centre.

Equally from time to time in certain locations in the City Centre we have issues reported to us about congregations of people drinking or acting in a manner detrimental to others trying to enjoy the City Centre, such as in Priory Gardens, Millennium Place or Lady Herbert's Garden.

We are supportive of the renewal of this order as we feel it will give Police an improved ability to deal with matters that are of a concern to businesses and visitors to the City Centre, and also ourselves as an organisation.

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Appendix 4 – Crime Stats for St Michaels Ward (year to date)

These statistics cover the period before the COVID-19 'lock down, the period during lock down and the period after. The very nature of this unprecedented period of time makes the drawing of conclusions regarding the impact of this order, extremely difficult. It should also be remembered that the Order is just one tool available to the Police alongside their more traditional powers and therefore, drawing conclusions as to its effectiveness is problematic.

<u>Crime</u>	<u>19/20</u>	<u>20/21</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>20/21</u>	<u>21/22</u>	<u>%</u>
Burglary	223	206	-7.6%	206	280	+35.9%
Knife Crime	136	93	-31.6%	93	178	+91.3%
Robbery	246	163	-33.7%	163	297	+82.2%
Vehicle Crime	424	279	-34.2%	279	359	+28.7%
Violence (U25 non Domestic abuse)	257	149	-42%	149	322	+116%

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Cabinet

12th April 2022

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport – Councillor K Caan

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Business, Investment and Culture

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Approval of Sport England Commonwealth Active Communities Funding Awarded to Coventry City Council

Is this a key decision?

Yes – affects all wards of the City

Executive Summary:

Coventry City Council has successfully bid to Sport England for a grant of up to £624,624.00 as part of the Commonwealth Active Communities Fund programme. The Commonwealth Active Communities Fund was awarded to four West Midlands areas in total – Coventry, Solihull, Birmingham, and the Black Country – to support the creation of a wide range of opportunities to help people get active in their local spaces as part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games legacy.

The focus of the funding for Coventry, will geographically be on the whole of the city. However, the project will focus primarily on the individuals and groups that are suffering from social isolation – a particularly acute issue in the city heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic and successive lockdowns. Through the development of the successful Active Communities funding application, the aim of the project has been focused to reach those who are most inactive and those least engaged, to create opportunities and fundamental behaviour changes that will increase activity, reduce isolation and address social and health inequalities.

‘Coventry Moves’ is the name of the funded project. A project oversight group has been established, on behalf of Coventry City Council in partnership with Coventry Sport & Physical Activity Strategic Board, to support delivery of the project.

The funding secured will focus on three key themed areas and will further support delivery of the International Children’s Games to be hosted in Coventry in August 2022. The three areas are focused on young people’s participation taking place around local parks; closing a number of streets in local communities to engage with people around sport and physical activity; and an adult social care project that will develop pilot work around ‘Commonwealth care homes’ that aims to increase physical activity amongst older residents.

This report is seeking retrospective approval for acceptance of a grant of up to £624,624.00 from Sport England as part of the Commonwealth Active Communities Fund programme.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is recommended to retrospectively approve the acceptance of the Commonwealth Active Communities funding in the sum of £624,624.00 awarded to Coventry by Sport England.

List of Appendices included:

None

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

The funding request has been developed in partnership with Coventry Sport & Physical Activity Strategic Board (an external group of partners within the city).

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Approval of Sport England Commonwealth Active Communities Funding Awarded to Coventry City Council

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Sport England's Commonwealth Active Communities Fund aims to tackle inactivity in local communities and engage underrepresented groups across the West Midlands as part of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games legacy.
- 1.2 As such, Coventry City Council applied to Sport England for funding for the 'Commonwealth Active Communities: Coventry Moves' project. This project aims to harness the power of the Games to provide sustainable opportunities and improve access to sport and physical activity for local people, boosting community connections and activity levels across the city.
- 1.3 Following the pandemic, the effects of isolation across the city have heightened and emerged as one of the more significant barriers to participation in physical activity. Therefore, isolation was identified as the overarching issue that the project will aim to address through the development of active communities. As a result, this has become the focus of the project's objectives, to tackle isolation and inequalities, to better support local people to become more physically active.
- 1.4 The main objectives of the fund are:
 - ❖ Tackle isolation as the overarching theme by bringing local people together.
 - ❖ Understand and address how the effects of isolation across the city have compounded inequalities, exacerbating pre-existing barriers to physical activity.
 - ❖ Decrease inactivity levels across the city by supporting communities to engage with sport and physical activity.
- 1.5 Using data correlated from the household survey, Mental Health Needs Assessment, the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and from the City of Culture Trust, it is clear that younger people are more likely to report being lonely (especially through and following the pandemic) and older people are more likely to experience loneliness.
- 1.6 The programme will focus on these objectives as a priority and the approach will geographically cover the whole city. Coventry is a city with a lower median age compared to the national average and by its very nature, isolation is an issue which remains excluded from public view, with many people affected left unidentified. Working across the city will provide the best opportunities to engage with those most at risk of isolation and facing the biggest barriers to an active lifestyle.
- 1.7 Further analysis of the data supports this approach, identifying a number of non-geographical factors which have the highest impact on loneliness. The findings in Coventry are in line with the literature review on factors influencing loneliness and social isolation.
 - ❖ 16-24's score highest on loneliness
 - ❖ Women are more likely to be lonely than men
 - ❖ Carers, disabled and unemployed people are more likely to be lonely
 - ❖ Fewer than half of adult social care users report having as much social contact as they would like to.

- 1.8 Correlating and sharing data from multiple sources and gathered from multiple sectors has enabled the development of the Commonwealth Active Communities programme to be focused on providing the most impact and benefit to residents, further allowing the development of a more detailed understanding of community activation within the city. This insight has also been important to establishing learning from the Coventry City of Culture Trust's work in local communities.
- 1.9 There is still much more activity to map and understand. This approach supports additionality not duplication in the programme or in use of resources. It also safeguards the capacity of small organisations in the city, enabling a better understanding of the demands of their time and their wider needs (providing distributive leadership to smaller organisation), not just those focused on sport and physical activity.
- 1.10 From both quantitative and qualitative data gathered, it has been possible to draw the following conclusions:
- ✓ There is opportunity to connect younger and older people in the city through a programme addressing loneliness and social isolation.
 - ✓ Events and activities should be focused on connecting opportunities to areas where people have fewer opportunities.
 - ✓ Connections must be built between people needing specialist health/social care services and others to maximise benefit.
 - ✓ Hyper-local, street focused activity is essential to the approach.
- 1.11 The key areas identified from the development work which underpin the programme are:
- ❖ Children, young people, and the elderly will form the focus demographics as these are the populations most likely to report feeling lonely and most likely to experience isolation.
 - ❖ Hyper-local activity is essential, both in relation to activation programmes and creating active environments. The programme will take place throughout the city, but activities and developments will be street-focused and co-created with communities.
 - ❖ Further themes for the initial stages of the funding will include the development of the Go Parks programme and connecting communities with their local green spaces; developing the local workforce through a collaborative approach and distributed leadership across the city and throughout communities; and developing effective monitoring and evaluation.
 - ❖ The programme will continue to develop alongside the Coventry Sports and Physical Activity strategic network, ensuring the number of organisations involved with and benefitting from the funding continues to increase.
- 1.12 In December 2021, Sport England confirmed Coventry's bid had been approved. A formal award letter was subsequently received in January 2022 and an activation programme has been developed to support mobilisation of the programme in the build-up to the Commonwealth Games.

2 Options considered and recommended proposal

Option 1 – Reject the Grant Funding (not recommended)

- 2.1 The funding will have a benefit across the city to the whole community to help to bring communities back together following the pandemic. In addition, the funding will target local people who are isolated in their local communities and without the funding it would not reduce the scale and impact possible.

- 2.2 The funding is to develop activation in the build up to the commonwealth games, whilst delivering for 18 months after the games finish, creating a local legacy. Not accepting the funding would reduce the impact of the Commonwealth Games on the local community.
- 2.3 Not accepting the funding would reduce the impact that the council and its partner organisations would have in local communities.

Option 2 – Accept the Grant Funding (recommended)

- 2.4 The value of the ‘Commonwealth Active Communities: Coventry Moves’ Grant is such that the Council’s Constitution requires formal approval prior to acceptance. There is no additional financial requirements from the council as part of the grant funding.
- 2.5 As time did not allow for Cabinet approval in advance of accepting the grant agreement, acceptance of the grant was approved in accordance with the provision of paragraph 2.3 of Part 3F of the Council Constitution by the Director of Business, Investment & Culture, following consultation with Councillor K. Caan (Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport) and Councillor Clifford (Chair, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board), with the decision to be reported to Cabinet retrospectively.
- 2.6 The Commonwealth Active Communities grant will enable thousands of local people to engage in the Commonwealth Games with a specific focus of activation on their doorstep in a hyper local approach.
- 2.7 The funding will support the Council’s aim to reduce health inequalities targeting local people who have been affected by the pandemic, whilst utilising Sport and Physical Activity to help to improve wellbeing.
- 2.8 The “Go Parks” theme of the project will support young people to access many green spaces across the city to become physically active through a range of engaging activities supported by the Coventry Youth Partnership.
- 2.9 The focus on local streets within local communities will enable people to try a variety of physical activities and work with communities and local organisations to continue these over the two-year period and be driven by local people and partners.
- 2.10 As part of the grant funding, the project focussed on Adult Social Care will create physical activity opportunities that are developed by local people to create Commonwealth Care homes to celebrate the Commonwealth Games in 2022 coming to Coventry. The focus will also support integrated living facilities and community settings to become more active and to reduce social isolation.
- 2.11 The funding is for a two-year period and will have a huge impact locally but in addition will continue to build the profile of Coventry and its place-based approach with national partners such as Sport England who are providing this grant funding to the City Council.

3 Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 The Council’s Sports, Culture & Destination team consulted with stakeholders and partners, including the Coventry Sport & Physical Activity Strategic Board, in developing the approach taken for the bid. A series of workshops and one to one sessions took place with a variety of partners across this city. This helped to guide the principles within the proposal, drawing on feedback, local knowledge and understanding of what local people were feeding back to organisations who were working closely with local people during the pandemic.

- 3.2 Data, as previously highlighted, was supplied by the Council's Insight Team, including information from the Household Survey, Mental Health Needs Assessment, the Joint Cultural Needs Assessment and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- 3.3 Prior to submission, the bid received sign off from the Cabinet Member for Sport and Public Health, the Strategic Lead (UK City of Culture and Commonwealth Games) and Acting Head of Sports, Culture and Destination Services, and the Commonwealth Games Officers Group.

4 Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The 'Commonwealth Active Communities: Coventry Moves' Grant Award Letter was received January and approved in February 2022 by the Director of Business, Investment and Culture, following consultation with Councillor K Caan, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and Councillor Clifford, Chair of Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5). Consultations with stakeholders, partners and relevant organisations were underway prior to this - and the applicable commissioning of projects and grants is now underway.

5 Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

The Commonwealth Active Communities: Coventry Moves Grant offer is valued at £624,624.00 for spend to December 2023.

A sum of up to £624,624.00 will be transferred to the City Council as per the grant terms and conditions set out in the grant agreement. Claims will be made to the awarding body at six monthly intervals for the duration of the programme – in line with expenditure. A final payment will be subject to any evaluation requirements from the awarding body, who are providing external consultants to deliver the monitoring and evaluation framework for the project

There is no match funding required from the Council.

5.2 Legal implications

The grant funding will contain terms and conditions which are legally binding. The Council will need to ensure that it is able to comply with the same.

Any works and services required to deliver the schemes must be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the procurement legislation (as appropriate).

6 Other implications

- 6.1 How will this contribute to the achievement of the council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan / scorecard) / organisational blueprint / LAA (or Coventry SCS?)

The services supported by the grant programme will contribute to the One Coventry Corporate Plan's vision to help to improve the health and wellbeing of residents by helping them to lead healthier lifestyles.

The project will increase access to arts, sports and cultural opportunities including leisure activities, music and events.

The project will also contribute to raising the profile of Coventry through promoting Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for arts and culture; sports and leisure; music and events.

The service will support the plan to reduce health inequalities by working towards becoming an age friendly city and helping support people facing multiple and complex needs.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

The Sport team at the Council will work closely to understand and mitigate risks in relation to the Commonwealth Active Communities Sport England Funding. A key requirement from the Sport England Grant Conditions is for the Council to keep a Risk Register and regularly update to Sport England officers. There are steering groups built into the governance structure. The Council is required to agree and manage the procurement / award of project funding to partners. Council officers will brief relevant Cabinet member(s) on key updates through regular (fortnightly) informal briefings, as required.

A project plan has been developed to use for all areas of the work including the three themed areas. This plan will feed into relevant steering groups and allow for regular updates, tracking of progress and reporting of project milestones.

The external consultancy provided will provide capacity to externally review the project on an ongoing basis and will allow for reporting to reduce any risk and understand the learning from the project.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The grant provides for additional resources within the Sports, Culture and Destination team at the City Council to deliver a Commonwealth Games legacy for the City and local people.

6.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

The provision is targeted at supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities – especially those impacted by the pandemic and most at risk of isolation.

The provision will also be targeted city-wide but will focus on areas that are identified at highest risk of stubborn inequalities.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

There are no implications.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

A number of partners across the city have helped to develop the bid in partnership with the City Council.

Partners such as CV Life, Think Active and Positive Youth Foundation (representing Coventry Youth Partnership) are being commissioned by Coventry City Council to support delivery and distribution of the Commonwealth Active Communities Sport England Funding – engaging a range of wider delivery partners via themed programme commissions.

One of the main aspects of the award will be to demonstrate distributive leadership. This is a requirement for all the commissioning organisations – leading to a range of smaller organisations, charities and Community Interest Companies that will support the delivery of the project. This will be cascaded down via a number of delivery partners such as Think Active, CV Life, and Positive Youth Foundation. By doing this, it will provide added resource and capacity for the Council to deliver the project as a whole in a focused, place-based approach.

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