

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 20 June 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor J Birdi (Chair)

Councillor F Abbott	Councillor R Lakha
Councillor S Agboola	Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor M Lapsa
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor M Ali	Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor R Bailey	Councillor P Male
Councillor L Bigham	Councillor A Masih
Councillor J Blundell	Councillor K Maton
Councillor R Brown	Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor K Caan	Councillor C Miks
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor B Mosterman
Councillor J Gardiner	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor S Gray	Councillor S Nazir
Councillor L Harvard	Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor G Hayre	Councillor E M Reeves
Councillor M Heaven	Councillor G Ridley
Councillor P Hetherington	Councillor E Ruane
Councillor A Hopkins	Councillor K Sandhu
Councillor J Innes	Councillor P Seaman
Councillor T Jandu	Councillor B Singh
Councillor A Jobbar	Councillor R Singh
Councillor A Kaur	Councillor R Thay
Councillor S Keough	Councillor CE Thomas
Councillor T Khan	Councillor A Tucker
Councillor AS Khan	Councillor D Welsh

Honorary Alderman J Clifford, D Skinner and T Skipper

Apologies: Councillor T Sawdon and R Simpson
Honorary Alderman H Fitzpatrick and M Hammon

Public Business

14. **Minutes of the Annual Meeting and of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 18 May 2023**

The minutes of the Annual Meeting and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 18 May 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

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

(a) John Gregg

The Lord Mayor referred to John Gregg who is leaving the City Council. John has worked in Coventry since 2015 and during his time here, the Council's Children's Services Ofsted rating has moved from 'inadequate' to 'good'. John is moving on to become Executive Director of Children's Services at Peterborough City Council and on behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor wished him every success in the future.

Members paid tribute to the work undertaken by John and conveyed their best wishes to him for the future.

(b) Death of Russell Plester

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Russel Plester, Head Teacher of Finham Park 2. Mr Plester was the Head at Finham Park 2 since it opened in 2015 and he was a hugely popular and well-respected colleague.

Although this was previously referred to at the AGM, it was considered appropriate to refer to it again today to allow Members to pay tribute and to convey their condolences.

Members paid tribute to Russell, for his charm and his unequivocal enthusiasm for children's education, the school and all his colleagues. He was referred to as a truly genuine gentleman who will be immensely missed by all who knew him.

It was noted that a letter of condolence had been sent on behalf of the City Council to his wife and family at this very sad and difficult time.

(c) King's Birthday Honours List

The Lord Mayor referred to an honour for a Coventry resident in the recent King's Birthday Honours List.

MBE - Judy Ledger, founder and Chief Executive of Baby Lifeline for services to pregnant women and new born babies.

Members noted that a letter would be sent on behalf of the City Council congratulating Judy her on her achievement.

16. Petitions

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

(a) Petition calling for the pavement to be tarmacked as per the works currently being done on Dane Road, west towards town - 79 signatures presented by Councillor K Caan.

(b) Petition objecting to the building of student accommodation on Burnsall Road - 27 signatures, submitted by Councillor A Tucker.

(c) Petition calling on the Council to reject proposals to convert commercial property 'First Interiors', Watch Close into student flats which would lead to the closure of the Caribbean Centre - 426 signatures presented by Councillor D Welsh.

17. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

18. Short-Term Home Support Services

Further to Minute 120 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing which sought approval for the re-commissioning of Short Term Support (STHS) in Coventry.

The report indicated that STHS is a key feature in the delivery of good Health and Social Care Services. The services support adults to acquire or reacquire daily living skills to remain residing independently in their own homes, a key policy objective for Health and Social Care. The service is also integral to reducing delayed discharges from acute hospitals, including over the difficult winter period and was an important feature during the Covid-19 pandemic. The service is also accessed by Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT) as part of their Urgent Care Response (UCR) service with an allocation of up to 100 hours per week for this purpose. In addition, the service plays a vital role in preventing hospital admission through short term community based, person centred support that provides reablement and contributes to service user assessments and determination of any ongoing care and support needs.

The current STHS contracts were awarded in 2017 to a framework of independent sector providers and since then there has been an increase in the expected demand for the service from 1995 hours per week in 2017 to a peak of approximately 2800 hours per week during 2022 with current delivery being approximately 2,600 hours per week, due to increasing demand for the service especially in relation to supporting hospital discharge. Much of the additional activity has been funded by specific Hospital Discharge Grants during and since the Covid pandemic.

There is a supplementary element to this service provided at night called the Mobile Night Carers that support adults with night-time needs and is instrumental in avoiding or delaying the need for admission to a care home for those who may require support during the night.

The current contracts expire on 31 October 2023, but an extension would be put in place to 31 January 2024 to enable the Council to run a competitive process to ensure ongoing support. The new contracts would be expected to be in place by February 2024, which has necessitated an extension of the current arrangements by three months to ensure continuity of services in the intervening period.

The Commissioning Team have engaged with key stakeholders including service users, carer, providers, health and social care staff and has also used its

experience over the past few years to inform the future delivery model, which seeks to incorporate several key service improvers.

RESOLVED that the Council approves the procurement of adults Short Term Home Support provision and delegates authority to the Director of Adults and Housing, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Services, for the award of contracts following completion of the tender process.

19. Appointment of the Deputy Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee

The City Council considered a report of the Chief Legal Officer which sought approval to a change of appointment of the Deputy Chair of the Council's Licensing and Regulatory Committee. The appointments were made at the Annual General Meeting of the Council on 18 May 2023.

RESOLVED that the Council appoints Councillor Rachel Lancaster to the role of Deputy Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee in place of Councillor Becky Gittins, with immediate effect.

20. Annual Report from the Leader to the Council on Key Decisions made under Special Urgency Provisions

The City Council noted a report of the Leader which reported on Key Decisions made in the previous year where the Special Urgency provisions were used. This applied where it was not practicable to give notice at least 5 clear days in advance of a Key Decision being made.

The Leader reported that there were no such cases during the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

21. Exercise of Emergency Functions

The City Council noted a report of the Interim Chief Executive (Chief Operating Officer) which informed the Council of the following decisions to exercise emergency functions undertaken by the Interim Chief Executive (Chief Operating Officer), in accordance with the Constitution and following consultation with the Leader of the Council, Councillor G Duggins: -

- a) Acceptance of a grant in the sum of £2,565,696 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to ensure the recent humanitarian schemes offering sanctuary to Afghan and Ukrainian peoples provided sufficient longer-term accommodation to those they support; mitigated the increased pressures on local authority homelessness and social housing resources arising as sponsorship/family placements/bridging accommodation arrangements for Ukrainian refugees comes to an end and; concurrently support wider local authority housing and homelessness responsibilities to UK nationals.

The decision was critical to the Council’s ability to provide housing needs within Coventry.

- b) Acceptance of a grant in the sum of £23,855,688.70 from the Department of Energy, Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (formally known as the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy) in respect of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1. In conjunction with Citizen Housing Group Limited, the grant funding, together with Citizen’s own investment, will deliver energy efficiency measures to approximately 2,000 social housing properties in Coventry. Works on the homes will predominately improve the fabric and ventilation of a property including cavity/external wall insulation, increased loft insulation, improved windows and doors and improving ventilation to reduce the potential for mould.

The decision was critical to support the energy efficiency improvements to houses in Coventry.

22. Statement of Assurance (Director of Children Services)

The City Council noted a report of the Chief Legal Officer which informed Council of the interim arrangements being put in place following the departure of the current Director of Children’s Services and provides a Statement of Assurance as to how, on an interim basis, the statutory responsibility of the Director of Children’s Services under Section 18 of the Children Act 2004 will be met. The updated Assurance Document for the fulfilment of the Director of Children’s Services was appended to the report.

23. Question Time

Councillors P Hetherton and G Duggins provided written answers to the questions set out in the Questions Booklet, together with oral responses to supplementary questions asked at the meeting.

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

No	Questions asked by	Question put to	Subject matter
1	Councillor F Abbott	Councillor P Hetherton	Homes prone to flooding in Wyken due to drainage issues and assurances that Severn Trent will be pressured into sorting the issues
2	Councillor S Gray	Councillor G Duggins	The receipt and circulation of responses received from Government in respect of Motions

3	Councillor A Tucker	Councillor K Caan	Refurbishment of tennis courts at Spencer Park for the benefit of the local community
4	Councillor A Tucker	Councillor P Hetherington	The imminent consultation on Earlsdon Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme
5	Councillor A Tucker	Councillor D Welsh	Government plans to deregulate housing for asylum seekers

24. **Motion Without Notice - Time Limits on Speeches**

In accordance with the Constitution, Councillor M Mutton moved the following Motion without Notice, that was seconded by Councillor G Lloyd and carried:

“That, as it’s the first full Council meeting of the year and there a number of issues to raise, in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 (g) of the Constitution, a Motion without Notice be moved to suspend Procedure Rules 12.1 and 12.3 and 12.4 relating to time limits on speeches to enable the Leader to present his Statement and Group Leaders to reply to that Statement.”

RESOLVED that the Motion without Notice as set out above be adopted.

25. **Statements**

The Leader, Councillor G Duggins, made a Statement in respect of a number of matters including the Ofsted inspection of Coventry Adult Education Services; the Channel 4 programme ‘Kids’; John Gregg; Director of Childrens Services; Coventry City Football Team; Coventry Rugby Team; Coventry Building Society Arena, Motofest; Very Light Rail; the 75th anniversary of Windrush; and Armed Forces Day.

Councillor G Ridley, Leader of the Conservative Group, responded to the Statement.

Councillor S Gray, Leader of the Green Group, responded to the Statement.

The Leader made a short reply.

26. **Debate: The State of the City's Highways and Footpaths**

The following debate was moved by Councillor M Heaven and seconded by Councillor M Lapsa:

“This Council expresses its deep concern about the state of the city’s highways and footpaths.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor P Hetherton, seconded by Councillor Lancaster and carried:

Delete the full stop and insert the following at the end of the Motion:-

“after thirteen years of cuts to Coventry’s funding from Westminster; and wholeheartedly supports Labour’s plans to invest a record circa £13 million in capital funds this year to repair our roads and pavements locally.”

The amended Motion now to read

“This Council expresses its deep concern about the state of the city’s highways and footpaths after thirteen years of cuts to Coventry’s funding from Westminster; and wholeheartedly supports Labour’s plans to invest a record circa £13 million in capital funds this year to repair our roads and pavements locally.”

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

Note: In accordance with the Constitution, a recorded vote in relation to the amended Motion was taken.

The Councillors voting for, against and abstaining in relation to the amended Motion were as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Councillor F Abbott	Councillor R Bailey	Councillor J Birdi
Councillor S Agboola	Councillor J Blundell	
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor J Gardiner	
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor M Heaven	
Councillor M Ali	Councillor T Jandu	
Councillor L Bigham	Councillor S Keough	
Councillor R Brown	Councillor M Lapsa	
Councillor K Caan	Councillor J Lepoidevin	
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor P Male	
Councillor S Gray	Councillor A Masih	
Councillor L Harvard	Councillor B Mosterman	
Councillor G Hayre	Councillor G Ridley	
Councillor P Hetherton		
Councillor A Hopkins		
Councillor J Innes		
Councillor A Jobbar		
Councillor A Kaur		
Councillor R Lakha		
Councillor R Lancaster		
Councillor G Lloyd		
Councillor K Maton		
Councillor J McNicholas		
Councillor C Miks		

Councillor M Mutton		
Councillor S Nazir		
Councillor J O'Boyle		
Councillor E Reeves		
Councillor E Ruane		
Councillor K Sandhu		
Councillor P Seaman		
Councillor B Singh		
Councillor R Singh		
Councillor R Thay		
Councillor CE Thomas		
Councillor A Tucker		
Councillor D Welsh		

Result:
For: 36
Against: 12
Abstentions: 1

27. **Debate: The Cost of Living and Unjustified Profits Made by some Supermarkets and Suppliers**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor CE Thomas and seconded by Councillor A Tucker:

“This Council recognises the hardship and suffering of ordinary people brought about by the unparalleled rise, not only in fuel and energy costs, but in the cost of good basic nutritious food.

This Council calls upon the Government to bring forward measures to ensure that nobody living in the UK goes hungry because of the exorbitant prices of basic healthy food and that the question of the unjustified profits made by some supermarkets and suppliers is addressed without delay”.

RESOLVED that the Motion as set out above be adopted.

28. **Debate: Pedestrian and Cyclist Access to the Tip at London Road**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor S Gray and seconded by Councillor E Reeves:

“Coventry City Council notes:

- * That it is not currently possible for pedestrians and cyclists to make use of the tip on London Road.
- * That, according to the census, over 37,000 Coventry households (more than one in four) do not have access to a car or van
- * That items such as electrical waste, which the council website states should not be placed in household bins, can often be easily carried by pedestrians and cyclists

Therefore, Coventry City Council resolves to introduce pedestrian and cycle access to the tip to make it easier for Coventry residents to dispose of their waste responsibly”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor M Heaven and seconded by Councillor J Blundell:

Insert the following at the end of the above Motion

“We will also review the current booking arrangements at the ‘Whitley tip’ and consult on moving to one day a week where no booking is required.”

The amended Motion now to read:

“Coventry City Council notes:

* That it is not currently possible for pedestrians and cyclists to make use of the tip on London Road.

* That, according to the census, over 37,000 Coventry households (more than one in four) do not have access to a car or van

* That items such as electrical waste, which the council website states should not be placed in household bins, can often be easily carried by pedestrians and cyclists

Therefore, Coventry City Council resolves to introduce pedestrian and cycle access to the tip to make it easier for Coventry residents to dispose of their waste responsibly.

We will also review the current booking arrangements at the ‘Whitley tip’ and consult on moving to one day a week where no booking is required”.

At this point, and in accordance with Procedure Rule 10 (d) of the Constitution, Councillor M Mutton moved a Motion without Notice, that was seconded by Councillor G Lloyd, to refer this item to a meeting of the Cabinet Member for City Services for consideration and that the Mover, Councillor S Gray and the Seconder, Councillor E Reeves be invited to attend that meeting for consideration of the item.

RESOLVED that the Motion without Notice as set out above be adopted.

(Meeting closed at 6.05 pm)