

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member (Policy and Leadership) held at 1.00 pm on Thursday, 19 February 2015

Members Present:

Councillor Mrs A Lucas (Cabinet Member)
Councillor J Blundell (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Directorate):

Chief Executives J. Venn
Resources H. Lynch, M. Rose

Public Business

13. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

14. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th December 2014 were agreed and signed as a true record.

15. Response to Petition to Stop Coventry being merged into Super area of Birmingham

The Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership considered a report of the Chief Executive, which set out a proposed response to a petition which opposed Coventry joining a 'Super Area of Birmingham' without a public referendum.

The Cabinet Member also considered a petition bearing 161 signatures which requested that the Council "Stop our Council Leader being able to agree to let Coventry join the Super area of Birmingham without a public referendum". The petition organiser was invited to attend the meeting to speak on behalf of the petitioners, but did not attend.

The report indicated that the petition appeared to be based on the mistaken assumption that the Leader of the Council has the authority to agree to let Coventry join a Super area of Birmingham. This was not the case. Under the Council's constitution, any proposal for Coventry City Council to become part of any formal grouping of local authorities, such as a joint committee, was not within the authority of the Leader of the Council.

In addition, the report confirmed that there were specific requirements under legislation that would have to be met before any Combined Authority or Economic Prosperity Board could create under the parts of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. These were formal bodies and each one could only be set up individually by specific Order by the Secretary of State.

Before such a body could be created, legislation required that each area must undertake a governance review and formal consultation undertaken locally on any proposals. After this had taken place locally, proposals for a new Combined Authority or Economic Prosperity Board must be submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. The Secretary of State would then undertake another formal round of consultation before putting the proposals before Parliament for statutory approval.

It was noted that there were currently no formal proposals being put forward by Coventry City Council and that any future proposals for the area covered by the City Council would be subject to formal approval by the Council and to the statutory process set out above.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership instruct officers to write to the petition organiser to inform the petitioners that the Leader of the Council does not have the authority to act as set out in their petition and to provide them with the information about the legislation that governs the setting up of Combined Authorities and Economic Prosperity Boards.

16. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

17. **Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 1.25 pm)