

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 6 December 2016

Present:

Members: Councillor L Harvard (Chair)

Councillor F Abbott	Councillor M Lapsa
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor A Lucas
Councillor R Auluck	Councillor P Male
Councillor R Bailey	Councillor K Maton
Councillor S Bains	Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor L Bigham	Councillor K Mulhall
Councillor J Birdi	Councillor J Mutton
Councillor J Blundell	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor R Brown	Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor K Caan	Councillor G Ridley
Councillor J Clifford	Councillor E Ruane
Councillor G Crookes	Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor P Seaman
Councillor D Gannon	Councillor B Singh
Councillor M Hammon	Councillor R Singh
Councillor J Innes	Councillor D Skinner
Councillor B Kaur	Councillor K Taylor
Councillor L Kelly	Councillor R Thay
Councillor D Kershaw	Councillor C Thomas
Councillor T Khan	Councillor S Walsh
Councillor A Khan	Councillor D Welsh
Councillor R Lakha	Councillor G Williams

Honorary Alderman Mr Gazey

Apologies: Councillor R Ali, A Andrews, R Lancaster, T Mayer, C Miks, T Skipper and H Sweet

Public Business

70. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2016 were signed as a true record.

71. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the private report on “Coventry Investment Fund Investment Cathedral Lanes Phase 2”, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of information defined in Paragraph 3 of the Schedule 12A of the Act as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and that in all of the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

72. **Coventry Good Citizen Award**

On behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor and Judge Griffith-Jones presented Mr Jim Sweeney and Mr John Robertson with the Good Citizen Award. Their citation read:

“This Good Citizen Award to Jim Sweeney and John Robertson is for their selfless devotion to the young people of Coventry, for organising and running short football sessions, including training, games and competitions, for over 20 years.

Over those years they have offered a variety of football experiences to local young people, including the 11 a side version, but it has always been the short football, the 4 a side variety, that predominated. They have introduced thousands of young people to this sport, with ages ranging from 5 to early teens. The emphasis is on taking part no matter how good their football skills; participation and fair play are key. Many come from the Longford, Bell Green area but others, both boys and girls, come from all parts of the city.

At a time of concern regarding youth obesity Jim and John offer a sporting option in a safe and supportive environment. Four-a-side football is all about sportsmanship and Jim and John injected this into the rules. They have given young people from all walks of life a direction towards good citizenship.

They have invested a large amount of their own time on this project. The courts need to be set up for each session and outside the events they spend numerous hours seeking sponsorship and organising related aspects to the football itself. In the past these have included ensuring medals are given to participants to mark special occasions and for participating in competitions run in parallel to the World Cup, the recent Euros and the Olympics.

Jim and John are true community people, freely giving their time for the benefit of others and therefore worthy recipients of the Good Citizen Award”.

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

The Lord Mayor informed Members that he had commissioned a colouring book featuring local landmarks that could be purchased with the proceeds going to the Lord Mayor’s Charities.

74. **Petitions**

RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate City Council bodies or the West Midlands Transport Authority:

- (a) Request to restrict parking on both sides of Gainford Rise of up to approximately 35 metres from the junction of Clifford Bridge Road – 72 signatures, presented by Councillor Abbott.**
- (b) Request for bus route from Lower Wall Hill Road through Brownhill Green Road – 14 signatures, presented by Councillor Birdi.**

(c) Request for the speed limit on Wall Hill Road be reduced to a more appropriate speed between the White Lion Pub and Hollyfast Lane – 59 signatures, presented by Councillor Williams.

(d) Request to reject the proposal to reroute footpath M242 and the creation of a new access point via Juniper Drive and retain the existing arrangements – 157 signatures, presented by Councillor Ridley.

(e) Request to extend the Number 27 bus to incorporate the Airport Retail Park into its route – 150 signatures, presented by Councillor Thomas.

75. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

76. Increasing Coventry's Superfast Broadband Coverage

Further to Minute 52 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Executive Director of Place which sought approval to proposals for investment to increase Coventry's superfast broadband coverage.

The Government expected that 20,000 new jobs and £6.4 billion in gross Value Added (GVA) would be created in the UK by 2024 as a result of investment in broadband infrastructure.

Coventry's broadband coverage currently lagged behind that of similar areas, superfast broadband connections, connections over 20Mbps, were available in just 91.7% of properties in Coventry which compares poorly to areas and is a long way from the Government target for 95% of properties to have superfast broadband by 2017. Birmingham, Derby and Leicester were in the top 40 for Broadband speeds, while Coventry came in at 74 out of 185.

European funding is being made available to improve Superfast broadband infrastructure that serves small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This funding would target areas containing concentrations of SMEs, but would not serve them exclusively; residents and larger businesses would also benefit as the infrastructure in the target areas improves as a result of the project. Ultimately, the project would help the city improve its Superfast broadband coverage considerably as part of its Digital Strategy which is under development would be formally adopted by the end of 2016.

In order to access this funding, the council must provide match funding. Coventry's contribution to an overall £15m package of improvements across Coventry and Warwickshire would be £2.55m. As well as a European grant of £4.86m, Growth Deal funding of £4.3m has been requested from Government. The project would be completed by the established Coventry, Solihull, Warwickshire Broadband Project (CSW Broadband).

RESOLVED that the City Council:

1. **Agree to capital investment of up to £2.55m for Superfast Broadband infrastructure to lever in £2.55m European Regional Development funding, £4.3m Growth Deal funding and £1.1m private sector funds for investment into Coventry's broadband infrastructure.**
2. **Approve the addition of £2.55m to the corporate capital programme, profiled as appropriate in terms of financial year.**

77. **Boundary Commission for England Review of Parliamentary Constituencies: Consultation Response**

Further to Minute 69 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources which detailed the City Council's response to a consultation on the Boundary Commission for England review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries.

In September 2016, the Boundary Commission for England published initial proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries and is consulting on these until Monday 5 December 2016. These proposals would make changes to two of Coventry's three parliamentary constituencies, including combining two Solihull Borough wards with wards in Coventry to create a new constituency called Coventry West and Meriden.

The review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries was being undertaken following the Government's decision to reduce the number of parliamentary constituencies across the UK from 650 to 600 and equalise the number of electors in each constituency.

The Boundary Commission for England (BCE), an independent and impartial non-departmental public body, periodically reviewed all the Parliamentary constituencies in England. It was currently conducting a review on the basis of rules set by Parliament in 2011 under the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 (The Act). They involved a significant reduction in the number of constituencies in England (from 533 to 501) and required that constituencies, apart from two specified exceptions, had an electorate that was no smaller than 71,031 and no larger than 78,507. The West Midlands has been allocated 53 constituencies, a reductions of six from the current number.

At the conclusion of its review, the BCE would be required to make a formal report to the Government during September 2018, recommending any changes that it believed were appropriate to the distribution, size, shape, name or designation of constituencies in England. The recommendations of the BCE would be turned into draft legislation and submitted to Parliament for approval, if approved, the recommended changes would be implemented for the next General Election after the date on which the legislation was passed.

RESOLVED that the City Council's response to the consultation set out at Appendix 1 of the report together with the following additional paragraph, be endorsed.

"Furthermore, this reduction in Members adds to the growing democratic deficit which is already significant. This will be compounded when

repatriation of powers from the European Union to the UK takes place. This will also be accompanied by a further reduction in elected representatives at a time when legislation will require even greater scrutiny.”

NOTE: In accordance with the Constitution, a recorded vote was required.
The Councillors voting for and against the Recommendations were as follows:-

For	Against	Abstain
Councillor Abbott	Councillor Bailey	
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor Birdi	
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor Blundell	
Councillor R Auluck	Councillor Crookes	
Councillor Bains	Councillor Hammon	
Councillor Bigham	Councillor Lapsa	
Councillor Brown	Councillor Lepoidevin	
Councillor Caan	Councillor Male	
Councillor Clifford	Councillor Ridley	
Councillor Duggins	Councillor Sawdon	
Councillor Gannon	Councillor Skinner	
Councillor Harvard	Councillor Taylor	
Councillor Innes	Councillor Williams	
Councillor Kaur		
Councillor Kelly		
Councillor Kershaw		
Councillor A Khan		
Councillor T Khan		
Councillor Lakha		
Councillor Lucas		
Councillor McNicholas		
Councillor Maton		
Councillor Mulhall		
Councillor J Mutton		
Councillor M Mutton		
Councillor O'Boyle		
Councillor Ruane		
Councillor Seaman		
Councillor B Singh		
Councillor R Singh		
Councillor Thay		
Councillor Thomas		
Councillor Walsh		
Councillor Welsh		

Result: 34 for
 13 against
 0 abstentions

78. Coventry Investment Fund Investment Cathedral Lanes Phase 2

Further to Minute 70 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a joint report of the Executive Director of Place and the Executive Director of Resources that

sought retrospective approval for a new loan facility to support the second phase of the Cathedral Lanes development.

A corresponding private report detailing confidential aspects of the proposals was also submitted to the meeting for consideration.

In 2014, the Council awarded a Coventry Investment Fund (CIF) loan to Shearer Property Group (SPG) who own Cathedral Lanes Shopping Centre. The loan award made SPGs plans to redevelop the centre as a leisure scheme and open several new restaurants commercially viable. The first phase of the scheme had been very successful and had formed a key part of the Council's overall plans for regeneration of the City Centre.

SPG now wished to proceed with the second phase of the redevelopment which would include more new restaurants and bring with it further regeneration benefits and increases in business rates. The loan would be made on appropriate commercial terms and would be subject to usual Council controls on such lending.

RESOLVED that the City Council:

- 1. Retrospectively approve the variation to the previous loan agreement granted to Shearer Property Group in September 2014 in relation to the refurbishment of Cathedral Lanes.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Executive Director of Resources, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, to manage the new revolving loan facility. The authority under this recommendation shall include the power to negotiate and agree variations to the terms of the revolving loan facility.**

79. Implementing the Devolution Agreement - Mayoral Combined Authority Functions

Further to Minute 76 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Chief Executive which sought consent for the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2016 to be laid in Parliament. The Order details the further functions required by the Combined Authority, in order to deliver the devolution deal.

Negotiations with Government had continued to ensure that the WMCA would create the right economic development incentives for the people of Coventry. The original 'Devolution Deal' was the basis of this agreement and underpinned the first stage of devolution.

The original Devolution Deal stipulated that the Chair of the WMCA would be a newly, directly elected Mayor. A subsequent Mayoral Electoral Order was made in September 2016 providing for the Election of a Mayor for the WMCA on 4 May 2017.

In conjunction with the Mayoral Election Order, a draft scheme was prepared which was subject to public consultation. The scheme dealt with the proposed functions and powers of the WMCA and the Mayor in line with the Devolution Deal. Following consultation, the scheme was submitted by the WMCA to the Secretary of State to form the basis of a third order, the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendments) Order 2016. The draft Order was now submitted for consent prior to it being approved by the WMCA Board and subsequently laid before Parliament.

RESOLVED that the City Council:

- 1. Note the outcome of the consultation undertaken by the West Midlands Combined Authority in respect of the Mayoral WMCA 'functions' scheme.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Leader to consent to the draft Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendments) Order 2016 to be laid in Parliament subject to having seen the draft finance order and having consulted with the City Council's S151 Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer.**
- 3. Delegate approval of any minor drafting amendments to the Order ("Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority (Functions and Amendments) Order 2016") to the Deputy Monitoring Officer following consultation with the Leader.**

80. Appointment of Named Substitute Members to the Ethics Committee

The City Council considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources which sought approval to appoint named substitute members to the Ethics Committee, to act whenever a member of the Committee is unable to attend a meeting.

RESOLVED that the City Council approves with immediate effect:

- 1. The appointment of Councillor M Mutton as a named substitute to the Ethics Committee (Labour Group).**
- 2. The appointment of Councillor R Bailey as a named substitute to the Ethics Committee (Conservative Group).**
- 3. That the Legal Services Manager (Place and Regulatory) be delegated authority to amend the composition of the Ethics Committee in the Constitution to reflect the appointment of named substitute members.**

81. Appointments to the City Council - Changes in Membership

The City Council considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources which sought approval to amend appointments made at the Annual Meeting of the City Council in May 2016 in respect of the membership of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee.

The report also provided for information, details of a revision to a Shadow Cabinet Member appointment.

RESOLVED that the City Council approves with immediate effect the appointment of:

1. **Councillor T Sawdon as a member of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee in place Councillor J Lepoidevin.**
2. **Councillor G Ridley as a member of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee in place of Councillor A Andrews.**

82. Question Time

Councillors Innes, J Mutton, Maton and Brown provided written answers to the questions set out in the Questions Booklet together with oral responses to supplementary questions put to them at the meeting.

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

No	Question asked by	Question put to	Subject Matter
1	Councillor Williams	Councillor Skinner	Westwood Ward Forum
2	Councillor Williams	Councillor Innes	Bus Lane Review
3	Councillor Williams	Councillor Innes	Missed refuse collections
4	Councillor Williams	Councillor Bigham	Allesley Village Conservation Area
5	Councillor Blundell	Councillor Innes	Bus gate trials
6	Councillor Blundell	Councillor Innes	Street cleansing
7	Councillor Ridley	Councillor Bigham	Delia Derbyshire Way
8	Councillor Thomas	Councillor Abbott	Autumn Statement & adult social care
9	Councillor Male	Councillor Maton	Former Woodlands Academy School Site

83. Statements

- (a) The Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership made a statement in respect of “Progress on the Combined Authority”.

Councillor Blundell responded to the statement.

- (b) The Leader of the Council made a statement in respect of “The Recent Jobs News and the Court Ruling”.

Councillor Blundell responded to the statement.

- (c) The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People made a statement in respect of “Children’s Services Improvement Plan”.

Councillor Lapsa responded to the statement.

84. **Debate - City Schools**

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

“This Council reaffirms its belief that the purpose of the City’s schools is to provide all children and young people, irrespective of background or specific needs, with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to achieve the best life chances possible.

This Council does not believe that aim can be fulfilled through the introduction of additional academic selection in the school system. We therefore call on the Government to abandon any proposals to introduce into our education system the selection by ability and social separation of young people into different schools.

We believe there is no evidence that selection at 11 or any other age improves social mobility. This is also the clear conclusion of the Government’s Social Mobility Commission. Instead we call on the Government to:

- (1) Recognise that to improve the prospects of all our young people achieving at school in academic, vocational , artistic sport and active participation skills, there is a need for significant additional investment in schools, especially in the most challenged areas.
- (2) Accept the evidence that provision and additional funding of high-quality support in the early years of childhood development and education, is the best way to ensure children are ready for school and to close the attainment gap between the most disadvantaged children and those from more affluent circumstances”.

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Male, seconded by Councillor Blundell and lost that the debate be amended to read:

“This Council reaffirms its belief that the purpose of the City’s schools is to provide all children and young people, irrespective of background or specific needs, with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to achieve the best life chances possible.

This Council believes that this aim can be achieved through a diverse education system that works for everyone. This system will be innovative, flexible and responsive to parental choice. Academies, free schools, independent schools, grammar schools, faith schools and universities can all make valuable contributions to improved learner outcomes.

We call on the government to promote a meritocratic, diverse and innovative school system, which recognises the value of early intervention programmes and a wide ranging curriculum that works for all pupils, but that also recognises the importance of engaging with universities and local

business to ensure a greater number of good and outstanding school places”.

RESOLVED that the Motion as set out above be adopted.

85. **Debate - Digital Infrastructure Fund**

The following notion was moved by Councillor Ridley and seconded by Councillor Blundell:

“This Council welcomes the pledge made by the government in the Autumn Statement to create a new £1000 million digital infrastructure fund - and its commitment to achieving ‘gold standard full-fibre broadband’ that works for everyone.

Council recognises the importance of broadband connectivity in the modern age and will continue to work with government, the private sector and other partners to improve broadband connectivity for businesses and residents across the city.

Council will strive to make our city a world class technology hub and the number one destination for IT start ups and technology based companies in the UK.”

Councillor O’Boyle proposed the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor Brown and in accordance with Paragraph 15.17 of the Constitution, accepted by Councillor Ridley that the debate be amended to read:

“This Council notes the pledge made by the government in the Autumn Statement to create a new digital infrastructure fund.

Council recognises the importance of broadband connectivity in the modern age and will continue to work with government, the private sector and other partners to improve broadband connectivity for businesses and residents across the city.

Council will continue striving to make our city a world class technology hub and the number one destination for IT start ups and technology based companies in the UK evidenced by:-

- Capital investment of up to £2.55m for Superfast Broadband Infrastructure
- Implementation of our Digital Strategy
- The work of the joint cross party work by the Digital Task and Finish Group from Scrutiny Boards 1 & 3”

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

Private Business

86. Coventry Investment Fund Investment Cathedral Lanes Phase 2

Further to Minute 78 above and Minute 73 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a private report of the Executive Director of Place that set out confidential aspects of proposals for retrospective approval for a new loan facility to support the second phase of the Cathedral Lanes development.

RESOLVES that the City Council:

- 1. Retrospectively approve the variation, as set out in section 1 of the report, to the previous loan agreement granted to Shearer Property Group in September 2014 for £2million in relation to the refurbishment of Cathedral Lanes.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and the Executive Director of Resources, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, to manage the new revolving loan facility. The authority under this recommendation shall include the power to negotiate and agree variations to the terms of the new revolving loans facility.**

(Meeting closed at 6.05 pm)