

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 10 October 2017

Members: Councillor T Skipper (Chair)

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

Honorary Aldermen J Gazey

Apologies: Councillor L Bigham, J Blundell, J Clifford, L Kelly and D Welsh

Public Business

47. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 September 2017

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 September, 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record.

48. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the private report detailed in Minute 58/17 below headed "Project CAP" on the grounds that the report involves the likely disclosure of information defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as it contains information relating to the financial

and business affairs of any particular proposed person (including the authority holding that information) and the amount of expenditure proposed to be incurred by the Council under a particular contract or the supply of goods or services. The public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

49. **Coventry Good Citizen Award**

On behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor and His Honour Judge Lockhart QC presented Albert Neale with the Good Citizen Award. His citation read:-

“Albert Neale was born in Coventry and for many years has given outstanding service to the communities of the city. He has devoted his time and efforts to helping individuals and families in a variety of ways. Over the years Albert has embarked on many ventures, he has been a Parent and Governor at Walsgrave Church of England Primary School where he helped to organise many fund raising events including the school’s annual fete. He was a volunteer for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme undertaking tasks which included assessing walking routes, driving, being the kit manager and supervisor for tent building. All of these supported young people to reach their goals within the scheme and helped them to become more independent.

Along with his passion for helping the younger generation, Albert has been the driving force for establishing the latest Foodbank distribution point at Walsgrave Baptist Church. This provides three-day emergency food parcels and support to local people and families in need; he has also been an active member and collector for other outlets. Albert has collected clothing and other items and delivered them to Coventry Charities including the Jesus Centre and Carriers of Hope.

Together with these charitable works Albert also found time to become a Coventry Ambassador spending time at the 2012 Olympics and the Jimmy Hill Commemorative Service.

Through his voluntary work he has shown tremendous commitment to the people of Coventry, his actions justly reflect his character and he is well deserved of this Good Citizen Award.”

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

(a) **Congratulations on National Quality Award**

The Lord Mayor indicated that Coventry Haven Women’s Aid had been awarded the Women’s Aid National Quality Mark back in August, demonstrating that it provides a high quality of service to women and their children experiencing domestic violence in Coventry. These are national standards which measure the quality of specialist domestic violence services on a number of factors. Coventry Haven were particularly commended for the professional expertise and experience of staff and volunteers, accessibility of services, and the organisations engagement and partnership working with a number of strategic partnerships and alliances in the West Midlands Violence against Women and Girls sector

(b) Feedback on Civic Visit to Kiel

Further to Minute 33/17, the Lord Mayor reported that he had made a civic visit to Kiel to mark the 70th anniversary of friendship and 50th anniversary of twinning. At a specially convened meeting of Kiel City Council last month he had delivered an address and presented a Message from Coventry to mark the anniversary, which had been warmly received by the Council and its invited dignitaries

(c) Local Democracy Week 2017

The Lord Mayor indicated that, as part of Local Democracy Week, the City Council were hosting a series of events aimed at encouraging democratic engagement, especially amongst younger people. These included students from 5 schools attending an interactive and inspiring workshop about democracy, pupils from Limbrick Wood School shadowing the Lord Mayor for a day; and a Question Time event with a panel of Members and representatives from Coventry University.

Members were invited to pop along to any events and to show their support for Local Democracy Week 2017.

51. Petitions

RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate City Council bodies/external organisations:-

- (a) Request for safety measures to stop speeding traffic on Alderminster Road – 466 signatures, presented by Councillor Lepoidevin**
- (b) Request for Coventry City Council to use its influence to get Whitefriars to install anti-fire sprinklers in Alpha Hose, Stoke – 62 signatures, presented by Councillor Bains**
- (c) Request to refurbish pavements and road – Delaware Road – 18 signatures, presented by Councillor Taylor**

52. Declarations of Interest

The Lord Mayor, Councillor T Skipper, and Councillor R Auluck both declared disclosable pecuniary interest in the matter the subject of Minute 57 below relating to “Debates - Business Rates – Landlords of Student Accommodation”. Both the Lord Mayor and Councillor Auluck left the meeting for consideration of this item.

53. **Motion Without Notice - Chair of the Meeting**

In accordance with the Constitution, further to Minute 52 above, in light of the Lord Mayor's disclosable pecuniary interest in Minute 57 below and in the absence of the Deputy Lord Mayor, a Motion Without Notice was moved by Councillor M Mutton, seconded by Councillor S Walsh and carried that Councillor L Harvard be elected to the chair the meeting for the consideration of that item.

54. **Question Time**

Councillors provided written answers to the question set out in the Questions Booklet, together with oral responses to supplementary questions put to them at the meeting.

In the absence of Councillor L Bigham, Councillor G Crookes requested that the two questions submitted by him be deferred to the next Council 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	Questions put to	Subject matter
1	Councillor Williams	Councillor Gannon	World Mental Health Day and the inclusion of Mental Health on the agenda for the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board
2	Councillor Williams	Councillor Maton	Spending cuts to travel provision for vulnerable children
3	Councillor Sawdon	Councillor Innes	Fines associated with the Whittle Arch bus gate
4	Councillor Sawdon	Councillor Innes	Parking on grass verges on Kenilworth Road by staff and students from Warwick University
5	Councillor Sawdon	Councillor Ali	What the role of Deputy Cabinet Member for Public health and Sport involves
6	Councillor Williams	Councillor Innes	The new "flash"

			crossing near Coventry Station
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55. Statements

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G Duggins, made a Statement in respect of “Progress on the Combines Authority”

Councillor G Ridley responded to the Statement.

56. Motion Without Notice To Combine Debates and Suspend Time Limits for Speeches

In accordance with the Constitution, Councillor M Mutton moved a Motion without Notice, which was seconded by Councillor S Walsh and carried, to combine the debates on the Motions as set out in items 10.1 and 10.2 on the agenda and to suspend the relevant paragraph of the Constitution relating to timing of speeches to enable:-

- a) The movers and seconders of both Motions to each speak for 5 minutes
- b) The movers of both Motions to sum up at the end of the debate for 5 minutes each

(A vote then to be taken on each Motion separately)

57. Debates - Business Rates - Landlords of Student Accommodation

Further to Minute 56 above, the following Motions were moved and seconded by the Councillors indicated:-

- (a) Moved by Councillor J Mutton, seconded by Councillor T Khan

“This Council believes that students are a very welcome part of our community and of our local economy, but often live in concentrated areas of the City in densely populated conditions. This has a big impact on services in those parts of the City.

Student households should continue to be exempt from Council Tax as students are, in the main, on low incomes or living on loans. Landlords of student accommodation are engaged in profit-making businesses and should therefore pay business rates for the demands that their tenants make on public services.

Council resolves to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the Chair and Vice Chairs of the Local Government Association and the three Coventry MPs to outline the contents of this motion and to request that Councils should be given powers to bring landlords of student properties within the scope of business rates in the same way that hotels, self-catering and holiday lets are within the scope of business rates.

Following such a change in legislation, Council also resolves to establish a working group chaired by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources with representatives of the Universities, Landlords and Student Unions to consider the operation of such a scheme in Coventry to ensure that it is designed in such a way so that it does not undermine the City's wider housing strategy and that the cost is not passed on to students."

(b) Moved by Councillor K Taylor, seconded by Councillor T Sawdon:-

"This Council recognises the contribution made to the city by its students and believes that students should continue to be exempt from council tax.

This Council notes the cessation of the Revenue Support grant in 2020 which presently compensates the Council for business rates which they do not receive from student accommodation.

This Council will ask Government to give local authorities additional powers to bring student landlords within the scope of business rates bringing them into line with hotels, self-catering and holiday lets."

RESOLVED:-

(1) That the Motion as set out in (a) above be unanimously adopted

(2) That the Motion as set out in (b) above be unanimously adopted

NOTE: In the absence of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Harvard chaired the meeting for consideration of this item.

Private Business

58. **Project CAP**

Further to Minute 63/17 of the Cabinet, the Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which set out the confidential proposals in relation to a commercial investment.

RESOLVED that the Council:-

- 1. Approve the use of its powers under Section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to acquire the shares in the company as a commercial investment for the value up to the sum indicated in the report, subject to any adjustments detailed in the report.**
- 2. Approve the addition of the sum indicated in the report (or other figure as agreed under delegated authority) to the capital programme.**
- 3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Director of Finance and Corporate Services and Legal Services Manager, following**

consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport, to agree detailed terms of the transaction with the company identified in the report.

- 4. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Director of Finance and Corporate Services and Legal Services Manager, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport, to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**
- 5. Approve the implementation of the governance structure and associated terms of reference for the Shareholder Panel and Board of Directors, as detailed in the report.**
- 6. Approve the appointment of the Leader, the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, and the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport onto the Shareholder Panel to represent the Council as sole shareholder of the Company.**

(Meeting closed at 4.15 pm)