

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 10 April 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor A Khan (Deputy Chair)
Councillor F Abbott
Councillor K Caan
Councillor J Innes
Councillor K Maton
Councillor J Mutton
Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor E Ruane

Deputy Cabinet Members Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor R Ali
Councillor C Thomas

Non-Voting Members: Opposition Councillor A Andrews
Councillor G Ridley

Other Members: Councillor S Bains
Councillor R Brown
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor M Mutton

Employees (by Directorate):

People K Lees, D O'Shaughnessy
Place M Yardley (Deputy Chief Executive (Place)), L Knight,
R Moon, J Newman, A West
Apologies: Councillors L Bigham, B Kaur, D Welsh

Public Business

148. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

149. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th March 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

150. Report back from the Task and Finish Group on improving the Quality of Housing and the Health and Wellbeing of Coventry Residents

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which set out the recommendations from the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) Task and Finish Group on improving the quality of housing and the health and wellbeing of Coventry residents.

The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) established a Task and Finish Group to look at improving the quality of housing and the health and wellbeing of Coventry residents, in recognition that housing is a significant factor in impacting health outcomes.

The Task and Finish Group wanted to investigate and draw attention to the link between health and housing, look at the existing work being undertaken by organisations across the City to support people in developing and maintaining healthy homes and to consider how the Council could improve the quality of private rented sector housing.

Members were joined on the Task and Finish Group by representatives from Coventry Citizen's Advice, who were able to provide an insight into the housing challenges faced by Coventry residents. Evidence was provided by the West Midlands Fire Service, Whitefriars Housing, the Council's Housing Enforcement team and Public Health. In addition, a call for evidence was also published electronically to enable private Landlords to give their views.

The Task and Finish Group identified recommendations, which were endorsed by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) at their meeting on the 31st January 2018 (their minute 40/17 referred), for the Cabinet's consideration.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:-

- 1. Authorise that discussions are progressed with the Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group to look at hosting advice outreach in GP surgeries, with the discussions and any outcomes to be overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport.**
- 2. Endorse the work of Citizens' Advice Frontline Network and other advice agencies to look at the co-ordination of grant and charity resources to assist tenants to create easier access to funds for tenants in need of support, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Community Development.**
- 3. Note the continued work of the West Midlands Fire Service on the Health Agenda, including working with partners to evaluate the impact and then, if appropriate, explore funding options for the Back Home Safe and Well initiative, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport and the Cabinet Member for Adult Services.**

4. Endorse work with city partners to consider opportunities for information sharing, which could lead to the identification of vulnerable people who may benefit from services or support through community resources, such as from Citizen's Advice, Coventry Independent Advice Services and the Fire Service Safe and Well check, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Adult Services and the Cabinet Member for Community Development.
5. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (People) in consultation with the Director of Public Health to undertake the necessary work required to define and promote Healthy Homes, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport.
6. Note the proposal to continue to develop Selective Licensing in the City, overseen by the Cabinet Member for Community Development.

151. Governance of the West Midlands Fire Service

Further to Minute 69/17, the Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive, which provided an overview of the public consultation evaluation in respect of the Mayoral West Midland Combined Authority (WMCA) Governance Scheme for the West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) and sought consent to the submission of the Scheme and consultation to the Secretary of State for the Home Office, the Home Secretary.

The WMCA supported the West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority's (WMFRA) broad proposal for the transfer of its functions to the Mayoral WMCA on 3rd March 2017. On the 8 September 2017 the WMCA board noted the indicative timeline for the proposed governance route and approved the development of a governance review and scheme for the Mayoral WMCA governance of WMFS pursuant to Sections 111 and 112 (1d) of Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

The Governance Review provided a review of existing governance arrangements and functions, including the proposed new model and its benefits under the Mayoral WMCA. As part of the review, the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee formed a Task and Finish Group to consider and make recommendations around the future Governance model.

The Scheme, presented to Cabinet on the 31st October 2017 and Council on the 5th December 2017, detailed the roles, accountabilities, and powers required by each individual and body in the proposed governance model.

In adherence to section 112 of Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which states that a combined authority must seek the approval of its constituent councils on the governance review and scheme, all seven constituent councils were consulted between October and November 2017. Unanimous support for the proposed scheme was received from all seven constituent councils, along with approval to proceed to a public consultation. Comments received from councils included: that the fire budget and fire reserves be ring-fenced, that the Mayor appoint the Chair of the Mayoral Fire Advisory Committee (MFAC) in consultation with Constituent Council Leaders, and that

MFAC be composed of no fewer than 15 members to ensure sufficient representation from all constituent authorities. As part of the public consultation exercise the Scheme was revised to reflect these concerns and was set out at Appendix A of the report submitted.

A formal public consultation on the proposed scheme was launched on 11th January 2018 for a period of eight weeks to 8 March 2018. This was pursuant to section 113 (3) Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The consultation was a requirement for the making of an order, which stipulated that the Secretary of State must not only consult constituent councils within a combined authority's area but also must have 'due regard to the need - (a) To reflect the identities and interests of local communities and (b) To secure effective and convenient local government'. Details of the consultation responses was set out in Section 3 of the report submitted along with a Consultation Outcome Evaluation at Appendix B.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1. Note the outcomes of the formal public consultation.**
- 2. Agree to consent to the submission of the Scheme together with the results of the Consultation to the Secretary of State for the Home Office so as to enable the transfer of governance of West Midlands Fire Service (WMFS) from West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority (WMFRA) to the Mayoral West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).**
- 3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader of the Council to approve the draft order received from Government to be laid before parliament, to enable the changes for WMCA to assume governance of WMFS.**

152. Implementation of Devolution Agreement - Adult Education Budget (AEB)

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive, which outlined the process to be followed and sought consent to the making of an order required to enable full devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

The WMCA's first Devolution Deal was formally agreed by the Combined Authority Shadow Board on 17th November, 2015. The agreement included the transfer of adult skills funding (Adult Education Budget - AEB) to the WMCA and the subsequent Order establishing the Combined Authority contained details of a number of Adult Education powers although it did not deal with the devolution of funding. In order to prepare for devolution, the Combined Authority was required to meet a series of readiness conditions including the transfer of the Secretary of State for Education's statutory duties in relation to the provision of further education for adults.

The principal purpose of the AEB was to engage adults in learning that supported wider economic and social priorities. Devolution of the AEB would only be applied within constituent member areas, and the indicative budget would be approximately £112m for 2019/20 based on current spend on residents.

The Order, to be received in draft by 19th March 2018, would set out the details of AEB functions that would be transferred to the WMCA with the agreement to devolve the budget. Department for Education (DfE) had been clear that the Order would not cover apprenticeships, adult offender learning or provision for people aged 16 -18. Subject to these exceptions, it was proposed that the following functions contained in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (ASCAL) 2009 would transfer to the WMCA in relation to constituent member areas:

1. S86 – Duty to provide appropriate 19+ Further Education (not to include apprenticeships, prisoner education or traineeships).
2. S87 – Duty to provide appropriate Further Education to 19+ learners who do not have certain specified qualifications
3. S88 – Duty to ensure that provision is free for relevant learners who do not have certain specified qualifications

The following powers would be exercised concurrently with the Secretary of State:

1. S90 – Duty to encourage learner and employer participation in education and training of people aged 19+ (except those in adult detention) (to be exercised concurrently with the Secretary of State)
2. S115 – Duty to consider/have regard to the needs of 19+ learners with Special Education Needs (other than those aged 19-25 with Educational Health Care plans, who will remain the responsibility of the LAs as they are treated as 16-18 year old learners).
3. S122 – Power to exchange information with providers to enable provision of 19+ FE (to be exercised concurrently with the Secretary of State).

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:-

1. **Approve the transfer of functions to WMCA as set out in the report to ensure the successful devolution of the Adult Education Budget in 2019.**
2. **Consent on behalf of the City Council to the making of an Order giving effect to this transfer.**
3. **Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, to approve the final draft Devolution Order in order to meet the timetable for agreement as set out in the report.**

153. Salt Lane Multi-Storey Car Park Development

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), which sought approval of an additional £1m from the Capital Programme, offset by reduced borrowing costs, in respect of the Salt Lane Multi-Storey Car Park Development, to allow the procurement to proceed to award of contract and construction thereafter.

Coventry City Council adopted the City Centre Parking Strategy in August 2016. The strategy recognised that demand for off-street car park would increase during the next decade in line with the growth of the local economy and the transformation of the city centre. It was recognised that ultimately demand would out-weigh the number of spaces available and that investment was needed in order to ensure a sufficient amount of parking spaces were available in the right locations.

On 24 January 2017, Council and Cabinet considered a linked business case for the development of new multi-storey car parks at Salt Lane and New Union Street in the city centre. The business case and the recommendation for the addition of £10.7million to the capital programme funded from the corporate capital resources for 2017/18 and 2018/19 for the development of a new 600 space multi-storey car park at Salt Lane on the site of the existing surface car park was approved.

During 2017, officers appointed consultants to progress the detailed designs of the proposed scheme and had subsequently secured planning permission. Design works had been undertaken in conjunction with stakeholders and Cabinet Member for City Services.

The Cabinet noted that the Salt Lane site was constrained by a large underground BT duct carrying multiple fibre cables which run across the site from the BT exchange. It had been necessary to work with BT to agree a strategy to enable the car park construction works while ensuring continuity of the BT services. This has culminated in BT requiring an assurance duct, at an additional cost to the project of £682k, to be installed prior to the commencement on site by the preferred contractor. These costs were not known at the time of the previous report.

To facilitate the additional works required by BT, it would be necessary to remove two redundant underground fuel tanks at an estimated additional cost to the project of £50k - 100k. There was an associated risk that the removal of the tanks may identify that the surrounding ground is contaminated.

Associated with the building of the multi storey car park were highway and public realm works. The public realm element of the scheme was included within the public realm phase 5 programme which was approved by Cabinet on 6th March 2018. Together with fees, contingency, and the additional BT costs set out above it was expected that the revised budget required to deliver the scheme would be £11.7million which represented an increase of £1million compared to the approved budget.

Prior to the award of the contract to the preferred contractor, approval was required for the additional capital funding that would be required to deliver the scheme.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approve the addition of £1million to the capital budget, funded from corporate capital resources, for the delivery of the Salt Lane car park as approved in the Business Case report of January 2017.

154. Replacement of Administration Building at Whitley Depot and ICT Data Centre at Jackson Road

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which sought approval for the replacement of the administration building at Whitley Depot and the ICT Data Centre at Jackson Road.

The Place Directorate continued to review the use and effectiveness of the City Council's operational property. It was clear that the current arrangement of two separate satellite sites for an operational depot and CCTV / data centre are tired, unfit for purpose. Including period repairs, they were also expensive to operate, averaging in excess of £0.5m per year.

The Cabinet noted that Whitley Depot dated back to the 1960's and comprised 14 different buildings; 2 submerged fuelling stations; a weigh bridge and a concealed pond on a sloping site, immediately adjacent to the River Sowe on the Western boundary.

Jackson Road, whilst newer than Whitley, comprised a secure CCTV and alarm monitoring area, ICT hub, a collection of small offices, a poison store and kennelling for stray dogs. The site had constrained access from Holbrook Lane and very limited operational parking. Originally the site formed part of the adjacent St Paul's cemetery, and had limited commercial appeal.

It was proposed that a new building be constructed on the Whitley Depot site, comprising an open plan office; welfare and deployment building on a greatly reduced footprint towards the south of the site, close to the London Road entrance. The new office building would house all back-office staff currently based on site and would create a purpose-built deployment space for the Streetscene and Greenspace, Building Services and Highways teams. The office would mirror the Council's new accommodation standards that were in place at the new Customer Service Centre in Broadgate, the Democratic Centre within the Council House and the new office facility at Friargate.

The report indicated that the main entrance from London Road would be redesigned to create a more fluid movement of staff and commercial vehicles in and out of the site. It would also look to contain visitor parking in a safer and more controlled environment. A neighbouring property had been acquired to make way for the entrance redesign and an area of land to the front of the site cleared. An indicative masterplan sketch of what the site could look like was provided at Appendix A of the report submitted. In addition the scheme would look to provide space for basic parking provision for the remaining neighbouring residents.

All other buildings on site would be demolished with the exception of the grit store and vehicle workshop. The scheme would also de-clutter the site and vastly improve general movement of staff, visitors and commercial traffic. The existing waste transfer station could potentially be relocated within the confines of the site in the future. However, it was not part of the proposed project and would be subject to additional funding.

It was acknowledged that perimeter security would need to be improved (CCTV, fencing, gates etc.) so that the externally contracted security that currently patrolled the site could be cancelled. Instead, the security staff in the Council's Monitoring & Response Service, which would by default be based on site 24/7, would be utilised to carry out deterrent patrols and provide an on-site security presence. The Council's Insurance team had confirmed that this was acceptable from a liability perspective.

The co-location of staff in to one building would improve efficiencies; introduce agile and flexible working arrangements; re-engineer business process and drive out further operational efficiencies moving forward.

In addition, the transfer of facilities from Jackson Road to Whitley Depot would allow the Jackson Road site to be brought into use for burials as an extension to St Paul's cemetery, thus deferring capital spend on provision of burial space in the area.

The total cost of the proposed scheme was £5.1m, £4.6m of which was additional spend which would drive revenue savings. £0.5m related to existing approved resources within the ICT capital programme of 2018/19. The redevelopment of the depot and co-location of services currently based at Jackson Road would produce a net revenue saving from operating one building on one site instead of several buildings on two sites. Future capital expenditure would also be deferred as a result of the creation of additional burial space by incorporating the Jackson Road site as an extension to St Paul's cemetery.

Alternative security measures in the form of the internal Monitoring & Response service would allow the cancellation of the external contract for security guards. There would also be much reduced costs to run the building (heating, cooling, maintenance etc.). These savings would free up revenue budget to afford the cost of financing the proposed building investment cost, and make a significant contribution toward existing Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings targets in the process.

In addition, re-provision of an ICT hub on a small part of the existing Jackson Road Site would incur a one off capital cost of £0.75m. This would provide the ICT service with the opportunity to review resilience of the ICT infrastructure in light of the recent network outage on 23rd May 2017. This was part of a wider ICT network re-development programme. £0.5m of the costs were funded from the existing ICT capital programme with the additional £0.25m being funded from within the £4.6m scheme cost.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:-

- 1. Approve the replacement of all office buildings at Whitley Depot with a smaller, open plan and more efficient administration and deployment facility, and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to submit any necessary applications for permission or consents to deliver this facility.**

- 2. Approve the replacement of facilities at Jackson Road and the demolition of the existing building to allow land to be brought back into use as additional burial ground at St Paul's cemetery and delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to submit any necessary applications for consents required to demolish and appropriate the use as additional burial space.**
- 3. Approve the overall affordability strategy for the Projects as set out in this report and subject to final scheme proposals being in line with the costs identified within this report.**
- 4. Approves the allocation of £0.5m existing ICT capital resources against the ICT Data Centre scheme.**
- 5. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Deputy Chief Executive (People), and the Legal Services Manager as appropriate, to negotiate, finalise and award contracts required to deliver the Projects within the affordability parameters detailed in this report.**
- 6. Consult with the Cabinet Member for City Services prior to the finalising of the design of the building and submission of any planning application.**
- 7. Recommend that Council approve the addition of the replacement administration depot scheme at a cost of £4.6m to the Council's capital programme for 2018/19 onwards and uses its prudential borrowing powers under the Local Government Act 2003 to fund the project as required.**

155. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

156. 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 2.15 pm)