

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 17 March 2020

Present:

Members: Councillor A Lucas (Chair)

Councillor F Abbott	Councillor AS Khan
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor R Lakha
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor A Andrews	Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor R Auluck	Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor R Bailey	Councillor P Male
Councillor J Blundell	Councillor K Maton
Councillor K Caan	Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor J Clifford	Councillor J Mutton
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor B Gittins	Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor L Harvard	Councillor G Ridley
Councillor M Heaven	Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor P Hetherington	Councillor P Seaman
Councillor J Innes	Councillor B Singh
Councillor T Jandu	Councillor R Singh
Councillor B Kaur	Councillor C Thomas
Councillor L Kelly	Councillor D Welsh
Councillor T Khan	Councillor G Williams

Apologies: Councillor M Ali, R Ali, L Bigham, J Birdi, R Brown, M Lapsa, T Mayer, C Miks, E Ruane, K Sandhu, D Skinner, H Sweet, R Thay and S Walsh

Honorary Alderman Fitzpatrick and Hammon

Public Business

98. Chair

In the absence of the Lord Mayor, Councillor L Bigham, and in accordance with the Constitution, the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor A Lucas, chaired the meeting

98. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 February 2020

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2020 were signed as a true record.

99. Motion Without Notice

In accordance with the Constitution, a Motion Without Notice was moved by Councillor M Mutton, seconded by Councillor D Welsh and adopted that the following items be withdrawn from the agenda:

- 4. Coventry Good Citizen Award
- 6. Petitions
- 8. Proposed Changes to the Constitution
- 16. Question Time
- 18. Debates

100. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED that, the press and public be excluded under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the following private reports on the grounds that the reports involve the likely disclosure of information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person or an organisation (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption under Schedule 12A outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

Minute No.	Report title
116	Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People through Property Acquisition
117	Options to Increase the Supply of Affordable Permanent Housing for Households Living in Temporary Accommodation
118	Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions
119	Phase 2A Belgrade Place, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions

101. **Coventry Good Citizen Award**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

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

Elizabeth Flowers

The Deputy Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Elizabeth Flowers who joined the Council 27 years ago and worked as a lecturer before she became the Disability Policy Lead for the Council, Chair of the Disabled Employees Network and a committed union representative. Tributes were paid to the work undertaken by Elizabeth.

Members noted that a letter conveying the City Council's sincere condolences would be sent to Elizabeth's family.

103. **Petitions**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

104. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

105. **Proposed Changes to the Constitution**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

106. **Proposed Changes to the Constitution Part 2M - Scheme of Functions Delegated to Employees and Appointment of Proper Officers**

Further to Minute 27 of the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, the City Council considered a report of the Chief Executive which outlined proposed changes to the Constitution Part 2M, Scheme of Functions Delegated to Employees and Appointment of Proper Officers.

As a result of the deletion of the post of Deputy Chief Executive (Place) from April 2020 and a move to new corporate landscape reflecting the One Coventry approach, the Council's constitution would need to be amended to reflect these changes. As a result of these changes to the Council Structure, the scheme of delegation to officers and other officer functions, including the designation of proper offices, currently provided for within the City Council's Constitution needed to be updated and amended.

The report sought approval to the required amendments to the Constitution to reflect the new Council structure and to designate the post of Director of Law and Governance as the Monitoring Officer and City Solicitor and the post of the Director of Finance as the Section 151 officer.

RESOLVED that the City Council:

1. **Designates the post of Director of Law and Governance as the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer (Section 5, Local Government Act 1972) and as the Proper Officer for the purposes of the Registration Services Act 1953.**
2. **Designates the post of the Director of Finance as Chief Finance Officer under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972;**
3. **Approves the transfer of functions set out in paragraphs 6.6.01 to 6.6.109 from the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) to the Deputy Chief Executive.**
4. **Approves the appointment of the Director of Law and Governance as Proper Officer for the purposes of functions relating to meetings, reports, agendas and minutes of formal meetings of the Council (paragraph 6.6.70) and deposit of documents (paragraph 6.6.104).**

5. Authorises the Director of Law and Governance to amend the Constitution accordingly.

107. Impact of European City of Sport 2019

Further to Minute 97 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which detailed the impact of the European City of Sport on the City.

In May 2018, it was announced that Coventry had been awarded the status of ACES European City of Sport 2019. It was noted that the City would have a defining 10-year period (2012/2022) in relation to sport, physical activity and leisure. The European City of Sport award formed a significant part of that decade of change, during which Coventry will have been a host city for the Olympic Games, hosted numerous international sporting events, invested over £100m in sports and leisure facilities, been the UK City of Culture 2021 and a host city for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The report indicated that over 180 events were delivered under the European City of Sport throughout the year. These events ranged from local events to major international events. The year enabled over 170,000 people to get involved in a variety of events, projects and activities that had been organised to support the aim of getting more people moving and helping to reduce health inequalities. In addition, over 500 volunteers supported the year, with over 2,500 hours of volunteering by the Coventry Ambassadors.

Over the course of 2019, Coventry opened a number of state-of-the-art sports and leisure facilities in the City, costing in excess of £100m, that transformed sporting and physical activities opportunities for the city's residents. These have included The Wave (Waterpark); Alan Higgs Centre 50 metre swimming pool; walking and running routes in parks; University of Warwick Sport and Wellness Hub; University of Warwick Athletics Track; 7 artificial cricket wickets and a 5 lane net facility; and footgolf at the War Memorial Park. This investment and continued development of additional facilities such as indoor bowls provision, has created a landmark year to remember for sport, physical activity and leisure in the City.

RESOLVED that the City Council recognises the impact of Coventry's European City of Culture 2019 in the build up to the UK city of Culture 2021 and Commonwealth Games 2022 and supports the ongoing legacy of the title.

108. Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People Through Property Acquisition

Further to Minute 99 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) which set out options to improve the provision of temporary accommodation for single homeless people through property acquisition.

A corresponding private report was also submitted to the meeting setting out the commercially confidential matters of the proposals (Minute 116 below refers).

The Council has legal duties to provide accommodation to homeless people who are eligible and in priority need. In recent years, demands on the Housing and Homelessness service have increased, with an attendant rise in the use and cost of temporary accommodation.

The Council has responded with a new Housing and Homelessness Strategy including the recommissioning of Homelessness related Support Service contracts, review of key policies and procedures, improvements in temporary accommodation options available for families and significant reductions in the amount paid for this accommodation. The report outlined the options to continue this work by improving the accommodation and support available to vulnerable residents, especially for the increasing number of single homeless adults in the city.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- 1. Approves the proposals and delegates authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to identify the properties and to agreed detailed terms of the transactions and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**
- 2. Approves the addition to the capital programme of an amount outlined in the private report to meet the cost of acquisition and refurbishment of properties for use as temporary accommodation for single homeless people, funded from borrowing.**

109. Options to Increase the Supply of Affordable Permanent Housing for Households Living in Temporary Accommodation

Further to Minute 100 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) which set out proposals to increase options for the supply of affordable permanent housing for households living in temporary accommodation.

A corresponding private report was also submitted to the meeting setting out the commercially confidential matters of the proposals (Minute 117 below refers).

The Council had been experiencing an increase in the number of households living in temporary accommodation. The length of time households were required to live in temporary accommodation was also increasing. Not only was this unsuitable for households but it also placed significant financial pressure on the housing service. Critically, there was insufficient and affordable permanent accommodation available. Increasing the supply of this type of accommodation was a key priority of the Council.

The gap between the cost of temporary accommodation and housing benefit subsidy grant was met by the Council and as activity had increased in temporary accommodation, this was creating a significant financial pressure.

A proposal was put forward by Cornerstone Partnership, a social enterprise, offering the Council access to affordable permanent accommodation. Access to the properties would be passed over a 2 year period but would ultimately give access to 103 permanent properties at the Local Housing Allowance rental level for the City. Nomination rights would enable the Council to fill these properties with families from temporary accommodation, ending main housing duty and reducing temporary accommodation activity.

It was noted that all aspects of the proposal had been considered and compared against other possible options. The outcome of this work was that this option would create financial benefits and allow quick access to a large number of affordable permanent properties. It was therefore proposed to enter into a 15-year transaction with Cornerstone Partnership for the supply of temporary accommodation for two years and permanent accommodation for fifteen years.

RESOLVED that the City Council:

- 1. Approves the amount specified in the private report, to be funded from the Housing and Homelessness Revenue Budget over the 2 year period.**
- 2. Approves the Cornerstone partnership transaction and delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to agree detailed terms of the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**

110. Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry - Investment Acquisitions

Further to Minute 101 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which set out proposals for the acquisition of a commercial investment property, Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry.

A corresponding private report was also submitted to the meeting setting out the commercially confidential matters of the proposals (Minute 118 below refers).

The subject property was a purpose built, 2 storey, detached office on a well located and popular business park extending to 9,400sqft with 48 on site designated parking spaces.

It was proposed that the Council would acquire the 999 year long leasehold interest in the land and the buildings. As the current tenant's lease ends in June 2020, the reversionary yield for the unit was set to improve. This would be by either negotiating a new lease with the current tenant on improved terms or alternatively following the refurbishment of the property letting to a new tenant.

It was noted that the Council already owned the freehold of the estate. The level of return generated was assessed based on the level of risk associated with the length of leases and the security of income. The negotiated price had been validated by external property experts as providing 'market value' for the Council.

It was intended that the property would be held by the Council as an investment asset and managed by the Council's Commercial Property Management Team.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- 1. Approves 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 leasehold interest in Oak House, subject to the occupational tenancy, for a sum identified within the private report.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Jobs and Regeneration and Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.**
- 4. Approves the necessary adjustment to the Capital Programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of the Oak House interest.**

111. Phase 2A Belgrade Place, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions

Further to Minute 102 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which set out proposals for the acquisition of a commercial investment property, Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, Upper Wells Street, Coventry.

A corresponding private report was also submitted to the meeting setting out the commercially confidential matters of the proposals (Minute 119 below refers).

The property was 100% let and comprised 129,500sqft of mixed use, city centre accommodation including a hotel, restaurants, convenience store, gym and residential accommodation.

It was proposed that the Council acquire the long leasehold interest in the land and receive the income from the occupational tenants. 70% was secured against two strong tenants with leases for between 11 and 22 years.

The level of return generated was assessed based on the level of risk associated with the length of leases and the security of the income. The negotiated price had been validated by external property experts as providing 'market value' for the Council. It was intended that the property would be held by the Council as an investment asset and managed by the Council's Commercial Property Management team.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- 1. Approves 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 leasehold interest in Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, subject to the seven occupational tenancies, for a sum identified in the private report.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finances and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.**
- 4. Approves the necessary adjustment to the Capital Programme to reflect the capital expenditure incurred in the acquisition of Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza.**

112. Annual Pay Policy Statement 2020/21

The City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which presented the proposed annual Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21.

Local authorities are required by sections 38 and 39 of the Localism Act 2011 to produce an annual Pay Policy Statement. The Statement must articulate the City Council's policies towards a range of issues relating to the pay of the workforce, particularly the most senior staff (or "chief officers") and the relationship of their pay to the lowest paid employees. The proposed Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 was attached as Appendix 1 of the report.

RESOLVED that, the City Council approves the annual Pay Policy Statement 2020/21 attached at Appendix 1 of the report.

113. Question Time

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

114. Statements

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G Duggins made a Statement in respect of "Coronavirus".

Councillor G Ridley responded to the Statement.

115. Debates

This item was withdrawn from the agenda.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

116. **Options to Improve the Provision of Temporary Accommodation for Single Homeless People Through Property Acquisition**

Further to Minute 108 above, the City Council considered a private report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), setting out the commercially confidential matters relating to the proposed options to improve the provision of temporary accommodation for single homeless people through property acquisition.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

1. **Approves the proposals and delegates authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to identify the properties and to agree detailed terms for the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**
2. **Approves the addition to the capital programme of an amount outlined within the report to meet the cost of acquisition and refurbishment of properties for use as temporary accommodation for single homeless people.**

117. **Options to Increase the Supply of Affordable Permanent Housing for Households Living in Temporary Accommodation**

Further to Minute 109 above, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), setting out the commercially confidential matters relating to the proposed options to increase the supply of affordable permanent housing for households living in temporary accommodation.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

1. **Approves expenditure of the amount specified within the report, to be funded from the Housing and Homeless Revenue Budget over the 2 year period.**
2. **Approves the Cornerstone partnership transaction and delegates authority to the Director of Housing and Transformation, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to agree detailed terms of the transaction and to enter into the relevant legal agreements and associated documents necessary to complete the transaction.**

118. **Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry - Investment Acquisitions**

Further to Minute 110 above, the City Council considered a private report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), setting out the commercially confidential matters

relating to the proposed acquisition of Oak House, Binley Business Park, Coventry, as a commercial investment property.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- 1. Approves 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 leasehold interest in Oak House, subject to the occupational tenancy, for a sum identified within the report.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Members for Jobs and Regeneration and Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.**
- 4. Approves the necessary adjustment to the Capital Programme to reflect the capital expenditure, of the sum identified within the report, incurred in the acquisition of the Oak House interest.**

119. Phase 2A Belgrade Place, Upper Wells Street, Coventry – Investment Acquisitions

Further to Minute 111 above, the City Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), setting out the commercially confidential matters relating to the proposed acquisition of Phase 2 Belgrade Plaza, Upper Wells Street, Coventry, as a commercial investment property.

RESOLVED that, the City Council:

- 1. Approves 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 leasehold interest in Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza, subject to the seven occupational tenancies, for a maximum expenditure sum identified within the report.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the City Solicitor, to undertake the necessary due diligence, negotiate and finalise the terms of the acquisition of the properties and to complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and**

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.

- 4. Approves the necessary adjustment to the capital Programme to reflect the capital expenditure, to the sum indicated within the report, incurred in the acquisition of Phase 2A Belgrade Plaza.**

(Meeting closed at 2.55 pm)