

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities held at
10.00 am on Friday, 12 February 2021

Present:

Cabinet Member: Councillor D Welsh

Shadow Cabinet
Members: Councillor R Bailey
Councillor M Lapsa

Other Members: Councillor L Bigham - Chair of Communities and
Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

Employees (by Service):

Law and Governance S Bennett, M Salmon

Streetscene and
Regulatory Services R Back, D Butler, C Eggington

Apologies: There were no apologies

Public Business

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

7. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2020 were agreed as a true record.

Further to resolution 2. of minute 3/20 headed 'Petitions for Immediate Review of the Local Plan', the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities indicated that he had not received a response to his request for a meeting with the Secretary of State for Housing and undertook to pursue this.

The Cabinet Member expressed his disappointment that, following the element of a recent national consultation relating to the provision of housing, the Government had announced that they would require increased housing growth focussed in the North of the Country and in the Midlands. A review of the Local Plan would be undertaken at the end of 2022.

The Head of Planning Policy undertook to send the Weblinks to the Government announcement to the Members present at the meeting.

8. **Consultation on the Draft Statement of Community Involvement**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services that sought authority to consult for a six-week period on a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 18) required Local Planning Authorities to produce a SCI. The law set out how the Council would engage communities and other interested parties in producing their Local Plan and determining planning applications. The SCI must be kept up to date and published on the Council's website.

The current adopted SCI was produced in 2012 and needed updating to reflect more recent changes in the planning system. A new SCI had been produced accordingly. Whilst there was no legal requirement to consult on a SCI, it was considered good practice to do so. It was therefore proposed to consult on the draft SCI, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, for a period of six weeks running from Monday 15th February to Monday 29th March 2021.

Consultation responses would be analysed and taken account of when considering amendments which may be required. The proposed final version of the SCI would be reported to Cabinet for adoption, at which point it would replace the previous version.

Members discussed the current situation in respect of the pandemic that restricted contact with the public through direct meetings and requested that officers explore as many ways as possible to engage communities in consultations to ensure as wide a reach as possible. It was acknowledged that social media, online workshops and forums and virtual meetings, as well as providing Ward Councillor with information on consultations that they could promote, were important forms of contact, but also recognised that there were barriers to digital forms of contact. Joint working with neighbouring authorities was essential to cover cross boundary issues, both for Community Plans and Community Forums. Officers would investigate where acknowledgements could be provided to those that submitted consultation responses, to reassure them that submissions had been received. Emphasis was placed on the need for the flexibility of the Consultation Database to ensure that it could be updated and adapted to meet future consultation needs.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities authorises a six-week public consultation period to run from Monday 15th February to Monday 29th March 2021 on the draft Statement of Community Involvement.

9. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

10. **Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of public business.