

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 7 December 2021

Present:

Members:

Councillor J McNicholas (Chair)

Councillor F Abbott	Councillor M Lapsa
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor M Ali	Councillor A Lucas
Councillor R Auluck	Councillor P Male
Councillor R Bailey	Councillor A Masih
Councillor L Bigham	Councillor K Maton
Councillor J Birdi	Councillor C Miks
Councillor J Blundell	Councillor B Mosterman
Councillor K Caan	Councillor J Mutton
Councillor J Clifford	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor S Nazir
Councillor B Gittins	Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor L Harvard	Councillor G Ridley
Councillor G Hayre	Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor M Heaven	Councillor P Seaman
Councillor P Hetherton	Councillor R Simpson
Councillor A Hopkins	Councillor B Singh
Councillor J Innes	Councillor R Singh
Councillor T Jandu	Councillor R Thay
Councillor S Keough	Councillor C Thomas
Councillor T Khan	Councillor A Tucker
Councillor AS Khan	Councillor S Walsh
Councillor R Lakha	Councillor D Welsh
Councillor R Lancaster	

Honorary Alderman: T Skipper

Apologies: Councillors R Brown, E Ruane, K Sandhu and D Skinner
Honorary Aldermen D Chater, H Fitzpatrick, K Mulhall K Taylor

Public Business

52. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 October 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October, 2021 were agreed and signed as a true record.

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

1. **Arthur Labinjo-Hughes**

The Lord Mayor referred to the tragic death of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes in Solihull and indicated that people across the City shared the deep and heartfelt reaction expressed across the country.

The Council observed a Minute's silence as a mark of respect in memory of Arthur.

2. **Death of John Sillett**

The Lord Mayor referred to the sad death of John Sillett on 30 November.

Known affectionately as 'Snoz,' John Sillett was joint-manager when the Sky Blues famously won the FA Cup in 1987, beating Tottenham 3-2 at Wembley Stadium. He went on to become a scout for the club and was named Life President in 2011.

It was noted that a letter of condolence had been sent to John's family from the Lord Mayor and the Leader on behalf of the City Council and Members paid tributes to John.

54. **Motion Without Notice - Vote of Thanks**

In accordance with the Constitution, the Leader, Councillor G Duggins, moved the following Motion without Notice, that was seconded by Councillor A S Khan and supported by Councillor G Ridley:-

"That the warmest thanks of the Council are due and are hereby given to Gail Quinton, Deputy Chief Executive, and Liz Gaulton, Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, for their hard work and dedication to the City Council'

RESOLVED that the above Motion be unanimously adopted.

55. **Petitions**

RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate City Council body or external organisation:-

- a) Request for traffic calming measures in Treherne Road - 87 signatures presented by Councillor M Ali
- b) Request for traffic calming on Spencer Avenue, Spencer Road and Newcombe Road - 143 signatures presented by Councillor A Tucker
- c) Request for improved road safety in Hockley Lane and Eastern Green Road - 112 signatures presented by Councillor J Lepoidevin

- d) Objection from residents of Holbrooks and surrounding areas, to the allotments behind Houldsworth Crescent, Birkdale Close and Meadow Road being used as a housing development site - 160 signatures presented by Councillor R Lancaster
- e) Objection to erection of communications mast on small green space next to 22 John McGuire Crescent – 130 signatures presented by Councillor C Thomas
- f) Request to support residents by lobbying National Express, West Midlands, to install Real Time information at the bus stop X1 service to Birmingham - 49 signatures presented by Councillor J Lepoidevin
- g) Request to stop the plan to build over 100 student rooms – Application FUL/2021/3316 - Argyle House, Collingwood Road - 150 signatures presented by Councillor Cllr B Singh

56. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

57. Gambling Act 2005 - Revised Statement of Gambling Policy 2022 - 2025

Further to Minute 9 of the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, the Council considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services which provided an update on the outcome of the 6 week consultation undertaken on the review of the Council's Statement of Gambling Policy for the Gambling Act 2005 and which recommended for approval, a revised policy for the period 2022 – 2025.

The Gambling Act required each licensing authority to prepare and publish a Statement of Gambling Policy. The policy statement sets out how the licensing authority intends to approach its licensing responsibilities and in particular how it intends to promote the three licensing objectives. The current Gambling Policy came into effect on 3rd January 2019, to cover a period up to 31st January 2022. This policy must be renewed every three years and be subject to a full consultation process. Cabinet Member (Policing and Equalities) on 22nd July 2021 and the Licensing and Regulatory Committee on 27th July 2021, considered a report on the draft revised Gambling Policy and authorised the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services to consult on its contents (minutes 4/21 and 11/21 respectively refer).

This report advised of the consultation that had taken place and outlined the comments received and amendments made to the Council's draft Gambling Policy. There were no major changes to the Policy except some minor wording amendments. The general principles of the Gambling Policy remained the same and the document was still centred around the Gambling Act's three licensing objectives, namely:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime and disorder, being associated with crime and disorder or being used to support crime;

- Ensure gambling is conducted in a fair and open way; and
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

Following public consultation, the revised draft Statement of Gambling Policy was now ready to be recommended for adoption to take effect from 31st January 2022 (Appendix A). The public consultation exercise finished on 13th September 2021, and included the following elements: -

- Mail shots to operators
- Notification to the responsible authorities
- Mail shots to trade organisations and religious organisations
- Wider public consultation through the city council's website

All statutory consultees had received a full copy of the draft Gambling Policy and notification of the draft policy was given to all Council Members and Parish Councils. The draft policy was also made available on the council's website from 2nd August 2021 to 13th September 2021 and was sent to all licensed businesses, Responsible Authorities, resident associations and other public consultees as set out in the policy inviting them to comment.

Three responses had been received to the consultation and these were summarised in Appendix B to the report. After considering these comments it was proposed that no further changes were required for the policy, and the reasoning for this was also outlined in Appendix B to the report. Therefore, the only proposed changes to the policy were minor wording amendments.

The revised Statement of Gambling Policy must be published by 3rd January 2022, allowing the Council to continue to carry out any function in respect of applications made under the authority of the Gambling Act 2005 after 31st January 2022.

RESOLVED that the Council adopts the revised Statement of Gambling Policy attached as Appendix A of the report.

58. **Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan**

Further to Minute 45 of the Cabinet, the Council considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive that sought approval of the Domestic Abuse Strategy refresh and action plan, which included provision of support for victims and their children in line with the duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and the extension of the current overarching Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy to 2025. Appendices to the report provided the Needs Assessment – executive summary, key findings and recommendations; the Action Plan; and the Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2023: Addendum and Extension to 2025.

Domestic abuse was a manifestation of one-person (or persons) exerting power and control over another with whom they shared a personal connection. Domestic abuse could take many forms including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, economic and emotional abuse. It also included honour-based violence, forced marriage, other culturally recognised forms of abuse and a range of controlling and coercive behaviours. Preventing harm from Domestic Abuse was a

priority within Coventry and was a key measure within the One Coventry Plan. Coventry's Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018 – 2023 outlined the city's approach to addressing domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. The Act provided, for the first time, a statutory definition of domestic abuse and delivered a number of significant changes to improve the protection of victims within the community and the criminal justice system. Cabinet received a report in June 2021 (minute 4/21 referred) outlining the new duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Work on the new duties had commenced. A new statutory board, the "Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board" had been established. A needs assessment had been carried out, including extensive consultation with survivors, domestic abuse service providers and stakeholders. Recommendations had been reviewed within the context of the current Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy and an action plan had been developed. New services for victims and their children had been commissioned.

The Cabinet at their meeting on 16 November, 2021 had:

- 1) Noted the findings and recommendations of the needs assessment.
- 2) Acknowledged the findings of the needs assessment, Strategy refresh and action plan under the duties set out by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- 3) Approved the Strategy refresh and action plan which includes provision of support for victims and their children in line with the duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- 4) Approved the extension of the current overarching Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy to 2025.
- 5) Noted progress in commissioning support services for victims of domestic abuse and their children residing within safe accommodation to fulfil the functions of the Act using the grant of £849,930 in 2021/2022 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
- 6) Requested that Council notes the report.

RESOLVED that the Council notes the Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan.

59. Appointment to Outside Body

The Council considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which sought to appoint a replacement to serve on Coventry Law Centre Limited for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2021/22, following the resignation of Councillor D Welsh as a Council representative.

RESOLVED that the Council approves the appointment of Councillor A Tucker as a City Council representative on Coventry Law Centre Limited for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2021/22, replacing Councillor D Welsh.

60. **Question Time**

Councillors K Caan, P Hetherton, O'Boyle and D Welsh 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	Questions asked by	Question put to	Subject matter
1	Councillor Male	Councillors J Innes and P Seaman	Safeguarding issues
2	Councillor T Sawdon	Councillor R Lakha	Consideration of severance packages at Audit and procurement Committee
3	Councillors M Heaven, T Sawdon, P Male, B Mosterman	Councillor P Hetherton	Disruption of Waste Services
4	Councillor A Tucker	Councillor O'Boyle	Cancellation of Bus services, Travel for West Midlands and associated matters
5	Councillor J Birdi	Councillor M Mutton	Impact of disruption of Waste Services on vulnerable adults
6	Councillor D Welsh	Councillor P Hetherton	Proposed 3 weekly refuse collections in Warwickshire
7	Councillor G Ridley	Councillor G Duggins	Communication proposed to residents re Waste Services and responses to press interviews in relation to this matter
8	Councillor M Lapsa	Councillor K Caan	Public Health implications of disruption to

			Waste Services
9	Councillor R Simpson	Councillor J O'Boyle	Binley cycle route
10	Councillor P Male	Councillor A S Khan	Issues relating to photographs of Coventry South MP attending event
11	Councillor P Male	Councillor G Duggins	Issues relating to Planning Committee and consideration of Indoor Bowls Planning Application
12	Councillor P Male	Councillor D Welsh	Introduction of Selective Licensing to deal with flytipping and rogue landlords
13	Councillor G Ridley	Councillor G Duggins	Confidence in Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport

61. **Statements**

There were no Statements.

62. **Debate - Accredited Living Wage**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor R Simpson and seconded by Councillor R Bailey:-

“This Council should consider becoming an Accredited Living Wage Employer as certified by the Living Wage Foundation”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor J Mutton, seconded by Councillor S Walsh and, in accordance with the Constitution, accepted by Councillor R Simpson:-

After the word ‘should’, insert the words ‘continue to’-

The amended Motion now to read :-

“This Council should continue to consider becoming an Accredited Living Wage Employer as certified by the Living Wage Foundation”

RESOLVED that the amended Motion, as set out above, be adopted.

63. **Debate - Nationality and Borders Bill**

The following Motion was moved by Councillor A S Khan and seconded by Councillor R Singh:-

“This Council:

(a) Notes that:

(i) Coventry is proud of our history of welcoming people seeking safety in England;

(ii) there are significant problems with the UK asylum system that affect people in Coventry including a record backlog of cases awaiting a decision, an effective ban on working, and enforced poverty and homelessness;

(iii) the Government’s Nationality and Borders Bill does not address these issues, and will instead create a two-tier system, penalising people seeking safety based on the journeys they make;

(iv) people seeking sanctuary, including Afghan refugees, who reach the UK via unofficial routes will be criminalised and threatened with deportation under this Bill;

(v) the Bill will create longer backlogs, warehouse people in large accommodation centres, and leave many refugees with a temporary and precarious status;

(vi) the Government’s proposals have been condemned by organisations in Coventry, the Welsh Government, the leaders of Glasgow, Newcastle, Sheffield, Birmingham and Bristol City Councils, and the United Nations Refugee Agency;

(b) Believes that:

(i) this Bill is effectively an ‘anti-refugee’ Bill and undermines the right to seek safety;

(ii) this Bill will lead to greater poverty and homelessness in Coventry and will undermine people’s ability to rebuild their lives;

(iii) the UK should uphold our obligations in international law and our responsibilities as a global nation;

(iv) the UK needs an asylum system that empowers people seeking safety to rebuild their lives and enables communities to welcome them;

(c) Resolves to:

(i) call on the UK Government to throw out the Nationality and Borders Bill;

(ii) call on the UK Government to work with Local Authorities and communities to build a fairer and more effective asylum system.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor J Lepoidevin, seconded by Councillor R Simpson and lost:-

That the Motion be amended by the deletion of the following Paragraphs:-

- (a)(iii – vi) [Paragraphs (i - ii) retained]
- (b)(i- ii) [Paragraph (iii - iv) retained and renumbered as i-ii]
- (c) (i) [Paragraph (ii) retained and renumbered as i]

RESOLVED that the Motion as set out above be adopted.

(Meeting closed at 6.10pm)