

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 13 June 2023

Present:

Cabinet Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor A S Khan (Deputy Chair)
Councillor L Bigham
Councillor R Brown
Councillor K Caan
Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor P Seaman
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor D Welsh

Non-Voting Deputy
Cabinet Members: Councillor S Agboola
Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor G Hayre
Councillor A Jobbar
Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor S Nazir

Non-Voting Opposition
Members: Councillor S Gray
Councillor P Male
Councillor G Ridley

Other Non-Voting
Members: Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor C Miks
Councillor C E Thomas

Employees
(by Service area):

Chief Executive Julie Nugent (Chief Executive)

Finance B Hastie (Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer))

Law and Governance J Newman (Chief Legal Officer), T Robinson, M Salmon

Streetscene and
Regulatory Services J Adams, D Blackburn, S Chantler, C Hickin, M McHugh,
L Nagle

Others in attendance: D Lyon, West Midlands Police

Apologies: Councillor Sandhu

Public Business

Welcome

The Leader, Councillor G Duggins, and Members of the Cabinet welcomed Julie Nugent, the new Chief Executive, and the newly appointed Deputy Cabinet Members, Chairs of Scrutiny Boards and Chairs of Committees, to their first meeting of Cabinet.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th April 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. Renewal of City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services that sought approval of the renewal of the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order.

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was created and approved in 2017 to address a number of behaviours within the City Centre that it was felt needed controlling. The behaviours included Street Trading, Busking, Begging, amongst others.

PSPO's were only permitted to run for 3 years and at that point either expire or an application be made to renew. The City Centre PSPO was due to expire on 16th July 2023 and approval to renew the current Order for another 3 years was being sought as it was felt that the existing order had worked well in its intention to address problematic behaviours and would benefit from those conditions being retained.

The City Centre PSPO assisted in addressing problematic behaviours and simplified the response of officers from the Police and the Council in dealing with various anti-social activities. It was quick and easy to use, which was an important consideration when both organisations were facing reductions in resources. It also had the added benefit of enabling the offender to accept a fixed penalty notice rather than appear in court and receive a criminal record. The wording of the proposed PSPO and a map of the area that would be covered by the City Centre PSPO were set out in Appendices to the report. Further Appendices detailed the Summary of Responses from Key Partners, and the Enforcement Activity for the Existing Order.

Progress on the implementation of the PSPO would be submitted to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in due course.

Members requested that Parking Services be formally made aware that Cabinet had asked that they have more of a presence in the Burges area of the City Centre, to address illegal and inconsiderate parking.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the renewal of the current City Centre Public Space Protection Order, including the area covered by the Order as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.**
- 2) Authorises officers to bring the Order into effect on 14th July 2023, prior to the expiry date of the previous Order.**

4. Review of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Additional Licensing Scheme 2023

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services that sought approval for a 12-week consultation to commence on 1st July 2023 that reviewed the current Houses in Multiple Occupation Additional Licensing Scheme in Coventry which had been introduced in May 2020, and to consider the results of that consultation together with findings from the review in a future report.

The duty to licence Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) was introduced in July 2006 through powers provided under the Housing Act 2004 (the Act), at that time HMOs that were three or more storeys in height and occupied by five or more persons required a licence through the HMO mandatory licensing powers.

In October 2018 the definition for HMOs requiring a mandatory HMO licence was changed to include any HMO occupied by five or more people forming two or more households, in effect removing the three-storey requirement.

Additional licensing of HMOs was a discretionary power that, if introduced by Local Authorities, could be applied to those HMOs which were not required to be licensed under the mandatory licensing powers.

The provision of good quality housing for Coventry residents was a priority for the City Council and Additional Licensing of HMOs was first introduced in the city on 4th May 2020. The Scheme could only run for a period of five years, during which time the Council must carry out a review. The Additional Licensing scheme meant that all HMOs, including those properties converted into self-contained flats without building regulations approval (Section 257 HMOs) required a licence.

The Council must complete a review within the lifetime of the Licensing Scheme. The scheme was introduced in May 2020, so this was an opportune time to review the Scheme as a sufficient amount of time had passed to measure the effectiveness of the Scheme. An Appendix to the report provided the Consultation Plan setting out the stages involved and the proposed reporting of the results of the review. An Equality and Consultation Analysis was attached as a further Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1) Authorises the implementation of a 12-week consultation on the review of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Additional Licensing Scheme in Coventry.**

- 2) **Requests that a future report be submitted to Cabinet which provides information on the achievements made during the Scheme so far following the conclusion of the review, for a decision to be made regarding the future of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Additional Licensing Scheme in Coventry.**

5. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

6. **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.

Craig Hickin

The Leader, Councillor Duggins, referred to the impending retirement of Craig Hicken after 31 years of service to the Council and, on behalf of the Cabinet, thanked Craig for his hard work and dedication to the Authority in his role as Head of Environmental Services and wished him well for the future.

(Meeting closed at 2.40 pm)