

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held**  
**at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 13 July 2022**

Present:

Members:                           Councillor R Auluck (Chair)  
  Councillor R Lakha  
  Councillor J Lepoidevin  
  Councillor J McNicholas  
  Councillor S Nazir  
  Councillor T Sawdon

Other Members:               Councillors

Employees (by Directorate):

Finance and                       B Hastie, P Jennings

Law and Governance       V Castree, G Holmes

Employees:

Apologies:                       Councillor J Blundell, B Gittins and E Ruane

## **Public Business**

### **1.       Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **2.       Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 March, 2022 were agreed as a true record.

The Board requested progress from officers and the Cabinet Member relating to minutes 34 and 36.

### **3.       Introduction to Local Government Finance**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources introduced the item, explaining that although this year they had balanced the budget, this will be harder in future due to inflationary pressures.

The Board received a presentation which covered the following areas:

- Overall funding
- Funding the Council's budget 2022/23 revenue budget
- The spectrum of Council responsibilities
- Net budget 2022/23

- Financial challenges and pressures
- Inflation
- Reserves
- Treasury management
- Treasury management philosophy
- Capital funding
- 2022/23 Capital funding
- Specific grants
- Initial budget setting process
- Political process
- Medium terms budget position
- Option for tackling financial challenges
- One Coventry Plan priorities
- Council relative performance
- Financial information

Members of the Board asked questions and received responses on the following:

- The government grant based on population is fairly small compared to other areas of income
- Project Management and Property referred to a specific service area associated with property project management which showed a net income budget, mainly due to income from rents.
- Property assets were used to generate income and the Council would dispose of property where it could generate a receipt.
- There was no specific policy for disposal of assets but there was the possibility to look at a framework for targeted disposals where assets were underperforming
- Decisions to dispose of assets followed the financial thresholds within the constitution
- A review of Local Government funding was overdue. This included a recent delay due to international events and the pandemic.
- Council Tax was based on property value bands from 1991. Council Tax levels are set by Council annually. The system was a national system, but Council Tax levels and annual increases were agreed locally.
- The budget for IT infrastructure had been increasing over the last 2 years with investment in resilience and cyber-security. There had also been increase in the cost of Microsoft licenses.
- Whether digital poverty was being considered and addressed by the Council
- That the Council did get value for money from the treasury management advice it receives

Members also requested budget allocations to be provided against the spectrum of Council services slide.

**RESOLVED that the Finance and Corporate Services Board (1):-**

- 1) Considered the content of the presentation**
- 2) Identified the following to be added to the work programme.**

- **Digital Inclusion as part of the item on ICT and Digital Update**

4. **Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Scrutiny Board considered the Work Programme for 2022/23.

The Board requested further clarification on the reporting of Coventry Municipal Holdings (formerly HoldCo) information to Elected Members

**RESOLVED that in additional to the item above the following would also be added to the work programme**

- **ER/VR process**

5. **Any other items of Public Business**

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.40 pm)