

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held**  
**at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 9 March 2023**

Present:

Members: Councillor R Auluck (Chair)  
Councillor J Blundell  
Councillor J Innes (substitute for Councillor B Gittins)  
Councillor R Lakha  
Councillor J Lepoidevin  
Councillor J McNicholas  
Councillor S Nazir  
Councillor E Ruane  
Councillor T Sawdon

Other Members: Councillor R Brown (Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources)  
Councillor D Welsh (Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities)

Employees:

Interim Chief Executives B Hastie, Interim Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)  
K Nelson, Interim Chief Executive (Chief Operating Officer)

Law and Governance: J Newman (Chief Legal Officer), V Castree, C Sinclair

Apologies: Councillor B Gittins

## **Public Business**

### **30. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **31. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2023 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

### **32. Financial Position of the City of Culture Trust**

At the meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held on 9 March 2023 the Members of the Board had unanimously resolved to request this additional meeting under Section 3E paragraph 2.4 of the City Council's Constitution to consider the concerns reported by the Coventry City of Culture Trust that had put into question the ability of the Trust to continue and deliver the legacy programme envisaged (Minute 29/22 refers).

In Summary, the Coventry City of Culture Trust (“the Trust”) had been established principally to deliver the UK City of Culture 2021 programme across the City. The Trust had continued in existence beyond the end of the main programme in May 2022 in order to deliver a series of legacy activities which were planned up to March 2024. The Trust was forecast to manage within its c£40m multi-year budget funded mostly from public sector grants, charitable trust donations and ticketing and commercial income. However, the Trust reported some significant financial concerns which put into question the ability of the Trust to continue and deliver the legacy programme envisaged.

This additional meeting had been called to consider the financial position of the City of Culture Trust and the risk that the Trust may not be able to deliver the legacy activities it had planned. On 28 February 2023, subsequent to the meeting being called, the Trust entered administration.

The wider City of Culture programme and legacy had been considered regularly at meetings of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and was next scheduled for a meeting early in the new municipal year. Therefore, Scrutiny Board 1 would focus on just the financial issues identified above.

In her opening comments, the Chair, Councillor R Auluck, made a statement in respect of the Board’s request for this additional including outlining efforts to contact Trust Members to respond to Members’ questions. However, no invitees were in attendance or had responded to the request. In light of this, the following motion was moved by Councillor J McNicholas, seconded by Councillor E Ruane and adopted that:

*“Scrutiny Board 1 calls for disclosure of the financial accounts (for the duration of the organisation) of the City of Culture Trust and the City Council to be shared for consideration.*

*It calls for all sums of monies held by the City of Culture Trust to be made public, in order to consider the extent to which loan conditions and deliverables were met.*

*Potential risks to the Coventry City Council’s reputation and City Council finances, including implications and mitigations for the loan made in October 2022”*

**RESOLVED that the motion detailed above be brought to the Board’s next meeting scheduled for 28 March 2023 and that Members of the former City of Culture Trust and representative for appropriate bodies to be invited to the meeting.**

**33. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Work Programme was noted.

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

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 2.40 pm)