

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 8 February 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor E Ruane (Chair)
Councillor J Blundell
Councillor J Innes
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor P Male
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor CE Thomas (substitute for Councillor K Maton)

Other Members: Councillor G Lloyd, Deputy Cabinet Member for City Services

Employees:

Digital Services: Paul Ward, Head of ICT and Digital Services
A Simmonds
M Walker

Law and Governance: G Holmes
E Jones
C Sinclair

Apologies: Councillors L Kelly and K Maton
Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

Public Business

25. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

26. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Matter Arising - Minute 21 (Delivering Value for Money in Placement Costs)

It was agreed that the board receive a follow-up report on delivering value for money at the meeting to be held on the 21 March 2024.

27. Artificial Intelligence and Automation

The Board received a briefing note and presentation on Artificial Intelligence and Automation. The presentation included the current 'mission statement for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automations', examples of AI including demonstrations of

some functions, an overview of a pilot scheme and the approach to a policy position for AI.

The Board questioned officers and the Deputy Cabinet Member on several points arising from the presentation, and received information on the following areas:

- **Whether there were any quick wins that could be made, particularly in the areas of transport infrastructure and children’s services.**
- **Noted that there was not a specific budget for AI, however the use of AI would be based on detailed business cases to identify savings and/or service improvements.**
- **The use of Copilot, an AI powered assistant, and the pilot currently being undertaken by 300 volunteer users to help develop and understanding about using AI in the workplace, define further use cases, and build a business case for any longer-term investment/deployment of Copilot.**
- **Security and privacy risks, including power outage and hacking.**
- **The importance of checking the accuracy of content created by AI**
- **Ethical considerations in the use of AI.**
- **The need for a corporate approach and how Members can be involved in developing the policy.**
- **The capability of using AI to make savings and improve service delivery.**

Resolved that the Board:

1. **Note the details in the presentation**
2. **Recommend to the Cabinet Member for City Services:**
 - a. **That a strategic corporate lead be taken by the City Council to identify ways in which AI could be used to improve services and save money.**
 - b. **That areas be identified where AI could be used for “quick wins”, specifically in traffic management and children's services.**
3. **Agree that a further report come back to the Board in due course which should include the proposed policy position above and ways in which AI could be used to improve services and save money**

28. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues

The work programme was noted.

There were no outstanding issues.

29. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.40 pm)