

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held**  
**at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 11 September 2024**

Present:

Members: Councillor A Jobbar (Chair)  
Councillor J Blundell  
Councillor J Innes  
Councillor R Lakha  
Councillor P Male  
Councillor J McNicholas  
Councillor D Toulson

Other Members: Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources  
Councillor G Duggins, The Leader & Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership

Employees:

Human Resources: S Chilton, Director

Law and Governance: E Jones  
C Sinclair

Apologies: Councillor G Lewis and A Tucker

## **Public Business**

### **7. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **8. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

### **9. Cabinet Member Priorities for the year**

The Board received a briefing from the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources setting out his priorities for the forthcoming year.

The Cabinet Member highlighted that the budget was the main priority, and the presentation covered:

- Financial challenges and pressures – including £30m savings which needed to be made whilst maintaining services
- The legal responsibility of balancing the budget which was achievable but was becoming ever more challenging
- The ongoing work that was being undertaken to identify savings

- The impact of Coventry receiving less-than-average funding compared to other authorities in the West Midlands region

The Board asked a number of questions arising from the presentation including on the following issues:

- How the Chancellor was helping local authorities to deliver their needs.
- What actions were being taken in respect of Coventry's underfunding compared to other local authorities

In noting the report, the Board requested that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources:

- Consider how best to present the challenges outlined in his presentation (including any involvement with SIGOMA) at a future meeting.
- Consider, for future annual priorities presentations, what data could be distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting.

## 10. **Workforce Metrics**

The Board noted a report which provided the current workforce analytics, the data within it included the numbers employed, turnover, starters, leavers, sickness absence, agency workers, and, where possible historical data had been included for comparative purposes. The report enabled a comprehensive overview and explanation of the workforce and related metrics.

Human Resources (HR) were now able to provide 'live' workforce analytical information due to the development of the data warehouse. This had been a shared development between HR and IT. Information was refreshed daily and was accessible to directors and managers on their desktops and it was flexible enough to be able to view at both service level and by category, ie grade, contract type, occupied and vacant posts.

The presentation also set out data on:

- Agency staff
- New developments in relation to the recruitment process
- Workforce diversity and inclusion data
- Retention
- Sickness absence
- Learning and development
- Benefits

The Board questioned the officer on a number of matters arising from the presentation including the following:

- The measures taken to address sickness absence in respect of the category 'stress, depression and anxiety.'
- The use of agency staff particularly in areas where there had been difficulties in recruiting.

Following questions, the Board asked to receive up to data information on the following:

- Number of vacant posts.
- Number of staff using counselling services

**Resolved that the Board**

- a) Note the contents of the report**
- b) Acknowledge and commend the on-going work being undertaken to improve the range and access of data to address workforce challenges**
- c) Establish a Task and Finish Group to look at issues around the use of agency staff**

**11. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Work Programme was noted with a request from Members for Officers to provide clarification on the item entitled 'alternative accommodation'.

There were no outstanding issues.

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

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.00 pm)