

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 11 February 2025**

Present:

Cabinet Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)  
Councillor N Akhtar  
Councillor R Brown  
Councillor K Caan  
Councillor P Hetherton  
Councillor AS Khan (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor J O'Boyle  
Councillor K Sandhu  
Councillor P Seaman

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

Non-Voting Opposition  
Members: Councillor P Male  
Councillor E Reeves  
Councillor G Ridley

Other Non-Voting  
Members: Councillor R Lakha  
Councillor G Lloyd  
Councillor C E Thomas

Employees (by Service Area):

Chief Executive Julie Nugent (Chief Executive)

Communications Nigel Hart

Finance and Resources Barry Hastie (Director of Finance and Resources),  
P Helm, T Pinks

Law and Governance J Newman (Director of Law and Governance), M Salmon

Property Services and  
Development R Moon (Director of Property Services and Development),  
P Beesley

Apologies: Councillor F Abbott  
Councillor L Bigham  
Councillor A Jobbar

## **Public Business**

### **58. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **59. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

### **60. Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED that Cabinet agrees to exclude the press and public under Sections 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to the private report in Minute 65 below headed ‘Disposal of Land Torrington Avenue, Coventry’ on the grounds that the report involves the likely disclosure of information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as it contains information relating to the financial affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.**

### **61. 2024-25 Third Quarter Financial Monitoring Report (to December 2024)**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer), which would also be considered at the meeting of Audit and Procurement Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025, that advised Members of the forecast outturn position for revenue and capital expenditure and the Council’s treasury management activity as at the end of December 2024.

The net revenue forecast position after management action was for spend in 2024/25 of £7.0m over budget. Whilst not a wholly comparable position, at the same point in 2023/24 there was a projected overspend of £8.5m.

The Council continued to face budget pressures within both Adults and Children’s social care, Housing, and City Services. Other overspends were also being reported in Property Services and Business Investment and Culture. These financial pressures were being caused by a combination of legacy inflation impacts, continued increases in service demand, complexity of cases and social care market conditions, income shortfalls due to reduced activity, and slippage in the delivery of some service savings.

The Council’s position above included a significant number of one-off actions that had been applied to reduce the overspend. Recognising that the underlying position was significantly higher, further urgent action was required to address the pressure in-year and to prevent the 2025/26 position increasing to unmanageable levels.

The Council's capital spending this year was projected to be £1111.3m and included major schemes progressing across the city. The size of the programme and the nature of the projects within it continue to be fundamental to the Council's role within the city. Although prevailing inflation rates looked to be stabilising, legacy inflationary pressures and high borrowing rates continued to affect capital projects. The assumption was that stand-alone projects that were already in-progress would be delivered as planned but that future projects that had not yet started would need to be re-evaluated to determine their deliverability within previously defined financial budgets.

The materiality of the financial pressures, both revenue and capital, had reaffirmed the imperative to maintain strict financial discipline and re-evaluate the Council's medium-term financial position. This would be a priority across all services as the Council developed its future budget plans.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet:**

- 1) Approves the Council's third quarter revenue monitoring position.**
- 2) Approves the revised forecast capital outturn position for the year of £1111.3m incorporating: £3.3m net increase in spending relating to approved/technical changes and £35m of net programme rescheduling of expenditure into future years.**

**62. Disposal of land Torrington Avenue, Coventry**

Cabinet considered a report of the Director Property Services and Development that outlined a request from Sandvik UK Limited (Sandvik) to acquire the freehold of land which they currently leased from the Council. A site plan was attached as an Appendix to the report.

A corresponding private report detailing confidential financial matters was also submitted for consideration (Minute 65 below referred).

The leased land currently formed part of a larger site formally occupied and operated by Sandvik. Sandvik owned the freehold of the adjoining land which made up the remainder of the site. The Council owned land extended to 1.86 acres (0.754 hectares), circa 30% of Sandvik's total site area as indicated in the site plan in the appendix to the report. The Council's land was only accessible by vehicles from the adopted highway across the Sandvik owned land. Sandvik's current lease from the Council expired on 5th May 2065.

Sandvik took a strategic business decision to close their Coventry facility and relocate its operation back to Sweden. The facility in Coventry was now closed and Sandvik were looking to dispose of their land interests in Coventry.

The market research undertaken by Sandvik's property agent, corroborated by the Council's own independent property advice, indicated that it was clear that the redevelopment of the site would be rendered much more challenging by there being a mix of freehold and long leasehold interest. Accordingly, the optimum option to drive value from the site, maximising returns for the Council and

delivering commercial business investment into the city in a timely manner, was to permit the freehold sale of the land for commercial redevelopment in these particular circumstances.

To protect the Council's financial position in any future redevelopment as well as strategically maintaining the land for employment purposes, it was recommended that any transfer of the Council's land should include a restrictive covenant preventing the land from being used for any purpose other than for commercial uses, therefore preventing a residential development in this location.

**RESOLVED that, subject to the consideration of the additional confidential information contained in the corresponding private report (minute 65 below refers), Cabinet:**

- 1) Approves the freehold disposal of the land.**
- 2) Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources (S151 Officer) and Director of Law and Governance, to negotiate and finalise the terms, to undertake the necessary due diligence and complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.**
- 3) Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, to approve and accept any other payments and any minor alterations or adjustments to the scheme or project.**

**63. Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

**64. 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.

**65. Disposal of Land Torrington Avenue, Coventry**

Further to Minute 62 above, Cabinet considered a private report of the Director of Property Services and Development, which set out the commercially confidential matters relating a request from Sandvik UK Limited (Sandvik) to acquire the freehold of land which they currently leased from the Council and that formed part of a larger site formally occupied and operated by Sandvik.

**RESOLVED that, following consideration of the corresponding public report and further to Minute 62 above, Cabinet:**

- 1) Approves the freehold disposal of the land based on the terms outlined in this report.**

- 2) **Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources (S151 Officer) and Director of Law and Governance, to negotiate and finalise the terms, to undertake the necessary due diligence and complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction.**
- 3) **Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, to approve and accept any other payments and any minor alterations or adjustments to the scheme or project.**

66. **Any other items of private business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 2.30 pm)