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### **Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)**

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**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Wednesday, 9th July 2025

**Place**

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House, Coventry

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**Public Business****1. Apologies and Substitutions****2. Declarations of Interest****3. Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)

(a) To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2025

(b) Matters arising

**4. Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change - Key Priorities for 2025/26**

The Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change will outline his key priorities for 2025/26

**5. Development of Coventry's Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan**  
(Pages 9 - 12)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator

**6. Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) Work Programme 2025/26** (Pages 13 - 20)

Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator

**7. Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved****Private Business**

Nil

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Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

Tuesday, 1 July 2025

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Michelle Salmon, Governance Services, Email: michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk

Membership:

Councillors F Abbott, P Akhtar, J Blundell, T Jandu, A Kaur, J McNicholas, B Singh, R Singh (Chair) and C E Thomas

By invitation:

Councillor J O'Boyle – Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change

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**Michelle Salmon**

**Governance Services**

**Email: michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk**

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)**  
**held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 12 March 2025**

Present:

Members: Councillor R Singh (Chair)  
Councillor P Akhtar  
Councillor J Blundell  
Councillor T Jandu (Substitute for Councillor S Jobbar)  
Councillor A Jobbar  
Councillor R Lakha (Substitute for Councillor A Kaur)  
Councillor B Singh

By Invitation: Councillor J O'Boyle (Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change)

Others Present: Mr Steven Ireland (Network Rail)  
Mr Andy Clarke (Midlands Connect)

Employees (by Directorate):

Law and Governance: E Jones, L Knight  
Regeneration and Economy R Coyle, J Norton, J Seddon, S Weir

Apologies: Councillor F Abbott  
Councillor S Jobbar  
Councillor A Kaur

## **Public Business**

### **24. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **25. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record.

### **26. Rail Update**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a briefing note and presentation which provided an update on Network Rail's 5-Year Plan; the Coventry – Leicester – Nottingham direct rail link project and the Heart of England Community Rail Partnership's work on engaging young people and families with the rail network.

Mr S Ireland (Network Rail) and Mr A Clarke (Midlands Connect) attended the meeting in support of this item.

With regards to the Network Rail 5-Year Plan, Mr Ireland explained that the Plan covered the 2024 to 2029 control period. The figures within the Plan may be subject to change and there will be further updates in due course as the Plan is currently going through the Department for Transport (DfT).

The presentation provided information in respect of the Central Route – Heart of Britain’s Railway; Lead Train Operators; Non-Lead Train Operators and Freight; Asset Base; Overarching Principles; Access Utilisation; and Start of Control Period 7 by Numbers.

It was noted that the central route covers a major part of the national rail network. Network Rail are the infrastructure manager for the main link between the West Midlands and London, a key commuter line in and out of Birmingham, and a vital freight route. The central route is also home to Birmingham New Street, the busiest station outside of London and the hub of the national rail network. With more than 160,000 passengers using the station every day, Birmingham New Street helps connect the Southwest with Scotland and the Northwest with East Anglia. Some key statistics were highlighted as follows:

- More than 2,400 trains a day carry passengers across routes
- 188,000 tonnes a week of nationally important freight
- 160,000 passengers per day through Birmingham New Street
- 152 Stations
- 1,103 miles of track
- 1,216 sets of points
- 505 wire runs (OLE)
- 1,668 colour signals
- 136 semaphore signals

Mr Clark presented information in respect of the work undertaken by Midlands Connect, particularly in respect of the Coventry – Leicester – Nottingham direct rail link and the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) to Government. The presentation indicated that the SOBC had been resubmitted to Government and set out the costs and benefits of improving the rail service, including a new direct service to the East Midlands. Midlands Connect were seeking money for the next stage, an Outline Business Case, and ultimately the construction by the early 2030s. The Presentation also highlighted the following:

- The Rationale – Economic Growth, Access to Opportunity and Railfreight.
- The current indirect route from Coventry to Leicester.
- What is needed – the preferred option of 1 train per hour local and 2 trains per hour regional.
- The infrastructure required – Coventry Bay Platform Capacity (twin bay for preferred option), Higher Speeds from Coventry to Nuneaton (from 45mph to 60mph), Nuneaton ‘Diveunder’, and Leicester 4-Tracking (South Wigston to Leicester).
- Key Headlines:
  - Journey Times – now 56 minutes – future 30 minutes
  - People using Rail – now 3% - future greater than 25%

- Value for Money – greater than 2 ‘high’ but greater than 3 with railfreight
- Benefits – More than £400m, of which £150m is to the wider economy.
- Next Steps
  - Submission to RNEP – two stages of submission
  - Then onto Outline Business Case (funds permitting) [2025-26]
  - Network Rail to lead the Outline Business Case on behalf of Midlands Connect [2027-28]
  - Entry into service by early 2030s but relies on timely decision making [by early 2030s]

The Board made statements, asked a number of questions and received answers in respect of the following:

- The importance of trains and buses being integrated.
- Who is responsible when there are train cancellations, whether it falls to Network Rail or the relevant operators.
- The process for applying for compensation when there are delays.
- How information is shared with communities within local regions and what information is published.
- How to ensure that a customer is able to purchase the cheapest option ticket when sometimes it is cheaper to buy tickets for the journey in stages/
- How technology has impacted on what services are available at stations.
- What percentage of tickets are now sold electronically.
- Coventry station being the second busiest in the region, links to the bus interchange, and issues of where taxis are stopping.
- Why there are so few carriages on the Cross-Country network, often resulting in trains being crowded.
- Whether Coventry had benefitted from any of the HS2 funding.
- How many apprentices are involved with the HS2 project.
- Whether there would be a swift ticketing approach to support the uptake of journeys from Birmingham to Leicester.
- Whether there could be different transport types available in light of the current timescales to 2030.
- What the likely impact of freight would be.
- Whether there had been any investigations to implement projects on a sectional basis.

The Board requested that the following additional information be circulated to them by Network Rail and Midlands Connect:

- a) An update on the development of the railway bridge of Holyhead Road.
- b) A summary of quarterly reports be shared with residents.
- c) Information on delay / cancellation responsibilities across Network Rail and Operators and performance information in respect of stations.
- d) Information on the benefits to Coventry in respect of HS2 funding.
- e) The number of apprentices involved with HS2.

- f) Information on how the Planning and Infrastructure Bill may assist with proposals for the Midlands Hub.

**RESOLVED that, the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):**

- 1) Notes the contents of the report and accompanying papers.**
- 2) Agrees that the formation of Great British Railways and proposals be included on a future agenda for the Board, once the current rail contract expires.**
- 3) Requests that the additional information requested in a) to f) above be circulated to the Board.**

## **27. Green Power Park and West Midlands Investment Zone**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a briefing note which provided an update on the Greenpower Park and West Midlands Investment Zone.

The Board noted that the Council owns the freehold of Coventry Airport, a 125Ha site within Warwick District. In 2021, the Council formed a joint venture with Coventry Airport Limited, which has a long leasehold over the site, in order to promote the site as the location for a battery gigafactory.

The note indicated that the costs of preparing the planning applications have been funded on a 50:50 basis, with each party committing £2m. In addition, the Council has provided a further £0.25m for preparation of the economic case for battery manufacturing on the site and for marketing the site to international investors bringing the Council's total commitment to £2.25m

In January 2022, Warwick District Council gave outline planning approval for a total of 530,000m<sup>2</sup> of development on the site for battery manufacturing and associated uses such as battery recycling, research and development (R&D), supply chain and HQ functions. Economic modelling suggested that if the site was fully developed, up to 6,000 jobs could be supported in the local economy.

Realising full delivery of the Investment Zone site was vital to achieving the objectives of both the One Coventry Plan (particularly "Enhancing the Economic Prosperity of the City and Region) and the Coventry Economic development Strategy 2022-2027. The site has huge potential to secure inward investment into the city and also position Coventry as a leader in the green industrial revolution, given the site's target focus of electric vehicle and battery production, recycling and R&D and associated Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain activities. Through the delivery of supply chain support programmes, and skills support programmes, there would be major opportunities to facilitate the successful growth and diversification of local businesses operating with Advanced Manufacturing supply chains, and to tackle inequalities by supporting local residents to upskill and secure new job opportunities.

The site has attracted interest from a variety of potential investor occupiers. This ranges from a large-scale battery manufacturer with significant output

requirements through to smaller cell manufacturers looking to develop technology and scale up production over time. In addition, there is also interest from the wider supply chain with battery component suppliers, battery R&D and testing companies, battery recyclers and some vehicle manufacturers all engaged.

In the UK government budget in March 2023, it was announced that eight areas including the West Midlands would be invited to develop proposals for Investment Zones. The aim of Investment Zones was to use tax reliefs, planning mechanisms and innovation, skills and business support to create private sector growth and quality jobs. Each Investment Zone must have a sector focus, and the West Midlands has selected Advanced Manufacturing, which is an excellent fit with Coventry's economic ambitions, and specifically our plans for battery manufacturing at Greenpower Park. The West Midlands Investment Zone (WMIZ) would focus on Coventry-Warwick Gigapark, Birmingham Knowledge Quarter and Wolverhampton Green Innovation Corridor.

The Coventry-Warwick Gigapark consisted of four sites, including the Greenpower Park, totalling 241Ha, making it by far the largest part of the WMIZ. The other sites were Whitley South, Segro Park and Whitley East. The following tax incentives were available for Coventry:

- Full Business Rate Relief – (5 years) for newly occupied business premises and certain existing businesses where they expend in tax sites.
- Full Stamp Duty Land Tax Relief – for land and buildings bought for commercial use or development for commercial purposes.
- Employer National Insurance Contributions – zero rated threshold raised from £5,000 to £25,000 in respect of new eligible employees for the first 36 months of their employment.
- Enhanced Structure and Building Allowances – 10% straight line deduction per annum.
- 100% First Year Capital Allowances – a 100% first year allowance for expenditure on plant and machinery.

A company investing in 20,000m<sup>2</sup> building could expect to save an estimated £4.78m in the first five years of operation. In addition to these tax incentives, WMIZ allows business rates from the three sets of sites in the region to be collected and reinvested into the Advanced Manufacturing sector in the West Midlands for 25 years. It was estimated that during this period £1.5bn in business rate growth would be generated to then reinvest in helping to grow the sector.

It was noted that the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) would develop an investment plan for this funding, and Coventry (and its partners in Warwickshire) would be working to ensure that funding is reinvested into the Coventry and Warwickshire advanced manufacturing eco-system which is critical to the local economy.

The Board made statements, asked questions and received responses in respect of the following:

- How raw materials would be brought to the site.

- Whether there were any concerns about the impact of the supply chain on child exploitation, such as the production of Cobalt in the Congo.
- Whether the protests around the Bubbenhall area related to the wider investment zone.
- Links between the site and Ansty Park.
- Whether there had been any promotion of the site to the defence sector.
- How many jobs could be created if the site were to be fully invested.
- The impact of AI and robots on the potential employee numbers.
- Whether the Council were insisting on options to provide skills to local children through apprenticeships.

**RESOLVED that, the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):**

- 1) **Notes the content of the briefing note.**
- 2) **Indicated that they have no specific recommendations for the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change.**
- 3) **Requests that information be provided on how many apprentices from Coventry are employed on the site.**

28. **Work Programme 2024/25**

The Business, Economy, and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator that detailed issues on the Board's Work Programme for meetings of the Board for 2024/25.

As this was the last meeting of the year, the Board noted the items they had considered over the course of the year and requested that two additional items be added to the list of matters to be considered during 2025/26. These were Destination Coventry and UK BIC. In respect of UK BIC, it was agreed that a tour of the factory be undertaken.

**RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):**

- 1) **Notes the matters considered by the Board during the 2024/25 Municipal Year.**
- 2) **Requests that Destination Coventry and UK BIC be added to the list of matters to be considered by the Board during 2025/26 Municipal Year.**

29. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 4.29 pm)



Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)**

**Date: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Subject: Development of Coventry's Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To establish a task and finish group (T&F) to support the development of Coventry's Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) are recommended to:

- 3.1 Establish a task and finish group on the development of Coventry's Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan (Appendix 1)

- 1) Identify Members to take part in the task and finish group

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 On the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2025, The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered a briefing note of the Director of City Services and Commercial, which provided an update on progress on the development of Coventry City Councils (CCC) Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan (LCWIP).
- 4.1 The Development of Coventry's Local Cycling and Walking Plan (LCWIP) is a strategic initiative by Coventry City Council aimed at enhancing the city's infrastructure for active travel. The LCWIP serves as a planning tool for local authorities to develop networks of walking and cycling routes, providing a policy framework that supports the implementation of the Coventry Transport Strategy, which was adopted by the Council in December 2022.
- 5.1 The plan focuses on both existing and potential travel demand, aiming to create a comprehensive network that encourages mode shift and adapts to new developments. For walking, the emphasis is on maintaining and improving the existing network, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all users, including those with mobility aids. This involves addressing barriers such as pavement parking, street furniture, and lack of dropped kerb crossings.
- 6.1 For cycling, the plan aims to connect sporadic routes into a cohesive city-wide network. This includes identifying corridors for new cycle routes and making both point and area-based interventions. The LCWIP is designed to be a live document, updated as priorities evolve, and it strengthens the council's position to obtain funding from various sources.
- 7.1 Overall, the LCWIP is a crucial component of Coventry's efforts to promote sustainable and active travel, improving the quality of life for its residents and contributing to environmental goals.

- 8.1 The focus of the Task and Finish Group is to aid greater understanding of issues, options, and scheme development of the Coventry's Local Cycling & Walking Innovation Plan.
- 9.1 The task and finish group would consider several factors, including national legislation, guidance, current policy, data, local comparators, costs and anything else which would come within the scope of the investigation.
- 10.1 The T&F will report back to the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3), including recommendations to the Cabinet Member this municipal year.

**Appendix 1: Draft scoping document**

Elan Jones  
Scrutiny Co-ordinator  
Law and Governance  
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# Scrutiny Scoping Document

<b>Title of Review topic</b>	
Development of Coventry's Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan	
<b>Objectives</b>	
What does the Board/Task and Finish Group hope to achieve by considering the topic?	The overarching purpose for the Task and Finish Group is to aid greater understanding of issues, options, and scheme development of the Coventry's Local Cycling & Walking Innovation Plan
What will be the indicators of success?	The T&F group will have input into the development of the LCWIP therefore the indicator of success will be a strategy supported by SB3, presented for agreement by the Cabinet Member
When will the review be evaluated?	6-12 months after the recommendations are made.
<b>What will be included in the scope of the review?</b>	
What will be included in the scope of the review?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desktop research</li> <li>• Local knowledge / information obtained by the Task and Finish Group members.</li> <li>• Data, evidence provided by Transport and Innovation Officers and Task and Finish Group members.</li> </ul>
What will be excluded from the scope?	General issues relating to cycling and walking.
Does the review link with any existing strategies or policies? Is this currently being reviewed/refreshed?	LCWIP is a planning tool for local authorities to develop networks of walking and cycling routes, providing a policy framework for active travel that supports the implementation of the Coventry Transport Strategy, adopted by the Council in December 2022. National guidance exists to help local authorities write effective LCWIPs. It links with the following strategies and policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Wellbeing</li> <li>• Environmental Policies</li> <li>• Urban Development</li> </ul>
<b>Methodology</b>	
How will the review be carried out? e.g. surveys, site visits, select committees etc.	Briefings, presentations from Council officers and external partners.
<b>Barriers and Risks</b>	
What are the barriers and risks to the review?	Scope creep
How can these be managed/overcome?	Ensure that the T&F is focused on the timeline of the LCWIP. Other issues can be noted and potential referred for further investigation elsewhere.
<b>Equality and Diversity</b>	
Does the review have any potential implications for Equality and Diversity? (race, gender (including transgender), disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, poverty, looked after children)	Health inequalities are a significant challenge for many communities, and reducing the barriers to active travel can help more people make healthier life and travel choices.
<b>Timescales and reporting procedure</b>	
List any key dates/events which might impact on the timescales of the review	

Anticipated number of meetings	3-4
Scrutiny Board portfolio	Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
Cabinet Member portfolio	Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change
Anticipated reporting date to Scrutiny Board	By end of municipal year 2026
Anticipated reporting route – Cabinet Member/Cabinet	Cabinet Member
Report of.....	Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
Comms involvement	
Task and Finish Group Members	Cllr Reeves from the Green Party has expressed an interest

Draft



Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)**

**Date: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

**Subject: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) Work Programme 2025-26**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To provide Board Members an opportunity to discuss potential items for the work programme 2025-26.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) is recommended to:
- 1) Consider the draft Work Programme attached at Appendix 1.
  - 2) Identify and agree any additional items for the Work Programme 2025-26.

### **3 Background and Information**

- 3.1 The Work Programme provides a schedule of items for meetings over the coming municipal year. The draft Work Programme for the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) for 2025-26 is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Scrutiny Work Programmes are working documents and will adapt and change over the year to react to Members' requirements. Any item agreed at this meeting does not preclude any future amendments to the Work Programme.

### **4 Health Inequalities Impact**

- 4.1 There is no impact on health inequalities for these recommendations, but Members may want to consider how identified Work Programme items may impact on health inequalities.

Appendix 1: Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) Work Programme 2025-26

Gennie Holmes  
Scrutiny Co-ordinator  
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**Please see page 2 onwards for background to items**

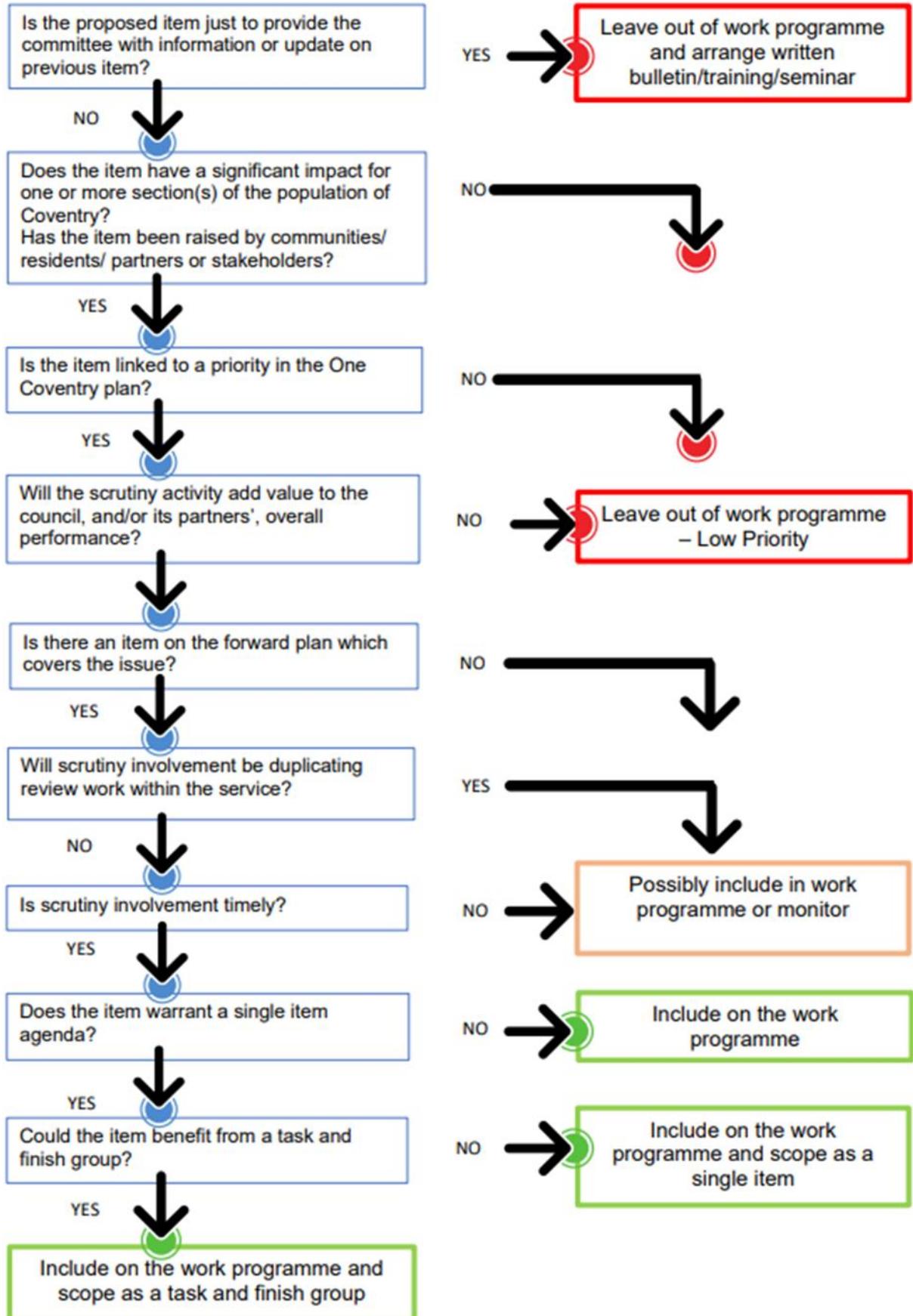
<b>9 July 2025</b>
Cabinet Member Portfolio Priorities Cycling and Walking Plan – Task & Finish Group
<b>17 September 2025</b> <b>22 October 2025</b> <b>26 November 2025</b> <b>4 February 2026</b> <b>18 March 2025</b> <b>25/26</b>
EV charging point infrastructure Strategy roll-out Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund Domestic Retrofit - Update Economic Development Strategy/Skills Strategy 25/26 Heatline Update on Bus Delivery Options City Centre South Development Very Light Rail – route identification CW Economic Development Strategy Destination Coventry Greenpower Park and West Midlands Investment Zone Visit to UK BIC

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
9 July 2025	Cabinet Member Portfolio Priorities	To invite Cllr O’Boyle to identify their priorities for the coming year, for Scrucro to be able to identify future items and hold Cabinet Members to account	Cllr O’Boyle
	Cycling and Walking Plan – Task & Finish Group	A Local Cycling and Walking Innovation Plan Task and Finish Group be established - Progress on implementation of the Plan – Member contribution pre-consultation during summer 25.	John Seddon / Andrew Saffrey Cllr O’Boyle
17 September 2025			
22 October 2025			
26 November 2025			
4 February 2026			
18 March 2025			

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
25/26	EV charging point infrastructure Strategy roll-out	An update following the item had 8 <sup>th</sup> November – to include employer facilities for charging agreed by Cabinet on 11 <sup>th</sup> October 2022. Strategy is due to be agreed by Cabinet on 5 <sup>th</sup> November – this item will consider how the strategy will be delivered, as well as steps being taken to encourage EV vehicles by large commercial fleets. To invite external fleet operators. Including accessible parking charging points	Cllr O'Boyle John Seddon Shamala Evans-Gadgil
	Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund	– update due 2024/25	David Nuttall Cllr O'Boyle
	Domestic Retrofit - Update	updates regarding the overall progress of the domestic retrofit programmes across the city.	Rhian Palmer Cllr O'Boyle
	Economic Development Strategy/Skills Strategy 25/26	A further progress report in 25/26 which includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress against benchmark data</li> <li>• Work to retain graduates in the city</li> </ul>	K Mawby / S Weir
	Heatline	Update on the use of Heatline, income generated, efficiency and best use of the resource, how it is contributing to net zero – Update in Feb 2026 – To include a private item to be arranged by officers including Bring Energy to update Members of the board with the financial side of Heatline to include value of assets etc.	Colin Knight / Lowell Lewis / Mark Anderson (Bring Energy) / Cllr O'Boyle
	Update on Bus Delivery Options	To include progress on bus franchising as well as whether the on demand bus service could include a Birmingham drop off.	
	City Centre South Development	Update on progress – Requested at the last meeting of the Municipal year 2024	Adam Hunt

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Very Light Rail – route identification	An item to include information about the feasibility of routes and how members of the public will be engaged in the process.	Cllr O'Boyle John Seddon
	CW Economic Development Strategy	Following Cabinet March 18th	
	Destination Coventry	Update on Destination Coventry including its performance	Paula Deas / Cllr O'Boyle
	Greenpower Park and West Midlands Investment Zone	To pick up progress, including promotion of the Gigapark.	S Weir Cllr O'Boyle
	Visit to UK BIC		Steve Weir / Cllr O'Boyle

### Work Programme Decision Flow Chart



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