

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 24 June 2025

Present:

Members: Councillor R Lancaster (Chair)

Councillor F Abbott	Councillor R Lakha
Councillor S Agboola	Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor N Akhtar	Councillor G Lewis
Councillor P Akhtar	Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor M Ali	Councillor P Male
Councillor L Bigham	Councillor K Maton
Councillor J Birdi	Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor J Blundell	Councillor C Miks
Councillor K Caan	Councillor B Mosterman
Councillor B Christopher	Councillor M Mutton
Councillor G Duggins	Councillor S Nazir
Councillor J Gardiner	Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor S Gray	Councillor E M Reeves
Councillor G Hayre	Councillor G Ridley
Councillor M Heaven	Councillor K Sandhu
Councillor P Hetherton	Councillor P Seaman
Councillor A Hopkins	Councillor B Singh
Councillor T Jandu	Councillor R Singh
Councillor Jobbar	Councillor CE Thomas
Councillor A Jobbar	Councillor D Toulson
Councillor A Kaur	Councillor A Tucker
Councillor L Kelly	
Councillor AS Khan	
Councillor T Khan	

Honorary Alderman

Apologies: Councillor R Bailey, R Brown, L Harvard, J Innes, M Lapsa, E Ruane and T Sawdon

Public Business

11. Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 22 May 2025

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 22 May 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record.

12. Coventry Good Citizen Award

On behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor and Judge Lockhart KC presented Adam Evans and John Coote with the Good Citizen Award. Their citations read:

'Adam and John founded Coventry Comfort Carers on 31st December 2012, to help support rough sleepers and homeless people throughout the city.

They have supported thousands of people with food and clothing and have helped many to gain housing and employment and to rebuild family relationships.

Through Coventry Comfort Carers they have supported other services around the city, at Easter and Christmas they have provided gifts to Valley House, Coventry Haven, children in care, children in respite units and families in temporary accommodation.

They have also supported many of the city's food hubs and elderly care homes.

In addition, they have provided medical supplies, food and toiletries etc. to many areas of Ukraine including directly to field hospitals and orphanages.

Adam and John are very worthy recipients of this Coventry Good Citizens Award.'

13. **Correspondence and Announcements of the Lord Mayor**

1. **His Honour Judge Andrew Lockhart KC**

The Lord Mayor expressed sincere gratitude to His Honour Judge Andrew Lockhart KC, Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry, who was ending his term of office shortly. Andrew had been appointed to the post in 2017, and the Lord Mayor referred to his significant contribution and steadfast support for the Council during his tenure.

The Lord Mayor and Members paid tribute to Andrew and wished him best wishes for the future.

2. **Graz**

The Lord Mayor referred to the school shooting which took place in Coventry's twin city of Graz on 10 June 2025. On behalf of the Council, the Lord Mayor expressed deepest sympathies and extended thoughts and prayers to all those affected by the incident. Members noted that a letter of condolence had been sent on behalf of the City Council from the Lord Mayor and the Leader to the Mayor of Graz.

3. **Air India Flight Crash**

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent tragic crash of the Air India flight on 12 June 2025. Members noted that amongst those who lost their life was Jamie Greenlaw-Meek from Coventry. On behalf of the Council, the Lord Mayor extend condolences to Jamie's family and friends and to all those who lost a loved one.

4. **Death of former Councillor Tom White CBE**

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of the Former Councillor Tom White.

Tom represented Henley Ward for 8 years between 1996 and 2004. During his time as a Councillor he sat on several committees, particularly relating to social care and senior roles included Chair of the Older Policy People's Policy Team and Cabinet member for Community Well-being. Tom also worked in social services management posts before becoming Coventry's first Director of Social Services in 1970. He left the City Council in 1985 to become Director of Social Work at the National Children's Home.

He was awarded the Coventry Award of Merit in 2002 in recognition of his outstanding development of social services within the City of Coventry and was also awarded a CBE and conferred with an Honorary Doctor of Business Administration by Coventry University.

Members paid tribute to Tom and noted that a letter of condolence had been sent to his family.

5. Death of Ken Lomas

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Ken Lomas. Ken worked at the City Council from 1959 until his retirement in 1992. He began in the Treasurers' Department becoming Deputy Treasurer and then City Treasurer.

In 1974 he was appointed Director of Property Services responsible for the management of all council property - a position he held until his retirement.

In relations to items 2 to 5 above, the Council observed a Minute's silence as a mark of respect.

6. King's Birthday Honours

The Lord Mayor referred to the following recipients of Honours the recent King's Birthday Honours List:

Fleur Sexton DL, Chief Executive and co-founder of PET-Xi Training has been awarded an MBE for services to the community in Coventry.

David Keene, the founder of Aurigo International plc in Coventry has been awarded an MBE for his services to the decarbonisation of airports.

Paul Stephen Wilsher, Commercial Support at the Department for Education has been awarded an MBE for services to Education.

Margaret Chatham has been awarded a British Empire Medal for services to the community in Coventry.

David Meredith, Chair of Albany Theatre has been awarded a British Empire Medal for services to Theatre and the Community in Coventry.

Aruna Bipin Mistry has been awarded a British Empire Medal for services to higher education

Trevor Pepper, National Pubwatch Regional representative has been awarded a British Empire Medal for services to the Night-time Economy and the Hospitality Industry.

On behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor congratulated all recipients on their awards.

7. Andrew Walster

The Lord Mayor referred to the upcoming departure of Andrew Walster, who was leaving the City Council to take up a new role as Managing Director at Western Riverside Waste Authority in London.

Andrew joined the City Council in 2003 and was currently the Director for City Services and Commercial he had responsibility for a number of areas including bin collections, street cleaning, planning, parks, highways and traffic management and improvements to public realm.

The Lord Mayor and Members paid tribute to Andrew and wished him every success in the future.

14. Petitions

RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate Cabinet Member/City Council body/external organisations:

- 1. Petition requesting the Council to add double yellow lines to the corner of Broadmere Rise, off Broad Lane – 23 signatures, presented by Councillor G Lewis.**
- 2. Petition requesting the Council to implement a Residents Parking Scheme in Broad Street – 65 signatures, presented by Councillor S Nazir.**
- 3. Petition requesting the Council to provide sufficient parking as part of the Spon End Road widening scheme – 201 signatures, presented by Councillor J Gardiner.**
- 4. Petition requesting the Council to install a crossing point on Alderminster Road, near junction with Aynho Close – 334 signatures, presented by Councillor G Ridley.**
- 5. Petition requesting the Council to support creating a location within the city to scatter ashes in flowing water – 615 signatures, presented by Councillors R Lakha and R Singh.**
- 6. Petition requesting the Council to provide access for mobility device users to Coundon Wedge – 478 signatures, presented by Councillor B Christopher.**
- 7. Petition requesting the Council to install more surveillance cameras in Willenhall to deter fly tipping – 95 signatures, presented by Councillor S Agboola.**

15. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

16. Adult Social Care Five Year Plan 2025-2030

Further to Minute 3 of Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Adult Care, Health and Housing, appended to which was the Adult Social Care

Five Year Plan 2025-2030. The report outlined how Adult Social Care provided essential support to people with care and support needs and their unpaid carers. It was a significant area of economic activity with an annual local authority net spend for 2024/25 of approximately £115m and in the region of 9,500 people employed within the sector in Coventry.

The report indicated that Council received in excess of 10,000 requests for support each year as well as over 6,000 safeguarding concerns. At the end of March 2025, approximately 4,000 people were being supported per week with a range of care and support needs across physical disabilities, learning disabilities/autism, sensory impairments and mental ill health. This support was provided on a short term, or one-off basis or ongoing, dependant on the circumstances of the individual. Support to unpaid carers so that they can continue caring, was also part of the Council's core purpose and approximately 2,000 people were supported by the Council per annum in their caring role.

Adult Social Care was always evolving and each year saw different issues arise and new challenges which the Council both needs to predict where possible and then respond to. Key performance and activity had been captured within the Annual Report and Self-Assessment but now a 'Five Year Plan' had also been produced in order to set out clearly what the main areas of focus for Adult Social Care would be until 2030.

Within the Five-Year Plan, the following six areas of focus were identified as follows:

- Personalising the experience of care and support
- Always improving
- New models of support
- Prevention
- Use of technology
- Integrated care with health partners

These six areas would provide the umbrella focus for the Plan with specific projects under each area being identified at Plan inception and revised at approximately mid-point. The reason specific projects had not yet been set for the five year period was that there was currently a period of change related to both structural changes in National Health Service England (NHSE)/Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) plus the Casey review, which was an independent government commission into Adult Social Care. These changes would inevitably impact on Adult Social Care and make specific long-term planning a challenge so there was a need to retain the flexibility to respond.

RESOLVED that the City Council endorses the Adult Social Care Five Year Plan 2025-2030 as appended to the report.

17. Proposal for Conferral of General Functions to the Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority

Further to Minute 6 of Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which indicated that at the meeting of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board on the 9th May 2025, a recommendation was

made to the Board that a period of statutory consultation be undertaken that would consider the transfer of transports functions currently exercised by the WMCA to be functions exercisable only by the West Midlands Mayor.

The report detailed how the transfer of these functions to the West Midlands Mayor would allow additional funding for transport to be raised by way of a Mayoral precept. The voting requirements of the WMCA to agree that a consultation period commence was a unanimous vote in favour by all Members of the Constituent Authorities present and voting.

The Leader of Coventry City Council, Councillor G Duggins, as a member of the WMCA Board, strongly indicated that he would not support the recommendation given the consequences of a Mayoral precept on the residents of Coventry and the wider West Midlands region. On this basis the matter did not proceed, and the statutory public consultation would not commence.

RESOLVED that the City Council supports the position of the Leader of the Council in preventing the commencement of a process that could lead to the raising of a Mayoral precept.

18. Annual Report from the Leader to the Council on Key Decisions made under Special Urgency Provisions 2024/2025

The City Council considered the Annual Report from the Leader to the Council on Key Decisions made under the Special Urgency Provisions for the year 2024-2025.

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 set out Special Urgency provisions to be used, where it is impracticable, to give at least 5 clear days' notice of the intention to make a Key Decision. The provisions detail a specific process to be followed, which includes seeking the agreement of the appropriate Scrutiny Chair or, if that person is unavailable, the Chair of the Council, that the matter to be considered is urgent and could not be reasonably deferred.

The Leader of the Council must submit an Annual Report to the Council containing details of each Key Decision taken during the period since the last report was submitted where the making of the Key Decision was agreed as urgent. The Council's Constitution requires that this report be presented at the first ordinary meeting of the Council after the Annual Meeting.

The Leader reported that there were no key decisions made under the Special Urgency Provisions for the 2024-25.

RESOLVED that the City Council notes the Annual Report of the Leader on the use of Special Urgency provisions for the 2024-25 Municipal Year.

19. Appointment of Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry

The City Council considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which sought approval to appoint a new Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry

following the end of term of officer of the current holder of this role, His Honour Judge Andrew Lockhart KC.

The position of Recorder has a long history and the position dates back to 1345 when the City of Coventry was granted a Royal Charter by King Edward III. During the medieval period, the duties of the Recorder were principally acting as general legal advisor to the City, having responsibility for keeping accurate records, and seeing that true judgements were made. It was not until 1882 that it became a requirement for a Recorder to be a qualified lawyer.

In 1971 the Courts Act brought about substantial changes to the Court system and abolished the Quarter Sessions. With the abolition of these Courts, the formal role of the Recorder ceased. The Act provided that all part-time Judges could be known as Recorders, but these would have no affiliation to any particular geographical area by virtue of their appointment. As a result of concerns expressed over the loss of this historic role, the Government changed the proposed legislation so as to allow for the appointment of Honorary Recorders. Only a Circuit Judge or a Recorder is qualified to hold office as an Honorary Recorder.

The City Council appointed its first Honorary Recorder in August 1971 and there have been eight holders of the post since that date. The post was mainly ceremonial in nature, but it did allow for the historic links between the City and the Judiciary to be maintained. The Honorary Recorder supports the Lord Mayor by attending functions such as the Annual Meeting of the City Council, Holocaust Memorial Day, Freeman's Guild Annual Service, Armed Forces Day, Remembrance Sunday, Royal visits and was invited to other city-wide events. The Honorary Recorder also Chaired the Good Citizen Award Advisory Panel and was invited to present this Award to recipients at Council meetings.

RESOLVED that the City Council appoint Her Honour Judge Kristina Montgomery KC to the role of Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry with effect from 1 July 2025.

20. Nomination for the Coventry Award of Merit

The City Council considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance recommending the granting of the Coventry Award of Merit to His Honour Judge Andrew Lockhart KC.

The Coventry Award of Merit was established by the City Council in the 1960s as a means of acknowledging and honouring personal behaviour reflecting the highest ideals of citizenship or outstanding performance in any field of human endeavour which enhances the good name of Coventry and affords inspiration to its citizens. The grant of the Award of Merit was made by full Council on the recommendation of the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, who is advised by an Advisory Panel established for the purpose. Nominations can be received from any organisation or individual.

A nomination had been received to grant the Coventry Award of Merit to His Honour Judge Andrew Lockhart, KC, Honorary Recorder for the City of Coventry 2017-2025. Having consulted the Advisory Panel, who unanimously supported the

nomination, the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities was recommending that the Award be granted to His Honour Judge Lockhart KC.

RESOLVED that the City Council approve the recommendation of the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities and grant the Coventry Award of Merit to His Honour Judge Andrew Lockhart KC.

21. **Political Proportionality and Amendments to Appointments to Council and Outside Bodies 2025/26**

The City Council considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance which sought approval for a revised Political Proportionality for 2025/26 and the consequential amendments required to appointments to Council and outside bodies which had arisen as a result of the formal notification by Councillor J Gardiner and Councillor M Lapsa that they were Reform Group Councillors from 6 June 2025.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Council on 22 May 2025, Council approved the Political Proportionality for the City Council for 2025/26, based on the following Group numbers:

- Labour Group – 40 seats
- Conservative Group – 12 seats
- Green Group – 2 seats

Appointments were made to Council and outside bodies for 2025/26 in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 which require bodies to be politically balanced and seats on Council bodies to be allocated in proportion to the Groups' share of the total membership of the Council.

On 6 June 2025 Councillors J Gardiner and M Lapsa formally notified the Head of Governance, as the Proper Officer, that they were now Reform Councillors (instead of Conservative Councillors) and had formed the Reform Group on the City Council, with Councillor Gardiner as the Leader of the Group and Councillor Lapsa as the Deputy Leader. The revised political make-up of the Council was now:

- Labour Group – 40 seats
- Conservative Group – 10 seats
- Green Group – 2 seats
- Reform Group – 2 seats

In accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, consideration needs to be given the revised Political Proportionality of the Council and to consequential amendments to the appointments to Council and outside bodies for 2025/26.

The City Council also considered a briefing note which was tabled at the meeting and which set out the details relating to the change in Political Proportionality, including the resulting changes to appointments for consideration by Council.

RESOVED that the City Council:

I) Approve the revised Political Proportionality for the City Council for 2025/26 as appended to these Minutes.

II) Approve the following amendments to appointments:

- a) Councillor M Lapsa to the Licensing and Regulatory Committee in place of Councillor J Lepoidevin**
- b) Councillor J Gardiner to the Ethics Committee**
- c) Councillor M Lapsa to be the named substitute for the Ethics Committee**
- d) Councillor B Mosterman to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor M Lapsa**
- e) Councillor B Mosterman to the Health and Wellbeing Board in place of Councillor M Lapsa**
- f) Councillor M Lapsa and Councillor T Sawdon to the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities – Members Training and Development Advisory Panel**
- g) Councillor J Gardiner as a non-voting representative to Cabinet and the Coventry Shareholders Panel**
- h) Councillor T Jandu to the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre in place of Councillor M Lapsa**

III) Noted the following changes which also occur as a result of the changes to the proportionality arrangements:

- a) Councillor J Gardiner remains on the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2), in a place now allocated to the Reform Group which was previously allocated to the Conservative Group**
- b) Councillor M Lapsa remains on the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5), in a place now allocated to the Reform Group which was previously allocated to the Conservative Group**
- c) Appointments to the Corporate Parenting Board and Children and Young People's Partnership Board made by Council to the Shadow Cabinet Member for Children and Young People which is now Councillor J Lepoidevin**
- d) The Planning Committee is reduced to 9 members with Councillor J Gardiner and Councillor G Hayre no longer being members of the Planning Committee**

22. Question Time

Councillors N Akthar, K Caan, Duggins (on behalf of Councillor Brown, Hetherington and O'Boyle) provided written answers to the questions set out in the Questions Booklet, together with oral responses to supplementary questions at the meeting.

The following Members answered oral questions put to them by other Members as set out below, together with supplementary questions on the same matters:

	Questions asked by	Question put to	Subject matter
1	Councillor Miks	Councillor Thomas	Matters championed by the Disability and Equality Action Partnership
2	Councillor Ridley	Councillor McNicholas	Macquarie acquisition of Birmingham Airport.
3	Councillor Mutton	Councillor Seaman	The City Council's plans following the recent report from Baroness Cassey's National Audit on group-based child sexual exploitation with its 12 key recommendations.
4	Councillor Gray	Councillor O'Boyle	Actions taken to support traders impacted by the current development work in the City Centre.
5	Councillor Blundell	Councillor O'Boyle	Measures taken to ensure traffic and business disruption during the development and implementation of the CVLR (Coventry Very Light Rail) programme.
6	Councillor Heaven	Councillor O'Boyle	Assurance that the plans in respect of connecting the VLR to UHCW would not impact on the Clifford Bridge Road cycle path.
7	Councillor Mosterman	Councillor Heaven	Delays in replacing garden waste bins when they have been reported as damaged during collection.
8	Councillor Gardiner	Councillor Seaman	Welcoming the recent national audit report (referred to at question 3 above).
9	Councillor Gardiner	Councillor Hetherton	Plans for car parking following demolition of the former Godiva Carpets building in Spon End.
10	Councillor Male	Councillor Seaman	Protective measures taken in respect of grooming gangs.

23. **Statements**

(a) Statement from the Leader

The Leader, Councillor G Duggins, made a Statement in respect of a number of matters including: the recent fire at Henley College, Coventry Very Light Rail, congratulations to the new Bishop of Coventry, the Right Revered Sophie Jelley, Armed Forces Day on 28 June 2025, this year's Godiva Festival, the recent 80th VE day celebrations and the upcoming Adult Social Care CQC inspection.

Councillor G Ridley, Leader of the Conservative Group, responded to the Statement.

Councillor E Reeves, Leader of the Green Group, responded to the Statement.

Councillor J Gardiner, Leader of the Reform Group, responded to the Statement.

The Leader made a short reply.

(b) Statement from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Councillor P Seaman, made a Statement on the progress being made to improve Children's and Education Services in Coventry.

Councillor J Lepoidevin, on behalf of the Conservative Group, responded to the Statement.

Councillor E Reeves, Leader of the Green Group, responded to the Statement.

Councillor J Gardiner, Leader of the Reform Group, responded to the Statement.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People made a short reply.

24. Debates

24.1 Debate - Gaza

The following debate was moved by Councillor AS Khan and seconded by Councillor S Nazir:

"Coventry City Council believes that the deliberate starvation of the innocent people of Gaza must end. We are witnessing a humanitarian catastrophe unfolding before our very eyes. Children, women, and men are being systematically deprived of the most basic necessities of life: food, water, and medicine. This is not a natural disaster. This is not an unavoidable consequence of conflict. The UK government has committed to work through the United Nations to work about the end of this conflict and to champion the call for a two state solution as the only way towards a lasting peace in the Region.

Many residents of Coventry are impacted by the ongoing conflict; the City Council has a clear role to support our communities and champion community cohesion

Therefore, Coventry City Council:

- Endorses the Government's calls to bring about the end of this conflict and to champion the call for a two-state solution as the only way towards a lasting peace in the Region, and
- commits to providing support and information for those residents of Coventry whose families are caught up in conflict."

RESOLVED that the Motion as set out above be adopted.

It was moved by Councillor AS Khan and seconded by Councillor Toulson that a named vote be taken. The Councillors voting For and Against the Recommendations were as follows:

<u>For</u>		<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Councillors:	Councillors:	Councillors:	
S Agboola	R Lakha	J Birdi	
N Akhtar	G Lewis	J Blundell	
P Akhtar	G Lloyd	J Gardiner	
K Caan	J McNicholas	M Heaven	
B Christopher	C Mijs	T Jandu	
G Duggins	M Mutton	J Lepoidevin	
S Gray	S Nazir	P Male	
A Hopkins	E Reeves	B Mosterman	
A Jobbar	K Sandhu	G Ridley	
S Jobbar	B Singh		
A Kaur	R Singh		
L Kelly	D Toulson		
AS Khan	A Tucker		
T Khan	Lord Mayor		
	Total: 28	Total: 9	Total: 0

For: 28

Against: 9

Abstain: 0

24.2 Debate: Abandoned Vehicles

The following debate was moved by Councillor G Ridley and seconded by Councillor J Lepoidevin:

"This Council calls on the DVLA to make it easier for local authorities and the police to remove untaxed abandoned vehicles."

RESOLVED that the Motion as set out above be unanimously adopted.

24.3 Debate: Planning and Infrastructure Bill - Protect Nature

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2, Councillor E Reeves gave notice in advance of the meeting that she was withdrawing this Motion for consideration at a future meeting.

(Meeting closed at 7.05 pm)