

Ethics Committee

Time and Date

11.00 am on Thursday, 24th September, 2026

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - a) To agree the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 June, 2026.
 - b) Any matters arising
4. **Review of Prospective Councillor Information Booklet and Candidates Briefing** (Pages 7 - 32)

Report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities
5. **Local Code of Corporate Governance** (Pages 33 - 58)

Report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities
6. **Members Gifts and Hospitality Registers - Declarations for January to June 2026** (Pages 59 - 72)

Report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities
7. **Officers Gifts and Hospitality Registers - Inspection of Registers for January to June 2026** (Pages 73 - 88)

Report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities
8. **Code of Conduct Update** (Pages 89 - 104)

Report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities
9. **Work Programme for Ethics Committee 2026/27** (Pages 105 - 112)

Report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

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

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

Wednesday, 16 September 2026

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services Email: suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors A Hopkins (Chair), L Bigham, W Davies, S Gray, M Heaven, P Hetherton, D McCann, S Atkinson, R Wills and P Wiseman

Independent Persons: S Atkinson, R Wills, and P Wiseman

Public Access

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Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services
Email: suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Ethics Committee held at 11.00 am
on Thursday, 25 June 2026

Present:

Members: Councillor A Hopkins (Chair)

Councillor L Bigham
Councillor W Davies
Councillor M Heaven
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor D McCann

Independent persons: S Atkinson, P Wiseman

Also in attendance: Councillors F Beechey, J Odje and E Reeves

Employees (by Directorate):

Law, Governance and J Newman (Director), G Holmes, S Manhertz, C Taylor
Safer Communities

Apologies: Councillor T Jewell
S Atkinson, R Wills

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2026, were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

3. Annual Report of the Ethics Committee 2025/26

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, regarding the tenth annual report of the Ethics Committee, setting out the work of the Committee over the last municipal year.

In particular it reported on:

- Code of Conduct Complaints
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Ending Abuse in Public Life – Council’s Self-Assessment Toolkit
- Local Government and Social care Ombudsman Annual Report
- Preparations for Candidates in the May 2026 Municipal Elections

The report detailed other regular work of the Committee over the last year and set out a brief overview of work to be undertaken in the 2026/27 municipal year.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Approves the Annual Report of the Committee; and**
- 2) Recommends that Council notes the Annual Report and considers whether there is any work within the Committee's terms of reference that Council would wish the Committee to undertake.**

4. Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities - Update

The Committee considered an update on the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities on the developments made to implement the new Standards and Conduct Framework. The report highlighted any developments since the consultation undertaken nationally and subsequent response by the Government which the Ethics Committee considered in January 2026.

The Committee welcomed the introduction of the removal of Members home addresses from public registers.

The Committee noted that most of the representations made in relation to the last consultation had been accepted by the Government however, it was not yet known if a further consultation or white paper would be brought forward prior to the proposals being agreed.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Notes the progress on the development of the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities.**

5. New Members Induction Programme - Interim Progress Report

The Committee considered a report on an interim progress report on the new Member Induction Programme.

The Committee welcomed and thanked officers for the introduction of the 'marketplace' event, which was found to be very useful. A number of suggestions were provided in relation to improving future members' inductions including:

- Existing Members being made aware that the 'marketplace' was not just for new Members.
- Members with a 1-year term of office would be prioritised in completion of the Code of Conduct and data protection training.
- A review of Members' induction timings or reluctance to join training would be undertaken.

The Committee noted the Officer/Members Protocol was covered in the induction packs and was also available online. Reporting lines were in place to provide any concerns.

The Committee also noted that safeguarding training and training around the budget and finance had been delivered in person and online, recorded and links sent to all Members. Members who had not accessed this training would be followed up by officers.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Notes and welcomes the interim progress on the Members Induction Programme.**
- 2) Supports and encourages all Members to participate in training and development opportunities.**
- 3) Provide the comments as outlined above on the future delivery of the Elected Members Training and Development Strategy.**

6. Code of Conduct Update

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on any national issues in relation to the ethical behaviour of elected Members and the local position in Coventry with regard to Code of Conduct issues.

The Committee welcomed the examples provided in the report from cases across the country, suggesting further powers should be at the Committee's disposal to protect Councillors, members of the public and officers from any breaches of the Code of Conduct.

The Committee noted stages of the complaints process and the implications of not completing Code of Conduct training.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Notes the position with regard to the matters concerning local authorities nationally.**
- 2) Notes the local position relating to the operation of the Council's Code of Conduct and delegates any actions arising from these to the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, following consultation with the Chair of Ethics Committee.**

7. Work Programme for Ethics Committee 2026-27

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities which outlined the proposed Work Programme for the Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2026/27.

The proposed Work Programme was appended to the report.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for Ethics Committee 2026-27 be noted.

8. **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 urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.45 am)



Public report Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee

24th September 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

Not applicable

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Review of Prospective Councillor Information Booklet and Candidates Briefing

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

The Ethics Committee at its meeting on 8 January 2026 considered the Prospective Councillor Information Booklet which had been prepared by officers to assist prospective new Councillors who were considering standing in the May 2026 election to fully understanding the responsibilities and expectations of the role before standing for election. This follows concerns arising from elections held in other areas in 2025 where individuals were elected in other parts of the country without anticipating or understanding the demands of office, which caused them to resign after being elected or not being eligible to stand in the first place.

In addition, a candidate briefing session was held to explain the information contained in the Booklet.

The Ethics Committee requested that following the elections in 2026 there would be a review of the Booklet and briefing sessions held to ascertain the effectiveness of the information provided and to establish if there were any improvements that could be made.

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the report and the review of the Prospective Councillor Information Booklet and Candidates briefing, which were well received.
2. Endorse and welcome the continued use of the Booklet and briefing sessions at future elections.

List of Appendices included:

The following appendices are attached to the report:

Appendix 1 – Becoming a Councillor Booklet

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

None.

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

Review of Prospective Councillor Information Booklet and Candidates Briefing

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. The Ethics Committee had previously highlighted the importance of ensuring that prospective new Councillors fully understood the responsibilities and expectations of the role before standing for election. This followed concerns arising from the elections held in 2025 where individuals were elected in other parts of the country without anticipating or understanding the demands of office. Which led to resignations and caused by elections and also in some cases the people had not been eligible to stand.
- 1.2. Officers produced a booklet 'Becoming a Councillor' which was available to prospective candidates in the May 2026 election (copy attached at Appendix 1). The approach taken was to ensure that it remained politically neutral and focused on what the role entails, what support is available and the election process. The information was also made available on the Council's website.
- 1.3. In addition, the Returning Officer held a prospective councillors briefing which covered the contents of the booklet, provided the opportunity for candidates to ask questions around becoming a Councillor, outlined expectations and duties of that role, the functions of local government and some basics around the election process. The briefing was well attended, generated a number of questions and was well received (see paragraph 3 below).
- 1.4. There were also candidate and agents briefings held as normal prior to the election which focus on the election timetable, completion of nominations, the count and campaigning.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. Option 1 – Continue to use of the prospective councillor booklet and briefing (**Recommended**). The use of the booklet and briefing will ensure that prospective candidates understand the role of Councillors and the expectations and duties associated with that responsibility.
- 2.2. Option 2 - Do nothing to prepare prospective candidates for the role of a Councillor (**Not recommended**) In view of the feedback received on the Booklet and briefing held in 2026, this would not be beneficial for future candidates in understanding the role of Councillors and the expectations and duties associated with that responsibility.
- 2.3. The recommended option is 1 to continue with the use of the Booklet and briefing for prospective Councillors.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. Following the election a survey was carried out with candidates and agents to which 46 responses were received, it does not distinguish if the person responding was a candidate or agent or if it was their first election. One of the questions asked was

“How useful was the information provided at the Prospective Councillor Event on 25 February?” 33 responses stated it was very useful or quite useful with 2 saying neither useful or not useful. There were 11 who did not attend.

- 3.2. In addition, a number of the newly elected Councillors were asked if they had a copy of the Booklet and attended the briefing. Those who have responded stated that they thought the Booklet was useful and so was the briefing and there was nothing they felt was needed to improve it at this time. One respondent stated that the booklet provided a relatively balanced and realistic view of what it can be like to be a Councillor.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1. The Booklet is already available and is detailed on the Council website and a date has already been booked for a briefing in 2027.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1. Financial Implications

- 5.2. The financial implications, with the costs of continuing with the booklet and briefing, are limited to the costs of printing hard copies of the booklet which can be met from within existing budgets.

5.3. Legal Implications No Legal Implications

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

- 6.2. Providing the information enables residents to consider representing their local communities as local Councillors and understand what is expected of someone in this role. It contributes to the enabling priority of the Council's role as a partner, enabler and leader.

6.3. How is risk being managed?

No risks.

6.4. What is the impact on the organisation?

None.

6.5. Equalities / EIA?

No EIA has been done.

6.6. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

None.

6.7. Implications for partner organisations?

None.

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Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
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Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
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Legal: Oluremi Aremu	Head of Legal & Procurement Services	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	19/08/26	21/08/26
Director: Julie Newman	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities	-	19/08/26	21/08/26
		-		
Councillor A Hopkins	Chair of Ethics Committee			01/09/26

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings



Becoming a Councillor



Thinking of becoming a councillor?

If you are interested in becoming a councillor, then read on...

Being a councillor is all about giving back to your community by bringing your energy, passion, and hard-working attitude. As a Coventry City Councillor you can make a real difference to our city and wider society. For example, you could be representing the views of local people to ensure the community gets the right services, supporting a resident with an issue, or helping to shape the future of the city by driving new ideas.

If you care about your community and are looking for a worthwhile and rewarding way to help, becoming a councillor may be the perfect choice for you.

This booklet will provide you with an outline about what you need to know about becoming a councillor and how to proceed once you have made the decision to stand for election.

“You have a unique opportunity to make a real difference to people’s lives.”

Quotes from people who have undertaken the role

“At Coventry City Council we have 54 seats that are up for election on 7 May 2026. This offers you the perfect opportunity to stand as a representative of your local community and become a councillor (also known as an elected member). Anyone can be a councillor and it’s important for our local democracy that we have people of all ages and from all backgrounds to represent a wide range of local views. It is hard work and you can expect to have to balance the needs of your local area, your residents and voters, community groups, local businesses and the Council on a daily basis.”

“We hope that this document will be helpful for anyone who is thinking of standing for election and is interested in finding out about the role of the councillor. The local election process for Coventry City Council begins in March 2026 when a Notice of Election will be published.”

Cllr George Duggins

Leader of Coventry City Council and the Labour Group





“Councillors come in all shapes and sizes! Some are young, some are older, some have careers while others are retired. What they all have in common is a desire to give something back to their community and make the world a better place. I’ve been a councillor for nearly two decades and it’s been a big part of my life during that time. It can be hard work, and there are lots of competing demands, but it’s been extremely rewarding to have played my part in the governance of the city – both as a Cabinet Member and more recently as Leader of the Opposition. Not everyone will be expected to take on leadership roles, but there are lots of ways councillors make a difference. So, if you’d like to get involved, what’s stopping you?”

Cllr Gary Ridley
Leader of the Conservative Group

“As a councillor you are a representative in the council for all your residents regardless of if they voted for you. It’s different every day, you might join residents campaigning about a local issue, help someone with problems ranging from housing to fly tipping or be in a meeting where you are looking in depth at how a specific service is functioning. It’s a lot to learn when you first start, especially when it comes to what your responsibilities are or how Council meetings work, but you will be offered training on all the basics and there is an amazing team in Members’ Services to help you so don’t be put off standing.”



Cllr Esther Reeves
Leader of the Green and Independent Alliance Group



“Being a Councillor is a surprisingly broad role that can wondrously morph into something beyond what you first thought. It requires a servant’s heart to do well. It is challenging but rewarding too; from seeing physical improvements to your ward and city, to helping individual residents resolve complex problems whilst supporting community groups to flourish to do what only they can. You’ll also play a vital role in making local government accountable to the people, which lies at the core of a properly functioning democracy.”

Cllr Jackie Gardiner
Leader of the Reform UK Group

What do councillors do?

Councillors are elected to represent local residents in an individual geographical unit of the city known as a Ward. The role of a councillor can be varied and it is up to each individual councillor how they work. Councillors have responsibilities to their ward, to the Council and to the community.

Councillors work with local people and partners, such as community groups, businesses and other organisations, to agree and deliver on local priorities. The decisions are implemented by permanent council staff, council officers, who deliver services on a daily basis.

The role of a councillor is to serve and represent everyone in the ward that they are elected to (and not just those who voted for them). Some are also appointed to additional roles in the council, such as being a cabinet member.

It's a varied and highly fulfilling role, and no day is the same.

The role brings people together. Councillors work with a diverse range of people from their community and have officers to support them in their role at the council. Councillors lead the local conversation: you can be part of that to make your area the best place it can be.



Councillors must adhere to the Code of Conduct which sets out the standards and behaviours expected of councillors and elected members. The code of conduct is based on the Seven Principles of Public Life (Nolan Principles).

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- ▶ I act with integrity and honesty
- ▶ I act lawfully
- ▶ I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- ▶ I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- ▶ I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- ▶ I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- ▶ I avoid conflicts of interest
- ▶ I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- ▶ I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.



You can find out more about the Councillor Code of Conduct at:

www.local.gov.uk/publications/local-government-association-model-councillor-code-conduct-2020

If you are interested in viewing a Council meeting these are webcast and available on our website coventry.gov.uk/meetings-1/full-council

There are written rules, which govern behaviour and procedures at meetings included in the 'Council Constitution' and these enable councillors to take part effectively.

coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/constitution

Mr Peter Wiseman, OBE, LLB – An Independent Member of the Council's Ethics Committee states:

"A successful local authority is always underpinned by sound governance. They go hand in glove and, if they don't, things can go horribly wrong. The responsibility is shared between Councillors and Officers. The Nolan Principles and the city's Code of Conduct for Councillors are the key to achieving success and avoiding failure. I would hope that they would become so firmly entrenched in the "DNA" of every councillor that, whenever they are conducting Council business, the Nolan Principles and the Code would be applied automatically: i.e. they had become second nature. This is the best way to ensure that outcomes and any decisions reached are robust having passed through respectful debate and scrutiny. I would argue that it is only by councillors adhering to the highest standards of conduct in this way that it is possible to retain the trust and confidence of the public in the City Council. This guidance should go a long way towards achieving this goal."

Becoming a councillor

Why are councillors important?

Councillors play a key part in the city as they:

- ▶ are a voice for the community, representing local people and communities.
- ▶ are champions of those who use local services.
- ▶ help shape future services for the benefit of local people.
- ▶ work in partnership with other organisations such as:
 - police
 - voluntary and community sector
 - other public bodies
 - the private sector
- ▶ play a major role in improving the quality of life for the people within the city of Coventry.

Why become a councillor?

People choose to become councillors for a variety of reasons:

- ▶ you may feel strongly about a particular issue or the wellbeing of your community as a whole and feel you would like the opportunity to influence decision-making on these issues.
- ▶ you may see yourself as a good spokesperson for your community and feel you could represent the views of the people living in your area.
- ▶ you may want to pursue political beliefs.
- ▶ you may have specific skills and

knowledge that you would like to use to benefit your community.

- ▶ you may already be part of a local organisation and feel that becoming a councillor would be a natural progression.

Some see becoming a councillor as an extension of what they are already doing. Maybe you are already active in a political party, trade union, or school governing body, and the next step for you is to become a councillor.

Who can become a councillor?

We need people from all backgrounds and experiences that reflect the communities they serve to put themselves forward for election.

To stand for election, on the day of nomination, you must be:

- ▶ 18 or over,
- ▶ British, or citizen of the Commonwealth, you may also be eligible as a citizen of the European Union, however, the criteria has changed now that the UK has left the European Union. Please check on EU citizens voting and candidacy rights in local elections.
- ▶ registered to vote in the area or have lived, worked or owned property there for at least 12 months before an election.

You cannot stand if you:

- ▶ work for Coventry City Council.
- ▶ you can work for another local authority as long as you are not in a politically restricted post.

- ▶ are the subject of bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
- ▶ have served a prison sentence (including suspended sentences) of three months or more within five years prior to the election.
- ▶ have been disqualified under any legislation relating to corrupt or illegal practices.
- ▶ are subject to any relevant notification requirements, or a relevant order, in respect of a sexual offence.

Do I need any skills, experience or special qualifications?

You don't need any experience, educational or special qualifications. Your experience and knowledge gained through being an active member of local groups and organisations, raising a family or being a carer for a family member can equip you with valuable life skills which will be beneficial in your role as a councillor.

It is important that councillors are able to represent the diverse communities that they serve and so a broad range of skills and experiences will be beneficial.

You will receive training and become more experienced and confident once elected. There can be a steep learning curve, but it is worth it for what you can achieve for your community.



There are a number of useful skills which help councillors carry out their role:

- ▶ being a leader in your community
- ▶ knowledge of the area
- ▶ confidence
- ▶ integrity
- ▶ having good communication skills
- ▶ partnership and team working
- ▶ problem solving, questioning and analytical skills
- ▶ being flexible, adaptable and open-minded
- ▶ being organised and having good time management
- ▶ having political understanding.
- ▶ resilience
- ▶ empathy

Further reading

Read more about the role and skills for councillors:

Political Skills Framework

www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/read-revised-version-poli-243.pdf

The 21st Century Councillor

21stcenturypublicservant.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/21st-century-councillor.pdf

Improving Access to Elected Office guidebook for disabled people

www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Improving%20access%20to%20local%20government%20elected%20office%20for%20disable%20people_0.pdf

What support will I get?

As already mentioned, regardless of what skills and attributes you bring with you, it is likely you will have a lot to learn about the workings of local government. This is nothing to worry about as you will be supported through an induction programme and ongoing development plans to ensure that you have the skills and training you need to fulfil your role as a councillor.

Some of the training and development will be compulsory dependent upon your role and other training may be optional. You will receive regular updates and information on available training opportunities, and you can choose the courses which you think will enable you to develop into your role as a councillor.

The Member Services Team provides personal assistance and administrative support to councillors to assist them in carrying out their Council duties including ward casework. We will ensure that reasonable adjustments are also supported, if required, to enable you to undertake your role. The Team does not support party political work.

You will also be provided with IT equipment and office space to support you in your role.

There will be an induction programme once you are elected covering things such as:

- ▶ Directorate marketplace
- ▶ Digital induction (laptop, email set up etc)
- ▶ Code of Conduct
- ▶ Hitting the Ground Running (delivered by the LGA)
- ▶ Data protection and cyber security
- ▶ Council finances and the budget
- ▶ Safeguarding
- ▶ Chamber skills

- ▶ Procedure for meetings
- ▶ Committee training (e.g. Planning, Licensing)
- ▶ The role of Scrutiny

Although it can seem daunting at first, the Council is here to support and help in any way we can. Remember, there is no expectation that you will automatically know how to be a councillor.

Can I have a job and be a councillor?

By law, if you are working, your employer must allow you to take a reasonable amount of time off during working hours to perform your duties as a councillor. The amount of time given will depend on your responsibilities and the effect of your absence on your employer's business. Council meetings are held during the working day, and you will need to attend several meetings in person. Employers can choose to pay you for this time, but they don't have to.

We would encourage you to discuss as soon as possible with your employer before making the commitment to stand for election.

Many employers are supportive and understand the importance, value and mutual benefits of their employees contributing to the community in this way.

There are many benefits to both employee and employer – practical work experience, skills and knowledge which can be transferred into any workplace, and the role can be career-enhancing.

Being a councillor provides:

- ▶ **Practical work experience:** Council work is incredibly varied (as the Council runs over 700 services) and links to all aspects of our life and therefore all types of employment.
- ▶ **New skills:** such as leadership skills, communication skills, reading reports, influencing skills and speaking at meetings or events.
- ▶ **Knowledge:** about the local community, how councils, government and the wider public sector work; as well as topics from culture and biodiversity, mental and physical health, to finance and budgets.
- ▶ **Confidence:** gained through new experiences, challenges and achievements for the local area.

Do I have to belong to a political party or group?

You can either stand as an independent candidate or by joining a group or political party. If you are thinking of standing as a candidate for a particular political party, then you will need to be a member of that party's local organisation.

There is a link at the end of this brochure to the register of political parties.

How much time is involved in being a councillor?

The time commitment will depend on your role within the Council, the number of duties you decide to take on and the demands of your constituents, but the role can be done flexibly around employment, studying, caring, and other voluntary commitments. It could range from a few hours each week to a few hours each day at busier times, but you should attend every committee to which you have been appointed as well as Full Council meetings.

Either way, your time as a councillor will be split between your two key responsibilities: your ward and the Council.



While much of the day-to-day work of a councillor takes place outside of formal meetings, you will be required to attend some Council meetings to:

- ▶ represent community views, needs and ideas
- ▶ help create strategies, policies and plans
- ▶ make decisions and/or review decisions taken.

Ward Duties	Council Duties
Dealing with queries and complaints from residents and working with council officers to resolve complaints	Help form policy
Explaining Council policy and processes	Help develop the council's budget and agree the level of Council Tax
Holding surgeries for local residents	Make or scrutinise decisions
Representing your Ward at meetings (for example where decisions are being made which directly affect your local area, such as Planning Application)	Attendance at Council meetings and reading associated papers
Attending Parish Council meetings within your Ward if applicable	Representing the Council on outside organisations/working groups

What you may want to consider

These are just a few of the considerations you will need to make before you take on the responsibility of being a councillor.

- ▶ You work for the people in your ward, but you work for them in conjunction with the Council and its officers.
- ▶ How your role as a councillor will impact on any family and personal relationships – you will need their support and understanding as you may be spending a lot of your spare time on Council business.
- ▶ You will be a member of at least one committee or be on the Cabinet. Nearly all committee meetings are held in the day.
- ▶ Your meetings/commitments may not be evenly spread out over the cycle so some weeks you may be out at more times than others.
- ▶ If you are elected as a chair, spokesperson or member of the Cabinet, the role can be very demanding as you will take responsibility for making decisions that affect the lives of the people of Coventry.
- ▶ The people you represent will look to you for help in dealing with their problems. You are likely to receive a lot of post, emails and telephone calls, and not every caller will telephone at what you might think is a reasonable hour!
- ▶ Most councillors hold at least one drop-in surgery each month, some hold two or even three surgeries in this period. You may spend some of your time visiting constituents at their homes, or at the Council offices, and you may also have to meet with officers of the Council to help you with any issues.
- ▶ There are approximately 10 Full Council meetings a year which are held on a Tuesday, these are formal meetings that you will be expected to attend. Most meetings start at 2pm and can last up to three hours, and sometimes longer.
- ▶ For most of the meetings you attend there will be agendas and reports that you will need to read beforehand. These can be quite detailed and take time to read and understand.
- ▶ While campaigning, all candidates should refer to and follow the Electoral Commission's guidance. This can be read at electoralcommission.org.uk/

guidance-candidates-and-agents-local-government-elections-england/campaigning. In particular, Candidates should avoid statements that suggest you will not consider evidence or officer advice at the decision-making stage. Do not say “I will vote against X no matter what” or similar wording. Instead, use phrases like: “I have concerns about this proposal, but I will consider all evidence before making a decision.”

Member of a political party?

There will be additional calls on your time to attend political group meetings. Political groups require their members to attend group meetings in advance of Council meetings and possibly training events/seminars organised by the political party.

Will I get paid for my duties?

There is no salary for being a councillor. However, you will be paid an allowance to

reimburse you for the time and expenses incurred whilst on Council business.

Every councillor is entitled to a basic allowance (£16,886 for the year 2025/26) which is paid into a bank account in 12 monthly instalments along with additional re-imbursement to cover all council-related travelling and subsistence when carrying out ‘approved duties’.



Some councillors are given an additional allowance to cover any special responsibilities, such as Executive member, scrutiny chair/spokesperson, among others. For example, the chairs of Council committees currently receive £8,431 per year in addition to the basic allowance.

For more information about the members’ allowance scheme please download the Council’s constitution coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/constitution



The city of Coventry

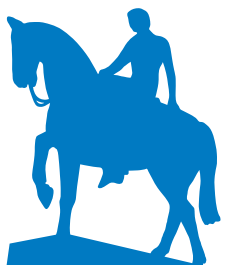
Understanding Coventry the place

Coventry is a lively, multicultural city, which embraces old and new.

Around the modern city centre there are traces of history everywhere – in the old city walls, the timber-framed buildings and the reconstructed medieval Spon Street.

But Coventry has always had an eye on the future and is now firmly focused on regenerating and re-inventing itself to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. With major developments and new projects taking place right across the city, it is an exciting time to be part of the Coventry journey!

Coventry is one of the fastest growing cities in the country



345,300
residents (census 2021)

35
YEARS

median age of 35 compared to the UK average of 40 years

Population growth in the last 10 years

8.9%



6.2%



6.6%



The increase is the 4th highest out of the 36 England metropolitan areas

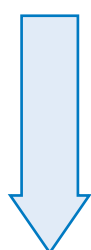
9th largest

metropolitan district in England, up from 11th in 2011.



23%

of Coventry children aged 0-15 live in relative low-income families compared to 19% nationally.



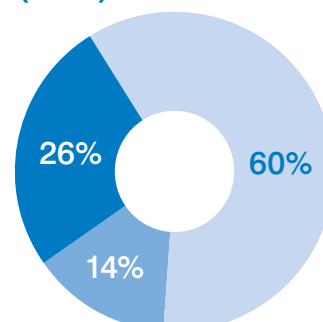
The percentage of Coventry neighbourhoods amongst the 10% most deprived in England **reduced from 18.5% to 14.4%** between 2015 and 2019.

Just under half of Coventry's school-aged children are from a global majority background.



The significant student population in Coventry has contributed to 9.15% of population being aged 20-24 – the 4th highest in England Metropolitan areas and higher than the national average of 6.04%.

0 - 20
20-64
65+



For more information, visit the Facts about Coventry website coventry.gov.uk/facts-coventry

How our Council works

Coventry has had a council from medieval times, which has been reformed on numerous occasions. Since 1974 the council has been a metropolitan council and in 1986 became a unitary authority following the abolition of the West Midlands County Council.

The democratic centre of the Council is at the Council House, Earl Street, Coventry, and is where nearly all democratic meetings take place. The main office for staff is at Friargate close to the railway station, although services operate from buildings across the city such as Whitley Depot, 17 libraries and eight Family Hubs.

The Cabinet

The Leader of the Council appoints a Cabinet selected from the elected councillors. The Cabinet is made up of 10 members, including the Leader of the Council.

The Cabinet makes decisions about Council Services which exceed the financial limits for a Cabinet Member (£1m - £1.5m) or which significantly affect more than one ward.

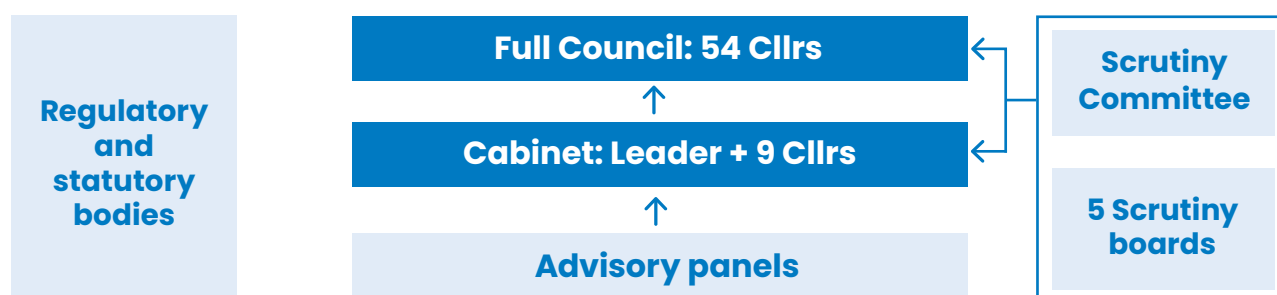
Functions and responsibilities include:

- ▶ maintaining and improving governance
- ▶ financial management
- ▶ recommendations to Council about annual policy priorities and resource allocation
- ▶ annual approval of Council Tax Base and recommendations to the Council about the level of Council Tax.

The Cabinet considers reports from the Scrutiny Committee and all policy and budgetary framework documents.

Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about holding the Executive (Cabinet) to Account, this is at different stages of the decision-making process, including public consultations. Scrutiny is independent of the Cabinet, responsible for setting its own work programmes. Scrutiny supports Cabinet and officers in developing policy and investigating whether planned outcomes are being achieved – e.g. Complaints Policy and Procedures. Scrutiny also reviews performance of Council services to ensure they are achieving customer satisfaction and value for money, monitors Council performance and ensures standards are met – e.g. One Coventry Plan Performance Reports. Scrutiny also looks at the work and impact of external agencies on the community e.g. health service providers, Community Safety Partnership and other partners e.g. CAMHS.



The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee appoints Scrutiny Boards to support this work, there are five boards.

Regulatory Committee

The Regulatory Committees of the Council include Audit and Procurement, Ethics, Licensing and Planning. These Committees all meet regularly and have specific responsibilities as set out in the Constitution.

What does Coventry City Council do?

As a City Council, Coventry City Council (CCC) is responsible for a range of vital

services for people and businesses in the city. We run more than 700 services, many are visible that combine to make a real difference to residents' lives on a daily basis. Some you may only know about if you come into direct contact with them. As a city councillor you will be involved in decision-making, shaping policy and budget setting for these important services.

A lot of Council work is done in an agile way, with a focus on improvement, collaboration, and innovation, and by working with the community and others such as the police and health partners.

Funding for the Council and local services comes from three main sources – government grants, business rates and council tax from residents.

Some of our 700+ services include:



refuse, recycling
and street
cleaning



housing and
regeneration



planning
and building
regulation



elections



transport, roads
and street
lighting



schools,
education and
adult learning



children's and
adults' social
care



environmental
health and
licensing



car parks



community
safety and crime
reduction



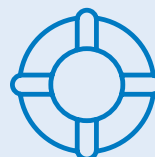
parks and open
spaces



leisure centres
and activities for
all ages



Council Tax and
housing benefit



emergency
response e.g.
flooding, major
incidents



arts, libraries,
museums and
heritage sites

One Coventry Plan 2022–2030

Coventry City Council's 'One Coventry Plan' outlines our vision and priorities for the future.

Our vision is: **One Coventry - working together to improve our city and the lives of those who live, work and study here.**

Our three priorities will focus on:



We will do this through:



We will create:

- ▶ a city with a strong and resilient economy, where inclusive growth is promoted and delivered, businesses are enabled to innovate and grow, and new local jobs are created.
- ▶ a city where our residents get the best possible start in life, experience good health and age well, in a city that embraces diversity, protects the most vulnerable and values its residents and communities.
- ▶ a city that leads the way and invests in the green industrial revolution. Ensuring the future wellbeing of our residents by embedding environmentally-friendly behaviours and exploring opportunities to lessen the pressures caused by climate change.

We will do this by being:

- ▶ a council with a strong and sustainable financial position, with resources

and assets that are aligned with our priorities

- ▶ a council that plays a key role as a civic leader, working in genuine partnership with residents, communities and partners.

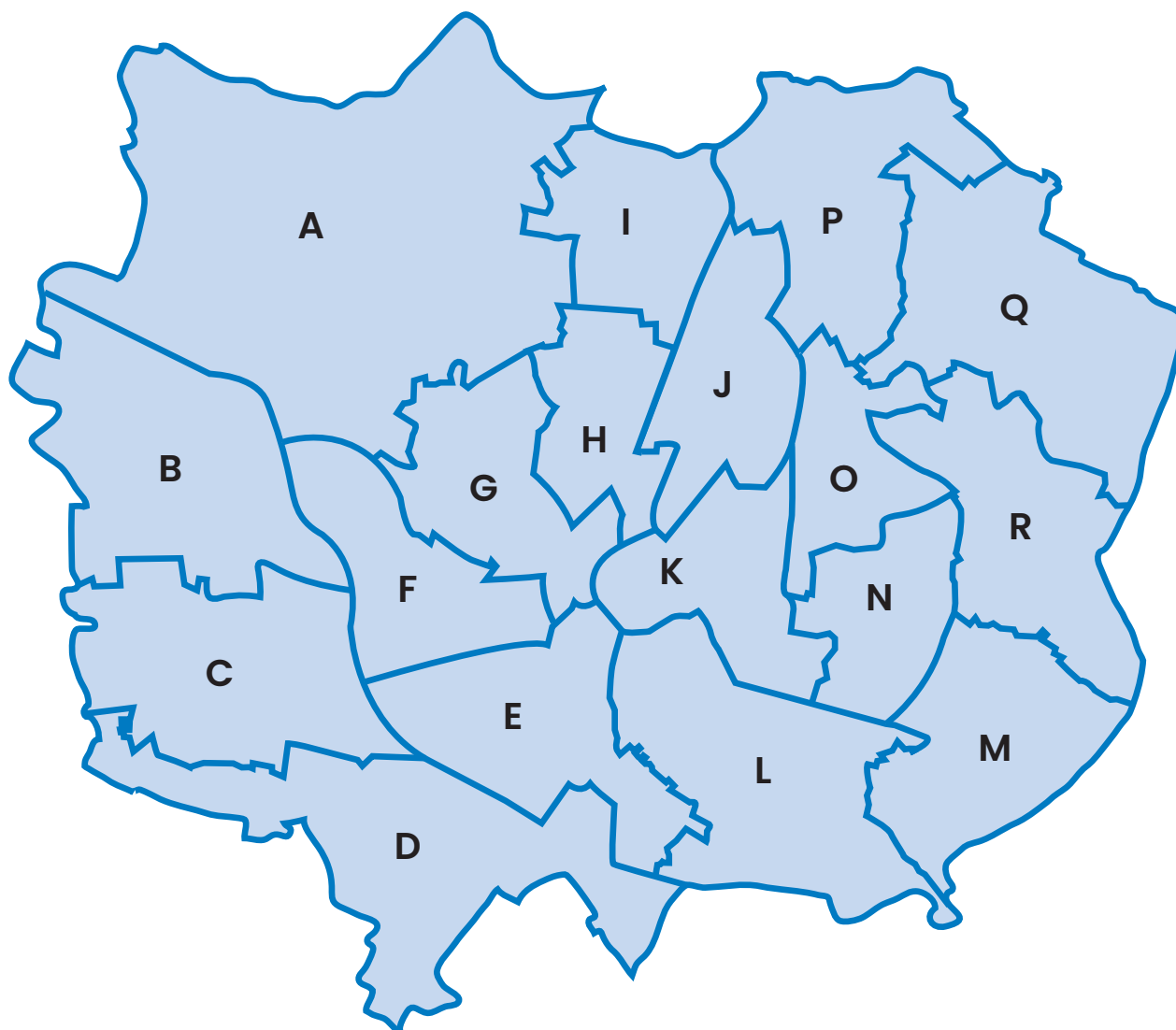
Managing our performance and how we measure our progress

The bi-annual performance report outlines our achievements in relation to our three main priorities and two enabling priorities. It highlights trends and provides performance metrics, supported by qualitative information through case studies, to assess the progress made. Additionally, the report offers contextual insights into our overall performance and compares it with relevant regional and national benchmarks.

The full plan is available to read: coventry.gov.uk/theonecoventryplan

Coventry wards

New ward boundaries come into effect in May 2026 (reflecting final recommendations of Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review).



Key	Name	No. of councillors
A	Bablake	3
B	Woodlands	3
C	Tile Hill and Canley	3
D	Wainbody	3
E	Earlsdon	3
F	Whoberley	3
G	Sherbourne	3
H	Radford	3
I	Holbrooks	3

Key	Name	No. of councillors
J	Foleshill	3
K	St Michael's	3
L	Cheylesmore	3
M	Binley and Willenhall	3
N	Lower Stoke	3
O	Upper Stoke	3
P	Longford	3
Q	Henley	3
R	Wyken	3

Elections and how they work

In England and Wales, over 19,000 people represent their communities by serving as councillors on a local authority. Councillors are elected to represent an individual geographical unit of the city known as a ward (district) or division (county). In the city of Coventry, a third of councillors are elected each year, once every four years. However, in some councils all councillors are elected every four years. Elections are held on the first Thursday in May, with the next elections due on 7 May 2026. It is important to note that at the elections in 2026 there will be elections for all councillors due to new ward boundaries being implemented following a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

If a councillor resigns or dies whilst in office, a by-election is held to elect another person to represent the ward. Councillors elected at a by-election serve the remaining period of the four-year term. However, when a vacancy occurs within six months of the date of when the previous councillor was up for re-election, then the seat is vacant until the next election.

Steps to being elected

To become a councillor, you will need to stand as a candidate in a local election.

Complete a nomination form to have your name included on the ballot paper

Appoint an Election Agent to report your campaign finances after the election

Run your campaign

Canvas electors for votes

Produce election material in accordance with the election rules

Conduct interviews with the press and media

Attend key events

Make an acceptance speech at the election count (hopefully).

Before every election we hold 'Candidate and Agent Briefing Sessions' to provide you with the key information that you will need and give you a step-by-step guide to the nominations process.

There is detailed advice available to candidates and agents on the Electoral Commission's website:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-and-agents-local-government-elections-england

Nomination process

The nomination process involves completing a number of different forms. Copies and guidance for completing these forms can be downloaded from the Electoral Commission's website:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk



Forms you will need to complete:

- ▶ Nomination form
- ▶ Candidate's consent to nomination
- ▶ Home address form
- ▶ Certificate of authorisation (if standing for a political party)
- ▶ Request for a party emblem (if standing for a political party)
- ▶ Notification of election agent



The nomination form must be endorsed by the signatures of two registered electors (known as subscribers) from the ward in which you are standing.

If you attend the 'Candidate and Agent Briefing Sessions' you'll be able to obtain a printed copy of the nomination pack, if you require one. The nomination pack will include nomination forms, timetables and guidance notes.

Next steps

If you have made the decision to stand you will need to make sure you are officially nominated. You will need to complete a nomination pack which you can download from the Electoral Commission's website or from the Elections Team by contacting electionbackoffice@coventry.gov.uk or calling 024 7697 5226.



Useful Contacts

If you are interested in other political parties, visit the register of political parties, accessible via the Electoral Commission's website:

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

The Electoral Commission

3 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8YZ

020 7271 0500 (switchboard)

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Local Government Association (LGA)

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ

020 7664 3000

www.lga.gov.uk

Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)

Third Floor, 251 Pentonville Road, Islington, London N1 9NG

020 7554 2800

www.lgiu.org

Be a Councillor (Local Government Association)

www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor

Contact us

Coventry City Council

Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR

024 7683 3034

coventry.gov.uk

Public report

Committee Report

Audit and Procurement Committee
Ethics Committee

21 September 2026
24 September 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership – Councillor G Duggins

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

N/A

Title:

Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

The Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out Coventry City Council's arrangements for meeting the seven principles of good governance as defined in the CIPFA/Solace Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. The Framework recommends that Local Authorities develop and maintain a Local Code of governance as it provides a structure to help individual authorities with their approach to governance.

The Council adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2017. The Code has been reviewed in the light of best practice and updated to reflect the current governance arrangements in place within the Council. An up to date and robust Local Code provides clarity over an authority's governance and supports the legal requirement to undertake an annual review of effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and produce an Annual Governance Statement.

Recommendations:

Audit and Procurement Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Consider the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27 and confirm its satisfaction that the Code accurately represents the Council's governance arrangements.

Ethics Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Consider the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27.

List of Appendices included:

The following appendix is attached to the report:

Appendix - Local Code of Corporate Governance

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents:

Code of Corporate Governance Report – Audit and Procurement Committee - 3rd April 2017

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016 edition)

Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Guidance for English Local Authorities (2016 edition)

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel, or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Local Code of Corporate Governance 2026/27

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. The CIPFA / Solace Framework defines governance as “the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.” Coventry City Council has a range of measures in place to ensure that governance in the organisation is managed effectively and works hard to ensure that these arrangements are robust and meet best practice. This is achieved through a range of policies, plans, procedures such as the Constitution (including codes of conduct for Members and employees), the One Coventry Plan, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and policies on whistleblowing, tackling fraud and corruption, and managing risk.
- 1.2 The attached Local Code of Corporate Governance (Appendix 1 to the report) is a refresh of the previous code with work undertaken with internal stakeholders to ensure it reflects the current position of the organisation and our One Coventry approach. The Local Code sets out the Council’s specific arrangements for putting the principles of good governance into practice. It draws on examples provided in the Framework but also reflects systems and processes which are specific to the Council.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework” published by CIPFA / Solace sets the standard for local authority governance. The Framework is designed to help local authorities develop an informed approach to governance, aimed at achieving the highest standards in a measured and proportionate way. The Framework recommends that Council’s adopt a Local Code of governance. By setting out specifically how the Council puts the principles of good governance into practice, there is a greater degree of clarity and transparency over the arrangements in place, which in turn supports the annual review of effectiveness and development of the Annual Governance Statement.
- 2.2 The principles of good governance as detailed in the Framework are as follows:
- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law
 - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
 - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
 - Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
 - Developing the entities capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
 - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
 - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit, to deliver effective accountability
- 2.3 The Council adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance in 2017. In 2023 the Code was reviewed in the light of best practice and has this year been updated again to reflect the current governance arrangements in place within the Council and has been reviewed by the Council’s Corporate Governance Group. Consideration of the Code by the Audit and Procurement Committee supports comprehensive understanding of governance across the organisation and will assist the Committee in discharging its role in relation to the Annual Governance Statement.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1. No consultation has been undertaken.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The Local Code of Governance reflects the Council's governance arrangements which are in place for the financial year 2026/27. The Council is required to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of these arrangements and publish an Annual Governance Statement.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1. Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications associated with this report. Internal control / governance has clear and direct effects on finance within the Council. Since these vary widely, it is not useful to attempt to summarise them here, beyond noting that all systems and controls are designed to help improve value for money obtained, the probity and propriety of financial administration, and / or the management of operational risks.

5.2. Legal Implications

There is no legal requirement to adopt a Local Code. However, having an up to date and robust Local Code reflects best practice and helps to demonstrate the Council's commitment to good governance. It also supports the legal requirement to undertake an annual review of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and produce an Annual Governance Statement.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes (i.e. the internal control environment) and culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled, and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads the community. It enables the authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

The key risk is that the governance arrangements set out in the Local Code are not effective and / or are not complied with. This risk is managed through the requirement to undertake an annual review and produce an Annual Governance Statement. Where areas for improvement are identified, these are included in the Annual Governance Statement action plan.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

None

6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

None

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author:

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Directorate:

Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Tel and email contact:

Tel: 024 7697 1007

Email: adrian.west@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Michelle Salmon	Governance Services Officer	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/26	01/09/26
Karen Tyler	Chief Internal Auditor	Finance and Resources	28/08/26	03/09/26
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Cath Crosby	Lead Accountant – Financial Management	Finance and Resources	28/08/26	10/09/26
Julie Newman	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities	-	28/08/26	10/09/26
Councillor G Duggins	Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership	-	28/08/26	03/9/26

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/council-meetings

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Local Code of Corporate Governance

2026/27

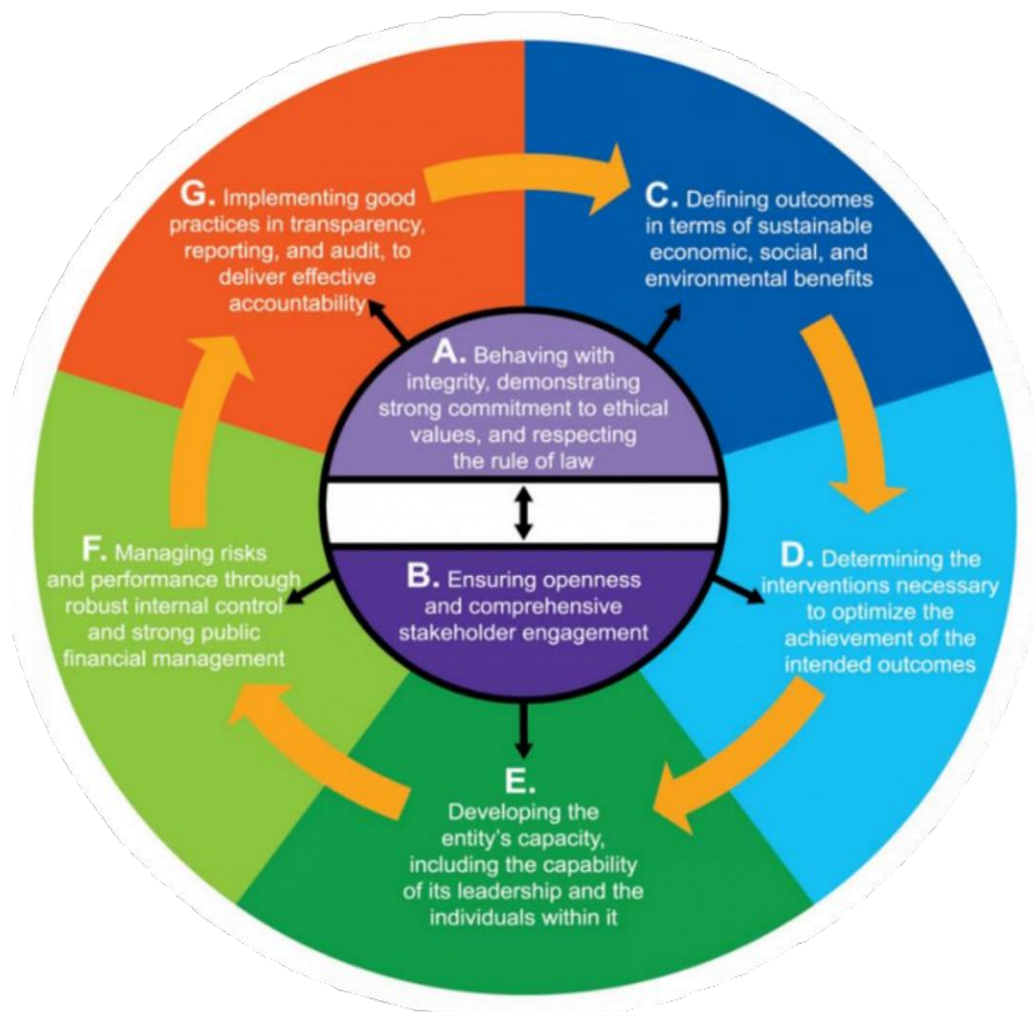


Introduction

Governance in the public sector can be described as the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are achieved while acting in the public interest at all times. In simple terms it is about:

How the Council operates to ensure it is doing the right things in the right way

Our governance arrangements are based on a series of principles*, as shown in the diagram below:



Source: CIPFA / SOLACE framework – *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government* (2016)

To explain this further:

Achieving the intended outcomes (doing the right thing) requires arrangements for:

- Being clear about what the Council wants to achieve for people, the environment and the economy

- Being clear about the actions needed to achieve the Council's aims
- Making sure the Council has the skills, ability and money to achieve its aims
- Making sure the Council manages risks, budgets and performance
- Making sure that the Council operates in an open, accountable and transparent way

All of the above means the Council needs to have in place ways to ensure the Council is acting in the public interest (doing it the right way). This means the Council needs to:

- Behave with integrity and demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical values and respect the rule of law
- Ensure the Council is open and engaged with our communities and stakeholders

As an example:

The Council's One Coventry Plan is how we define the outcomes we are planning to achieve (Principle C).



Our Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out our arrangements for meeting the principles, helping us to ensure that we deliver our intended outcomes and are accountable to those who live, work and visit Coventry. The law requires us to undertake an annual review to reflect on how well our governance arrangements have been operating in practice during the year and provide an opinion on this.

This is published in our Annual Governance Statement. The Statement also includes a plan of any actions we are taking to improve governance. The Council is committed to continuous improvement and we recognise that good governance is dynamic - as things change, the way in which we work needs to change as well to ensure that we can continue to do the right things in the right way.

The full Local Code of Governance for Coventry City Council is outlined in this document. The Code is reviewed every year and approved by the Audit and Procurement Committee to ensure it is up-to-date and accurately reflects how the Council operates.

Principle A:

Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

1. Behaving with integrity

The Council has a Code of Conduct for Elected Members. The aim of the Code of Conduct is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of Elected Members, Co-opted Members and local government. It sets out general principles of behaviour expected of all Elected Members and Co-opted Members. It provides a guide to modelling the behaviour that is expected and covers standards including respect, bullying, harassment and discrimination; confidentiality and use of position as well as arrangements for declaring interests. Members receive training on the Code of Conduct.

There is a Code of Conduct in place for Employees which forms part of their terms and conditions of employment and is based on the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Our 'One Coventry Values' have been co-created with the support and input of all employees across the Council, so they are reflective of how we want to be represented both as colleagues and to our wider communities. The One Coventry Values are "Open and Fair", "Nurture and Develop", "Engage and Empower", "Create and Innovate", "Own and Be Accountable" and "Value and Respect". Our Behaviour Framework defines the behaviours we need to be successful and effective in what we do. Our People Plan sets out our commitment and ambitions for our workforce over the next three years 2026 - 2029 and has our One Coventry Values at its centre.

2. Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values

The Council has a cross-party Ethics Committee which promotes and maintains high standards of conduct by Members and co-opted Members. The Ethics Committee monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Elected and Co-opted Members, consider complaints made against Elected and Co-opted Members, and monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for employees.

Registers of Interests for all elected Members can be viewed on the Council's website. Officers are expected to declare financial and non-financial interests to their line manager, which are confirmed through the annual appraisal process and the Council undertakes an annual declaration of interest exercise in relation to all senior management graded officers.

Gifts and hospitality are declared. The Ethics Committee reviews Members' and Officers' declarations of gifts and hospitality every 6 months. These are published as part of the Ethics Committee papers.

A Member Officer Protocol offers guidance on some of the issues which are commonly experienced between Members and Officers when working together. Officers and Members both serve the public, but they have different roles. Officers are employees of the Council and are politically neutral.

Their role is to advise Members and implement the policies of the Council to the best of their abilities. Members are office holders and will often belong to a political party. They are obliged to exercise their own judgement in respect of matters before them, but may also legitimately pursue party political objectives. Employees are answerable to the Chief Executive, not to individual Members (whatever office they hold), but there should be good communication between senior officers and Members with special responsibility for their area of work.

3. Respecting the Rule of Law

The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. The Council has three statutory posts - the Chief Executive, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer - who are responsible for ensuring the rule of law, as set out in the Constitution is applied. There is a Monitoring Officer Protocol in place.

The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy. This enables employees to report concerns about wrongdoing which are in the public interest. This policy is important as it protects the individual who raised the concerns from suffering any detriment. There is also information on the staff intranet which advises employees how they can raise concerns about work (including Whistleblowing), entitled "I have a concern".

A Group Governance Agreement is in place, which sets out the legal framework for the operation and management of Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd and its subsidiaries. Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd and the Council's Joint Venture companies are accountable to the Coventry Shareholder Committee, which represents the interests of the Council as shareholder.

Principle B:

Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

1. Openness

Formal meetings are open to the public and information is displayed on our website. A weekly public notice is published and displayed at the Council House. Papers are published on the website five working days before a meeting and wherever possible, items are discussed in public. If items are discussed in private, a reason is given for this.

Key Decisions (those which involve financial implications of over £1m or impact substantially on two or more Wards) are published.

Decisions taken by Cabinet and Member Committees are available on the website.

2. Engaging with citizens and stakeholders

The Council undertakes inclusive engagement by ensuring that residents, communities, partners and stakeholders have clear and meaningful opportunities to help shape decisions that affect them.

Engagement activity is planned in line with the Council's duty to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, with particular attention given to reaching people and groups who may face barriers to participation or whose voices are less often heard. This includes using a range of accessible methods, formats and channels; providing clear, timely and plain English information; making reasonable adjustments where needed; and working with community organisations and trusted networks to support participation.

Feedback gathered through engagement is considered alongside other evidence to inform decision-making, and the Council aims to be transparent about how views have been used and what difference they have made.

The Council engages with residents and stakeholders in a variety of ways both digitally and non-digitally. We publish a magazine, Your Coventry, which is delivered to every house in the city and includes news, views and features about the work of the Council and life in Coventry. The magazine includes information about how you can get in touch with your local councillors and reports on the many events taking place in the city.

The Let's Talk Coventry website is an online engagement platform designed for residents to engage with the Council. You can use it to take part in consultations, share ideas and join in with discussions. We

also use the site to keep residents and stakeholders up to date with how your feedback has led to action from the Council. Consultation and engagement opportunities are available in hard copies at our libraries. Posters are also displayed giving people a phone number to call to request information in different languages or different formats. Opportunities are also promoted through our social media channels and the many newsletters that are sent out from the Council and partners.

In the case of large-scale projects, leaflets/ “Street News” are produced and delivered to business and residential properties within a geographical location of proposed new developments/transport schemes. One-off public meetings/drop-in sessions are also held.

Peer engagement is recommended working alongside Community Leaders in geographical or special interest groups to encourage involvement.

In addition, the Council engages with businesses within the City of Coventry to understand the barriers to entry in tendering for contract opportunities and how these barriers can be addressed through the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules. This engagement has resulted in changes to the Contract Procedure Rules introducing minimum timescales to below-threshold activity, uplifting the minimum number of quotes/tenders sought in below-threshold activity and simplification of Request for Quotation documents. Additionally, Procurement Services is launching several Meet The Buyer webinars from late 2026 to deliver targeted support in navigating public sector procurement processes.

Principle C:

Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

1. Defining outcomes

The One Coventry Plan sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the city to 2030. It provides the framework for how the Council works with partners and communities to improve outcomes, tackle inequalities, support economic prosperity and respond to climate change. Members and senior officers regularly monitor how well the Council is delivering work towards meeting the targets. Cabinet and Scrutiny receive a report reviewing progress biannually toward targets, and an annual performance report that provides an assessment of progress against the Plan's priorities, using performance indicators, trend data, benchmarking and case studies to show both measurable outcomes and wider impact. This report is published and discussed publicly.

2. Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

The One Coventry Plan focuses on economic, social and environmental benefits. The Plan is underpinned by a number of strategies which help us to deliver the plan. This includes the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which helps us to plan our spending over a three-year period, the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Every decision-making report contains information on how the decision will impact people and the environment. For significant policy changes, full Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken.

The Council has a Social Value and Sustainability Policy. This means that we look at maximising the wider benefit for our city through meeting our needs when we purchase goods, services or works in a way that achieves value for money for the life of the contract. This means that whilst the cost of the contract is important, we also look at what else can be gained, for example, apprenticeship opportunities or environmentally friendly working practices.

The Council has a Supplier Code of Conduct which aims to build trusting and open relationships between the Council and Suppliers to drive improved performance throughout the Council's supply chains. The Code sets out the behaviours that the Council and its Suppliers would expect of each other.

Principle D:

Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

1. Identifying the right course of action

Decision-making reports contain information on the options considered, which includes outlining the impact of doing nothing. Financial and legal implications are explained, and the reports contain information on how the work contributes to the One Coventry Plan as well as how risks are managed. The report also includes information on the impact on equalities, including the identification of any groups that the decision may have an impact on (including a positive impact) and how any potential adverse impacts on groups will be mitigated. The implications of decisions on climate change, the environment and partners are also outlined in decision-making reports.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) brings together evidence about the health and well-being of Coventry residents to help inform the right course of action. This information is used by the Council and health partners to enable us to work together to improve the health and well-being of Coventry residents.

There are Procurement Boards and Panels that use the information provided to make informed decisions when we purchase goods and services. This includes considering the Social Value and Sustainability Policy when procuring goods, services or works.

2. Planning action

The Council has a One Coventry Plan Performance Management Framework, which helps us ensure we achieve what we aim to do. It does so by setting out how we plan and organise our resources to achieve the things we want to do – our vision and priorities, as set out in the One Coventry Plan. By aligning our resources, actions and activities to the Council's vision, priorities and desired outcomes, it helps us measure how public money is turned into results.

Performance and outcome data are used during annual budget planning and service planning processes. By examining trends, demand pressures, financial information and outcomes achieved, elected members and senior officers can prioritise investment in areas where evidence shows the greatest need or opportunity for improvement.

3. Maximising outcomes

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out how we plan to manage our finances for the next three years and how we can closely align resources to the priorities set in the One Coventry Plan. This Strategy is refreshed annually and considered by Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council.

Principle E:

Developing the Council's capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

1. Developing capacity

Our People Plan outlines what we as a Council and a responsible employer are going to do to deliver the workforce vision and objectives, particularly around organisational design, development and leadership. The People Plan details how we intend to improve capacity, capability and processes to deliver the Council's priorities.

The Council recognises the importance of partnerships in developing capacity in our city. This can be seen through the introduction of a Director for Strategy and Performance at the Council. The One Coventry Partnership aims to facilitate and grow cross-organisational working with partner organisations such as the Universities, West Midlands Police and voluntary and community sector partners. The Partnership is chaired by the Director of Care, Health and Housing to improve outcomes through more joined-up and relevant local services.

We are also part of the Coventry and Warwickshire Anchor Alliance, working collaboratively with other organisations to make the biggest positive impact on the lives of local people. Anchor institutions are large organisations based in the city that have a significant stake in the area – this includes NHS Organisations, universities and large employers.

2. Developing strong leaders

The Council has a Members Training and Development Strategy which is designed to ensure our Members are properly supported to help them meet the demands of the role. Members need the skills and knowledge to be able to deliver Coventry's ambitions. A well-trained and informed cohort of Members is key to the success of the One Coventry Plan.

The 4 year strategy was updated in March 2026 provides the framework for Members to access a programme of training that meets their needs, as well as the needs of the organisation to deliver the ambition set out in the One Coventry Plan. The strategy will help to continue to support the development of a training culture for Members. Delivery of the strategy is overseen by a Cabinet Member Advisory Panel, which has cross-party representation and makes recommendations to the Cabinet Member responsible for Member training. A detailed induction

programme was organised to support new councillors following the all out elections in May 2026.

The Owning and Driving Performance culture change programme offers leaders and managers the opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge within a coaching programme and empower employees to achieve excellence within the services we provide for our residents. Following its introduction to senior leaders, the programme has been extended to a wider group of managers.

New behaviours have been introduced for seniors leaders which describe the way we expect colleagues to act and behave in their interactions with colleagues, customers and stakeholders. Having in place a group of strong, effective leaders who inspire others to make a difference, work as a collective leadership team to deliver outcomes and who create the conditions for staff to take the lead in delivering excellent services to our diverse residents is central to the successful delivery of the Council's ambitions.

The Council has a Corporate Learning and Development offer in place which is centred around embedding diversity, equity & inclusion and also includes a strand on leadership and management development. Strengthening the leadership and management capability of our workforce will enable us to address some of the challenges we face as an organisation and will put us in a better position to deliver our 'One Coventry' priorities through our One Coventry Plan.

Principle F:

Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

1. Managing risk

The Risk Management Policy sets out the mechanisms for the identification and management of risks in the Council. This includes requirements for both service and directorate registers to be maintained and when a risk should be reported to the Senior Leadership Board, so that they can consider if it should be included in the Corporate Risk Register. The Corporate Risk Register contains those risks which threaten the achievement of One Coventry priorities, and it is kept under review by the Senior Leadership Board and the Audit and Procurement Committee. In addition, risk registers are maintained for significant projects the Council is working on, and all decision-making reports must explain how risks will be managed.

2. Managing performance

Performance against the One Coventry Plan is reported to Scrutiny, Cabinet and Council.

The Council has six scrutiny boards which are responsible for keeping a check on decisions and how they are made. They help to provide transparency and enable decisions and policy to be challenged. Scrutiny plays a part in developing Council policy, reviewing Council Services, and making sure the Council is acting effectively and efficiently. Scrutiny meetings are open to the public and welcome suggestions and comments from the public on items to scrutinise.

The Strategy and Performance Directorate has been introduced and collates all the Council's key performance indicators on a quarterly basis. This includes One Coventry Plan performance indicators, Local Outcomes Framework metrics and Corporate Leadership Dashboard indicators. Monthly Senior Leadership Board sessions focus on performance.

Directorate Service Plans, Service and Team objectives set out how all parts of the organisation contribute to delivering the strategic outcomes set out in the One Coventry Plan.

There is an effective appraisal framework in place for our employees who have an appraisal which considers their performance, targets and development needs every year. As part of the appraisal process, all senior leaders are set a

diversity and inclusion objective which is monitored and reviewed on an annual basis. Individual Appraisal Objectives ensure every employee understands how their work contributes to service delivery and organisational success.

Performance management of the Council's subsidiaries is undertaken by Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd which are accountable to a Shareholder Committee.

3. Robust internal control

Officers are responsible for implementing appropriate systems of internal control to manage risks within their services. The Council's Internal Audit Service is responsible for providing independent assurance that internal control processes are operating effectively and advising on actions to improve systems and processes where necessary.

The Internal Audit Charter defines the purpose, authority, responsibility and position of Internal Audit within the Council.

The Council has a Fraud and Corruption Strategy which sets out the Council's arrangements for responding to the risk of fraud and corruption.

The Council has an Audit and Procurement Committee which ensures there is sufficient assurance over governance, risk and internal control and oversees the work of Internal Audit.

4. Managing data

The Council's information governance framework ensures that personal information is held and processed confidentially and securely while ensuring compliance with the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements. Key roles have been identified to ensure appropriate oversight and accountability.

A corporate information risk register has been developed for regular review by the Information Management Strategy Group, which is chaired by the Senior Information Risk Officer.

Guidelines and training are in place to support the safe collection, storage and use of data and a reporting system is in place to identify data incidents, which are investigated and used to identify lessons learned. Information about incidents and near misses are reported annually to the Audit and Procurement Committee.

5. Strong financial management

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial planning foundations that support the setting of the Council's revenue and capital budgets and the Constitution sets out the budget and policy framework procedure rules, financial procedure rules, and rules for contracts.

Budgetary control arrangements are in place including defined responsibilities of budget holders and budget managers. Quarterly financial monitoring reports are presented to Cabinet and Audit and Procurement Committee, along with out-turn reports.

An annual assessment is undertaken of both the Council's compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code, which provides guidance for effective and sustainable financial management in local authorities and the role of the S151 Officer (Director of Finance and Resources) against the CIPFA Statement of the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government.

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

1. Implementing good practice in transparency

The Council publishes a range of information about its services, including that which is required under the Local Government Transparency Code, which sets out which information we should be publishing and the timeframe for doing so.

Our report templates are standardised and designed to make sure that it is clear why a decision has been taken and that the appropriate information is provided to explain the decision. The reports and minutes of meetings are published and meetings are open to the public.

2. Implementing good practices in reporting

We report on our performance annually through the One Coventry Performance Report and review every six months with stakeholders to provide assurance of collective progress against targets and identify areas requiring focus. This is available on our website.

We compile our Statement of Accounts on an annual basis. The Statement of Accounts gives residents and other interested parties clear information about the Council's finances and operational and financial performance.

The statement summarises the cost of services provided by us in the year, how services were paid for and our assets and liabilities at the year end. The Statement of Accounts is available on our website. The Council's External Auditors assess the Council's arrangements for providing value for money as part of their audit on the Statement of Accounts.

The Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd Board provides the Shareholder Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee with a summary of the activities and financial performance of Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd Group over the preceding year.

3. Assurance and effective accountability

The Council is subject to a number of external reviews and inspections including OFSTED and CQC, as well as external audit. The outcomes of these inspections and reviews are published. Governance and oversight of these reviews and inspections are undertaken through the local authority.

Services participate in peer reviews which are designed to support the Council's performance by identifying its areas of strength and areas for development. Learning from a Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge carried out in January 2024 was used to develop an action plan for the organisation in response to recommendations for continued improvement.

Improvement plans are developed and monitored to implement recommendations from reviews and inspections, and this is overseen by Cabinet Members in their regular briefings with Directors and by the Senior Leadership Board.

The Council publishes its Statement of Accounts annually, supported by the Annual Governance Statement and external audit reporting. These provide transparency over the Council's financial position, governance arrangements, and arrangements to secure value for money.

The Audit and Procurement Committee provides oversight of the accounts, internal audit, external audit, risk management and governance improvement actions.



Public Report Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee

24 September 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A - Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Six Monthly Review of Members' Gifts and Hospitality

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary

This report sets out details of declarations of gifts and hospitality made by Members for the period 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026. The Committee reviewed the gifts and hospitality register entries received from 1 July 2025 - 31 December 2025 at its meeting on 19 March 2026. The Committee is asked to consider the most recent declarations.

Recommendations: -

The Ethics Committee is recommended to consider the gifts and hospitality register entries for Members received from 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026 and to make any recommendations that it considers appropriate.

List of Appendices included:

- Appendix 1: General Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality for Members received between 1 January 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Six Monthly Review of Members' Gifts and Hospitality

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Ethics Committee has, as part of its Work Programme, decided to review on a regular basis the declarations of gifts and hospitality made by Members. Appendix 1 contains copies of all declarations received from Members from 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026.

2. Options considered and recommended proposals

- 2.1 The declarations received between from 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026 are at Appendix 1 of this report. There were 4 forms received from 4 elected Members.
- 2.2 There have been no requests by members of the public to view the register during this time.
- 2.3 The Committee is recommended to consider the declarations made in the first six months of 2026 and to make any recommendations that it considers appropriate.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Not applicable

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

Any recommendations of the Committee will be implemented within an appropriate time frame.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1 Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal implications

Members are required to declare Gifts and Hospitality under section 4 of the Code Conduct for Elected Members at Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. Whilst there is currently no statutory requirement for members to declare in this way, maintaining a process and register aids transparency and assists the Council in promoting and maintaining a process and register aids transparency and assists the Council in promoting and maintaining high standards of ethical behaviour as is required under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011.

6. Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the One Coventry Plan?

Not applicable

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no direct risk to the organisation as a result of the contents of this report, but a failure to implement and maintain a system of Declarations of Gifts and Hospitality can impact on the organisation's ethical behaviour and transparency.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

The routine declaration of gifts and hospitality received should assist in protecting Elected Members from unfounded allegations of bias and facilitate good and clear transparent decision making.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage

Report author(s):

Name and job title: Shanita Manhertz, Trainee Solicitor

Directorate: Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Contact details: 0247 697 2350; Shanita.Manhertz@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date document sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/2026	01/09/2026
Names of approvers for submission: (Officers and Members)				
Finance: Richard Shirley	Lead Accountant	Finance	28/08/2026	11/09/2026
Legal: Julie Newman	Director of Law Governance and Safer Communities	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/2026	11/09/2026
Councillor A Hopkins	Chair of Ethics Committee		11/09/2026	

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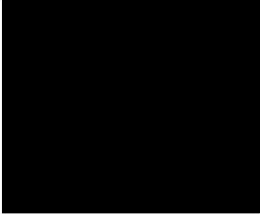
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Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Name of Elected Member	Councillor Abdul Salam Khan
Position held e.g. cabinet member, shadow cabinet member, elected member etc.	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities (with responsibility for International Relations)
Date on which gift or hospitality was offered and received or accepted	2 nd – 4 th March 2026
Person or organisation offering or providing the gift or hospitality and link to the Council if appropriate	Armagh City and Triangle Housing
Full details of what was received	Flights, accommodation and food provided by the organisation.
Actual cost or estimated cost e.g. face value of tickets, price of set menu at venue etc.	£700 approximately
Justification for accepting the gift or hospitality	Attended as the cabinet member with responsibility for International Relations and Equalities. I made a formal presentation, detailing the City's work in combating inequalities.

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

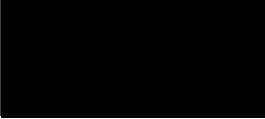
Please outline the benefit to the City or City Council in acceptance of the gift or hospitality	The conference aimed to bring together civic leaders, community practitioners and peace-building organisations to share learning between Coventry and Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on reconciliation, community cohesion and good relations in post-conflict and divided societies. To strengthen the peace and reconciliation links between Coventry and Northern Ireland, and lay foundations for continued collaboration.
Signature of member: Date:	 9th March 2026

Reviewed October 2024

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Name of Elected Member	Councillor Rachel Lancaster
Position held e.g. cabinet member, shadow cabinet member, elected member etc.	Lord Mayor
Date on which gift or hospitality was offered and received or accepted	2 nd – 4 th March 2026
Person or organisation offering or providing the gift or hospitality and link to the Council if appropriate	Armagh City and Triangle Housing
Full details of what was received	Flights, accommodation and food provided by the organisation.
Actual cost or estimated cost e.g. face value of tickets, price of set menu at venue etc.	£700 approximately
Justification for accepting the gift or hospitality	Attended at the request of the organisation to strengthen the peace and reconciliation links between Coventry and Northern Ireland, and lay foundations for continued collaboration.

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Please outline the benefit to the City or City Council in acceptance of the gift or hospitality	The conference aimed to bring together civic leaders, community practitioners and peace-building organisations to share learning between Coventry and Northern Ireland, with a particular focus on reconciliation, community cohesion and good relations in post-conflict and divided societies. .
Signature of member: Date:	 11th March 2026

Reviewed October 2024

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Name of Elected Member	Cllr Gary Ridley
Position held e.g. cabinet member, shadow cabinet member, elected member etc.	Leader of the Conservative Group (Leader of the Opposition).
Date on which gift or hospitality was offered and received or accepted	16.04.26
Person or organisation offering or providing the gift or hospitality and link to the Council if appropriate	Coventry City Football Club
Full details of what was received	1 x ticket to Coventry vs Portsmouth Football Match on Tuesday 21 st April 2026
Actual cost or estimated cost e.g. face value of tickets, price of set menu at venue etc.	Attendance in the Boardroom is invitation only, but cost is estimated in excess of £250.00
Justification for accepting the gift or hospitality	To represent the city at a key local sporting event and build links with other key regional stakeholders.

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Please outline the benefit to the City or City Council in acceptance of the gift or hospitality	To represent the city at a key local sporting event and build links with other key regional stakeholders.
Signature of member: Date:	22.04.26

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Name of Elected Member	Cllr Kindy Sandhu
Position held e.g. cabinet member, shadow cabinet member, elected member etc.	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
Date on which gift or hospitality was offered and received or accepted	February 2025
Person or organisation offering or providing the gift or hospitality and link to the Council if appropriate	Belgrade Theatre
Full details of what was received	2 Tickets for The Romeo and Julie Show
Actual cost or estimated cost e.g. face value of tickets, price of set menu at venue etc.	74GBP
Justification for accepting the gift or hospitality	I attended in my role as Cabinet Member for Education and Skills as the show included many young people from our city and I wanted to attend to support them.

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality under Members' Code of Conduct

Please outline the benefit to the City or City Council in acceptance of the gift or hospitality	Attendance demonstrated Coventry City Council's support for young people involved in the arts and reinforced the Council's commitment to promoting cultural and educational opportunities within the city.
Signature of member: Date:	05/06/2026



Public Report Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee

24 September 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A - Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Six Monthly Review of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary

In its Work Programme, the Committee has decided to review entries in the Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality every six months.

Recommendations: -

The Ethics Committee is recommended to consider the entries of gifts and hospitality received by Officers from 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026 and to make any recommendations that it considers appropriate.

List of Appendices included:

- Appendix 1: Table of Gifts and Hospitality received by Officers between 1 January 2026 to 30 June 2026.

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Six Monthly Review of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality

1. Context (or background)

1.1 The Committee's Work Programme includes an item for this meeting to review entries on the registers of officers' gifts and hospitality every six months.

1.2 The Code of Conduct for Employees sets out the requirements for employees when being offered or accepting gifts and hospitality, The basic rules are:

(a) Gifts

- Personal gifts should never be accepted unless they are modest and are of token value (less than £50). The manager's permission must be obtained.
- Items such as coffee mugs, diaries, calendars, pens or other promotional materials can be retained if they are in use in the office and can be considered to form part of the general mailings of a company.
- Where small gifts, such as chocolates, are given as thanks for a service provided, these can be accepted if they are shared within the Team or raffled for charity.
- Gifts worth more than £50 should be refused. If this is not possible, the manager should dispose of them to charity and record the fact in the register.

(b) Hospitality

- Hospitality consisting of light refreshments, working lunch or other meals which are part of a visit, conference, meeting or promotional exercise is acceptable.
- Invitations to social events offered as part of normal working life, or where the Council should be seen to be represented, may be accepted if authorised in advance by the appropriate Assistant Director.
- Invitations to other types of hospitality which are not directly linked to the City Council's functions should not be accepted.

The rules relating to gifts and hospitality were amended by the Committee in June 2016 and those changes were accepted by full Council in September 2016.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 The Directorates have been asked to provide details of gifts and hospitality received during the first six months of 2026. The position for each Directorate is set out in the Table in Appendix to this report.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Not applicable

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

Not applicable

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1 Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. However, reviewing the gifts and hospitality offered to employees on a regular basis will help to demonstrate that the Council continues to monitor and review ethical standards within the Council.

6. Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the One Coventry Plan?

Not applicable

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Not applicable

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Keeping matters such as this under review help to promote high standards amongst elected members and employees in accordance with the Localism Act

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage

Report author(s):**Name and job title:** Shanita Manhertz, Trainee Solicitor**Directorate:** Law, Governance and Safer Communities**Contact details:** 0247 697 2350; Shanita.Manhertz@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date document sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/2026	01/09/2026
Names of approvers for submission: (Officers and Members)				
Finance: Richard Shirley	Lead Accountant	Finance	28/08/2026	11/09/2026
Legal: Julie Newman	Director of Law Governance and Safer Communities	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/2026	11/09/2026
Councillor A Hopkins	Chair of Ethics Committee		11/09/2026	

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Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

Officer	Date offered or received	Description	Gift or hospitality	Value	Offered or provided by	Involved or likely to be involved in determining any application or tender or similar made by the donor?	Will acceptance create any conflict, perceived or actual in the future?	Approved by	Approval date
1. Director of Public Health and Wellbeing	01/09/2025	One box of pencils	Gift	£10.00	Visiting academics from South Korea	No – this was an information-gathering visit for South Korean visitors	No – this was an information-gathering visit for South Korean visitors	Director of Care, Health and Housing	03/06/2026
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
It would be rude in South Korean culture to refuse such a gift.									
2. Chief Executive	14/01/2026	Lunch with Odgers at 180 House, London	Hospitality	£45.00	Odegers Interim	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Developing a relationship with a key stakeholder to discuss current issues in local government.									
3. Chief Executive	03/02/2026	Housing Dinner with the Mayor of the West Midlands and invited guests at Hotel Du Vin, Birmingham	Hospitality	£50.00	Ocean Media	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
To discuss the PIC Research Report "Realising the 1.5 million: Reliably delivering homes, infrastructure and communities"									

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

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4. Chief Executive	22/02/2026	River cruise with high tea at the Riverfront, Ahmedabad, India	Hospitality	Unknown	Ahmedabad Municipal Commissioner	No	No	N/A	N/A
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Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:

- Part of a West Midlands delegation to India supporting events designed to build partnerships with Indian industry and government. Playing a pivotal role in showcasing the region as a leading location for investment.

5. Chief Executive	22/02/2026	Men's T20 World Cup Cricket Match, Ahmedabad, India	Hospitality	Unknown	Ahmedabad Municipal Commissioner	No	No	N/A	N/A
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Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:

- Part of a West Midlands delegation to India supporting events designed to build partnerships with Indian industry and government. Playing a pivotal role in showcasing the region as a leading location for investment.

6. Chief Executive	23/02/2026	Indigo Art Museum Informal Buffet Dinner and Networking, Ahmedabad, India	Hospitality	Unknown	Arvind Group	No	No	N/A	N/A
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Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:

- Part of a West Midlands delegation to India supporting events designed to build partnerships with Indian industry and government. Playing a pivotal role in showcasing the region as a leading location for investment.

7. Chief Executive	23/02/2026	West Midlands in India Dinner Reception, Mumbai, India	Hospitality	Unknown	West Midlands Growth Company	No	No	N/A	N/A
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Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:

- Part of a West Midlands delegation to India supporting events designed to build partnerships with Indian industry and government. Playing a pivotal role in showcasing the region as a leading location for investment.

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

8. Chief Executive	26/02/2026	King's Birthday Party, Bengaluru, India	Hospitality	Unknown	British Deputy High Commission	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Part of a West Midlands delegation to India supporting events designed to build partnerships with Indian industry and government. Playing a pivotal role in showcasing the region as a leading location for investment.									
9. Chief Executive	27/02/2026	Closing Dinner Reception, Bengaluru, India	Hospitality	Unknown	West Midlands Growth Company	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Part of a West Midlands delegation to India supporting events designed to build partnerships with Indian industry and government. Playing a pivotal role in showcasing the region as a leading location for investment.									
10. Chief Executive	05/03/2026	Dinner to celebrate the awarding of the Queen Elizabeth Prize for Education	Hospitality		North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College			N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Declined.									
11. Head of Business Systems and Continuous Improvement	16/03/2026	Awards Ceremony - Meal	Hospitality	£70.00	Rethink Partners	No	No	Assistant Director ASC	14/04/2026

Disco

Disco

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

15. Chief Executive	23/04/2026	Coventry & Warwickshire Business and Community Awards	Hospitality		Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Declined - attended for the drinks reception only - not the awards.									
16. Chief Executive	25/04/2026	Birmingham City FC v Bristol City FC	Hospitality	£150	West Midlands Growth Company	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Representing the Council as Chief Executive to develop the Council's relationship with regional stakeholders. Attended with the Director of Strategy and Performance.									
17. Director of Strategy and Performance	25/04/2026	Birmingham City FC v Bristol City FC	Hospitality	£150	West Midlands Growth Company	No	No	Chief Executive	14/08/2026
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Representing the Council to develop the Council's relationship with regional stakeholders. Attended with the Chief Executive.									
18. Chief Executive	26/04/2026	Coventry City FC v Wrexham FC	Hospitality	£150	Coventry City FC	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Representing the Council by supporting the City's football team and developing the Council's relationship with a key partner.									

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

19. Chief Executive	29/04/2026	Informal dinner with Redford Developments	Hospitality	£40	Redford Developments	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Representing the Council as Chief Executive, developing a relationship with a key stakeholder.									
20. Strategic Led – Operations and Delivery	07/05/2026 & 14/05/2026	Invite to attend Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport Awards. Invite to attend Institute of Chartered Engineers Award	Hospitality	£100 for each award	Waterman Aspen and Tony Gee	No	No	Interim Director of City Services	08/06/2026
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Awards ceremony directly related to field of work and Local Authorities across the region attend these events with other public bodies and delivery partners.									
21. Chief Executive	18/05/2026	Oval Real Estate Dinner	Hospitality	£80	Hospitality received at UKREiiF 2026 – Host: Oval Real Estate				
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Private dinner and networking opportunity.									
22. Chief Executive	20/05/2026	The Hill Group Dinner	Hospitality	£80	Hospitality received at UKREiiF 2026 – Host: The Hill Group				
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Private dinner and networking opportunity. The Hill Group is the developer for City Centre South, a major development scheme in Coventry.									

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

23. Director of Property Services and Development	20/05/2026	Stoford Dinner	Hospitality	£80	Hospitality received at UKREiiF 2026 – Host: Stoford				
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Private dinner and networking opportunity. Stoford is a developer that has worked on projects in Coventry in the past and would like to work in the city again.									
24. Strategic Lead – Economic Development	20/05/2026	Milligan Dinner	Hospitality	£80	Hospitality received at UKREiiF 2026 – Host: Milligan				
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Private dinner and networking opportunity. Milligan has recently been appointed as the commercial leasing partner for Coventry City Centre South.									
25. Director of Property Services and Development	21/05/2026	West Midlands Senior Leaders Dinner	Hospitality	£55	Hospitality received at UKREiiF 2026 - West Midlands Growth Company, sponsored by Lovell				
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Networking and dinner alongside senior Local Authority and Combined Authority representatives and key private sector partners.									

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

26. Strategic Lead – Economic Development	21/05/2026	Meeting/dinner with Property Skills and Complex Development Projects	Hospitality	£60	Hospitality received at UKREiiF 2026 – Host: Property Skills and Complex Development Projects				
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Dinner with two active Coventry developers to discuss their schemes and future plans.									
27. Chief Executive	21/05/2026	Private dinner - New works series	Hospitality		Lunar Agency	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Declined.									
28. Chief Executive	31/05/2026	Warwickshire Bears Men v Northamptonshire Steelbacks Men Cricket Match at Edgbaston (plus guest)	Hospitality	£100	Warwickshire County Cricket Club	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Representing the Council as Chief Executive, developing relationships with regional stakeholders.									
29. Systems Lead	01/06/2026 & 02/06/2026	Flights between Birmingham International Airport and Aberdeen Airport, return travel from Wolverhampton to Birmingham	Hospitality	Circa £670	Bromcom Computers PLC	No	No	Director of Digital	05/06/2026

Appendix 1: Register of Officers' Gifts and Hospitality 1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026

		International, Taxi travel to and from Wolverhampton station, taxi travel from Aberdeen airport to Hotel in Aberdeen city centre, hotel stay bed and breakfast and evening meal on 1st June							
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Bromcom approached Coventry City Council to ask for a guest speaker at their event for Local Authorities in Scotland. Due to the recent roll out of Bromcom to Coventry schools they were keen to share our experience of our roll out at scale to schools across Coventry with Scottish Schools. I therefore presented at the event on our honest experiences of our roll out. Before agreeing to attend this was checked and approved by Director of Digital.									
30. Chief Executive	03/06/2026	Glass plaque and approximately 100 individually wrapped biscuits.	Gift	Unknown	City Fibre	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Accepted on behalf of the organisation to celebrate partnership working between CCC / City Fibre marking City Fibre reaching the milestone of over one million homes and businesses connected to their full fibre network. Biscuits distributed to employees working in the Council House.									
31. Chief Executive	14/06/2026	Women's T20 Cricket World Cup at Edgbaston - India v Pakistan at Edgbaston	Hospitality	£75	Edgbaston Stadium	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council:									
Representing the Council as Chief Executive welcoming a delegation from VisitBritain / VisitBritain India with regional partners.									

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32.	Chief Executive	16/06/2026	1 night hotel complimentary accommodation at De Vere Cotswold Water Park Hotel	Hospitality	£135	AH Media / Local Government Strategy Forum	No	No	N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council: Attending the Local Government Strategy Forum as a guest speaker.										
33.	Chief Executive	25/06/2026	Summer Social – drinks, food and networking	Hospitality		Avison Young			N/A	N/A
Justification for acceptance/Benefit to the Council: Declined.										



Public Report Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee

24 September 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A - Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Code of Conduct Update

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary

The report updates the Ethics Committee on any national issues in relation to the ethical behaviour of elected Members and the local position in Coventry with regard to Code of Conduct issues.

Recommendations:-

The Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the position with regard to matter concerning local authorities nationally; and
2. Note the local position relating to the operation of the Council's Code of Conduct and to delegate any actions arising from these to the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, following consultation with the Chair of Ethics Committee.

List of Appendices included

None

Other useful background papers

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Code of Conduct Update

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Council's Ethics Committee has agreed that the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities will provide a regular update on cases relating to the Members' Code of Conduct on a national basis. This is to facilitate the Ethics Committee's role in assisting the Council with its duties under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of Members' conduct.

1.2 The National Picture

1.2.1 Local Government Association Guidance on Social Media

The Local Government Association (LGA) has produced guidance for Councillors in respect of social media.

The guidance is designed to assist Councils in advising Councillors on the effective, safe and responsible use of social media, highlighting legal considerations, defamation and libel, reputational impact, and safety considerations including securing accounts and privacy. It also confirms that "the same legal standards apply online as offline".

It aims to " maximise positive engagement opportunities while minimising the risk of legal issues and reputational damage to both individual councillors and the council".

The guidance can be adopted informally, as local policy or embedded into the Constitution and link to the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

1.2.2 Councillor W; Rother District Council

Following an independent investigation, which found evidence of breaches of the Rother District Council's Members' Code of Conduct by Councillor W, the matter was handled by way of a local resolution.

Councillor W was said to have made comments at a Council meeting in July 2025 and made subsequent comments on social media about "the Council's decision-making process" and the recording that decision.

The Standards Committee was not asked to determine whether a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members had arisen, but it is the Council's policy that where a complaint is resolved by local resolution it must be reported its Standards Committee. However, should Councillor W fail to comply with the resolution in the manner agreed, the Monitoring Officer would be able to consider further action.

The agreed local resolution included written apologies, training on Members' Code of Conduct, Member-Officer relations and the use of social media, a future conduct undertaking and a public-facing personal statement.

As part of the public-facing personal statement written by Councillor W, he acknowledged the findings of the investigation, apologised and explained that he would "raise any future procedural concerns through appropriate Council channels".

1.2.3 Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption

The Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption also known as GRECO at the framework and measures in place for preventing corruption and promoting integrity at national level and subnational level via the Greater London Authority and Kent County Council.

As part of its findings, it found that the in respect of its Anti-corruption and integrity framework, the UK has "has a robust anti-corruption and integrity policy framework, both at the national level and in the local authorities under evaluation".

GRECO made six recommendations for the UK , those being to:

- Clarify and strengthen the framework for sanctioning elected officials in local authorities to ensure effectiveness and proportionality
- Implement measures to raise awareness on matters of integrity for Councillors through regular training (for Kent County Council authorities)
- Provide advice on integrity, conflicts of interest and corruption prevention and confidential counselling for employees
- (For Kent County Council authorities) Make it a legal requirement to publish gifts and hospitality, when none are received that this is expressly referred to on the website and consider published an aggregated list of when received by Councillor.
- Ensure there is greater transparency in respect of lobbying
- Bring the Local Audit Office into operation so to allow for the escalation of issues, financial transparency and timely publication of audited accounts in an effective manner.

1.2.4 Councillor M; Slough Borough Council

The Standards Committee at Slough Borough Council determined that Councillor M had breached the Local Authority's Code of Conduct

following a complaint of “intrusive and aggressive” conduct at an establishment in 2025.

The complaint, as set out in the Standards Committee’s Decision Notice details how in April and September of last year, Councillor M without prior notice “approached individuals working at the business in an intrusive and aggressive manner”.

It was said that in April 2025 among other things, the Councillor made threats which indicated that the business could be closed down and had “deeply intimidating” tone and conduct causing an individual to feel harassed.

Furthermore, In September 2025 he is said to have left his vehicle in a position which blocked the road and attempted “to solicit the assistance of a passerby in a manner that continued a pattern of harassing, targeted and vexatious behaviour and placed an unsustainable burden on a small business navigating a challenging environment”.

As a result of this conduct, Councillor M was found to have breached paragraphs of the Code pertaining to treating others with respect, bullying and harassment and improper use of position.

The sanctions recommended by the Committee concerning Councillor M were censure, training on the role of a Councillor and the offer of conciliation which, if accepted by the business, for Councillor to engage with the process.

1.2.5 Durham County Council Councillor emails

The Chief Executive of Durham County Council is reported by the BBC to have issued a warning to Councillors regarding emails being sent considered to be “unacceptable”.

Although the specific details of the emails themselves do not appear to have been disclosed, these are reported to concern “personal views, allegations and assumptions” and include instances of “officers being singled out” and “allegations being presented as fact without any evidential basis”.

The Chief Executive is also reported to have commented on the “potentially significant legal risks” which the Local Authority could face as a consequence of such emails, such as employment tribunal claims and highlighted Councillors’ responsibilities regarding “high standards of behaviour” and “respect”.

1.3 The Local Picture

Complaints under the Code of Conduct:

- 1.3.1 The Ethics Committee has requested that the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities reports regularly on any complaints received relating to Members of Coventry City Council.

Since the last Committee meeting held in June 2026, the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities has received 4 complaints concerning 2 Councillors.

All complaints concern Councillors of the City Council. 2 of these complaints are Councillor on Councillor. At the time of writing this report the complaints remain at Stage 1.

2. Recommended proposal

The Ethics Committee are recommended to:

1. Note the position with regard to matters concerning local authorities nationally; and
2. Note the local position relating to the operation of Council's Code of Conduct and to delegate any actions arising from these to the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, in consultation with the Chair of the Ethics Committee.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Not applicable.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

Not applicable.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1 Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report. The issues referred to in this report will assist the Council in complying with its obligations under Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011.

6. Other implications

None.

6.1 How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no direct risk to the organisation as a result of the contents of this report.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

No direct impact at this stage.

6.4 Equalities/ EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage.

Report author(s):

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Directorate: Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Contact details: 0247 697 2350; Shanita.Manhertz@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date document sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/2026	01/09/2026
Names of approvers for submission: (Officers and Members)				
Finance: Richard Shirley	Lead Accountant	Finance	28/08/2026	11/09/2026
Legal: Julie Newman	Director of Law Governance and Safer Communities	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	28/08/2026	11/09/2026
Councillor A Hopkins	Chair of Ethics Committee		11/09/2026	

This report is published on the Council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Model guidance for councils: elected members' use of social media

This guidance is designed to support councils in providing clear and proportionate advice to members working alongside their communications and democratic services teams, on using social media safely, effectively and responsibly.

Background

Although many authorities have established social media protocols for staff, some lack the equivalent for elected members. This guidance is designed to support councils in providing clear and proportionate advice to members working alongside their communications and democratic services teams, on using social media safely, effectively and responsibly. The aim is to maximise positive engagement opportunities while minimising the risk of legal issues and reputational damage to both individual councillors and the council.

An LGA [survey \(https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/more-half-councillors-report-being-victims-misinformation-while-rates-abuse-and-threats\)](https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/more-half-councillors-report-being-victims-misinformation-while-rates-abuse-and-threats) revealed that 11 per cent of councillors had their private information exposed, while 64 per cent reported experiencing online abuse. This highlights the importance of the council working closely with its councillors to enhance their safety and strengthen their ability to manage challenging online situations.

This guidance is not intended as a guide on how to use social media in general. Rather it provides a model template which councils can use and adapt to local requirements to help members in using social media safely and appropriately. Separate [guidance on using social media](#)

for councillors (<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/communications-and-community-engagement/social-media-guidance-councillors>) is available through the LGA Civility in Public Life Hub and Communications Hub.

Local adoption and application

Councils may choose to adopt this guidance in different ways, including:

- as informal guidance for members
- as a locally adopted policy
- as a protocol incorporated into the council's constitution and linked to the Members' Code of Conduct

The way in which this guidance is adopted locally will determine whether and how it is enforceable. Where adopted formally, councils should ensure clarity about its status, scope and relationship with the Code of Conduct.

Model guidance

Purpose and scope

This guidance is for all elected members when using social media in their capacity as councillors. This includes circumstances where a councillor is acting or is reasonably perceived by the public to be acting, in their role as an elected member of the council.

This guidance is intended to assist members in using an important communications channel (social media) in a way that supports local democracy, the council's delivery of key services and public confidence in local government.

Relationship with the Members' Code of Conduct

This guidance sits alongside the council's Members' Code of Conduct. Where this guidance is adopted locally, a failure to follow it may, depending on the circumstances, amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct. Where it is not adopted, it remains advisory only.

[Link/quote/reference to your authority's Members' Code of Conduct here.]

Use of language in this guidance

Where this guidance uses words such as “should” or “avoid”, these indicate recommended practice. Where legal duties apply, this is made explicit. Councillors remain personally responsible for complying with the law at all times.

Safety

This section outlines recommended steps councillors can take to protect themselves and others when using social media.

Setting up your accounts securely:

- Use strong, unique passwords for each social media account.
- Avoid using your councillor or council email address to log in, as these may be publicly available.
- Enable two-factor authentication (2FA) on all platforms – this adds an extra layer of protection by asking for a code sent to your phone or email when you log in.
- Regularly review your security settings and update passwords if you suspect your account may have been compromised.

Protecting your privacy.

Maintain a clear boundary between your personal life and your public role.

- Review privacy and tagging settings on all platforms
- Avoid posting personal information such as your home address, phone number, date of birth or details about your family.
- Be mindful that friends, family and neighbours may not wish to have their information shared

- Where possible, avoid sharing information which may suggest that your home is currently unoccupied.

Staying alert

- Be alert to phishing* messages, suspicious links and fake accounts.
- Report any abusive, threatening or inappropriate behaviour to the social media platform and, where appropriate, to your council or the police.
- If you are concerned about your safety or receive repeated harassment, speak to the monitoring officer, community safety team or the police
- It is far safer to report concerns early, even if you are unsure whether they are serious.
- The Government has **collection of security guidance for candidates** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/candidate-security-guidance-collection>) which may also be useful.

*(a fraudulent communication, such as an email or text, designed to trick you into revealing sensitive information like passwords, credit card numbers, or other personal details).

Legal considerations

Councillors are personally responsible for what they post online. The same legal standards apply online as offline. Social media posts are subject to a high level of public scrutiny due to their accessibility and permanence.

Defamation and libel

Defamation includes libel, which is defamation in written or published form, including online. A person who publishes an untrue statement that damages another's reputation may be liable in defamation. Both individuals and organisations may bring claims.

Repeating a defamatory statement may also give rise to liability. This can include sharing content and, in some circumstances, other forms of online engagement where this amounts to republication.

Copyright

Placing images or text from a copyrighted source (for example, extracts from a publication or photographs) without permission may infringe copyright law. Members should ensure they have appropriate rights before sharing content created by others.

Data protection

Councillors should not publish personal data about individuals without a lawful basis to do so. Personal information obtained through correspondence or private exchanges should not be shared publicly unless there is clear consent or another lawful basis.

Bias and predetermination

Where councillors are involved in planning, licensing or other quasi-judicial decisions, they should avoid social media activity that could give the impression that they have made up their mind in advance.

Expressing a preliminary view is not unlawful in itself. However, councillors must be able to demonstrate that they approached the formal decision-making process with an open mind and were genuinely prepared to consider all relevant evidence.

Code of conduct

Online activity may fall within the scope of the Members' Code of Conduct. Even where a councillor intends to act in a personal capacity, the public may perceive them as acting as a councillor. Where in doubt, members should seek advice from their monitoring officer before posting.

Contempt of court

Councillors, like all members of the public, must take care not to publish material that could interfere with active legal proceedings. Once proceedings are active, publishing content that creates a substantial risk of serious prejudice may amount to contempt of court.

Members should avoid sharing content that assumes guilt, identifies individuals where identification is an issue, or could influence jurors or witnesses. Particular care is required in relation to victims, children and vulnerable groups.

Reputational considerations

Councillors are visible representatives of their communities and their councils. Social media activity can directly affect public trust and confidence.

Members are encouraged to engage constructively, maintain a professional tone and avoid posting in anger or responding to provocation. Blocking or reporting persistently abusive individuals can be appropriate and proportionate.

Members should remember that deleted posts may still be captured and shared elsewhere.

In summary:

- Think before posting
- Do not rely on disclaimers such as “All views are my own”
- Only post information you would be comfortable saying in a public meeting or seeing reported in the local press.
- Avoid sharing unverified information or speculation.

If in doubt, members should refer to their council’s Members’ Code of Conduct or seek advice from relevant officers.

External guidance and support

The LGA provides a range of resources to support councillors and councils, including guidance on the pre-election period, disinformation, online communications and civility in public life.

- **Pre-election period (<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/communications-and-community-engagement/pre-election-period/code-recommended-practice>)**
- **Guidance on disinformation for councillors (<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/communications-and-community-engagement>)**

ment/guide-disinformation-local-councillors)

- **Online communications for councillors (<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/civility-public-life-resources-councillors/handling-abuse-and-0>)**

The LGA also offers social media training for councillors. If you are interested in this offer, please let your communications and/or democratic services teams know, who can then reach out to **commsnet@local.gov.uk** (**<mailto:commsnet@local.gov.uk>**). Wider communications guidance can be found on the LGA's **Comms Hub** (**<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/comms-hub-communications-support>**). As a councillor, you can also get directly in touch with your **political group office** (**<https://www.local.gov.uk/about/our-meetings-and-leadership/political-composition/political-groups>**) at the LGA.

Disclaimer

This guidance is provided for general information only and does not constitute legal advice. Councils and councillors should seek their own legal advice where appropriate, including before adopting this guidance locally.

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Public report Ethics Committee

Ethics Committee

24 September, 2026

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A- Ethics Committee

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

Ward(s) affected:

Not applicable

Title:

Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2026/27

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

This report details the Work Programme for Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2026/27. The Committee is asked to consider the Work Programme and make any suggestions for additional or alternative reports.

Recommendations:

The Ethics Committee is recommended to review the Work Programme for 2026/27 attached as Appendix 1 and make any changes or amendments the Committee considers appropriate.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - Work Programme

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Work Programme for the Ethics Committee 2026/27

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Committee's Terms of Reference are set out in the Council's Constitution and include the consideration of matters which are relevant to the ethical governance of the Council, its Members or employees. This report details a programme of work for the Committee for the Municipal Year 2026/27, designed to assist the Committee to meet its objectives set out in the Terms of Reference, and to ensure that the Council complies with its obligations under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 to promote and maintain high standards of conduct amongst elected and co-opted Members.
- 1.2 The Committee's Work Programme takes account of the need to promote standards and addresses this in a number of ways. The Work Programme is flexible in terms of suggestions from members of the Ethics Committee as to additional or substitute areas which they would want to consider and receive reports on.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The Work Programme includes regular items on:
 - Code of Conduct/ Monitoring Officer Update
 - Declarations of gifts and hospitality by Members and Officers
 - Annual report to full Council
 - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Report
- 2.2 In addition, the Ethics Committee factor into the Work Programme a number of matters where work is being, or about to be, undertaken across the Council. This includes continuing work on Civility in Public Life and the provision of training for Members.
- 2.3 The Committee is asked to consider whether there are any other matters that they would want to consider during the year.

2.4 Recommendation

The Ethics Committee is recommended to review the Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and make any changes or amendments the Committee considers appropriate.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

None

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Not applicable

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities

5.1 Financial implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report.

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report, as there is no statutory obligation on the Committee to adopt a Work Programme. However, the Council must comply with its obligations under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 and the continuation of a clear programme of work would assist in compliance for the Council as a whole, in its duty to promote high standards of ethical conduct.

6. Other implications

None

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the One Coventry Plan?

Not applicable.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no direct risk to the organisation as a result of the contents of this report.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

If implemented, the Work Programme will facilitate the promotion of high standards amongst elected Members in accordance with the Localism Act.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

There are no public sector equality duties which are of relevance at this stage.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None at this stage

Report author(s):

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Directorate: Law, Governance and Safer Communities

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Shanita Manhertz	Trainee Solicitor	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	29/07/26	31/07/26
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and Members)				
Director : Julie Newman	Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities	Law, Governance and Safer Communities	29/07/26	07/09/26
Finance: Richard Shirley	Lead Accountant	Finance	29/07/26	29/07/26
Cllr A Hopkins	Chair: Ethics Committee		01/09/26	014/09/26

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Appendix 1

Work Programme for the Ethics Committee - Municipal Year 2026/27

Ethics Committee Meeting and date	Topics
2026/7	
1. 25 June, 2026	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Annual Report of the Committee
	New Members Induction - Interim Update for Ethics Report
	Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities - Update
	Work Programme 2026/27
2. 24 September, 2026	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for first 6 months of 2026
	Local Code of Corporate Governance
	Members Gifts and Hospitality -Declarations for first 6 months of 2026
	Local Government Association (LGA) Ending Abuse in Public Life – Council Self-Assessment Tool Kit – Progress
	Review of the effectiveness of the work undertaken in relation to the Prospective Councillor Information
	Work Programme 2026/27
3. 7 January, 2027	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update
	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Report
	Review of the effectiveness of the work undertaken in relation to the New Member Induction Programme 2026
	Work Programme 2026/27
4. 18 March 2027	
	Monitoring Officer/Code of Conduct/ Members Complaints Update.
	Members Gifts and Hospitality - Declarations for last 6 months of 2026
	Officers Gifts and Hospitality - Inspection of Registers for last 6 months of 2026
	Member Training and Development Review 2026/27
	Work Programme 2027/28

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