

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Council held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 25 February 2025

Present:

Members: Councillor M Mutton (Chair)

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

Honorary Alderman D Chater, J Clifford, D Skinner, T Skipper and K Taylor

Apologies: Councillor L Bigham, J Gardiner, E M Reeves and E Ruane
Honorary Aldermen H Fitzpatrick and M Hammon

Public Business

91. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2025

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 January 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record subject to an amendment to Minute 73 (Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 December 2024) to amend the description "Rising service costs at Nauls Mill House" to "Increased service charge at Nauls Mill House."

92. Coventry Good Citizen Award

On behalf of the City Council, the Lord Mayor presented Sharandeep Sahota with the Good Citizen Award. Her citation read:

“Since the age of 7 Sharandeep has been a carer for her disabled relatives, helping with their daily care and their health and wellbeing.

Sharandeep volunteers with the Carers Trust Heart of England and founded the Young Carers Council with the Carers Trust in Coventry, to ensure young carers are represented.

She is an inspiration to other young carers and proves that even with a caring responsibility, you can still achieve incredible things.

Sharandeep has a strong volunteering ethos which includes speaking to students about volunteering at the Birmingham Youth Summit in 2022, helping at the International Children's Games, teaching at the Streetlaw Project, campaigning about knife crime and fundraising with the National Citizen Service.

In November 2023, Sharandeep was named as the Duke of Edinburgh Award's "Change Maker of the Year". In May 2023 she was nominated for a Coronation Champions Award.

In November 2021, Sharandeep received a national special mention for the Who Cares Wins, Young Hero category for volunteering at Carers Trust, being a young carer and creating packages for the homeless.

Sharandeep is an incredible young lady, who has and continues to support so many throughout her community and is a worthy recipient of the Coventry Good Citizen Award.”

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

1. **Ukraine**

The Lord Mayor reported on her attendance at the service at the Cathedral to commemorate the 3rd anniversary of the start of the war in Ukraine.

The service had been attended by many of our Ukrainian families who had found refuge here in Coventry. The Lord Mayor reported that it had been a very poignant and moving service and it was an honour to be able to re-affirm this City's commitment and solidarity to Ukraine and her People.

The Lord Mayor thanked Councillors that attended this event along with the Coventry Branch of the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant.

2. **Death of Steve Stewart**

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of Steve Stewart.

Steve held a variety of leadership roles including that of Executive Director of Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions and Chief Executive of Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull Partnership Ltd, the sub regional economic development and regeneration company for the area prior to the formation of Local Enterprise Partnerships.

He was involved in the formation and development of Coventry & Warwickshire

Champions. In 2004 Steve was awarded an OBE for services to young people and careers.

Members paid tribute to Steve.

3. **Former Councillor Harvey Williams**

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of former Councillor Harvey Williams, who had passed away on 17 February 2025.

Harvey had been a Conservative Councillor representing Sherbourne Ward from 1967 to 1982. He had served on many Committee during this time and was Chair of the Public Works Protection Cttee from 1970-1972.

Harvey was also a long serving and highly active member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and in 2010 he became the first person in Coventry and Warwickshire to receive an award from them for his outstanding contribution to the profession.

Members paid tribute to Harvey.

Members then stood for a minute's silence in memory of Steve and Harvey.

94. **Petitions**

RESOLVED that the following petitions be referred to the appropriate City Council body:

1. **Petition requesting a speed limit of 30 mph and traffic calming measures on Westwood Heath Road – 155 signatures, presented by Councillor M Lapsa.**
2. **Petition requesting parking restrictions on Albert Street, Leigh Street and Clarence Street – 15 signatures, presented by Councillor J O'Boyle.**
3. **Petition calling on the Council to work with residents and Councillors to conduct a traffic safety assessment of Bannerbrook Park – 49 signatures, presented by Councillor G Ridley.**
4. **Petition to stop the decline and revitalise Aldermoor playground – 82 signatures, presented by Councillor J McNicholas and Councillor R Singh.**

95. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

96. **Motion without Notice**

In accordance with the Constitution, a Motion without Notice was moved by Councillor P Seaman, seconded by Councillor D Toulson, and adopted that agenda item 7 (Council Tax Setting Report 2025-26) and item 8 (Budget Report 2025-26) be considered together.

It was noted that a recorded vote would be taken in respect of all decisions relating to matters the subject of Minutes 97 (Council Tax Setting Report 2025-26) and 98 (Budget Report 2025-26), including any amendments.

97. Council Tax Setting Report 2025-26

Further to Minute 69 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer), that calculated the Council Tax level for 2025/26 and made appropriate recommendations to Council, consistent with the Budget Report 2025/26.

The report recommended a 4.9% increase in the City's Council Tax. Some figures and information, shaded grey in the report, were provisional due to precepts not having been confirmed at the time of publication. These figures were confirmed as final at the meeting and confirmed as accurate.

The report incorporated the impact of the Council's gross expenditure and the level of income it would receive through Business Rates, grants, and fees and charges. This resulted in a Council Tax requirement, as the amount that its expenditure exceeded all other sources of income.

The report included a calculation of the Band D Council Tax that would be needed to generate this Council Tax requirement, based on the City's approved Council Tax base. The 2025/26 Band D Council Tax that was calculated through this process had increased by £99.11 from the 2024/25 level.

Each year the Government determined the maximum Council Tax increases that local authorities could set without triggering a referendum. For 2025/26, Coventry City Council's Council Tax must be below 5%, comprising a 2% precept for expenditure on adult social care and a maximum of 3% for other expenditure. The recommendations within the Budget Report 2025/26 were based on a proposed increase in Council Tax of 4.9%, incorporating a core Council Tax rise of 2.9% and a 2% Adult Social Care Precept.

The recommendations followed the structure of resolutions drawn up by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, to ensure that legal requirements were fully adhered to in setting the tax. As a consequence, the wording of the proposed resolutions was necessarily complex.

RESOLVED that:

(1) The Council note the following Council Tax base amounts for the year 2025/26, as approved by Cabinet on 7 January 2025, in accordance with Regulations made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 ("the Act"):

a) 90,062.6 being the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax base for the year for the whole Council area;

**b) Allesley 451.3
Finham 1,585.7
Keresley 616.3**

being the amounts calculated by the Council as its Council Tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(2) The following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2025/26 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Act:

(a) £961,854,567 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils (Gross Expenditure and reserves required to be raised for estimated future expenditure);

(b) £772,363,707 being the aggregate of the amounts that the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. (Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet the Gross Expenditure but excluding Council Tax income);

(c) £189,490,860 being the amount by which the aggregate at (2)(a) above exceeds the aggregate at (2)(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year;

$$(d) \text{ £2,103.99} \quad \frac{(2)(c)}{(1)(a)} = \frac{\text{£189,490,860}}{90,062.6}$$

being the amount at (2)(c) above divided by the amount at (1)(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. (Average Council Tax at Band D for the City including Parish Precepts).

(e) £51,386 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. (Parish Precepts);

$$(f) \text{ £2,103.42} = (2)(d) - \frac{(2)(e)}{(1)(a)} = \text{£2,103.99} - \frac{\text{£51,386}}{90,062.6}$$

being the amount at (2)(d) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at (2)(e) above by the amounts at (1)(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the area to which no special item relates. (Council Tax at Band D for the City excluding Parish Precepts);

g)

Coventry (unparished area)	£2,103.42
Allesley	£2,140.85
Finham	£2,116.96
Keresley	£2,124.55

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (2)(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at (1)(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate. (Council Taxes at Band D for the City and Parish).

h)

Valuation Band	Parts to which no special item relates	Parish of Allesley	Parish of Finham	Parish of Keresley
	£	£	£	£
A	1,402.28	1,427.23	1,411.31	1,416.37
B	1,635.99	1,665.10	1,646.52	1,652.42
C	1,869.71	1,902.98	1,881.75	1,888.49
D	2,103.42	2,140.85	2,116.96	2,124.55
E	2,570.85	2,616.60	2,587.40	2,596.68
F	3,038.27	3,092.34	3,057.83	3,068.79
G	3,505.70	3,568.08	3,528.27	3,540.92
H	4,206.84	4,281.70	4,233.92	4,249.10

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (2)(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

(3) The Council note that for the year 2025/26 the Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands and West Midlands Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

Valuation Band	Police and Crime Commissioner for the West Midlands	West Midlands Fire Authority
-----------------------	--	-------------------------------------

	£	£
A	153.00	53.46
B	178.50	62.37
C	204.00	71.28
D	229.50	80.19
E	280.50	98.01
F	331.50	115.83
G	382.50	133.65
H	459.00	160.38

- (4) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (2)(h) and (3) above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2025/26 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Band	Parts to which no special item relates	Parish of Allesley	Parish of Finham	Parish of Keresley
	£	£	£	£
A	1,608.74	1,633.69	1,617.77	1,622.83
B	1,876.86	1,905.97	1,887.39	1,893.29
C	2,144.99	2,178.26	2,157.03	2,163.77
D	2,413.11	2,450.54	2,426.65	2,434.24
E	2,949.36	2,995.11	2,965.91	2,975.19
F	3,485.60	3,539.67	3,505.16	3,516.12
G	4,021.85	4,084.23	4,044.42	4,057.07
H	4,826.22	4,901.08	4,853.30	4,868.48

- (5) The Council determines that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2025/26 is not excessive in accordance with the principles set out in the Secretary of State's report, under Sections 52ZC and 52ZD of the Act.

Note: The Councillors voting For and Against the Recommendations were as follows:

For

Councillors:

S Agboola
N Akhtar
P Akhtar
M Ali
R Brown
K Caan
B Christopher
G Duggins
S Gray
L Harvard
G Hayre

Councillors:

R Lakha
G Lewis
G Lloyd
K Maton
J McNicholas
C Miks
S Nazir
J O'Boyle
K Sandhu
P Seaman
B Singh

Against

Councillors:

R Bailey
J Birdi
J Blundell
M Heaven
T Jandu
M Lapsa
J Lepoidevin
P Male
B Mosterman
G Ridley
T Sawdon

Abstain

A Hopkins	R Singh
J Innes	R Thay
A Jobbar	CE Thomas
S Jobbar	D Toulson
A Kaur	A Tucker
L Kelly	Lord Mayor
AS Khan	
T Khan	

Total: 36

Total: 11

Total: 0

For: 36
 Against: 11
 Abstain: 0

98. Budget Report 2025-26

Further to Minute 70 of the Cabinet, the City Council considered a report of the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer), that followed on from the Pre-Budget Report approved by Cabinet on 10 December 2024 (Minute 44/24 refers) which had since been subject to a period of public consultation. The proposals within the report would now form the basis of the Council's final revenue and capital budget for 2025/26 incorporating the following details:

- Gross budgeted spend of £961.9m (£94.0m or 11% higher than 2024/25).
- Net budgeted spend of £296.7m (£19.3m or 7% higher than 2024/25) funded from Council Tax and Business Rates less a tariff payment of £22.2m due to the Government.
- A Council Tax Requirement of £189.5m (£13.6m or 8% higher than 2024/25), reflecting a City Council Tax increase of 4.9% detailed in the separate Council Tax Setting report on today's agenda.
- A number of new expenditure pressures, policy proposals and technical savings proposals.
- A Capital Strategy including a Capital Programme of £171.6m including expenditure funded by Prudential Borrowing of £55.3m.
- An updated Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy, and a Commercial Investments Strategy.

The financial position in this Budget Report was based on the Final 2025/26 Local Government Finance Settlement published on 3rd February 2025. This settlement still only provided a one-year focus for 2025-26 with no detail for local government finances beyond this. However, in response to significant lobbying by Local Government, it was now being recognised that the current methodology and much of the data that fed into it was out of date and therefore, the Government have begun a consultation process into Local Authority Funding Reform, with the intention that a new system, intended to reflect need, could be implemented from 2026/27.

The Council had closed the significant financial gap for 2025/26 which it had at the start of the Budget process. Measures to achieving this included the identification of additional Council Tax resources, a range of technical adjustments and newly identified cost savings or income streams. All proposals were set out in detail in Appendix 2 to the report. Where these were different to the proposals that were

included in the Pre-Budget Report, this had been indicated within Appendix 2 to the report and shown in tables 2 and 3 within section 2.2 of this report. Due to the additional resources received within the final settlement on 3rd February 2025, several savings options had been removed from the final budget proposals in response to consultation engagement and petitions heard by Members.

The proposals did not provide the Council with a balanced budget beyond 2025/26. The Council's current medium term bottom line incorporated a combination of future inflationary and service pressures and the fall-out of uncertain specific grant resources. Some of the future funding assumptions were speculative at this stage and would be revised towards the end of 2025 as any changes to local government finance resulting from the Local Authority Funding Reform consultation and 2026/27 Settlement were made known. The initial approach would however be dictated by an intention to review and update technical information as it became available to the Council and to identify further efficiencies from, or generate further income within, Council services. Through 2025, the Council would continue to refine and implement a programme of activity designed to review how best to deliver its services, improve integration between some of them and optimise the effectiveness of others.

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) included as Appendix 1 to the report, set out the financial planning foundations that supported the setting of the Council's revenue and capital budgets, including the policy assumptions and financial management framework that underpinned the strategy.

The recommended Capital Programme proposals were a key part of the Council's approach and amounts to £171.6m in 2025/26. The proposals reflected the Council's ambitions for the city and included: extensive highways infrastructure works including specific schemes relating to continued delivery of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) Programme. The report also detailed the annual Treasury Management Strategy, incorporating the Minimum Revenue Provision policy and the Commercial Investment Strategy. These covered the management of the Council's treasury and wider commercial investments, cash balances and borrowing requirements.

An amendment, as detailed in Appendix 1 to these Minutes, was moved by Councillor Male, seconded by Councillor Ridley, and lost.

RESOLVED that the Council:

- (1) Approves the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in Appendix 1 to the report, as the basis of its medium-term financial planning process.**
- (2) Approves the Budget proposals in Appendix 2 to the report, after due consideration of the consultation responses set out in Appendix 7 and Appendix 8 to the report and the Equality Impact Assessment set out in Appendix 10 to 15 to the report.**
- (3) Approves the total gross 2025/26 revenue budget of £962m in Table 1 of the report and Appendix 3 to the report, established in line with a 4.9% City Council Tax increase and the Council Tax Requirement**

recommended in the Council Tax Setting Report considered on today's agenda.

- (4) Notes the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) comments confirming the adequacy of reserves and robustness of the budget in Section 5.1.2 and 5.1.3 of the report.
- (5) Approves the Capital Strategy incorporating the Capital Programme of £171.6m for 2025/26 and the forward commitments arising from this programme totalling £510m between 2025/26 to 2029/30 detailed in Section 2.3 of the report and Appendix 4 to the report.
- (6) Approves the addition to the capital programme of up to £1.1m grant funding from Arts Council England to contribute towards delivery of the City Centre Cultural Gateway scheme detailed in Section 2.3.4 of the report and Appendix 4 to the report.
- (7) Approves the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2025/26 in Section 2.4 of the report and the Prudential Indicators and limits described and detailed in Appendix 6 to the report, the Commercial Investment Strategy for 2025/26 in Section 2.5 of the report and Appendix 5 to the report and the Commercial Investment Indicators detailed in Appendix 6 to the report.

Note: 1) The Councillors voting for and against **the amendment** (as detailed in Appendix 1 to these Minutes) were as follows:

For	Against	Abstain
<u>Councillor:</u>	<u>Councillor:</u>	<u>Councillor:</u>
R Bailey	F Abbott	R Lakha
J Birdi	S Agboola	G Lewis
J Blundell	N Akhtar	G Lloyd
M Heaven	P Akhtar	K Maton
T Jandu	M Ali	J McNicholas
M Lapsa	R Brown	C Miks
J Lepoidevin	K Caan	S Nazir
P Male	B Christopher	J O'Boyle
B Mosterman	G Duggins	K Sandhu
G Ridley	S Gray	P Seaman
T Sawdon	L Harvard	B Singh
	G Hayre	R Singh
	P Hetherton	R Thay
	A Hopkins	C E Thomas
	J Innes	D Toulson
	A Jobbar	A Tucker
	S Jobbar	Lord Mayor
	A Kaur	
	L Kelly	
	AS Khan	
	T Khan	
Total: 11	Total: 38	Total: 0

For: 11
Against: 38
Abstain: 0

2) The Councillors voting for and against the **Recommendations as detailed in the report** were as follows:

For		Against	Abstain
<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Councillor</u>	
S Agboola	T Khan	R Bailey	
N Akhtar	R Lakha	J Birdi	
P Akhtar	G Lewis	J Blundell	
M Ali	G Lloyd	M Heaven	
R Brown	K Maton	T Jandu	
K Caan	J McNicholas	M Lapsa	
B Christopher	C Miks	J Lepoidevin	
G Duggins	S Nazir	P Male	
S Gray	J O'Boyle	B Mosterman	
L Harvard	K Sandhu	G Ridley	
G Hayre	P Seaman	T Sawdon	
A Hopkins	B Singh		
J Innes	R Singh		
A Jobbar	R Thay		
S Jobbar	C E Thomas		
A Kaur	D Toulson		
L Kelly	A Tucker		
AS Khan	Lord Mayor		
	Total: 36	Total: 11	Total: 0

For: 36
Against: 11
Abstain: 0

99. **Statements (if any)**

There were no Statements.

(Meeting closed at 6.10 pm)

Conservative Group Budget Proposals**Council Meeting - 25th February 2025 - AMENDMENT****Budget Report 2025/26 - Amendment**ResourcesReduction in Council Tax £1,000,000New Spending ProposalsHighways Potholes £300,000**TOTAL** **£1,300,000**Consultation – Retained service savings

Cultural Services (posts) (£56,000)

Election Cost efficiencies (£100,000)

Cease Your Coventry publication (£65,000)

Sub Total (£221,000)Additional Savings proposed

TU Facilities Time (£150,000)

Remove 2 post from Communications team (£96,000)

Remove Policy contingency (£75,000)

Remove management posts (£330,000)

Reduce corporate subscriptions (£50,000)

Reduce Cabinet Members by 2 and remove deputy's (£48,000)

Sub Total (£749,000)Policy ProposalsReject Godiva (events) budget increase (£330,000)**TOTAL** **(£1,300,000)**

To be moved by:-



Councillor Male

To be seconded by:-



Councillor Ridley