

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Coventry Shareholder Committee**  
**held at 2.30 pm on Tuesday, 15 April 2025**

Present:

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

Non-Voting Opposition

Members: Councillor J Lepoidevin  
Councillor E Reeves

Employees  
(by Service area):

Chief Executives J Nugent (Chief Executive)

Finance and Resources B Hastie (Director of Finance and Resources)

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

Property Services and Development P Beesley, A Hunt, J Bachelor

City Service and Commercial A Walster (Director of City Services and Commercial)

Apologies: Councillor J Blundell

**Public Business**

**25. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

**26. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 26 March 2025 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

**27. Council Acting as Charitable Trustees for War Memorial Park regarding the site of the Former Wisteria Lodge**

The Coventry Shareholder Committee considered a report of the Director of Property Services and Development that sought agreement of the Council acting as sole Charitable Trustee of the War Memorial Park to approve the marketing by tender and disposal by way of a sale of the land at the former Wisteria Lodge. Appendices to the report provided: an Illustrative Masterplan for Outline Application Development Option A for 8 (eight) family houses; an Illustrative Masterplan for Outline Application Development Option B for 24 (twenty-four) bed residential care home or independent/assisted living flats for over 55s; and a Draft Disposal Plan for Former Wisteria Lodge.

The former Wisteria Lodge (the site) formed part of the land within the War Memorial Park land holding, albeit distinct and detached from the main parkland.

By virtue of a conveyance dated 27 January 1921, the War Memorial Park was held on trust by the Council. Accordingly, any decisions taken by the Council in its capacity as charitable trustee must be made on the basis of what was in the best interests of the charity. Where a local authority was trustee of an asset held in charitable trust, it was essential to ensure that the asset was held and applied in accordance with the particular charitable purpose to which it was conveyed to the local authority.

Where the local authority was the sole trustee, it was the corporate body ("authority itself") which was the trustee, and as such guidance from the Charity Commission stated that responsibility for decision-making and oversight rested with Councillors. In exercising the obligation as charity trustee, the decision takers must ensure that their decisions are only taken on the basis on what was in the interest of the charity.

As per advice sought from the Charity Commissioners around the sale of the site, they confirmed that the sale of the site must be on the best terms that could be obtained and be approved by an independent Charities Act report.

**RESOLVED that Coventry Shareholders Committee:**

- 1) In its role as charitable trustee of the War Memorial Park and in the best interest of the charitable asset, agrees in principle to the marketing by tender and disposal by way of a sale of the Former Wisteria Lodge site shown edged red on the plan at Appendix C to the report, subject to:**
  - an independent Charities Act report recommending that the intended disposal between the Charitable Trust and the successful tenderer represents best value to the charity.**
- 2) Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources, and the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change, to:**

- **Prior to the disposal, place a public notice of the disposal of the Former Wisteria Lodge site in accordance with the guidance from the Charity Commission.**
- **Consider any comments and/or objections received in response to the public notice and decide whether the disposal of the Former Wisteria Lodge site be affected; and**
- **Negotiate the detailed terms of agreement with the successful tender including but not limited to undertaking the appropriate due diligence and completion of the necessary legal documentation to bring into effect the recommendations set out in this report.**

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

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 2.35 pm)