

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee
held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 30 October 2025

Present:

Members: Councillor G Lloyd (Chair)
Councillor J McNicholas (Deputy Chair)
Councillor L Kelly
Councillor R Lakha (Substitute for Councillor M Ali)
Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor M Mutton (Substitute for Councillor A Jobbar)
Councillor G Ridley
Councillor R Singh

By Invitation: Councillor G Duggins
Councillor J O'Boyle

Employees (by Service Area):

Chief Executive J Nugent (Chief Executive)

Finance and Resources B Hastie (Director of Finance and Resources), M Phillips

Law and Governance G Holmes, L Knight

Regeneration and Economy T Fawcett, R Palmer, P Singh, S Weir

Others Present: C McAneny (Interim Head of Coventry Strategic Energy Partnership)
R Moon (Director of UKBIC)

Apologies: Councillors M Ali, A Jobber

Public Business

25. Declarations of Interest

Councillor L Kelly declared an other interest in the matter referred to in Minute 29 below, headed Strategic Energy Partnership Progress 2025/26. She remained in the meeting but took no part in the consideration of this matter.

26. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded under Sections 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the consideration of the following private reports on the grounds that the reports involve the likely disclosure of information defined in Paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act as indicated, and that in all circumstances of the cases, the public interest in

maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interests in disclosing the information:

Minute Number	Report Title	Paragraph(s) of Section 12A of the Act
34	UKBIC Annual Performance Report 2024/25	3
35	Coventry Municipal Holdings Limited Annual Performance Report year ended 31st March 2025	3

27. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee One Coventry Plan Deep Dive Recommendations

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee received a report of the Chief Executive, which provided an update on the outcome of deep dive investigations into the One Coventry Plan.

Following consideration of a report presented to the Committee on 26th August 2025 (Minutes 15/25 refers), the Committee agreed to undertake a deep dive investigation into the performance reported against the key performance indicators (KPIs) in the One Coventry Plan.

Five sessions were held in which members of the Committee questioned in detail the Cabinet Members and officers responsible for those areas where performance had not met targets. The details of the deep dive sessions, including the KPIs discussed and recommendations on specific KPIs were set out in Appendix 1 of the report submitted. These included recommendations for relevant Scrutiny Body's in respect of the following areas:

- Hot-Streets Analysis
- Young Justice
- Child Poverty Systemic Approach
- Consider the number of jobs created by sector
- Collection agency performance data on third-party collection agencies, including their success rates
- Ensuring that each Scrutiny Board reviews performance on the relevant KPIs on an annual basis as part of the One Coventry Plan review process:

The deep dive had identified recommendations for the Cabinet and the Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee:

- 1. Approve the proposed recommendations to Cabinet as detailed within the report.**

2. **Request that the appropriate Scrutiny Body undertakes the work detailed within Appendix 1, Section 17.**
3. **Ensure that each Scrutiny Body reviews performance on the Key Performance Indicators related to their remit on an annual basis as part of the One Coventry Plan review process.**

28. **Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme and Outstanding 2025/2026**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Law and Governance that provided information regarding the Committee's Work Programme and Outstanding Issues for 2025/26. The Committee noted changes to the Work Programme in relation to the report back on the outcome of the deep dive of underperforming indicators within the One Coventry Plan.

RESOLVED that Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee notes the Work Programme attached as an appendix to the report.

29. **Strategic Energy Partnership Progress 2025/26**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Regeneration and Economy and received a presentation, which provided an update on performance of the Strategic Energy Partnership (SEP) against the Strategic Business Plan for 2024-2029 and the Annual Business Plan for 2024/2045, which had both been approved by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting on 23rd April 2024.

The Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

The 15-year SEP between the Council and E.ON is the first of its kind in the UK. It has the potential to put Coventry at the forefront of the UK's clean energy transition, benefitting residents and businesses in terms of helping to lower bills, generate clean local energy and create new jobs and skills. The Council's relationship with E.ON would help support the development of ground-breaking projects, with potential funding from E.ON as well as other sources.

The Committee noted that the Annual Business Plan 2024/25 was the SEP's first business plan and had delivered a huge amount of activity, laying the foundation for significant impacts in future years. This had included the creation of the Coventry Energy Plan, which provides an evidence base for the SEP to build momentum and prioritise the most impactful projects in the years ahead. In the first 18 months of partnership, 11 projects entered contract, with 22 in development, including a pipeline of innovation projects and £1.3m in social value delivery being committed.

A pipeline of innovation programmes had been developed and projects were underway which support the most vulnerable. This included a battery storage and time of use tariff pilot which supported some of the most vulnerable people in Coventry to reduce their bills, and drone energy efficiency survey pilot for 4,000

properties in Hillfields to help identify residents eligible for grant funding to improve energy efficiency.

The report indicated that investment in the SEP from inception in September 2023 to March 2025 was £1.9m, taking into account development expenditure, capital expenditure, operational expenditure, grant funding and deployment of a community benefit fund. The resource cost of delivering all the projects from September 2023 to March 2025 cost £3.5m. However, the Council's contribution to this was only £0.3m because of the Partnership.

A significant requirement of the SEP is to generate community benefit. £1.3m has been committed in social value delivery, including engagement with 860 school children, care leavers work placements, tree planting in Wyken and community growing projects in some of the least green parts of the city, including Hillfields and Stoke.

Members of the Committee asked questions and received answers from officers in respect of the following:

- The planning application for Lenton's Lane Solar Farm has been amended to address some of the residents' concerns with the initial application and is expected to be considered by Planning Committee this calendar year.
- The solar farm will provide an increased income through rental of the land. Any profits will be shared with E.ON, but the levels are not known at the moment.
- The SEP is working in partnership with social housing providers and private developers to look at energy efficiency.
- That all of the children that had been part of the programmes were from Coventry and a menu of programmes would be offered to schools.
- That the Council can and are working with other energy providers, the partnership with E.ON does not preclude that.
- Each project has to demonstrate value for money and social impact as part of the gateway process to progress.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee note the report and support the recommendations to the Coventry Shareholder Committee.

30. Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub Half-Year Report (Financial Year 2025/26)

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Finance and Resources, which outlined the half year performance of the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub for the 2025/26 financial year.

The Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

The report indicated that the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub (CWGH) was established in 2014 and is firmly integrated as part of a successful Coventry and Warwickshire economic area, providing a 'one stop' centre for local

businesses, with advice and guidance on the most appropriate support for their needs.

The CWGH Business Plan was approved by the Coventry Shareholder Committee on 26th March 2025. The half-year report outlined the performance based on the Business Plan during the financial year 2025/26, detailing income and operating costs for the 'core' Growth Hub. There were limited risks with the company balance sheet and CWGH have sufficient resources to meet liabilities as they fall due. The Council is not responsible for meeting liabilities in its role as a shareholder as CWGH is a private limited company.

Primary objectives and priorities for the period of the Business Plan remain unchanged with the CWGH focussing on accessing and supporting sub-regional small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), plugging them in to relevant and available support partners and their programmes, such as those funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Overall, 188 referrals out of a target of 325 had been made (58%, with the CWGH well placed to meet the target for referrals by the end of the financial year. Nearly all of the programmes were close to or over 50% of the target. Further information on progress was set out in Appendix 1 of the report. During the second half of the current financial year, a targeted marketing campaign would focus on the Business Energy Advice Service Programme to generate additional referrals.

The Committee were advised that, whilst there is no intention or indication that the CWGH is to close, the CWGH holds sufficient resources in reserves to ensure that, were a closure required, there would be no financial liability upon the Council as shareholder.

Members of the Committee asked questions and received answers from officers on the following:

- The unique position of CWGH as the only source of free region-wide advice available to all businesses.
- That the performance figures were a fair reflection of the 6-monthly position and a proactive campaign would be undertaken to target those areas that were underperforming.
- That the service was open to all of the approximately 10,000 businesses, including SMEs, in Coventry and the service is marketed through business rates and licensing to promote the service.
- That the CWGH was a separate business and needs to generate income from referrals.
- That the CWGH works closely with the Chamber but provides different services.
- That the CWGH was in an excellent position to be able to gather information about the impact of the JLR cyber-attack on the supply chain businesses in the area.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee note the report and support the recommendations to the Coventry Shareholder Committee.

31. **UKBIC Annual Performance Report 2024/25**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Finance and Resources, which set out the performance of UKBIC for the 2024/25 financial year.

A corresponding private report detailing confidential financial matters was also submitted for consideration (Minute 34 below referred).

The Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

The report indicated that UKBIC is a state of the art battery manufacturing research and development facility, funded by £114m from the UK Government, through Innovate UK, part of UK Research and Innovation) and £18m from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). The facility is operated by UKBIC Ltd which is owned by Coventry City Council. The Council is also the accountable body for the grant funding used to establish the facility.

It was noted that the Council does not provide any ongoing funding for UKBIC but did provide a one-off short term loan of £500k in 2021, which is being repaid in line with expectations and is due to be fully repaid by 2027.

The principle activity of the company is to provide focussed capabilities to enable industry, via open access, to scale up and commercialise advanced battery technologies central to the development and manufacture of batteries.

The Company's mission to support the growth of the battery industry in the UK remains unchanged. The financial year 2024/25 as is often the case with developing industries, saw both positive and negative developments, which have affected the company. The period saw a rapid take-up in battery-powered electric vehicles, together with the further development of newer battery technologies and chemistries (such as solid state, prismatic, sodium, nickel, etc.), all of which were reflected in customers using UKBIC facilities. Against that, there were a number of high-profile company failures in the UK, that affected the business. As a result of this, UKBIC has widened its key objectives to accommodate a changing battery industry and landscape to incorporate both international opportunities and other potential facility utilisation without changing its core mission of supporting the growth of the UK battery industry.

UKBIC secured an additional £36m in capital funding for a new Flexible Pilot Line (FPL) in 2023. This is a smaller scale line which is designed to bridge the gap between research-scale work on battery chemistries (often taking place either in private labs belonging to individual manufacturers or in university facility) and the main industrial scale-up line that was originally installed in the facility using the grant funding managed by the Council. This allows UKBIC to offer 40-litre mixes which require less material which is a key driver to the cost for potential customers, considerably reducing the barrier to entry and opening up a wider customer base for the company.

The first customers would begin to use the FPL before the end of 2025 and the final cell assembly capability due to become available in summer 2026. The

company has held successful industry days and webinars to promote the new capability, and whilst the focus will remain on UK industry in line with the company's overall mission, it will also be seeking international opportunities.

In addition, UKBIC offers 5 training courses designed for people working in the battery sector, including:

- Introduction to Battery Manufacturing
- Electrode Deep Dive
- Cell Assembly Deep Dive
- Formation Aging and Testing Deep Dive
- Module and Pack Deep Dive.

The company also offers bespoke training courses designed specifically for the needs of their customers, with six companies currently receiving training from UKBIC.

Members of the Committee asked questions and received answers from officers on the following:

- That there is no on-going funding for UKBIC from the Council and that the loan is being repaid.
- UKBIC has had significant grant income but will need commercial income from customers to continue to operate.
- That work is being done by UKBIC on disposal of batteries, including recycling and re-purposing car batteries for other uses.
- That there is a dedicated business development team to sell the facility to battery companies.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee note the report and support the recommendations to the Coventry Shareholder Committee.

32. Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd Annual Performance Report year ended 31st March 2025

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Finances and Resources, which set out performance against the business plan for the 12 month period from April 2024 to March 2024 for Coventry Municipal Holdings (CMH) and its subsidiaries, which include the following entities:

- Coombe Abbey Park Limited, including
 - No Ordinary Hospitality Management Limited (NOHM)
 - Coombe Abbey Park (LACo) Ltd (CAP LACo)
- Tom White Waste Ltd (TWW), including
 - A&M Metals and Wast Ltd (A&M)
 - Tom White Waste (LACo) Ltd (TWW LACo)
- Coventry Regeneration Ltd (CR)
- Coventry Technical Resources Ltd (CTR)
- No Ordinary Hotels Ltd (NOH)

A corresponding private report detailing confidential financial matters was also submitted for consideration (Minute 35 below referred).

The Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

Coventry Municipal Holdings Limited was established in November 2021 as an intermediary parent company to manage the Council's existing company investments. This includes investments in Coombe Abbey Park Limited and Tom White Waste Limited, along with other smaller subsidiaries.

The Group Governance Agreement is a legally binding document that was entered into by the entities within the CMH Group. It sets out the governance and reporting requirements for the group, which includes presenting a report on the annual performance for the group to the Coventry Shareholder Committee each year.

Appendix 1 sets out the position in the Annual Performance Report. In summary, in respect of Coombe Abbey Park Ltd, group achieved revenue of £11.3m during the year 24/25, with hotel revenues consistent with previous years but park retail and Go Ape slightly down on previous year. The cost base has been an area of focus with food and beverage costs being well controlled in line with budget across the board. There have been additional costs in relation to maintenance costs associated with operating a Grade One listed building and inflationary increases in the cost of staffing. Payroll costs remain a key area of focus for the company. The investment in a rota management and payroll system in June 2025 has helped provide management with greater information to flex staffing levels in line with anticipated revenues. This remains a key area of focus in 25/26.

The performance of retail and leisure outlets managed by CAP subsidiary No Ordinary Hospitality Management (NOHM) is a key focus but included the continued success of Go Ape and the over performance of The Abbey Artisan Market compared to budget.

NOHM is continuing to operate a sales and marketing agreement at IXL Events Centre and identify ways to grow revenues and improve margin at other outlets across Coombe Abbey Hotel, St. Mary's Guildhall and the War Memorial Park. NOHM's primary focus was on strengthening existing retail and leisure activities, particularly given the need to manage pressures on the core hotel business. The audited accounts for the Coombe Abbey Group were signed and approved by the company Board of Directors on the 25th September 2025 and have been subsequently filed at Companies House.

With regard to Tom White Waste Limited, the first half of the year in 2024 was impacted by underperformance from April to September, affected by the decision to close one site and reduce sales resources. This led to a weaker financial position. From October to March the TW saw the financial performance improve.

The financial position changed in January 2025 as part of the sale and leaseback arrangement with Council for the operating site. The Council acquired the site and will receive a commercial rental each year over the 25-year lease term.

The company has ended the year with revenue of £21.8m and a cash generated profit of £1.26m. The cash balance at the end of the year was £3.2m compared to the £0.2m the year before. The accounts for the year ending 31st March 2025 have been signed off by Board of Directors.

TWW have continued to improve on key customer services metrics, achieving 98% service success and 98% call availability (both up from 96%). TWW also achieved FORS Silver operator status for their haulage service. In September 2025, TWW received confirmation of the new permit issued by the Environment Agency which will create opportunities to trade additional material streams.

Members of the Committee asked questions and received answers from officers on the following:

- Clarification on accounting technicalities
- The trading positions of Tom White Waste and Coombe Abbey Park
- Clarification on circumstances behind the VAT liability
- Return on investment at St Mary's Guildhall
- The additional value provided by purchasing Coombe, including the extended offer to visitors to the park and increased income from parking fees.
- Recognition of the pressures within the hospitality industry and the slower growth anticipated as a result.

In considering the report, the Committee requested that the summary available from Companies House is available within future reports.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee note the report and support the recommendations to the Coventry Shareholder Committee.

33. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

34. UKBIC Annual Performance Report 2024/25

Further to Minute 31 above, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a private report of the Director of Finance and Resources, which set out the commercially confidential matters relating to the performance of UKBIC for the 2024/25 financial year.

The Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee note the report and support the recommendations to the Coventry Shareholder Committee.

35. Coventry Municipal Holdings Ltd Annual Performance Report year ended 31st March 2025

Further to Minute 32 above, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a private report of the Director of Finance and Resources, which set out the

commercially confidential matters relating to the performance against the business plan for the 12 month period from April 2024 to March 2024 for Coventry Municipal Holdings (CMH) and its subsidiaries, which include the following entities:

- Coombe Abbey Park Limited, including
 - No Ordinary Hospitality Management Limited (NOHM)
 - Coombe Abbey Park (LACo) Ltd (CAP LACo)
- Tom White Waste Ltd (TWW), including
 - A&M Metals and Wast Ltd (A&M)
 - Tom White Waste (LACo) Ltd (TWW LACo)
- Coventry Regeneration Ltd (CR)
- Coventry Technical Resources Ltd (CTR)
- No Ordinary Hotels Ltd (NOH)

The Committee noted that the report would be considered by the Coventry Shareholder Committee at its meeting scheduled for 4th November 2025.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee note the report and support the recommendations to the Coventry Shareholder Committee.

36. **Any Other Private Business**

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 3.45 pm)