

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 14 January 2026

Present:

Members: Councillor A Jobbar (Chair)
Councillor A Hopkins (sub Councillor R Lakha)
Councillor P Male
Councillor K Maton
Councillor CE Thomas

Other Members: Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance & Resources,
Councillor R Brown

Employees:

Finance & Resources P Helm, T Pinks

Law and Governance E Jones, C Taylor

Apologies: Councillors J Innes, R Lakha and A Tucker

Public Business

27. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

28. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2025 and were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

29. Pre Budget Consultation Report 2026/27

The Pre-Budget Report outlined potential themes for investment based on public engagement and council performance data. These include:

- Keeping people safe – tackling crime, improving cleanliness and city centre improvements
- Anti-social behaviour – including fly tipping
- Local environments – particularly in deprived neighbourhoods
- Protecting vulnerable people – tackling child poverty
- Good jobs, investment and prosperity – addressing youth unemployment and education achievement
- Helping people to manage – support with bills and energy costs
- Roads and pavements – improving condition and safety

The Board's focus was on reviewing the proposed themes, considering their alignment with strategic priorities, and to respond as necessary to support informed decisions ahead of the final budget approval in February 2026.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resource, Councillor R Brown, welcomed the report, particularly the implication of the 'Fair Funding' proposals which were expected to be positive for Coventry, however, how to prioritise the funding would be challenging.

The Board questioned Officers and received responses on a number of matters relating to the Briefing Note including:

- Provision of support to employers to enable disabled employees to achieve and maintain employment.
- Proposed increase in Council Tax was 5% and a 3 year settlement, however, the actual increase would be confirmed prior to setting the budget in February 2026.
- Approximately £67m of efficiencies had been found in the past 5 years however, savings and efficiencies through innovative and smarter working and improved technology was ongoing.

The importance of re-establishing residents' trust with the Local Authority through additional funding allocation from Central Government was suggested.

RESOLVED that the Board:

- a) **Note the contents of the Pre Budget Consultation Report (Appendix 1) which was approved by Cabinet on 16 December 2025, as a basis for consultation.**
- b) **Provide feedback as part of the formal pre budget consultation which ends on 28 January 2026 as follows:**
 - i) **Research and provision of further support for disabled employees to achieve and maintain employment and for employers to enable them to adapt practices to employ disabled people.**
 - ii) **Support for the Council Tax Support Scheme.**
 - iii) **Ensuring that the additional funding allocation from Central Government is used in a way that re-establishes residents' trust with the Local Authority.**

30. Work Programme and Outstanding Issues

The Work Programme for 2025/26 was noted.

31. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 10.40 am)