Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Procurement Committee held at 2.00 pm on Monday, 27 July 2026

Present:

Members:	Councillor S Nazir (Chair) Councillor A Bryant Councillor M Heaven Councillor C Phillips Councillor H Rehman Councillor K Sandhu (Deputy Chair)
Other Members:	Councillor F Beechey
Employees (by Directorate):	
Finance and Resources	B Hastie (Director of Finance and Resources), S Kinsell, K Tyler, H Williamson
Law, Governance and Safer Communities	L Knight
People and Facilities	S Chilton (Director of People and Facilities), N Powell
Apologies:	Councillor R Brown

Public Business

9. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

10. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2026 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

11. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that the Audit and Procurement Committee agrees to exclude the press and public under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, relation to the private report in Minute 17 below, headed "Consideration of Approval of Severance Packages" on the ground that the item involves the likely disclosure of defined in Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the act, as they contain information relating to individuals, the financial and business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and information relating to labour relations matters and that, in all circumstances, of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

12. **Revenue and Capital Outturn 2025-26**

The Audit and Procurement Committee considered a report of the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) that had also been considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 7th July 2026 and would also be considered at the meeting of Council on 8th September 2026. The report outlined the final revenue and capital outturn position for 2025/26, and reviewed treasury management activity and 2025/26 Prudential Indicators reported under the Prudential Code for Capital Finance. Appendices to the report provided: a detailed breakdown of Directorate Revenue Variations; Capital Programme Changes and Analysis of Rescheduling; and Prudential Indicators.

The overall financial position included the following headline items:

- An underspend of £3.2m, balanced by a contribution to earmarked reserves.
- Capital Programme expenditure of £154.3m.
- An increase in the level of available Council revenue reserves from £119m to £145m.

The Committee noted that the Council had faced significant pressures within Adults Social Care, City Services and Regeneration and Economic Development. These financial pressures were caused by a combination of continued service demand, complexity and market conditions in social care, legacy inflation impacts and income shortfalls due largely to the economic climate.

The underlying revenue position has improved by £4.8m since Quarter 3 where an overspend of £1.6m was being forecast. The majority of the improved position relates to improvements in City Services within both Environmental Services and Highways, as well as an improved position in Property Services and Development following the recognition and removal of City Centre South demolished properties from the National Non-domestic Rates rating by the Valuation Office, and finally significant improvements realised in demand for Temporary Accommodation. These improvements were set out in section 2.1.4 in the report.

In relation to the rescheduling set out in Table 5 of the report, the Committee sought assurances that rescheduling would be a one-off for each project and sought further clarification as to whether there would be additional costs incurred as a result of the delay. The Committee were advised that the rescheduling related to finances only and that each project would have its own Project Board, which would include a relevant Director, who monitor progress, including any potential cost implications. Sometimes the delays were out of the Council's control, such as when working with contractors. For the significant projects, such as Very Light Rail, update reports would also be submitted to the Cabinet.

The Committee also sought confirmation that the income targets within Planning and the situation relating to Housing and Homelessness costs were sustainable. It was reported that the change to the income target within Planning related primarily to the large applications across the City, which had reduced and that there was a lot of preventative work and investment taking place in respect of Housing and Homelessness and those that are at risk of being made homeless to try to ensure that any costs are kept down and represent value for money.

In terms of the explanation provided in respect of variances, the Committee asked that for future reports a simple table could be included for each section to explain at a glance how the variance had arisen.

RESOLVED that, the Audit and Procurement Committee note the Revenue and Capital Outturn Report for 2025/26 and confirmed that they had no issues to refer to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources for consideration.

13. **Audit and Procurement Committee Annual Report to Council 2025-26**

The Audit and Procurement Committee considered its Annual Report to Council that provided an overview of its activity during 2025/2026. The report would be submitted to Council at its meeting on 8th September 2026.

The report included an introduction by the Chair, Councillor S Nazir, who was appointed to the Committee in May 2026. The report indicated that the Audit and Procurement Committee was a key component of the Council's governance framework, supporting good governance and strong public financial management. Over the last year, the Committee had continued to discharge its key responsibility effectively, namely providing independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the Council's financial reporting and governance processes. The report demonstrated the vital role carried out by the Committee and the contribution that it made to the Council's overall governance arrangements.

The Committee received a range of routine reports based on the clearly defined expectations of services / functions that reported to it, e.g. internal / external audit and financial management. It also received ad-hoc reports which focussed on either a specific concern or developments that impacted directly on the Committee.

The report detailed the Committee's activity in 2025/26 in the following areas: Governance; Financial Management and Accounting; External Audit; Internal Audit; Fraud and Error; Procurement and Salaries. Reports considered during this period which were linked to risk management, internal control and governance, included: Whistleblowing Annual Report 2024/25; Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Annual Compliance Report; Complaints to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman 2024/25; Corporate Risk Register; Information Governance Annual Report 2024/25; and Coventry Municipal Holdings Group Accounts.

The report also detailed priorities for the Committee for 2026/27 which included:

- Ensuring there are adequate opportunities for the training and development of Councillors on the Committee;
- The Council has appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the timetable for the publication of the 2025/26 unaudited and audited Statement of Accounts is met and work on rebuilding audit assurance is appropriately progressed.

RESOLVED that, the Audit and Procurement Committee recommends that Council considers the Audit and Procurement Committee Annual Report 2025/26 at their meeting on 8th September 2026.

14. **Outstanding Issues**

The Audit and Procurement Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, that identified issues on which a further report/information had been requested or was outstanding so that the Committee were aware of them and could manage their progress.

Appendix 1 to the report provided details of an issue where a report had been requested to a meeting along with the anticipated date for consideration of the matter.

Appendix 2 of the report provided details of an item where information had been requested outside the formal meeting.

With regards to item 2 of Appendix 2, the Committee were advised that there had been a formatting error within the report and were provided with an updated Appendix.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Procurement Committee notes the Outstanding Issues report.

15. **Work Programme 2026/2027**

The Audit and Procurement Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, that detailed the Work Programme of scheduled issues to be considered by the Committee during the Municipal Year 2026/27.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Procurement Committee notes the Work Programme for 2026/27.

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

The Committee were advised that officers had met with the Council's External Auditor, Grant Thornton, who would be attending the next meeting of the Committee. They had indicated that they would be willing to offer additional training to the Committee and that officers would be in touch with Members regarding dates. It was further reported that investigations would be made with a view to linking procurement training with the training provided by Grant Thornton.

RESOLVED that, the Committee note the update provided in respect of training.

17. **Consideration of Approval of Severance Package**

The Audit and Procurement Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Facilities that sought approval of a severance package which had occurred due to the proposed deletion of a position detailed within the report.

Part 2I of the Council's Constitution required that any severance package for an employee of the Council which exceeds £100,000 should be determined by the Audit and Procurement Committee. The calculation of the value of an exit package included the costs to the Authority as well as payments / benefits to the employee.

RESOLVED that the Audit and Procurement Committee approves the potential severance payment arising from compulsory redundancy, as calculated and detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, should redeployment or other mitigation not be successful.

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

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 2.50 pm)