

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Ethics Committee held at 11.00 am
on Thursday, 25 June 2026

Present:

Members: Councillor A Hopkins (Chair)

Councillor L Bigham
Councillor W Davies
Councillor M Heaven
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor D McCann

Independent persons: S Atkinson, P Wiseman

Also in attendance: Councillors F Beechey, J Odje and E Reeves

Employees (by Directorate):

Law, Governance and J Newman (Director), G Holmes, S Manhertz, C Taylor
Safer Communities

Apologies: Councillor T Jewell
S Atkinson, R Wills

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2026, were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

3. Annual Report of the Ethics Committee 2025/26

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, regarding the tenth annual report of the Ethics Committee, setting out the work of the Committee over the last municipal year.

In particular it reported on:

- Code of Conduct Complaints
- Local Code of Corporate Governance
- Ending Abuse in Public Life – Council’s Self-Assessment Toolkit
- Local Government and Social care Ombudsman Annual Report
- Preparations for Candidates in the May 2026 Municipal Elections

The report detailed other regular work of the Committee over the last year and set out a brief overview of work to be undertaken in the 2026/27 municipal year.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Approves the Annual Report of the Committee; and**
- 2) Recommends that Council notes the Annual Report and considers whether there is any work within the Committee's terms of reference that Council would wish the Committee to undertake.**

4. Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities - Update

The Committee considered an update on the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities on the developments made to implement the new Standards and Conduct Framework. The report highlighted any developments since the consultation undertaken nationally and subsequent response by the Government which the Ethics Committee considered in January 2026.

The Committee welcomed the introduction of the removal of Members home addresses from public registers.

The Committee noted that most of the representations made in relation to the last consultation had been accepted by the Government however, it was not yet known if a further consultation or white paper would be brought forward prior to the proposals being agreed.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Notes the progress on the development of the Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities.**

5. New Members Induction Programme - Interim Progress Report

The Committee considered a report on an interim progress report on the new Member Induction Programme.

The Committee welcomed and thanked officers for the introduction of the 'marketplace' event, which was found to be very useful. A number of suggestions were provided in relation to improving future members' inductions including:

- Existing Members being made aware that the 'marketplace' was not just for new Members.
- Members with a 1-year term of office would be prioritised in completion of the Code of Conduct and data protection training.
- A review of Members' induction timings or reluctance to join training would be undertaken.

The Committee noted the Officer/Members Protocol was covered in the induction packs and was also available online. Reporting lines were in place to provide any concerns.

The Committee also noted that safeguarding training and training around the budget and finance had been delivered in person and online, recorded and links sent to all Members. Members who had not accessed this training would be followed up by officers.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Notes and welcomes the interim progress on the Members Induction Programme.**
- 2) Supports and encourages all Members to participate in training and development opportunities.**
- 3) Provide the comments as outlined above on the future delivery of the Elected Members Training and Development Strategy.**

6. Code of Conduct Update

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on any national issues in relation to the ethical behaviour of elected Members and the local position in Coventry with regard to Code of Conduct issues.

The Committee welcomed the examples provided in the report from cases across the country, suggesting further powers should be at the Committee's disposal to protect Councillors, members of the public and officers from any breaches of the Code of Conduct.

The Committee noted stages of the complaints process and the implications of not completing Code of Conduct training.

RESOLVED that the Ethics Committee:-

- 1) Notes the position with regard to the matters concerning local authorities nationally.**
- 2) Notes the local position relating to the operation of the Council's Code of Conduct and delegates any actions arising from these to the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, following consultation with the Chair of Ethics Committee.**

7. Work Programme for Ethics Committee 2026-27

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities which outlined the proposed Work Programme for the Ethics Committee for the Municipal Year 2026/27.

The proposed Work Programme was appended to the report.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for Ethics Committee 2026-27 be noted.

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

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.45 am)