



Strategy and Resources Meeting
Monday 8th December 2025
The Trinity Centre
7:00pm

Present:

Cllrs S Ward (Chairman), Cooper, Mackey, Parkin, Pears and Raut.

In Attendance:

Olive O’Sullivan – Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Mary Kidner – Head of Finance & Governance.

There were two members of the public present.

A resident asked questions around the community groups referenced in the Pride in Place (PiPP) Regeneration Plan and if the list could be provided for the Sutton Coldfield Arts Forum use. The CEO responded that there were around 420 groups that were known to the Town Council, this includes the 242 Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social Enterprise groups and 99 sporting organisations grouped in tables within the plan. The remaining groups had either not responded or responded no, to a request to share their details with consultants. The CEO said that relevant groups could be extracted from the data and Sutton Coldfield Arts Forum details shared with them.

48 Apologies for Absence

The CEO reported apologies from Cllr Cairns and Puri.

Resolved to accept the apologies received.

49 Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

50 Minutes of the Previous Meetings

Resolved to confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 14th October 2025.

51 Matters Arising

The CEO reported that further to Agenda Item 45, the Town Council’s IT Support contractors had advised that the Town Council’s Microsoft 365 accounts did not include co-pilot and would not be subject to a large subscription price increase, that emails deleted are backed up for a period of 90 days and options for cyber insurance were being explored.

Cllr Ward asked that should a suitable policy be identified that this be progressed and reported back to Committee.



52 Questions from Members

No questions were received.

53 Royal Sutton Coldfield Libraries and Community Centres

The CEO gave a verbal update that following the successful rebranding and launch of the service on 1st November 2025, the first quarterly performance meeting had been held with no issues to report. Quotes had been sought for the redecoration, recarpeting and refurbishment of toilets at Mere Green Library and Community Centre and will be brought back to a Committee meeting to consider.

In response to a question from Cllr Raut, Cllr Ward confirmed that the Council would look to hold some meetings at the Community Centre, subject to availability.

In response to a question from Cllr Cooper the CEO reported that Birmingham City Council had appointed to Community Hub Manager role and confirmed that the post holder would be based in Sutton Coldfield and responsible only for libraries and community centres in Sutton Coldfield.

54 Budget Proposals 2026/27

Cllr Ward said it was a legal requirement to set an annual balanced budget, a responsibility taken seriously by the Town Council, and that Committee are asked to review the draft budget and budget requirement for consideration by Full Council next week.

The CEO reported that there was likely to be an underspend on the Libraries & Community Centres Budget for the current year and this could be moved into an earmarked reserve to cover any annual increase to the contract for 2026/27 that isn't funded by the annual budget. Committee will consider reserves at its meeting in February. Committee considered amending the indicative budget for 2027/28 to cover two years of annual increases, at 5% per year.

In response to questions, the CEO confirmed that in addition to the quarterly reviews there would be an annual review of the Library and Community Centres contract towards the end of next year and that the Town Council would also review the charging policy, as the Sutton Coldfield service is outside of Birmingham City Council's remit. The CEO advised that discussions for the transfer of buildings could now progress and that she would write to Birmingham City Council to formally request the transfer of Mere Green and Walmley Library and Community Centres and the lease for Boldmere Library.

There is no change to the draft budget for Wi-Fi Maintenance, the provider has confirmed that the scheme can continue to be supported for a further three years within this budget. The Falcon Lodge connection is currently offline as the equipment is installed in the closed Community Centre. The Methodist Church has offered to host a connection for Falcon Lodge, this would need additional budget of £3-£5k in 2025/26, to install additional lamppost points and equipment. Cllr Ward requested that the Wi-Fi Connection in Mere Green also be reviewed to ensure it provides adequate coverage. Cllr Parkin asked that an update be provided on the usage of the free public Wi-Fi provided by the Town Council.

The CEO reported that the Cycle Hire Scheme had been extended for a period of six months, at no further cost to the Town Council, as Transport for West Midlands were carrying out a procurement exercise to find a new provider. It was confirmed that the Sutton Coldfield Scheme has been



included in the tender and that docking stations near to the park are well used and likely to continue in the new scheme.

- [Proposed Draft and Indicative Budgets for recommendation to Full Council](#)

Resolved to approve a Budget virement of £5,000 from the Budget Contingency to Wi-Fi Maintenance in 2025/26.

Resolved to recommend the draft budget for 2026/27 to Full Council for approval.

Resolved to recommend the indicative budgets for 2027/28, 2028/29 and 2029/30 to Full Council for approval.

55 Precept 2026/27

In response to a question from Cllr Mackey on a government council tax surcharge applied to higher banded homes, the CEO confirmed that this would not impact the Town Council.

Cllr Parkin said he was pleased to see that the Town Council were investing the precept in the priorities that residents had asked for. Cllr Mackey supported the proposed precept and balanced budget and spoke about ensuring the local precept was set at a manageable level.

Resolved to note the draft Sutton Coldfield Council Tax Database that is subject to BCC approval at a Cabinet meeting in January 2026 and the formula for calculation for the 2026/27 Precept.

Resolved to recommend the Precept Levy of £2,631,825 for 2026/27 to Full Council for approval.

56 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Cllr Pears asked if CIL funds could potentially be used to match fund PiPP capital funding, Cllr Ward confirmed that there is no specific requirement for PiPP projects to be match funded and there are no restrictions on use of CIL for this purpose. Projects will be looked at on a case-by-case basis and all allocations of CIL needs to be approved by Full Council.

The CEO said she would report back on the difference between generating CIL and Section 106 funds, following a question from Cllr Mackey.

Cllr Ward said that projects should be identified in the wards where the CIL was generated in the first instance but could be pooled together and used for the benefit of Sutton Coldfield.

Resolved to note the Community Infrastructure Levy funds spend and allocation for 2024/25.

57 Internal Audit Report

Resolved to note the internal audit interim report for the 2025/26 financial year.

58 Pride in Place Programme (PiPP) Regeneration Plan

The Draft Regeneration Plan was approved by the PiPP Board and submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government in November 2025. Cllr Ward thanked the CEO and Officers for their hard work in bringing the Regeneration Plan to the Board.

Resolved to note the PiPP draft Regeneration Plan and Investment Profile.

59 Pride in Place Programme (PiPP) Local Assurance Framework



Councillor Ward stated that the Town Council was the only Town or Parish Council to be the responsible finance body for the PiPP funds and this laid out the governance framework.

The CEO confirmed that the PiPP funds are kept in a separate account but do show on the Town Council's balance sheet.

Resolved to recommend to Full Council approval of the Pride in Place Programme Local Assurance Framework.

60 Bank Reconciliations

Resolved to note the bank reconciliations from September and October 2025.

61 Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting scheduled is 10th February 2026 at the Trinity Centre.

The meeting ended at 8:05pm

Signed as a true record

10th February 2026