
To
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date 10th October 2007

Subject
Update on Scrutiny Board 3 (City Development, City Services, Climate Change, Sustainability & Housing) Work Programme

1 Purpose of the Briefing Note

- 1.1 To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination committee as to the progress of the Scrutiny Board 3 Work programme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to note the Briefing Note and discuss with the Board's Chair any issues arising as appropriate.

3 Background / Information

- 3.1 Between May and September the Board have held five formal Board meetings plus an additional informal one to prepare for the Cabinet Member Strategic Plans meetings.

Issues that the Board have considered so far include:

4 Microgeneration / Planning White Paper

- 4.1 As well as considering the work programme, the June Board meeting also considered the draft responses to a number of Government consultation documents. The Board's remit had been recently extended to include the portfolio of Climate Change, Sustainability & Housing and it was therefore timely that Government proposals for promoting Microgeneration were included in this meeting.
- 4.2 The Board considered these proposals in detail discussing the potential conflicts between this policy objective and the practical detail of permitted development and protecting the street scene. The Board recommended some additions to the prepared draft Council response (relating to wind turbines and solar panels), which were accepted at the subsequent Council meeting.
- 4.3 This meeting also considered recent the recent Planning White Paper and associated consultations. These proposals include changes to the charging regime, the appeals process and the application process for major developments. The Board again asked for

the response to be amended to include the importance of a sub-regional dimension to planning for major projects and otherwise endorsed the draft response.

5 CVOne Business Plan

- 5.1 The Board was pleased to welcome the Chief Executive of CVOne to its July meeting to discuss the developing business plan. After a detailed presentation on the company's progress and plans for the future the Board questioned the Chief Executive on a number of issues including:
- Footfall in the city centre.
 - Parking
 - The role of CV One.
 - The promotion of Coventry.
 - Recent events including the Godiva Festival, Christmas events, and fair ground rides in the city centre.
 - Public conveniences.
 - Ambassadors.
 - Belgrade Plaza.
 - City centre BID revote.
 - Communication including the new newsletter.
 - Coach park.
 - Decisions regarding sponsors.
- 5.2 The Board welcomed the progress to date and requested that the Chief Executive report back on some of the issues raised, later in the year.

6 RES / Services for Small Businesses / Incentives for Recycling / Sustainable Homes

- 6.1 The above issues have also been brought to the Board's attention. Proposals for changes to small business support were broadly welcomed by the Board, however they expressed concerns once again about the sub-regional dimension and links to other policy work. The issues around sustainable homes relate to Coventry being approved as a growth point. The Board welcomed the draft response, however sought to emphasise the importance of local decision-making over the details of planned development.

7 The Commercial Property Portfolio Review

- 7.1 This is an issue considered by the Board on a number of occasions last year. Following a Member Panel a criterion for considering the value of Commercial Property held by the Council was considered and officers were asked to go away and prepare a list of assets considered to be poorly performing for disposal. The Board recently considered the first tranche of these assets and a discussion was held with particular regard to the acquisition of assets. Whilst the Board endorsed the recommendation to dispose of a number of poorly performing assets they also requested officers to include an acquisition strategy to replace the income from these assets in any future proposals.

8 IKEA

- 8.1 Earlier this year the Board held a special meeting concerning the development of a new IKEA store in the City Centre. The Board received an update of progress to date at its

September meeting. This update included the news that the stores opening date has been put back to Sunday 18th November. This will provide new challenges whilst at the same time allowing the highways changes introduced as a result of the development to bed in.

- 8.2 The Board has requested a further report on the progress of the development early in the New Year.

9 Cabinet Member Strategic Plans

- 9.1 Scrutiny Board 3 has 3 Cabinet Member Plans to scrutinise and in order to give each Plan due consideration the Chair decided that these be considered at separate meetings.

City Services

- 9.2 The Board met with the Cabinet Member (City Services) and questioned her on a variety of issues around her portfolio. These included performance; the development of the waste strategy (including fly tripping and recycling); test purchases of alcohol and fireworks; the highways capital programme; the burial strategy; school transport and the schools meals service.

City Development

- 9.3 The meeting with the Cabinet Member City Development raised a number of issues of note including park and ride facilities; the relocation of the QCA and further relocations; the development of the Ricoh Arena; the City Centre Masterplan; the economic development strategy; Coventry's status as a growth point and the necessary infrastructure and disabled access to Council buildings.

Climate Change, Sustainability and Housing

- 9.4 The meeting with the Cabinet Member for this newly created portfolio was in part an introduction to the concepts involved, however the meeting also discussed a variety of questions including performance, the Nottingham Declaration; energy efficiency; local air quality; creating more sustainable housing including special needs housing; the recent Audit Commission inspection of Housing Services and promoting sustainable transport.
- 9.5 These meetings were particularly successful and will prove particularly useful as the Board continues with its work programme over the coming year.

10 Future Business

- 10.1 The Board will shortly consider proposals for Urban Traffic Management Controls (UTMC) in the City, as well as the Pest Control Service redesign as well as an update on recycling in the City. The Board will then commence work on a major work programme item regarding road safety and the use of speed cameras.

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